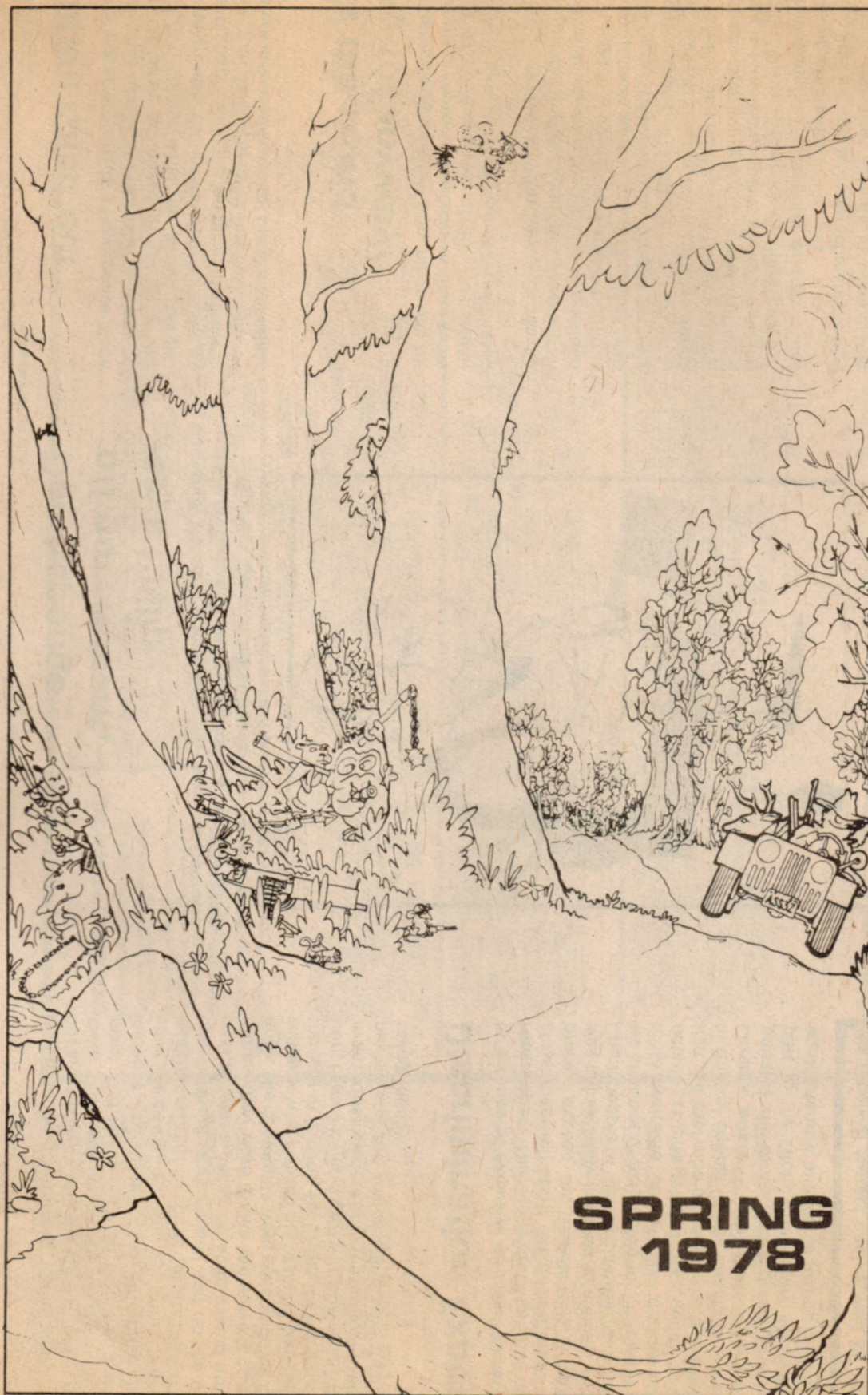


A Libertarian Socialist Newsletter

THE RED MENACE



**SPRING
1978**

Volume 2, Number 2

.75

Introduction to this issue

As the article What is The Red Menace? (P. 10 in this issue) makes clear, there are differing ideas about what The Red Menace should be. Part of the problem revolves around the desire, on the one hand, to make this newsletter a forum for the exchange of a broad range of opinions covering the spectrum of the libertarian left (which leaves the question of how to define "libertarian") and the desire, on the other hand, to make The Red Menace an expression of the views of the people working on it. One thing which we feel would be useful in dealing with the situation is to begin each issue with a brief introduction explaining some of the themes of the issue, the choice of major articles, and indicating how the collective evaluates important or contentious articles.

The publication of our first two issues brought us a good deal of favourable response, much of it from anarchists. Many seemed to assume we are anarchists; other people wrote to ask what, if anything, distinguishes our politics from anarchism. In an attempt to answer that question (for ourselves as well as for our readers) we are attempting to encourage articles on this and other basic political questions on the libertarian left. In this issue, there are several articles on the topic, from rather different perspectives. A member of the collective, Ulli Diemer, has contributed two articles, ("Anarchism vs. Marxism" and "Bakunin vs. Marx") which look at the roots of the anarchist/marxist split, and take up a number of general issues in the anarchism/Marxism debate. Diemer takes a pro-Marxist position, and argues that the rejection of Marxism by most present-day anarchists has more to do with the false identification of Marxism with Leninism, and with the failure of most anarchists to find out anything about Marxism before attacking it, than with any serious consideration of Marx's own views. He raises a number of points of disagreement with anarchism, but suggests that they can and should be overcome. Diemer's position substantially reflects the views of many members of the Libertarian Socialist Collective, but is not the group's 'official' position: at least one member of the collective, in fact, intends to write a reply to the articles for the next issue.

A diametrically opposed view is contained in P. Murtaugh's "The End of Dialectical Materialism: An Anarchist Reply to the Libertarian Marxists". Murtaugh essentially argues that 'libertarian Marxism' is either honest confusion, or deliberate opportunism, but in any case not a defensible political position. The Libertarian Socialist Collective categorically rejects Murtaugh's analysis, which we think displays an ignorance of Marx and Marxism that is unfortu-

nately widespread among many people who style themselves anarchists. Nevertheless we welcome the way it confronts the issue frontally, thereby opening a discussion which we think can potentially be very fruitful. We are confident that libertarian socialism and anarchism are fundamentally in tune, but we think it important that misunderstandings and disagreements be confronted openly and vigorously. (It should also be noted that Murtaugh's article is not



necessarily representative of anarchists generally — some anarchist comrades, in fact, objected to its publication because they considered it too unrepresentative.)

Our purpose in encouraging discussion on this and other issues is not of course to create division among people who are presently able to work well together; rather, it is an attempt to elaborate the basis on which unity between different kinds of libertarians is possible. We strongly believe that theoretical and strategic

questions have to be dealt with critically and frankly, not swept under the rug for fear of the results. Questions of goals, strategy, and organization are central to any political movement. It should be possible — must be possible — for libertarians to discuss ideas and actions, criticize each other, and differ where necessary, without hostility and splits resulting. Hopefully we libertarians are mature enough to engage in the vigorous exchange of ideas without fracturing our movement.

A radicalism that is to be more than abstract rejection of capitalist society has to develop a radical critique of the way things are done in this society, and develop alternatives. One critical problem is that of technology: is there a liberatory way of using technology, or is most current technology inherently capitalist, suited only to hierarchical society whose relation to nature is that of domination? One of the most important attempts to develop an analysis of the liberatory potential of technology has been developed by Murray Bookchin. In his article on Bookchin Tom McLaughlin examines some of the directions that Bookchin has explored.

A specific example of an attempt to use technology in a liberatory way is the revolutionary radio station in Bologna: Radio Alice. Radio Alice takes its name from Alice In Wonderland, and has attempted to similarly invert language and logic in a subversive way. Last year, it was also caught up in an attempt to subvert the City of Bologna in a slightly more traditional way: when street fighting broke out, Alice acted as a centre of communication and co-ordination, with non-stop broadcasting of events on the streets as they happened. In this issue, we feature an excerpt from that broadcast.

The discussion of work and other daily life experiences begun in the last issue continues in this one with another article on office work, which discusses what it's like to work in a highly structured office environment.

A number of debates from the last issue are taken up again in this issue in the "Exchange" section (P. 18). Included are a response to Ed Clark's "Why the Leninists Will Win" entitled "Why the Leninists Will Lose"; a reply from the Wages for Housework group at Bain Avenue to criticism of them in the last issue, and a counter-reply to the charges they make; and a piece by Simon Rosenblum arguing for working in the NDP. (The collective is in complete disagreement with Rosenblum on this, but considers the question of the NDP an important one which should be discussed. Replies to Rosenblum, as well as to anything else in the issue, are welcome.)

The Red Menace P O. Box 171 Postal Station D Toronto, Canada

Contents

Introduction	1	about what The Red Menace should be. Some of the points under debate are presented here.	
Multiphasic Follow the Leader Exam	2	Bakunin vs. Marx	11
Have you ever wondered whether you would make a good leader? Now you can take The Red Menace's scientifically designed multiple-choice test and be sure.		A look at the roots of the anarchist/Marxist split: the break between Bakunin and Marx, which has had a tremendous impact on the subsequent history of the movement.	
Revolutionary Radio in Italy	3	Murray Bookchin on Technology	14
The radio station "Alice" (named after Alice in Wonderland) of Bologna set out to be a 'peoples' radio station'. This article is a transcript of their broadcast during the street battles of last year.		Is there a libertarian way of using technology, or is most technology inherently capitalist? Murray Bookchin's approach to a liberatory technology is reviewed here.	
Working in an Office — for a while	5	Some Thoughts on Organization	15
Discussion of life and power in an office.		Everything you wanted to know about sects, but were afraid to ask	16
Words	7	Exchange	18
Some critical comments about the way leftists use language.		Featuring "The End of Dialectical Materialism: An Anarchist Reply to the Libertarian Marxists"; a reply and counter-reply to the article on tenants at Bain Ave. in the last issue; and a rejoinder to Ed Clark's article from the last issue: "Why the Leninists Will Lose".	
Anarchism vs. Marxism	8	Letters	22
A few notes on an old theme: the century-old battle between anarchism and Marxism.			
Sources	9		
What is The Red Menace?	10		
We have had a good deal of behind-the-scenes discussion			

Multiphasic Bureaucratic Follow the Leader Exam

(With built-in Deception Detector)

Instruction: Select the one most non-committal answer.

PART ONE: Would you make a good Leader?

- When I talk, people
 - listen
 - leave the room
 - inspect their fingernails
 - gaze at the ceiling
 - I never talk
 - I only talk to myself
- My comrades are always telling me that I
 - am intellectually advanced
 - am ideologically advanced
 - am sexually advanced
 - have nice hair
 - all of the above
 - none of the above
- People often come to me
 - for advice
 - for comfort
 - for money
 - to borrow something
 - after they've gone to everybody else
 - people never come to me
- The most important quality in a leader is
 - The ability to quickly grasp the significance of any situation at a glance, work out a detailed plan of action, and manipulate everybody into following it.
 - To be able to complete a night compass course exercise at Ft. Benning, Georgia, without falling over a cliff or getting bitten by a rattlesnake.
 - humbleness
 - self-righteousness
 - a big mouth
- I am
 - always right
 - almost always right
 - often wrong, but I seldom admit it
 - always wrong, but I never admit it
- People are always commenting that my eyes are
 - filled with the steely light of strength and absolute determination
 - evasive
 - weak
 - watery
 - rheumy
 - crazy-looking

PART TWO: Would you make a good follower?

- The main responsibility for the administration of discipline should be left to
 - the central committee at the local level
 - the central committee at the district level
 - the central committee at the regional level
 - the central committee at the national level
 - our Glorious Leader
 - my Mom
 - all of the above
- The concept of "freedom of speech" is
 - over-rated
 - nice if the situation allows it
 - a petty—bourgeois fetish
 - hardly relevant in a well-led organization
- The 'pursuit of happiness' means
 - strictly adhering to the policies and cheerfully and diligently carrying out the orders of the central committee at the local level.
 - strictly adhering to the policies and cheerfully and diligently carrying out the orders of the central committee at the district level.
 - strictly adhering to the policies and cheerfully and diligently carrying out the orders of the central committee at the regional level
 - Strictly adhering to the policies and cheerfully and diligently carrying out the orders of the central committee at the national level
 - strictly adhering to the policies and cheerfully and diligently carrying out the orders of Our Glorious Leader
 - all of the above
- When a problem comes up I
 - wait to see what our leader says about it
 - wait to see what everybody else says about it
 - stay out of sight
 - pretend it doesn't exist

- "Criticism/self-criticism" is
 - a way of getting back at people
 - a parlour game
 - a kind of bloody show & tell time for grown-ups
 - hardly relevant in a well-led organization
- The Peoples' State will
 - take care of the people
 - take care of the leaders
 - fuck over the people
 - wither away
- The "dictatorship of the proletariat" means
 - the dictatorship of the Party
 - the dictatorship of the central committee
 - the dictatorship of Our Glorious Leader
 - all of the above
- When a person of authority says squat, I
 - vote yes
 - get confused
 - vote no
 - shit
 - all of the above

Special Bonus Question

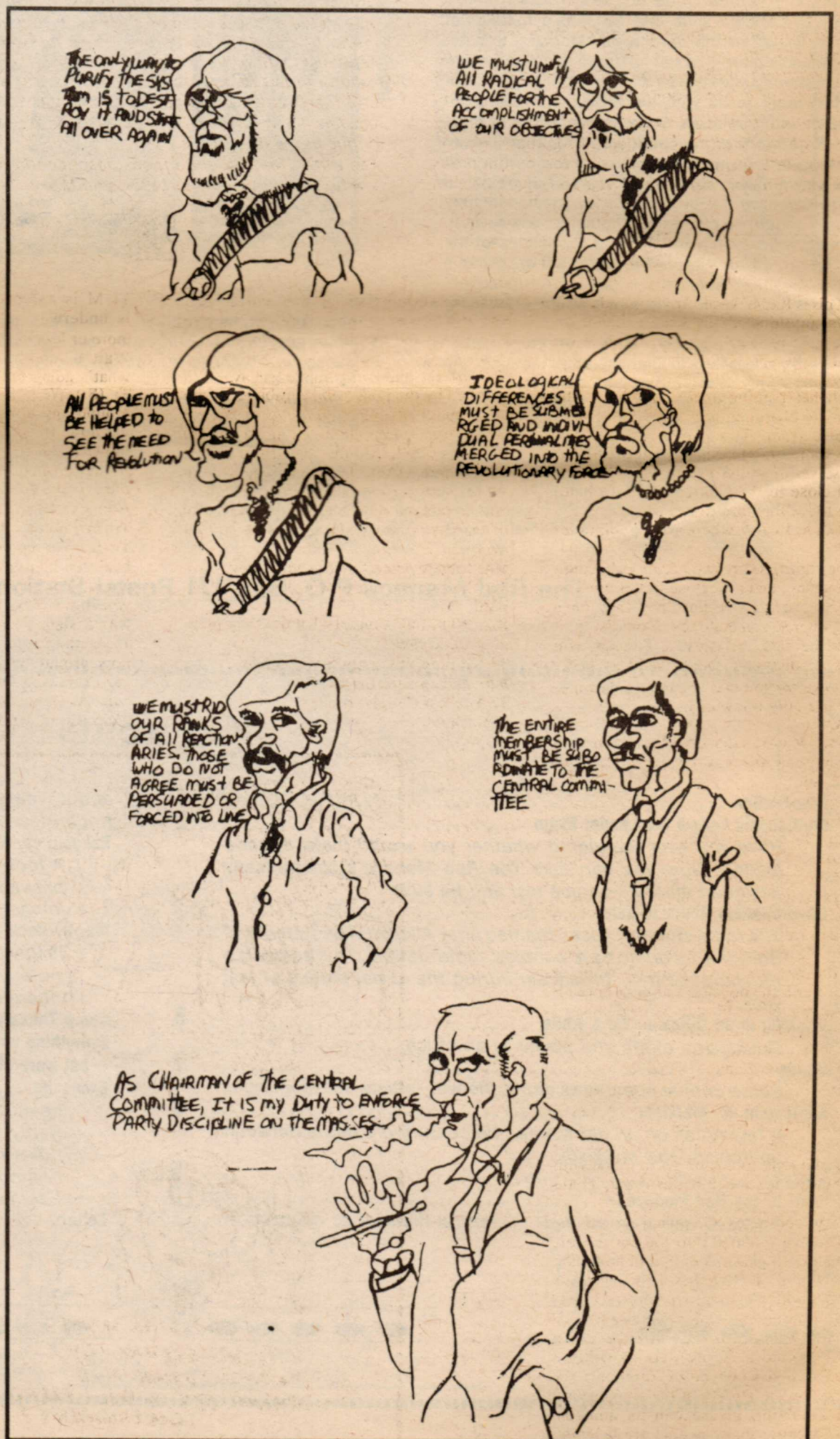
When I see a tall shiny pair of black boots, I feel like I want to

- stomp someone
- goose-step
- be stomped
- lick them

STOP. END OF TEST.

All blanks must be filled in, or this form will be thrown back in your face. Go back and check answers. Don't guess. Answer truthfully; this test has a built-in deception detector. Just relax and do the best you can. Pay attention. Don't worry, be happy. You will never see the result of this test, but they will go into your permanent record. When the bell rings, place your pencil on the desk and file silently out of the room.

Designed by Larry Kisinger



Radio Alice: radio in action in Italy

Elsewhere in this issue, Tom McLaughlin discusses Murray Bookchin's ideas on the liberating potentialities of technology. The following article focuses on a day in the life of Radio Alice, a 'free radio station in Bologna, Italy, that represents one attempt to turn modern technology in a liberating direction.

Radio Alice is interesting as an attempt to show that the act of creating a liberated society requires the transformation of the dominant technology and means of communication. The station was founded two years ago, in February 1976, by a political collective who took the name Radio Alice from Lewis Carroll's Alice because they sought to subvert reality in the way it was in Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass. They were especially interested in the politics of speech, and how speech itself reflects the world-view of the dominant reality. As a result, they attempted, through Radio Alice, to subvert the dominant mode of discourse and in so doing to show that it is not the only one possible.

The station itself is affiliated with no political group, although many of the members of the founding collective were formerly members of the autonomous left-wing groups that have played so large a part on

the Italian scene in recent years. These groups have been distinguished by their refusal to accept the traditional leftist forms of organization, strategy, and leadership, by their militancy, and by their total opposition to the 'alternative' presented by the Communist Party, which they characterize as part of the system to be overthrown. The CP, incidentally, controls the municipal government in Bologna.

The events described in the following transcript must be understood in the political context of Italy today. While the country's rulers grapple ineffectually with a serious and chronic economic crisis, and while unemployment soars above the two-million mark, the ruling Christian Democrats cling to power through a governing coalition which excludes the CP but which survives only with the support of the CP, whose only stated goal seems to be a few seats in a government of national unity that is to save Italian capitalism. (See the interview with the Italian CP senator in this issue.) Meanwhile leftists battle police and the strong neo-fascists in the streets in violent clashes. Many compare Italy today to the Weimar Republic in the late 1920's.

The events leading up to those described in the following transcript were as follows: in March 1977 left

tist and rightist students clashed in an angry but non-violent confrontation on the university campus in Bologna. Police invaded the campus, indiscriminately clubbing students, who then replied with paving stones and molotov cocktails. The result was a series of street battles stretching over several days. The campaign of police repression was accompanied by a continuous stream of abuse from the Communist Party directed at the insurgent students.

Radio Alice broadcast news of the events as they occurred, often by airing telephone calls from militants who described events, called for assistance in a given sector, and reported police movements. The station was twice raided and closed down by police, but resumed broadcasting by switching locations and resorting to a transmitter powered by a car battery. Finally, the station was silenced and charges of inciting riot were laid against a number of the key militants. About a month after it was closed down, the station resumed broadcasting on an irregular schedule with a reduced collective of people. (For more information about Radio Alice and the March events in Bologna, see the Winter 1977-78 issue of Radical America.)

RA: This is Radio Alice. Any comrade who knows anything about what's going on please give us a call here at RA, and we would really appreciate it.
—music—

Telephone: (panting voice) ... so listen, the police are charging from via St. Petronio, and also from via Zamboni, at the end. They shot some tear gas, then they lined themselves up at the end of via Zamboni, I mean close to the Church of St. Donato, close to ... they are there.

RA: Got it. Listen, where are the comrades now?

T: The comrades are in piazza Verdi, counterattacking, and also close to Economics; they have made one line, and they have also gathered some stones. Now listen, it should be said, perhaps ... I mean, you know ... that you should send as many comrades as you can to help us, because there are only a few of us now.

RA: OK.

T: Fine. Maybe later on I'll drop in with some more news, or maybe somebody else will. Ciao.

RA: Ciao, thanks.

—music—

T: Hey, the police have entered the university zone. They've started spreading tear gas. And they've already reached the second traffic light on via Zamboni. The comrades are withdrawing to a place where they can rally together. They are not opposing the police. They are rallying, but they are not yet moving ahead, while at piazza Verdi the police are already spreading teargas. Now the rally is beginning to move and they are heading to the zone close to St. Donato. That's all.

RA: OK, ciao, thanks.

—music—

RA: There is an urgent message, it's very important: the people of the political-judicial committee should come here into our studio right away, or get in touch with us, anyway: it's much better if they come here.

T: ...so, comrades, the police are moving up. They've rammed into the barricades, marched onto piazza Verdi, and now they have occupied it. Now they are going down via Zamboni. The comrades are now between Economics and porta Zamboni. Anyway, we need news and information for our comrades. Those who know if the police have reached porta Zamboni, via Ernerio, or the streets in the ring around porta Zamboni, please call us immediately, because many people are listening to the radio. We need to know it badly

because we must set up new barricades, and organize everything. Anyway, they're moving up and they're using a lot of tear-gas.

T: ...so the university buildings have been emptied by the police and carabinieri, who have marched onto piazza Verdi from 3 sides: from via Zamboni, from via Riva di Reno, via delle Moline, and from piazza Oldobrandi. There has been very little or no resistance from our side because there was no fucking way. Those guys threw a lot of teargas bombs while they were still far away.

RA: Listen, where are the comrades now?

T: They've moved down along via Zamboni.

RA: What for? I mean what are they planning to do now?

T: Nothing, it's a complete defeat.

RA: A complete defeat?

T: Yeah, a slaughterhouse.

—music—

T: M is calling. The end of the world is underway here. Police are behaving more or less like at the theatre, you know. Wait a minute. Here's S. who knows what's going on better than me.

T: (S.) Well, the police are not gaining ground any more, they are not using tear gas now. It's probably because the wind is blowing the tear gas back towards them. Matter of fact, the wind is now blowing in our favour. We have nice sunshine too and plenty of fresh air.

T: (M.) Oh it's great, it's springtime.

T: (S.) The comrades were able to throw back the tear gas bombs before they exploded. You grab it from the top and then you throw it back at the police.

RA: Listen, where are you now?

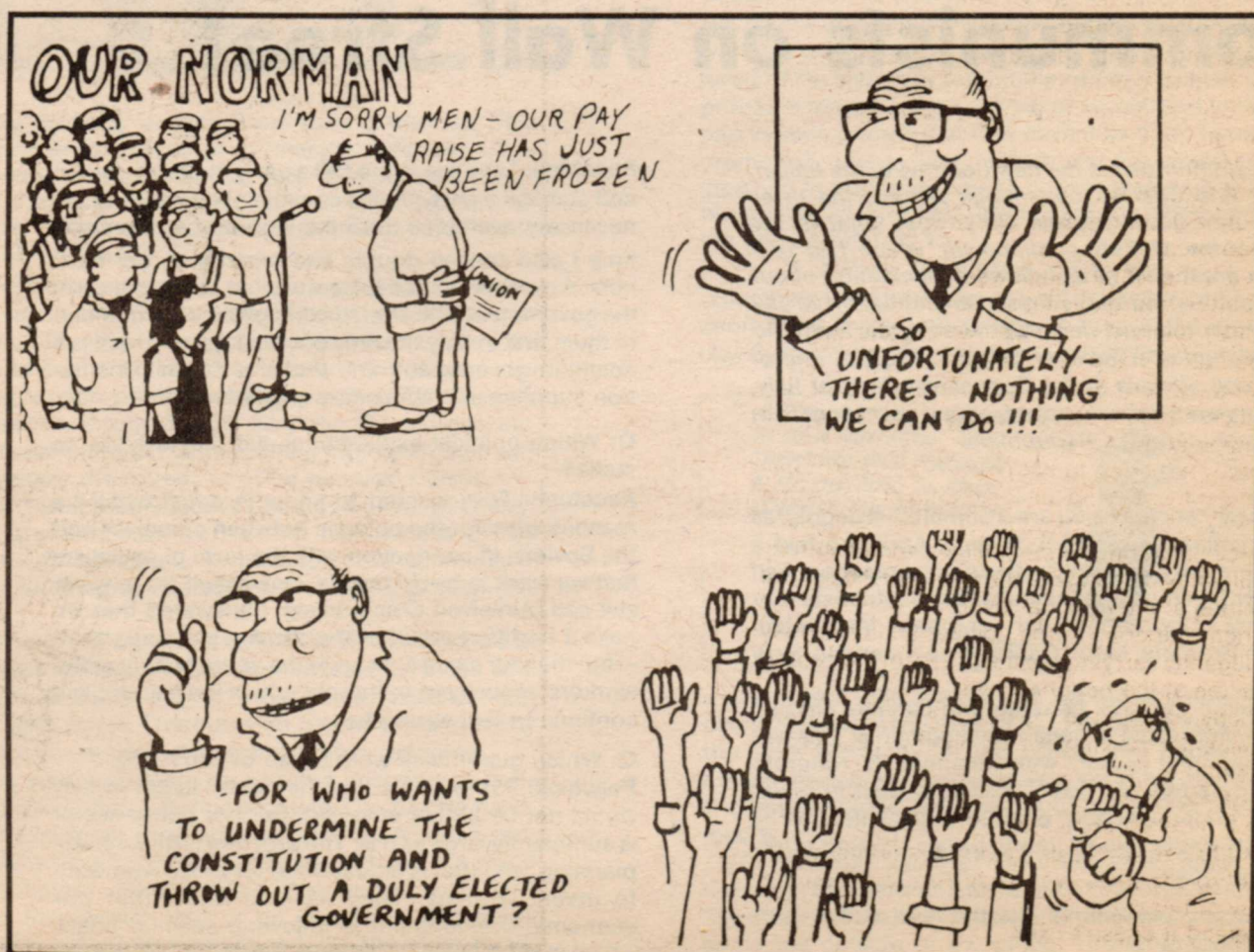
T: All the people who started the rally are now around via Zamboni. But the rally hasn't started yet. They still have to decide. As of now the police are dug in around piazza Verdi, and we have a lot of very nice

barricades that stretch all along the way down to the end of via Zamboni. Now I can hear the explosion of a bomb. I don't know what kind, a teargas bomb or something else. Anyway, things are going well now. The point now is that if we decide to start the rally we can move it to via ... (noise), there are no police there, so we can. But those comrades who are listening to the radio, they can reach us of course from the side roads, to porta Zamboni, easily, and reach ...

RA: That's OK, now, thank you. Ciao.

T: The comrades have tried somehow to resist, but because the police were throwing teargas bombs, and they had only stones, you know, they could not reach that far with their throws so they had to withdraw along via Zamboni, and now they have all gathered around the gate of porta Zamboni, and perhaps it's better that the rally does not start at all.

RA: Fine.



Radio Alice...

T: I'll call later on.

RA: Hey, listen...

—music—

T: I just wanted to tell you that the whole area around via Petroni, piazza Al-drovandi, all the side streets, via St. Vitale and Strada Maggiore, is completely closed. So if somebody wants to get out of there, they should try a different way, that is, through the malls, and not to go to piazza Maggiore and the other small streets that lead to piazza Maggiore from piazza Verdi. I just wanted to tell you this because, you know, the police are right here and they're not letting anyone through. They stop and check everybody who shows up.

RA: OK, thank you, ciao.

T: Almost half an hour ago, maybe more, let's say at 4:30 or 5 p.m., during the first clashes, we saw some firemen in uniform and with helmets and oxygen bottles running away along via Zamboni while teargas was being thrown all around. Naturally we asked where they were going and what they were doing. "We are looking for a telephone because they cut firehoses and we don't know how to put out the fire at the Cantunzein." Who cut the fire hoses?

"The police." This is what I heard with my small blue ears. Here's the other guy again. T: (the other guy) Right now in via Rizzoli everything is still, but clearly, the cadres of the movement are not here. Three hundred and fifty of them, the toughest, went to Rome, so now the people who are arriving here are those who would like to do something but are a bit scared. That's why there are only slogans. Anyway, the situation is very tense.

RA: But, then, the police are in the middle surrounded by the comrades.

T: (woman) We were in via Rizzoli. At one point everybody started to run. Then in piazza Maggiore a comrade arrived saying that the police charged ordinary people, that is, passers-by, children and senior citizens. He also said that the police, the special corps, got out of their jeeps and started to cudgel the people. This comrade was really pissed off. Then we ran into the house of a comrade living nearby. Now we don't know what to do.

RA: Thank you for the news. First some comrades phoned saying that the comrades were surrounding the police and that the situation was very tense. We don't know what the situation is now.

T: There were people running.

RA: OK, someone please phone us, telling us more precisely what's going on. We will see if it was a joke.

T: OK, ciao.

—music—

RA: This is always RA, don't despair. We are continuing to transmit the fragmented news we have. Right now, there is great

confusion. Someone has asked if it is true that the police have sacked the Cantunzein. This is not true. They merely cut the fire hoses. Outside it is starting to rain. Inside, we will continue to transmit.

—music—

RA: OK:

T: Here in via Rizzoli, at first the comrades encircled the police. It was beautiful, because they were moving forward, then sitting down, making fools out of the police, who were very bewildered. Anyway, about fifteen seconds ago they exploded... wait...

T: (another voice) It's very important Jesus fucking christ are you there? Can you hear me? Yes, OK, I'm Bonvi. The situation is this, the wonderful thing is this, there were comrades of the Communist Party who came on their own, independent of the Party organization. They were sitting there in the piazza, becoming more excited and more resolute. At this point the police shot some teargas. Via Rizzoli is full of smoke. My office is becoming full of people who are taking shelter from the side roads. OK guys, be quiet... The situation is still very indeterminate, but anyway it is very nice. It seems to me that the people of the city are replying very well to this provocation by the police. Here is Gabriele, ciao.

T: Listen, it is important to understand that we have nothing against the policeman as an individual, but that we are fighting against policemen as an institution, as power...

T: (Bonvi) The most beautiful thing is that not only the "ultras" but the whole population, all the young people, also the teenagers, replying and not just to mess around but because they have had their balls and ovaries broken enough.

T: We agree. No one has ever fought against the police personally but for what they represent, for what they have to do.

T: This is the situation in piazza Verdi. The police have succeeded in occupying it. The comrades are barricaded near philosophy and behind the cafeteria. Both sides are shouting.

RA: I don't understand what you mean by both sides are shouting?

T: There's shouting from both sides. Or, at least, we can hear shouting from both sides and throwing of molotovs, etcetera. By the way it is likely that they have set fire to the faculty of law, but we don't know for sure. There is a lot of smoke coming from there. That's all I know.

RA: Thanks, ciao.

T: (voice of a man speaking angrily) Listen, we are a group of workers and we are trying to get organized and see if we can reach you and break your bones because we are fucking sick and tired of listening to you cocksuckers, that's what you are. Stop it, pigs!

You should be ashamed, you are pieces of shit.

RA: If, instead of staying at home, you were here, you would learn that...

T: Come on, why should I bother, since I've seen you at work (great confusion, a lot of swearing and insulting)

RA: Yet you don't know what's happening...

T: You assholes!

RA: We just got some news, something dependable. A mass rally is coming from the Ducati factory, we do not know what they have in mind, what they are planning to do.

—music—

RA: Wait a minute, say it again.

T: So, our comrades have just regained control of piazza Verdi, after a whole afternoon of fighting, the police have been pushed back. They could not get through and had to withdraw to the two towers. Apparently, at the two towers, they are gathering together again to go back to piazza Maggiore once more. That's all. Ciao.

—music—

RA: We have some more news. Apparently it is dependable. It seems that outside Porta St. Vitale there is a rally of workers, a rather big one, judging on what they said, so there should be two rallies of workers around now. We don't think they are chasing leftists, but that they are chasing cops.

—music—

RA: This is Radio Alice. We cannot use the telephone because the line is busy, but we want to talk to Radio Citta, here in Bologna, to see if we can make a joint broadcast about the riots. Every now and then we expect to receive news from the comrades who have gone into the fighting zones and who should still be there. They should call us if they can. Our number is 273459. Considering what's happening, I would say that the best thing to do would be this joint program.

T: One more message. We will soon give you some news about... I mean some news about comrades in jail. We got this news from the Soccorso Rosso (Red Aid). A comrade has been beaten at the central police station. Ten comrades are at the prison of St. Giovanni. But later on we'll give more details. Just listen to what those pigs are doing. I mean, hang on...

—music—

T: (housewife) Today, in Piazza Maggiore, when the students were trying to get in, there were workers' pickets who did not let them through. This has been the most hideous thing the people of Bologna could do. I found that very loathsome. At long last I learnt from you that at least these people have started to do something, and this cheered me up a little bit. Because I

was really sad, you know. Tomorrow I have to leave the city, but I was really sad. I was thinking that Bologna was fighting against her very children, see what I mean?

RA: I do.

T: Look, that really came as a surprise, the biggest shame I've ever seen in my life.

RA: We too are glad to learn that the people of Bologna are now on our side.

T: (weeping) Right, otherwise it would have been truly sad. Look, my children are going to school, but it is sad. One lives in Rome, the other one is here in Bologna. So I happened to be here right on these days. Since the 8th, Woman's Day, when they beat that girl, since that day and the next one and so on I've been in the streets, but today I could not take it anymore. I wish you every luck. I'll call you again from Morano. Ciao, thank you!

—music—

RA: Cops are not the only ones who can bug a telephone — we can too, listen. We've been given this news. Our good old minister, Cossiga, the very honest minister of Police, has given a certain order, namely: the "blue meanies" should clean up Bologna gently and with a lot of tact, and should be very tough at Rome instead. This is the command given by Cossiga.

—music—

RA: Then it is of vital importance that Radio Citta get in touch with us. Radio Citta, please call the operator, number 10, and ask to be connected with our number. It is very important, we need to talk to them.

Radio Citta: We can tell you for sure that they have called exactly 180 soldiers in order to enforce "law and order" in this town. They have been brought to the "Minghetti" barracks. So far so good. There are 800 pupils from the Police School of Alessandria. Well, these pupils are kids around the age of 20, people with no experience at all, people who are now being sent inside a very harsh fight, thrown in it by murderous logic which has been seen so far only in "Westerns". The more a guy is likely to lose control of his temper, the better it is, they think, in order to spoil the image of a city like Bologna. We are asking for an answer to this situation from every democratic institution in Bologna, from every democratic force. And we are asking for it right now, while we, all the free radio stations in Bologna, keep on receiving requests for explanations. They come from people who are appalled and fucking angry, people who are demanding explanations of why the police are behaving this way, to know what exactly is going on, and what Bologna is being turned into.

—music—

RA: This is a joint transmission with Radio Citta. You were mentioning a message

Communists on Wall Street

"Euro-communism" is the new doctrine of the Italian, French, and Spanish communist parties; the three largest non-governmental CP's. Just what is the new doctrine of Euro-communism, which has provoked a great deal of debate and speculation about the communist parties? As good an indication as any comes from the interview, reprinted below, with the Italian Communist Senator Eugenio Peggio, one of the leading officials of the Communist Party of Italy. The interview originally appeared last year (April 6) in the Roman paper La Repubblica.

Q: Senator Pecchioli, you are a Communist deputy, as is your colleague Boldrini. In early April you had a meeting in the Salomon Brothers skyscraper on Wall Street with generals, bankers, and industrialists representing corporations such as Chase Manhattan, Lehman Brothers, Mobil Oil, and Pan American. How was it?

Pecchioli: In the U.S. generals and bankers are particularly interested in Italian developments. This was their first direct contact with Communists. Naturally they had certain worries. Those who plan to invest with us understandably enough expect Italy to be politically stable, expect Italy to have a capable, effective government.

Q: How do these people see the role of the Communist Party of Italy?

Pecchioli: They see in the CPI a party, that can govern and stabilise, a party that is capable of demanding the necessary sacrifices from the workers. At the same time I also sensed doubts and mistrust in our partners. A number tended to confuse our participation in the government with a seizure of power. We explained to them that in Italy the only possible government is a coalition government, and that the Italian constitution supplies all the necessary guarantees.

Q: Which political explanations did they ask you to make?

Pecchioli: They wanted to know in detail what the reasons were for the polemic between ourselves and the Soviets, in connection with the form of socialism that we want to build in Italy. One asked me why we still call ourselves Communists. I answered that we have a tradition and that the name is not important—but that our name links us to the entire history of the workers' movement in Italy, to which we felt and will continue to feel strong ties.

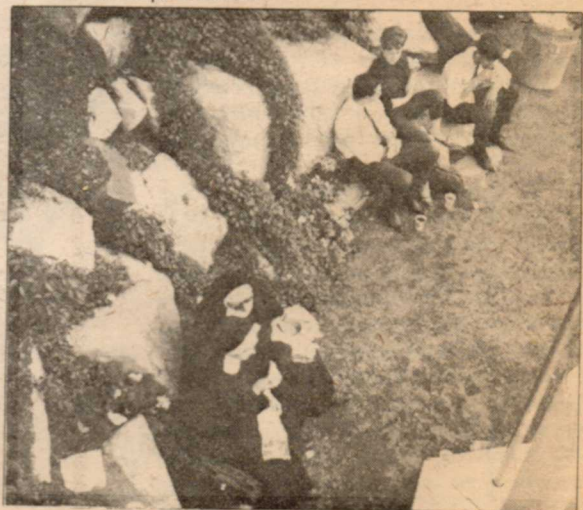
Q: Which guarantees were asked of you?

Pecchioli: For example that the public sector in Italy would not be further enlarged. But our public sector is sufficiently large as it is. The problem is democratic planning, and that is a guarantee for those who want to invest with us. They have to know that our economic development is following specific goals, which will not be changed from day to day. Particular

emphasis was laid on wage rates; we explained that these are only one aspect of the economic problems of Italy.

Q: And what did you say to the generals?

Pecchioli: We repeated that the entry of Communists into the government would not result in Italy leaving NATO. Of course our goal is the gradual dismantling of the blocs. But the military equilibrium must be maintained. Thus we accept military bases in Italy. One has to work toward the reduction of armaments, but on an equal basis.



from eight comrades arrested by the police.
RC: Nine.

RA: Nine comrades in the prison of St. Giovanni.

RC: This is the message: "Ask about Isola Paolo and eight other people. Arrested without charges during the clashes yesterday, they weren't even at the rally and they weren't armed. These are abusive arrests." And a note at the bottom, "a comrade has been beaten until he lost blood."

RA: Are these comrades in St. Giovanni?

RC: I don't know, but I think so. Anyway, I am not sure, but the message is reliable.

RA: It seems that the police want the Commune of Bologna to result. The police of Cossiga, of the state minister, of the minister for all seasons, of the control minister — the christian police, supported by the leaders of the Communist Party, leaders by now discredited by the response of their own militants — these police want it, want the Commune of Bologna. They will have it.

—music—

RA: Is anybody answering? Listen, all the comrades of the legal defence committee please phone the radio station, or rush here. Hello?

T: Hello.

RA: Listen, the police are here, we are RA. We are still waiting for our lawyers to come to let the police in. The police are trying to break the door down. I don't know if you can hear the noise from the radio. If you are policemen then you can break it down! (talking to the lawyers:) I told them that I would not open the door if they don't stop pointing their guns and unless they show me the search warrant. And since they haven't put their guns down I told them we are not going to open the door until our lawyers arrive. Please come, rush. They have guns, bullet-proof jackets and all that kind of shit. Via del Pratello 41.

T: OK.

RA: Ciao — Listen, Mauro... Hold it, our lawyers are coming. Alice! The police are at the door, leave the telephone... Listen, this is RA, the police are behind the door. The police are behind the door... the police are behind the door with bullet proof jackets, guns in their hands and all that stuff. The police are at the door. Our lawyers are waiting. We positively refuse to let the police in until our lawyers are here because they are pointing guns and things like that. We cannot tolerate such things. OK — please, the comrades that are re-transmitting our program, please give us a signal via radio, I am listening. All comrades be in piazza Maggiore before midnight. Radio Citta please give us a signal. Radio Citta try... There is a phone call. Hello. Comrades, anyway, the situation is stable.

T: I am the lady...

RA: Lady we are waiting for the lawyers. The police are sitting down... the police are still out there, waiting to get in, still with bullet-proof jackets and pointing guns. They said they would have broken the door down, and things like that... did you see the movie — fucking cow, what is its fucking name? — the one about Germany, I got it — "The Lost Honour of Katrina Blum", they have the same identical helmets, the same identical bullet-proof jackets, the guns pointed at us, and things like that. It is really absurd, really unbelievable, like in a movie. I swear it, if they weren't making all this noise, I would have thought I was in a film! There are four of us here at the radio station; we were all doing our job of counter-information, and we are waiting to see what the fuck the police are going to do. Right now they seem to be quiet. They've stopped beating the door. Maybe they thought it was too strong. Give me a record, let's put some music on... pigs... the telephone here is ringing all the time...

—music—

RA: The police started again to pound on the door. (voices) Alice! There are the police at the door — they're coming in! They are in! We have our hands up! They are in! We have our hands up!

Working in an office --for a while

One of the articles that particularly intrigued me in the first issue of the Red Menace that I received was the one on "working in an office". I feel that I would like to share my experience and opinions on this subject. Both my name and the place where I now work are held back, for obvious reasons. My present position is only a temporary one (it is the first time that I have ever worked in an office), but it would still be rather unpleasant to lose it at this time.

What We Work

The first thing that strikes one about working in this particular office is how little actual work ever gets done. Productivity is absurdly low. The essential reason for this is that efficiency is punished. Extra work will be piled onto anyone who has finished their assigned work. If there is no extra work to be found, the supervisors will still express their severe disapproval of anyone who appears to be doing "nothing". Anything that is totally outside the bounds of the usual "work", such as reading a book, is only rarely done (and usually only by supervisors). One secretary was sacked for bringing her knitting to work.

While most activities that might even vaguely hint at personal enjoyment are verboten, there are two methods of time wasting that are tolerated. The first is to literally do nothing, to sit and stare at the wall. Numerous people can be seen practicing this "yoga



attempts to increase the office workload by pressure cannot succeed either. In the first place, the attempt to force the staff to work harder would involve a substantial increase in the workload of the supervisors themselves. The incentive to accept this burden is not really present given the present organizational setup. Also, the open hostility that such a move would provoke would destroy the buddy-buddy system upon which the supervisors presently depend to get anything done at all. The result of increasing the workload would more likely be catastrophic breakdown than increased efficiency.

We're All Friends Here

Which brings us to another point. The pseudo-friendly attitude that pervades the entire office is probably necessary for the staff to effect their reduction of the working day. You can hardly spend hours talking to someone you openly dislike. The real attitudes of most of the people here can, however, be gauged from the fact that it is rare for people from the office to meet socially outside of work hours. From what I have heard this is quite usual in most offices.

The greatest source of pseudo-friendliness, however, is the manipulation practiced by the supervisors. This technique is their response to the "shirking" of the staff. It connects well with the eternal conversations, as one of their favorite ploys is to break into a friendly conversation and gradually move it towards work matters. The conversation often ends with a grand finale of work assignments to everyone taking part in it. All this is, of course, done with a smile.

This happy bubble of friendliness is often punctured by minor plots that swirl up from the depths. These plots are usually due to the efforts of either two people in similar positions vying for a promotion, or the efforts of an immediate subordinate attempting to work his way up the ladder a little faster. The lowest levels of the hierarchy rarely take part in the plots. The probable reason for the refusal of secretaries to take part in such plots is that they have little or no hope of promotion. Lower level technicians are usually too insecure in their positions to dare to take part in any plots. After all, anything they say may be passed on to the person referred to.

A Finely Tuned Sense of Hierarchy

One thing that strikes anyone entering an office from another job is the well polished nature of the hierarchy. Certainly in other jobs there is a boss and usually



of the void" at various times during the day. This method of time wastage is tolerated because 1) it is impossible to maintain for extended periods of time and therefore not immediately threatening and because 2) the excuse can be raised that one is "thinking about the job".

The preferred method of time wastage is, however, not daydreaming but talking. The people in this particular office have evolved a system whereby they are able to spend at least 3 or 4 hours out of each day talking to each other about linoleum, the kids, hunting, insurance, insulation, the new car, the old car, etc. Some people seem to do nothing more with their day than make the rounds of other peoples' offices.

The result is an effective reduction of the work day. The problem, however, is the narrowness of the means of reducing it. To have to converse all day is close to being as oppressive and boring as having to work.

Another problem that results from this method of workday reduction, a problem at least for those who have to deal with this particular office, is that nothing ever gets done. There are no incentives and many disincentives against ever finishing anything.

The supervisors are caught in a quandary in their attempts to deal with this problem. On the one hand, establishing an incentive program to increase productivity would challenge their control over the office environment. People when they would work and when they would read or go shopping. The office discipline would be undermined. On the other hand,



a supervisor. The majority of people working in a place, however, tend to be of roughly the same level in the work hierarchy. In this office, and perhaps all offices, the ladder is minutely graded into a multitude of different layers. Titles and subtitles proliferate like rabbits.

The physical layout of the office gives mute testimony to the hierarchical nature of the organization. The offices of the high suits, the chambers of the gods circle the outside of the office. The advantages of

highsuitdom are numerous. Windows; you can actually see the sun during the day. Doors; you can shut out the rest of the office and read or go to sleep. Walls that are not simply dividers; you can make those hour long phone calls to the wife or mistress without the nagging fear of being overheard. Private secretaries; to enhance one's sense of self importance and to run interference with anyone who would dare to call upon a god.

Next on the ladder come the assorted non-descript administrators. These are graded into a hierarchy of byzantine complexity, as are the high suits. Unlike the high suits, however, their offices are grouped in the centre of the building. They are formed by dividers and have no doors. They are, however, still private offices. It is harder for these people to goof off than it is for the high suits, but it is still not impossible. The assorted administrators have unlimited access to the general office secretaries, but not to the private secretaries of the high suits. Perhaps one out of ten are women (none of the high suits are female). While it is possible for these people to goof off in private they generally prefer the talkfest method of wasting time. Maybe it helps in promotions to be "sociable".

Next on the ladder come the "lowly technicians". These people are generally grouped two to an office. These offices are of about the same size and layout as those of the administrators. They are also, however, infinitely more crowded as the lowly technicians usually require some sort of working instruments and files. The office "toys", so prominent in the offices of high suits and administrators, are absent here.



Whether paperweights, potted plants and "cute" fans are really so terrible to lose is debatable.

Next come the lowlier technicians. These are generally tucked in small corners off the major thoroughfares of the office. This position has the disadvantage that goofing off in private is impossible. All the desks of the lowlier technicians are arranged so that they can be seen but cannot see who is watching them without contortions worthy of the rubber man in the circus. These people, and the lowly technicians are the real talkers of the office.

Somewhere near the bottom of the heap come the lowliest technicians. These are not true office workers at all, as they are really laboratory technicians. They are occasional visitors to the office, and a likely source of high blood pressure for the more finicky administrators. Lowliest technicians wear blue jeans and blue jean jackets, track in mud from the field, laugh loudly at bad jokes (their own) and generally disrupt the genteel routine of the office. They refuse to treat the functioning of the beloved institution with the seriousness its exalted status deserves.

On about the same status level as the lowliest technicians (perhaps a bit above them actually) are the private secretaries. These are generally older women. Their desks are placed in the open, as a sort of block to anyone attempting to enter a high suits office. Because of the positioning of their desks, they have absolutely no opportunity to goof off in private. They do, however, link in with the talk rounds of the other people in the office. Their major difficulty is that they are not permitted to "go visiting" unless on a definite mission. The private secretaries generally appear to be busy most of the time. Whether this is appearance or reality is hard to judge.

Finally, at the bottom of the heap come the general office secretaries and the "front desk girls". There may be a status difference between the two, but I have so far been unable to observe it. The only apparent opportunity these people have to kill time by talking is if someone from the higher levels gives them the chance to linger in an office. Initiation of talk fests amongst lower level secretaries is held in extreme disapproval by the supervisors.

The Lunch Room Too?

One of the interesting things about the above mentioned hierarchy is that it continues outside of the office environment. Besides the obvious fact that the different people in different levels live in different neighbourhoods, there are also numerous other ways in which the layering makes its presence known. In the lunchroom, for instance, each level sits only with its own kind.

The lunchroom in the building where I work serves several different offices. What makes me suspicious that the situation I have described in my office is typical is the fact that the tables occupied by people from other offices appear to be segregated similar to ours. An interesting side note to this segregation is the recent presence of repairmen working in the building in the lunch room. About two days ago a sign appeared on the door to the cafeteria — "This facility for public servants only".

One can distinguish the various levels of the hierarchy by physical appearance. The high suits, for instance, are all male, usually older, more conservative in dress, more confident looking, fatter, and generally more "prosperous". They have the look of someone who has "made it". The assorted administrators have a hungry discontented look about them. The various levels of technicians are indistinguishable, except for the lowliest technicians. Their physical appearance has already been mentioned.

The tables in the lunch room are usually sex segregated. This is despite the fact that everyone would love to relieve the boredom by talking to someone of the opposite sex. During one coffee break, I counted 6 all male tables, 9 all female tables and 2 mixed tables. The mixed tables are generally either a lone female administrator or technician sitting with her own kind or one of the high suits "visiting" one of the more attractive secretaries.

And so on, and so on.

Possibilities for Change

The possibility for change, at least in this office, is limited by several factors. The first is, of course, the finely graded hierarchy. There are not two classes of worker in offices like these but many. This means that each class, except for the lowliest, feels that it has some stake in the status quo. I suppose that this is an old story.

The potential for breaking down the barriers erected by this hierarchy is limited. The chance of "promotion" serves to compensate many of the people working here for the meaningless routine they have to endure. People who ceased to believe in the desirability of the hierarchy would be more likely to walk out (and be replaced by a believer) than stay and struggle on the job. Any push by the lower levels to increase their privileges (such as people beginning to come late regularly, or reading while at work) would only result in a corresponding increase in the privileges of the upper parts of the hierarchy and a maintenance of the hierarchy.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1977

Watch that coffee break! You may be an employee thief

By EDWARD CLIFFORD

A personnel expert who estimates that Canadian employees "steal" \$2-billion in time from their employers every year by being late, making personal phone calls or socializing at the office, largely blames their bosses for it.

Robert Half, who heads Robert Half Personnel Agencies, a placement agency for financial and data processing executives, said employees

are influenced by their superiors, and if they have one who comes in at 10:30 a.m. and leaves to go golfing at 2:30 p.m., they see it as an example for themselves "no matter how much he may deserve to spend less time at the office."

If it is not the boss who is the culprit, there is likely one other person, who may be simply a faster worker who spends his leftover time slowing down the others. His "theft" of the company's time

may be inadvertent, as opposed to an employee who runs what amounts to his own business during company hours. The latter is practicing intentional theft and should be dismissed.

Mr. Half said he came up with his \$2-billion estimate on the basis of a survey conducted by Robert Half agencies in Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver. The agencies got in touch with local personnel and financial executives,

who estimated that employees "stole" an average of 3.5 hours a week each on such activities as:

- Being late for work and leaving early;
- Spending too much time socializing;
- Reading or daydreaming when there is work to be done;
- Taking sick leave when there is no illness;
- Making excessive personal phone calls;

— Eating lunch at the desk and then going out for a lunch hour;

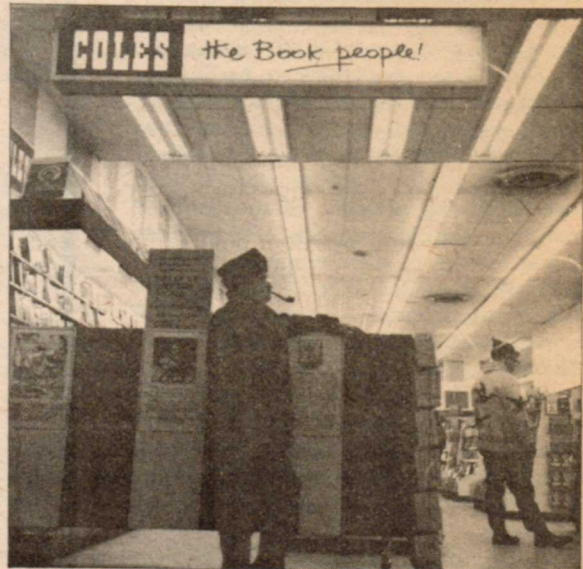
— Extending coffee breaks to occupy large chunks of the work day.

Mr. Half said white-collar crime and employee pilferage are considered expensive but cost \$2-billion, compared with the \$2-billion for time theft. He called it "a very real threat to the economy" but said a similar survey in the United States indicated that

U.S. employees "steal" an average of 15 minutes a week more than their Canadian counterparts.

Although he recommends that employees who are found to be time-stealers be fired, he knows of no case in Canada or the United States where such an employee has been charged with theft or fraud.

Mr. Half is in Toronto for an international conference of company branches. The agency is based in New York.



These limitations, put together, make me believe that it is impossible to approach government offices in the traditional style of "organizing". A government office is not a place, such as an electronics or automobile plant, a library or a construction company, where workers could collectively turn their labor into liberatory channels if they had control. Small victories, within the context of such offices, can and should be won, but they should be seen in a total strategy, not of transformation, but of destruction. Our goal, as libertarians, should be to erode the legitimacy of certain institutions to the extent that they begin to have serious manpower shortages — shortages that occur begin to leave for more satisfying work/play.

The fight to gain small privileges within the office should be seen as part of this process of delegitimization. This process has already begun, under its own dynamic. Our job, as libertarians, is to experiment with methods of speeding it up. As long as people continue to take such jobs seriously, they will continue to act as stabilizing forces within those organizations whose job it is to reintegrate threats to the system (eg. welfare agencies reintegrate threats from welfare rights groups, environmental departments reintegrate environmental groups, city planning departments reintegrate neighbourhood groups, etc.). Work from within such government agencies is important only in so far as it is subordinated to the construction of an independent system of opposition groups and workplaces, groups and workplaces which cannot be reintegrated into the system of government.

Help the Red Menace get read

One of the main problems we have now at The Red Menace is our poor distribution. We are not succeeding in getting it out to the extent we would like to. We would like to ask all our friends, sympathizers, and readers to help us improve our distribution. You can do this by:

- Taking out a subscription if you haven't already done so
- giving gift subscriptions to your friends
- mentioning The Red Menace to friends, and showing them your copy

- giving us the names of people you think might be interested in it. We'll be happy to send them a sample copy.
- asking your local left book store to carry it
- selling it on your lit table
- mentioning it in your own publication
- anything else you can think of, or can suggest to us that we might do.

We think The Red Menace is worth reading. Please help us make sure that it does get read. We'll appreciate any help you can give us.

The Red Menace P. O. Box 171 Postal Station D Toronto, Canada

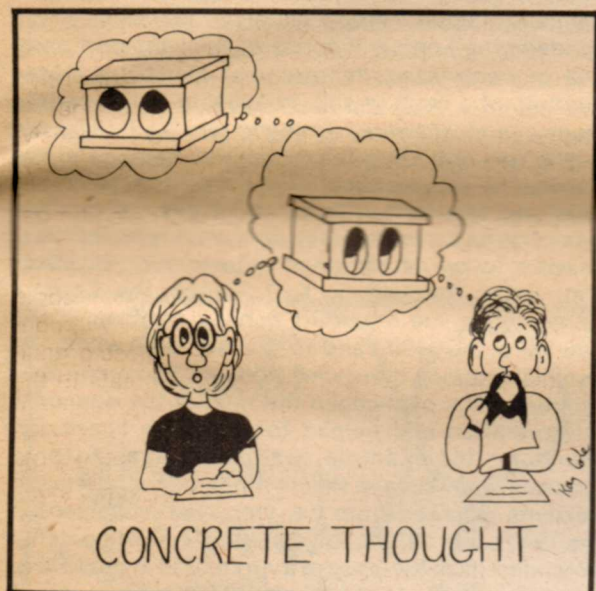
Words, words, words...

One of the most striking things about the left — or most of it, at any rate — is its habitual abuse of language. While this vice is by no means confined only to the left, it seems to take on some of its worst forms among socialists. The fuzzy, jargon-ridden language of leftist writing is perhaps the most immediately noticeable thing about the left to the ordinary person, and it is one of the main reasons that most of what the left has to say is not even listened to. The problem is by no means a new one — Orwell wrote about it more than a generation ago, in essays like 'Politics and the English Language' (which should be required reading for every socialist), in various reviews, and in 1984.

As Orwell, and a very few other political writers such as Paul Goodman have pointed out, abuse of language is not simply an incidental failing. Language is the form through which thoughts are (or are not) developed and communicated. The misuse of language implies the failure to think clearly, to analyse correctly, to communicate with others. (Alternatively, it may imply the deliberate misleading of others.)

The question of language is an important one in the development of critical thought, and I hope that it will be a continuing theme in The Red Menace. Here I would like to make a start by mentioning a few common examples of the abuse of language which I find particularly irksome.

Concrete thought: Whenever leftists are about to get specific (rarely enough, to be sure) they seem to have an irresistible compulsion to preface their venture down to earth with 'concretely', or, 'to get down to some concrete facts', or 'we have to be more con-



crete'. Perhaps this is the curse of the intellectual, who can't do anything without first announcing that he is going to do it, then proclaiming he is doing it as he does it, and finally pointing out that he did it after it's over. I worry that such people will find themselves doing the same thing during their sexual activities and in the process driving their bed-partners 'round the bend. I also have visions of them thinking about chunks of concrete, not so far-fetched when you consider that many 'Marxists' do handle Marxian categories as if they were so many blocks of cement. The point is that while the intention is undoubtedly good, and in keeping with Marxism ('All the propositions of Marxism, including those that are apparently general, are *specific*'. - Karl Korsch) the constant announcements of intention are wearisome, and the choice of imagery is poor. Unfortunately, all too many leftists forget that words do evoke images, and so they use them mindlessly, to produce writing that obscures meaning rather than making it more vivid. Take concrete (please!): if thought is really concrete, it will harden quickly, the last thing we want our thinking to do. We want our thinking to be specific, we want it to be precise, we want it to be fluid, we surely do not want it to be concrete. It's good to get down to particulars, to talk about the nitty-gritty. It is not good to wear out any given word or expression in unnecessarily announcing the obvious. Why don't we just practice getting down to specifics without first proclaiming that we are going to do so?

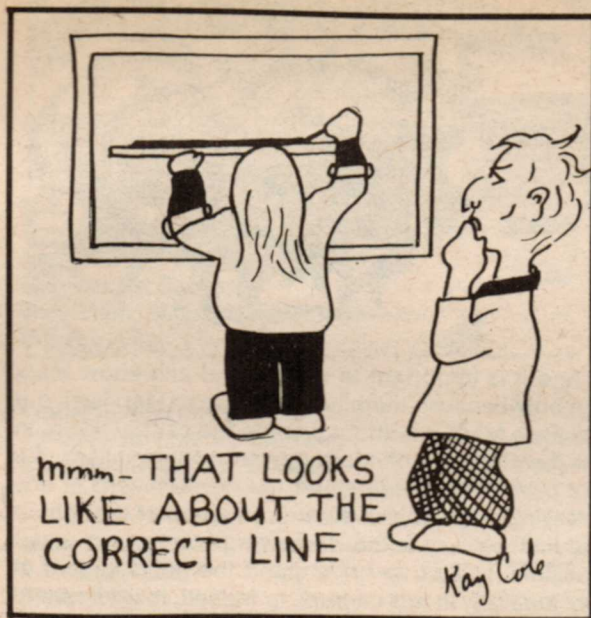
While we're speaking of construction materials...is it really possible that there are people calling themselves socialists who think that it's a good thing for a political organization to exhibit a **unity of steel**? Or who think a party should possess **monolithic unity**? Do these people know what a monolith is? (Oxford Dictionary: 'monolith': 'a single block of stone':

'monolithic': 'solidly uniform throughout, showing or allowing no variation'). And how about the Leninist's contribution to the theory and practice of S & M: **iron discipline**?

Rank and file: Phil Maller points out in his excellent book 'Portugal: The Impossible Revolution' that the term 'rank and file', so popular with trade unionists and socialists, masks an authoritarian conception, although many people who use the expression, having never thought about what it means, may not intend it that way. But 'rank and file' is a military term, referring to soldiers drawn up in rigid formation on the parade ground. It may accurately convey the ideas of those who think of themselves as leaders commanding their working class troops in the struggle, but it is a poor choice for those of us who have a libertarian view of working class organization.

Intervening: How many political groups describe their activity as 'intervention'? Too many, at any rate. Those who are fond of this word should pause to consider what it implies. The concept of intervention, whether or not the user realizes it, betrays a Leninist way of looking at class struggle. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines 'intervene' as 'come in as something extraneous'. This is precisely the Leninist conception of revolution, as spelled out in 'What is to be Done' and adopted by every Leninist party since. According to Lenin, the working classes cannot develop socialist consciousness themselves; it has to be brought to them 'from without', by the socialist intellectuals organized in a vanguard party. The party represents the objective forces of history, as uncovered by the method of 'dialectical materialism'. This view places the revolutionary outside of and above social and historical forces, and then has him 'intervening' in them. It is a conception that is fundamentally elitist, undialectical, and ahistorical. It is neither libertarian nor Marxist.

And, incidentally, all those 'Marxists' who use the term '**dialectical materialism**' as a synonym for Marxism, who say that Marxism is 'dialectical materialism', might be interested in knowing that Marx never used the term. 'Dialectical materialism' is the invention of Plekanov, one of the key figures (with Kautsky and Lenin) in the vulgarization of Marxism. Plekanov coined the term for his interpretation of Marx eight years after Marx's death. Those who take their 'Marx-



Write to us

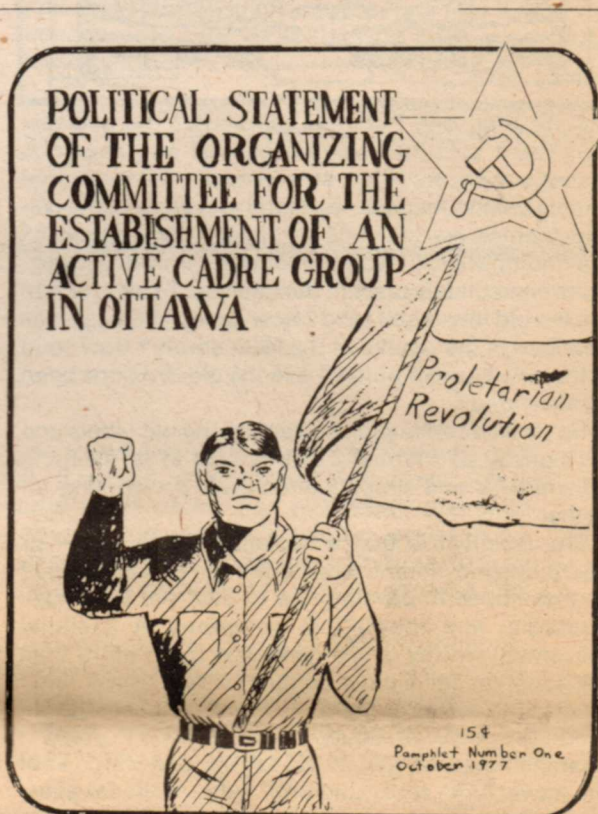
We see the Red Menace as an organ of communication, and an expression of creativity, not as our mouthpiece. Consequently we urge you, our readers, to become our writers and artists as well. The Red Menace cannot live up to its potential unless many of you contribute to it. We are particularly interested in encouraging those who do not normally write for publication to do so. Everyone has thoughts about life and how it could be changed that are worth sharing. Don't think you have to write long, definitive articles. Short letters, brief comments on some specific point, are most welcome. Accounts of daily-life experiences are particularly important to us. You may remain anonymous if you wish.

Just one request: please write in plain English, not in jargon shrouded in a fog of latinized double-talk. We are also most interested in making The Red

ism' (often without realizing it) from followers of Plekanov (even after his political split with Plekanov, Lenin repeatedly praised his exposition of Marxism) might do well to read Marx's criticism's of Plekanov's rigid dogmatism. They would do even better to read Marx himself, rather than his interpreters.

Finally, 'in terms of': If this expression once meant something, I don't know what it was. I am certain, however, that all those people — and they are many — who use the expression now don't use it to mean anything. 'In terms of' has simply become the leftist's way of saying 'um' or 'uh'. Let's go back to saying 'uh'. It may sound dumb, but at least it doesn't sound pretentious as well.

Ulli Diemer

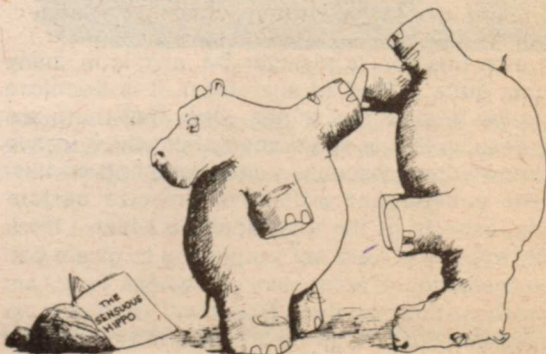


Above, we present one of the better recent examples of that eternally popular art form: socialist realism. It represents the collective artistic high point of 'The Organizing Committee for the Establishment of an Active Cadre Group in Ottawa' (M-L) and depicts that favourite motif of the paleozoic left: The Worker as Thug. It appeared on the cover of a short pamphlet that unhesitatingly proclaims that 'Only revolutionary community leadership and trained Communist Cadre can offer the guidance that the working class needs at the present time', and that sets out 'The Rectification of the Periphial Tendency' as the first task of that 'revolutionary communist leadership'.

The highlight of the pamphlet is perhaps its crypto-Freudian analysis of the impotence of the organizations in question: 'The Ottawa left is in a quagmire of immobility and seemingly unwilling to arouse itself to action. Even spontaneous manifestations which once had a certain attraction for the 'radical' cultists are now passe. The periphial left is incapable today of even mounting solidarity actions in support of those who are struggling whether on the domestic or external fronts. To say that the rot of the periphial tendency in this area is almost complete is not an over-exaggeration.'

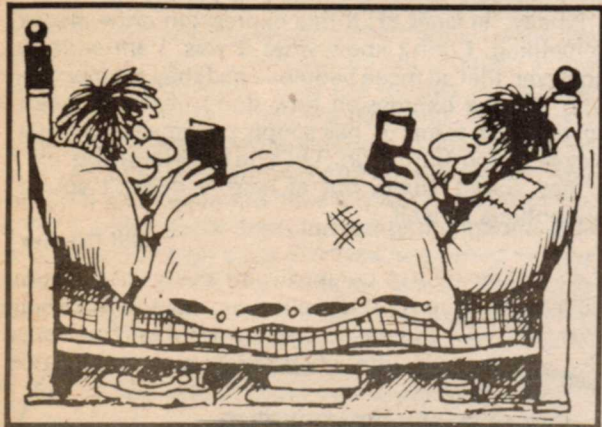
Menace a vehicle of artistic expression. Please submit your drawings, photographs, poems, collages, songs, or whatever.

Revolution is a supreme act of creativity. Let us keep our creativity developing and flourishing as we strive to bring it about.



Anarchism vs Marxism:

A few notes on an old theme



More than one hundred years after the socialist movement split into warring Marxist and anarchist factions, there are signs, at least on a small scale, that people calling themselves anarchists and people calling themselves Marxists or "libertarian socialists" are finding ways of working together fruitfully. Questions immediately present themselves: To what extent are the old labels still valid? How have their meanings changed in the course of the last century? How solid is the new basis of unity? Have the old divisions been transcended?

But is it necessary to re-examine the old labels and divisions at all? Would it not be best to let sleeping polemics lie and simply concentrate on working together?

The problem is that a socialist movement — or libertarian movement: what terms can we validly use? — that hopes to develop has to confront historical, strategic, and theoretical questions. A socialist movement worthy of the name has to do more than get together for simple actions. It has to ask itself where it is trying to go, and how it proposes to get there: precisely the issues which sparked the fateful anarchist-Marxist split in the 1870's, and which kept the movements separated until today. Political questions which are ignored do not vanish, they only reappear with all that much more destructive impact at a later date. They must be dealt with frankly.

But this does not mean that we are fated to barrenly re-fight old battles and re-live the splits and hostilities of the past. The world has changed a great deal since the 1870's, and the experience of the socialist movement during the past century has changed the problems we face immeasurably. Of no little importance is the re-vitalization of a Marxist current that is militantly anti-Leninist, and the re-emergence of an anarcho-communist movement which accepts (although not necessarily consciously) a good deal of Marxist analysis. There is a good deal of common ground on which we can come together.

It should also be acknowledged that while the differences between Marxists and anarchists have been real, it has also been the case that too often in the past the disputes between them have generated more heat than light. A problem in many polemics is that each side tends to take partial tendencies of the other side and extrapolates them to be the whole, and in that sense misrepresents. A serious analysis has to go beyond the simplicities of black and white (black and red?) argumentation. At the same time, it is true that posing questions sharply generally implies a polemical tone, so we should not shrink back from polemic if this means that important questions will be glossed over or ignored.



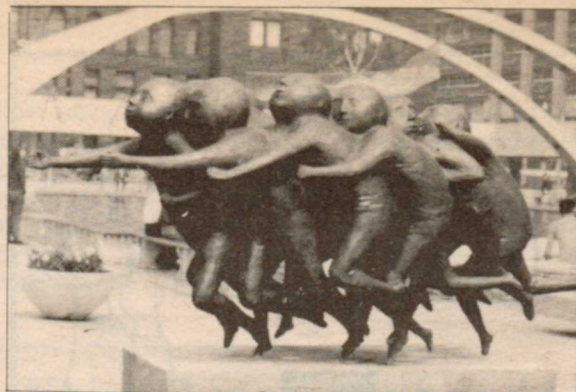
My own position is pro-Marxist, and is in many respects quite critical of anarchism. It is therefore imperative to note two things: One, that there are many positive things about anarchism which I leave unacknowledged, because I am attempting, in this, and the subsequent article, to criticize certain specific aspects of the total doctrine which I think greatly weaken it. I am not purporting to give a balanced evaluation of anarchism as a whole. Two: I am far more critical of the "Marxism" of the most "Marxist-Leninists" than I am of anarchism. While I regard most anarchists as comrades in the libertarian

movement, I consider the very expression "Marxist-Leninist" to be a contradiction in terms, and consider "Marxism-Leninism" to be an ideology that is diametrically opposed to the emancipation of the working classes.*

It is naturally not possible to cover the whole anarchist-Marxist debate adequately in one or two articles. What I propose to do here, and in the accompanying notes on Marx and Bakunin, is to concentrate on the most common and basic anarchist objections to Marxism, and to examine them *briefly*. These notes should be seen as just that — notes that make a few basic points. I hope that they will provoke a lively discussion that will make it possible to examine the questions raised, and others, in much greater detail.

The impetus for seeking a debate on Marxism and anarchism comes primarily from reading a number of recently published pieces on anarchism which all seem to display an astonishing misunderstanding and ignorance of Marx and what he wrote and did. (EG. Bakunin on Anarchy, with the Preface by Paul Avrich and the Introduction by Sam Dolgoff; Mark Brothers' article on Anarchy in Open Road No. 4; the piece on Bakunin in Open Road No. 2, and P. Murtaugh's article in this issue of The Red Menace.) All of these — and most anarchist writings — expend a great deal of effort in attacking something called "Marxism". In every case, the "Marxism" that is attacked has little or nothing to do with the theories of Karl Marx. Reading these polemics against a "Marxism" that exists mainly in the minds of those attacking it, one can only mutter the phrase Marx himself is said to have repeated so often in his later years, only regarding the works of his "followers": "If this is Marxism, then all I know is that I am not a Marxist".

If there is to be any dialogue between Marxists and anarchists, if the negative and positive aspects of the Marxian and anarchist projects are to be critically analysed, then it is incumbent upon those who oppose Marxism, as well as those who support it or seek to revise or transcend it to at least know what they are talking about. Nothing is solved by setting up and attacking a straw-man Marxism.



And it is important to understand and know Marx not only because there are "libertarian Marxists" but because Marx is without dispute the central figure in the development of libertarianism and socialism. It is not possible to understand the development of any left-wing political movement or system of thought in the last century without knowing Marxism. It is not possible, in fact, to understand the development of any ideology in this century, or indeed, to understand the history of the last hundred years, without knowing something about Marxism. The political history of the twentieth century is to a very great extent a history of attempts to realize Marxism, attempts to defeat Marxism, attempts to go beyond or amend Marxism, attempts to develop alternatives to Marxism.

* On the other hand, I do not see all "Marxists-Leninists" as counter-revolutionaries, as many anarchists seem to do. Many (particularly Trotskyists) are sincere revolutionaries who do not understand the implications of the ideology they adhere to. The fact that "Marxism-Leninism" as an ideology is counter-revolutionary does not mean that every "Marxist-Leninist" is a counter-revolutionary, any more than the fact that Christianity is reactionary makes every individual Christian a reactionary. Nor are the political differences that divide the left always as absolute as they are made out to be. There are of necessity always gray areas, where, for example, anarchism and Marxism begin to converge, or Marxism and Leninism, or — yes — anarchism and Leninism. Life does not always lend itself to analysis by the categories "them" and "us", if for no other reason than that all of us have internalized at least some of the repressive baggage of the dominant society. All of us have something of the "counter-revolutionary" in us.

Anarchism is certainly no exception. It originally defined itself in opposition to Marxism, and continues to do so to the present day. Unfortunately, anarchists seem totally unaware — or unwilling to realize — that Marxism is not a monolith, that there are, and always have been, enormously different currents of thought calling themselves Marxist. Anarchist critiques invariably identify Marxism with Leninism, Leninism with Stalinism, Stalinism with Maoism, and all of them with Trotskyism as well. There is usually not a hint of guile in this remarkable bit of intellectual prestidigitation — your average anarchist simply thinks it is a universally accepted, established fact that all these political systems are identical.*

This is not to say that it cannot be *argued* that all these political systems are fundamentally the same, that their differences, no matter how violent, are secondary to certain essential features they all have in common. But the point is that it is necessary to *argue* the case, to marshal some evidence, to know a phenomenon before condemning it. One can't simply begin with the conclusion.

But the fact is that Marxism is not a monolith. Despite Murtaugh's uninformed assertion that "Libertarian Marxism is a rather recent development, as far as political theories and movements go", and despite the fact that the term "libertarian Marxism" is new — and unnecessary — the tradition goes back a long way. For example, Rosa Luxemburg — surely one of the central figures in any history of Marxism — was condemning Lenin's theories of the vanguard party and of centralized, hierarchical discipline three-quarters of a century ago, in 1904. In 1918 — while many anarchists were rushing to join the Bolsheviks — she was criticizing the dictatorial methods of the Bolsheviks and warning of the miscarriage of the Russian Revolution. After her death there were other thinkers and movements that condemned Bolshevism as an authoritarian degeneration of Marxism: Anton Pannekoek, Karl Korsch, the Council Communists, the Frankfurt School, right up to the new left of the 1960's and 1970's. And even within the Leninist tradition there were thinkers who made contributions that challenged the hold of the dominant interpretation and helped to nourish a libertarian Marxism; for example, Georg Lukacs, Antonio Gramsci, and Wilhelm Reich. A number of libertarian currents emerged from the Trotskyist movement in the 1940's and 1950's. Any libertarian movement that proclaims itself the issue of a virgin birth in the 1970's, or that acknowledges only one thin anarchist strand as 'true' libertarianism through the ages, while cutting itself off — whether because of dogma or because of ignorance — from all other contributing currents, only impoverishes itself. Yet anarchists writing on Marxism seem to deliberately and almost perversely shut their eyes and ears to anything except the dominant Leninist tradition, and so manage always to reconfirm their own prejudices about Marxism.

All this does not prove of course that the libertarian interpretation of Marx is the correct one. But it should be possible to agree on a basic analytical point: if there is doubt about what Marx stood for, then it is necessary to read Marx, not to take the word of either his enemies, or those who claim, justifiably or not, to be his followers. Once this is accepted, and only then, is it possible to begin an anarchist-Marxist dialogue on a serious level.

My own attitude to Marx is not unequivocally favourable. There are in my view serious questions to be raised about aspects of Marx's thought. Marxism, like everything else, must be subjected to criticism, criticism that may lead to transcending Marx, but not, I think, to rejecting him. "Marxism is a point of depar-

* For example, Mark Brothers in his article "Anarchy is liberty, not disorder" in Issue 4 of the Open Road, uses the terms 'Marxism' and 'Marxism-Leninism' interchangeably, and is either unaware or doesn't think it worth mentioning that two of the three concepts he criticizes — the vanguard party and democratic centralism — are nowhere to be found in Marx, while the third, dictatorship of the proletariat, was given completely different meanings by Marx and the Leninists. Similarly, Murtaugh (The End of Dialectical Materialism: An Anarchist Reply to the Libertarian Marxists) knows so little about Marxism that he does not even know that neither Marx or Engels ever even used the term "dialectical materialism", which he blithely supposes "libertarian Marxists" adhere to, and which he disposes of in four pages. (Dialectical materialism made its first appearance eight years after Marx died, courtesy of Plekanov.)

ture for us, not our pre-determined destination. We accept Marx's dictum that our criticism must fear nothing, including its own results. Our debt to Marxism will be no less if we find that we have to go beyond it." The essential point, however, is that the Marxian project must be the heart of any libertarian politics. It may be possible and therefore necessary to transcend Marx, but to transcend him it is first necessary to absorb him. Without Marx and some of the best of the "Marxists", it is not possible to create a libertarian praxis and a libertarian world.

Finally, in judging Marx's work, it is necessary to keep in mind that his writings and actions span some 40 years as a revolutionary, that he often wrote letters and made notes that represent partial insights which he was not able to return to and expand, that many of his works were polemics against particular doctrines and are one-sided because of that. It would be a mistake, therefore, to take each sentence and each quotation in the corpus of his work as finished holy writ, or to expect that his work is wholly consistent or that he thought the implications of all of his theories through to the end. Marx's work is an uncompleted, uneven, but enormously fruitful and brilliant contribution that must be approached as he himself approached everything: critically.

At this point, it is necessary to confront one of anarchism's tragic flaws, one that has made it incapable of becoming a serious historical alternative: its strong tendency toward anti-intellectualism. With a very few exceptions (eg. Kropotkin, Rocker, Bookchin) anarchism has failed to produce proponents interested in developing a rigorous analysis of capitalism, the state, bureaucracy, or authoritarianism. Consequently its opposition to these phenomena has tended to remain instinctive and emotional; whatever analyses it has produced have been eclectic, largely borrowed from Marxism, liberalism, and other sources, and rarely of serious intellectual quality. This is not an accidental failing — there has been no lack of *intelligent* anarchists. But anarchists, perhaps repelled by the coldbloodedness of 'official' Marxist intellectuals, perhaps sensing instinctively the germ of totalitarianism in any intellectual system that seeks to explain everything, have been consciously and often militantly opposed to intellectual endeavour as such. Their opposition has been not simply to particular analyses and theories, but to analysis and theory as such. Bakunin, for example, argued — in a manner reminiscent of the medieval Pope Gregory — that teaching workers theories would undermine their inherent revolutionary qualities. What happens when a movement's leading theorist is explicitly anti-intellectual?

these preoccupations, which have become so routine as to make anarchism for the most part simply *boring*, are not pursued in such a way as to develop new insights relating to the history of capitalism, the revolutionary process, or Bolshevism, for example.

Rather, the same arguments are simply liturgically repeated. Rarely is there any serious political debate within the anarchist movement, while polemics against the bugbear of "Marxism" (as essential to anarchism as Satan is to the Church) are generally crippled by a principled refusal to find out anything about what is being attacked. Arguments are mostly carried on in terms of the vaguest generalities; quotations are never used because the works of the supposed enemy have never been read.

As a consequence of its anti-intellectualism, anarchism has never been able to develop its potential. A movement that disdains theory and uncritically worships action, anarchism remains a shaky edifice consisting essentially of various chunks of Marxist analysis underpinning a few inflexible tactical precepts. It is held together mainly by libertarian impulses — the best kind of impulses to have, to be sure — and by a fear of organization that is so great that it is virtually impossible for anarchists to every organize effectively on a long-term basis. This is truly a tragedy, for the libertarian movement cannot afford to have its members refusing to use their intellects in the battle to create a new world. As long as anarchism continues to promote anti-intellectualism, it is going nowhere.

Ulli Diemer

Help!

We need your help in keeping the Red Menace going. At present, we lose a substantial amount on every issue, and we have to dig fairly deeply into our own pockets to cover costs. Virtually all of the Libertarian Socialist Collective's income from members' dues goes to pay for The Red Menace. This is discouraging; we would like to be able to afford to do other things as well. We don't see the publication of the Red Menace as our only task, nor in the long run as our main activity. But at present we can't afford to do anything else, and we can't even really afford to do The Red Menace.

Yet the amount of money in question is not really large. One issue costs about \$500, substantial if it comes out of a few pockets, but insignificant if it is split among enough people.

So....please help us out if you can. Every subscription is a step in the right direction — encourage people you know to take out subscriptions too. Any donations you can send us will be very much appreciated indeed.

If you like our politics, then please decide what it is worth to you that The Red Menace continue to exist.

Sources

Libertarian socialism hasn't swept the world (yet!) but libertarian ideas, literature, publications, and groups are to be found in an amazing number of places. If we are to turn these beginnings into a full-fledged movement, we will have to establish more contact with each other, co-operate with each other, and learn from each other as we work to improve our ideas and our practice. In the last issue, we listed a number of publications and groups. In this issue, we add to this list, and we will continue to do so from issue to issue. We don't necessarily endorse everything these groups have to say, but we think they are worth knowing about.

*But first the bad news: **Liberation**, one of the oldest and best publications on the left on North America, has ceased publication for the time being. The Liberation collective intends to spend the next few months trying to re-start the publication, seeking commitments from writers and potential financial backers. We hope they succeed.*

Soil of Liberty
P.O. Box 7056
Powderhorn Station
Minneapolis, Minn. 55407
U.S.A.

"Put out by North Country Anarchists and anarcho-feminists", Soil of Liberty is a modest little publication that consistently produces high-quality, interesting, thoughtful writing. Subscription rates are \$3-\$4/year.

Left Face
available from Cineaste,
333 Sixth Ave., New York,
N.Y. 10014, U.S.A., or,
Smyrna Press,
Box 841,
Stuyvesant Station,
New York, N.Y. 10009,
U.S.A.

Left Face is a source book of radical magazines, presses, and collectives actively involved in the arts (in North America). It's a useful compilation. The cost is \$1.50.

Librairie Alternative Bookshop
2033 Boulevard St. Laurent,
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Carries a wide selection of books, pamphlets, periodicals, many of them from a libertarian perspective, all available by mail order. Write them for a free catalogue.

Open Road
P.O. Box 6135,
Station G,
Vancouver, Canada

The Open Road, mentioned in the last Red Menace, carried a listing of North American anti-authoritarian groups in its winter issue that is quite extensive, and useful.

Synthesis
Box 6300,
Station A,
Toronto, Canada

Not to be confused with the Synthesis mentioned in the last issue of The Red Menace, this publication, put out by the Canadian News Synthesis Project, appears monthly with its review of events reported in the Canadian press. It's a very useful aid in keeping up with what's going on. Subscriptions \$10.00 per year.

News from Neasden
22 Fleet Rd.,
London NW3 2QS,
England

A catalogue of new radical publications. Useful for keeping track of new materials as they appear. Subscriptions \$3.00.

The Cienfuegos Press
Anarchist Review,
Over-the-Water,
Sanday, Orkney,
KW17 2BL,
United Kingdom

An impressive, substantial publication, with a large number of good articles, reviews, and graphics. It contains the best current anarchist writing that we have come across. Two pounds U.K.



The results for the anarchist movement have been crippling. Anarchism as a theory remains a patchwork of often conflicting insights that remains frustrating especially to critical sympathizers because the most fruitful threads rarely seem to be pursued. Most anarchist publications avoid any discussion of strategy, or any analysis of society as it is today like the plague. (Even one of the best anarchist publications, The Open Road, remains essentially a cheerleader for anything vaguely leftist or libertarian. People organizing unions and people organizing against unions receive equally uncritical coverage; pie-throwing and bomb-throwing are seen as equally valid activities, and no attempt is made to discuss the relative strategic merits of the one or the other in a given context) Most anarchist publishing houses seem interested in nothing except (a) re-fighting the Spanish Civil War, (b) re-fighting Kronstadt and (c) trashing Marxist-Leninists yet one more time. Even

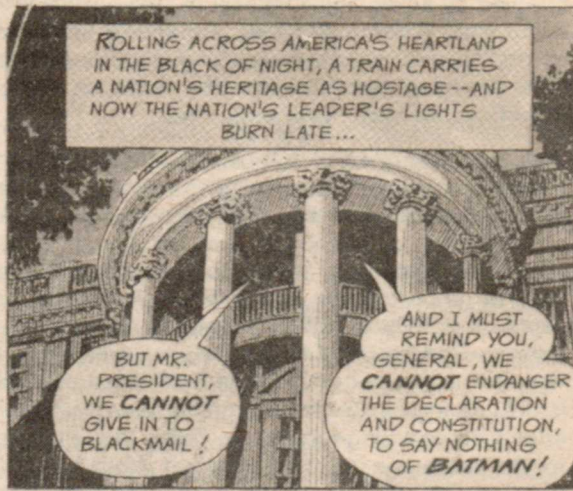
An ongoing debate

In case you hadn't noticed, The Red Menace doesn't have a correct line on everything yet. (We're working on it, of course.) One of the things we (in the Libertarian Socialist Collective) are still trying to work out is the nature and purpose of The Red Menace itself. We do of course have certain guiding conceptions that we are working from, and we think that our newsletter is successfully developing a character of its own. But as we continue to publish, problems and issues arise that have to be dealt with.

The preparation of this issue was accompanied by an important debate over one question in particular — the question of printing submissions which we in the publishing collective don't agree with: a debate whose importance is by no means restricted to The Red Menace. Two articles sparked the controversy: 'The End of Dialectical Materialism: An Anarchist Reply to the Libertarian Marxists', and Simon Rosenblum's piece on the NDP. We in the Libertarian Socialist Collective (LSC) are in fundamental disagreement with both articles. Initial objections to printing the articles came not from within the collective, however, but from anarchist comrades who have been helping us produce the newsletter. Their argument was that the articles in question are not representative of The Red Menace's politics and, in the case of the article on the NDP in particular, are resurrecting tired debates which are of no interest or importance of libertarians developing their own politics. Most, but not all, of the members of the LSC reject this position. (Some readers may find it slightly ironic to see anarchists opposing the printing of 'an anarchist reply to the libertarian marxists', while the marxists favour printing it...)

The LSC's view is that The Red Menace should be a forum of dissenting views within the broadly defined boundaries of libertarian socialism. Generally, we are willing to accept the self-conceptions of those who submit articles: if they consider themselves libertarians, we will normally be willing to give them the benefit of the doubt.

We see The Red Menace as a forum for discussion and debate, and while we will certainly be making decisions about articles based on political considerations as well as on considerations of quality, relevance, and space, we want to be open to a whole range of different perspectives, whether we agree with them or not. Basically, we think that political



development grows from criticism and debate, not from monologue, even if the message of the monologue is our own 'correct line'. For example, Rosenblum's article on the NDP expresses views that are widely held on the independent left in Canada. We strongly disagree with those views, but we consider it more useful to publish them and attempt to refute them, than to ignore them.

We also consider that we have a special obligation to print replies to articles published in The Red Menace. The letter from the Rent Freeze people at Bain Avenue in this issue ('Exchange') is an example. Based on content alone, this particular submission would have been rejected: it is politically retrograde, and deliberately dishonest to boot. But if debate on the left is ever to be shifted from its usual locale — the gutter — all of us must at least adopt certain basic principles: such as the idea that if you are going to publish a polemic against someone, then they should be given the opportunity to reply at reasonable length.

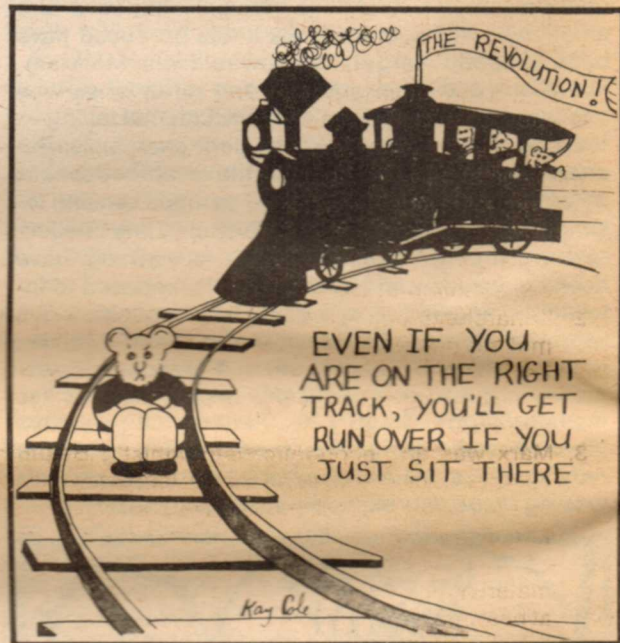
At the same time, we are not interested in abdicating editorial control over The Red Menace by simply printing anything that is sent in. Our primary purpose in publishing it is to develop and advance our politics. This naturally implies that a substantial proportion of the articles will represent the views of the LSC. It also implies that we will indicate editorially which articles we agree with, which we don't, and why. Beginning with this issue, we are publishing introductory com-

ments on the major articles, in the front of the newsletter. Often we will take the opportunity to publish a reply to an article we disagree with.

We are also concerned with the overall balance and character of The Red Menace. We may not expect every article to express our views, but we do hope that it will be clear from each issue, taken as a whole, what we are about. In that sense, in setting priorities and designing the total package, we will attempt to exercise significant editorial control.

One aspect of this is that we do not want The Red Menace to be dominated by polemic and debate. We have other priorities as well. Thus, many articles of this nature will be restricted to the 'Exchange' section at the back of the newsletter, and the section itself will be kept at a reasonable size in any particular issue.

We are aware that our approach to this debate about the nature of The Red Menace is not the last word. Our friends in Kitchener may take the opportunity to state their views in the next issue. We are also very interested in knowing what our readers think. Let us know.

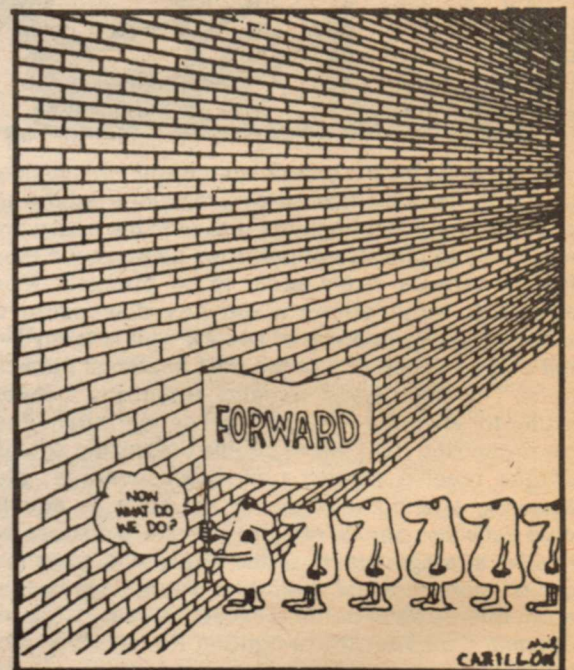


SIGN OF THE TIMES



Join us

The Libertarian Socialist Collective doesn't see itself merely as the publisher of The Red Menace. We hold meetings regularly as a group, and we are attempting to branch out into other activities besides publishing this newsletter. One thing that holds us back is personpower. If there were more of us, we could do more, advance our politics more effectively, develop more quickly. We therefore welcome more members to our collective. If you feel that you share our politics, and live in the Toronto area, please contact us, at P.O. Box 171, Station D, Toronto.



BAKUNIN VS. MARX

I propose in this article to examine some of the most common anarchist objections to "Marxism". The issues I shall single out are all raised in the recent works cited in the preceding articles all of them were raised, often for the first time, Bakunin at the time when anarchism first emerged as a self-conscious movement defining itself in opposition to all other currents on the left. Therefore I will concentrate primarily on Bakunin in the following discussion, and on some of his differences with Marx. While I realize that Bakunin is not the only interpreter of anarchism, I think this is a valid approach for a number of reasons: (a) it is not possible to cover everything and everybody in a short essay (b) the Bakunin/Marx split was the formative event in the history of anarchism (c) Bakunin is still the most widely read, quoted, and admired anarchist in the anarchist movement itself (d) many of the key anarchist objections to Marxism originate with Bakunin, and these objections continue to be used today; to the extent that it is possible to call them into question, it is possible to call into question current anarchist pre-conceptions about Marxism and to inaugurate a genuine dialogue.

How do anarchists see the Marxist/anarchist split? What are their claims?

The following beliefs seem to be generally accepted by anarchists:

1. Marxists believe in the creation of a "peoples' state" or a "workers' state"; anarchists believe in the abolition of the state.
2. "Anarchists look to a society in which real decision making involves every one who lives in it"; Marxism instead would set up "a few discipline freaks pulling the strings on a so-called 'proletarian' dictatorship."
3. Marx was an "economic determinist"; Bakunin "emphasized the psychological (subjective) factors in revolution." Marxism is the ego trip of intellectuals who try to fit everything into their "theory of byzantine complexity" — dialectical materialism — which is of "doubtful usefulness" at best and which mainly serves to make it possible for Marxist leaders to establish "control over the movement".
4. Anarchists believe that revolutionary organizations should be open, egalitarian, and completely democratic; marxists on the other hand advocate "hierarchical, power-tripping leadership", as exemplified by the vanguard party and democratic centralism.
5. The original split in the First International between the factions headed by Bakunin and Marx came over the issue of authoritarianism; Marx had Bakunin expelled from the International on trumped-up charges because Bakunin opposed Marx's dictatorial, centralized regime over the International.
6. Marxism is "authoritarian"; anarchism is "libertarian".

What of these objections?

1. The peoples' State.

Perhaps it is not surprising that it is widely believed that Marx originated this concept, given the number of "Peoples' Republics", "Workers' States", etc. in the world today that call themselves "Marxist". Both the Leninists who use the concept, and the anarchists who oppose it, seem quite unaware that it is nowhere to be found in Marx's writings. Marx, on the contrary, specifically rejected it. (See for example the Critique of the Gotha Program).



It is indicative of Bakunin's methods that he repeatedly accused Marx of advocating a "Peoples' state" (see for example Dolgoff, ed., Bakunin on Anarchy, Vintage, 1972), an accusation that in view of his failure to cite any evidence to support it (check the sources and see if Bakunin ever offers a single quote to back up his claim), and in view of Marx's and Engel's repeated repudiation of the concept, can only be interpreted as a deliberate fabrication on Bakunin's part. And it is hardly to the credit of several generations of anarchists that they have continued to swallow Bakunin's fictions on this matter without ever bothering to look for evidence to back them up.

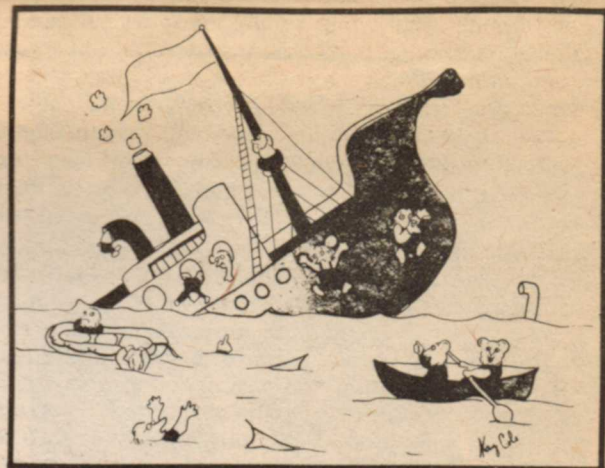
Marx and Engels' position on the state, while not free of ambiguities and not above criticism, was quite different from what Bakunin claimed. It is spelled out most extensively in Marx's *The Civil War in France*, but is developed in numerous other works as well. What Marx foresaw was that during the revolutionary period of struggle against the bourgeoisie, the proletariat would use the state apparatus to crush the bourgeoisie: "to achieve its liberation it employs means which will be discarded after the liberation". (Marx, *Conspectus of Bakunin's State and Anarchy*, 1874-75). After the vanquishing of the bourgeoisie, the state has outlived its usefulness. Marx pointed to the Paris Commune as being very close to what he had in mind; Bakunin too was enthusiastic about the Commune, yet continued to accuse Marx of secretly holding very different views. This Bakunist nonsense has been endorsed by other anarchists as well. For example, the anarchist writer Arthur Mueller Lehning writes that "It is an irony of history that at the very moment when the battle between the authoritarians and the antiauthoritarians in the International reached its apogee, Marx should in effect endorse the program of the antiauthoritarian tendency... The Commune of Paris had nothing in common with the state socialism of Marx and was more in accord with the ideas of Proudhon and the federalist theories of Bakunin. Civil War in France is in full contradiction with all Marx's writings on the question of the State." (quoted in Bakunin on Anarchy, P. 260) This is a remarkable piece of doublethink. Marx's major work on the state is said to be "in full contradiction" with "all" his writings on the state. What writings on the state is Lehning referring to then? We don't know, because he doesn't say. As always, in anarchist polemics, we have to take him on faith. Certainly Lehning cannot be referring to the *Poverty of Philosophy*, written in 1847, or *The Communist Manifesto*, written in 1848, or the *Critique of the Gotha Program*, written in 1875, or to the private letters Marx was writing at the same time as the publication of *The Civil War in France* in 1871. All of these consistently maintain that the state is incompatible with socialism. Together they comprise most, if not "all" of Marx's writings on the state. But Lehning (and Bakunin, and Dolgoff, and Avrich, and Brothers, and Murtaugh, and...) know better. Somewhere, in some mythical world known only to anarchists, there are to be found Marx's *real* views on the state, the "People's State of Marx" (Bakunin on Anarchy, P.318), which is "completely identical" with "the aristocratic-monarchic state of Bismark". (Bakunin on Anarchy, P. 319).

How does one refute an "argument" which, without a single shred of evidence, except racial predisposition ("as a German and a Jew, he (Marx) is from head

to toe an authoritarian" — Bakunin in 1872.) without a single quotation, attributes ideas and concepts to Marx that Marx had repeatedly attacked? There are two alternatives: either one swallows everything Bakunin, Dolgoff, and Co. say, on faith, because they are anarchists, or one takes the path of intellectual integrity, and tries to discover Marx and Engels' views on the state by reading Marx and Engels. If one takes the latter course, one might start by reading Engels March 1875 letter to Bebel, in which he says "it is pure nonsense to talk of a free people's state: so long as the proletariat still uses the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist. We would therefore propose to replace state everywhere by *Gemeinwesen*, a good old German word which can very well convey the meaning of the French word 'commune'".

It is still possible, of course, to argue that the use of the state by the proletariat in the brief transitional period is dangerous, and could lead to the establishment of a permanent state. (It must be admitted, however, that Bakunin himself envisioned a form of post-revolutionary state, complete with elections, delegates, a parliament, an executive committee, and an army. (Bakunin on Anarchy, P.153) Anarchists are curiously quiet about this, however.

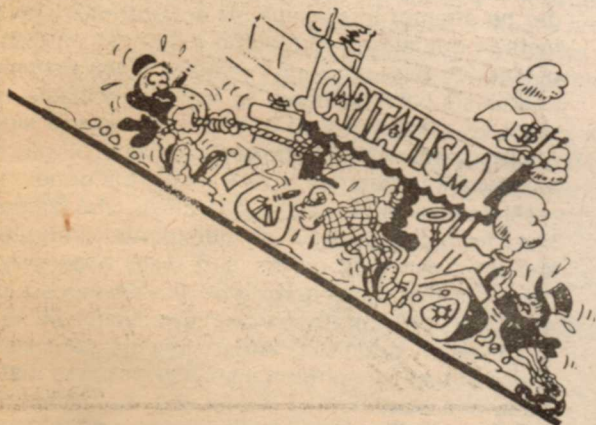
Nevertheless, it remains a fact that in balance, the concern Bakunin expressed about the possible degeneration of the revolution was a valid one, and that Marx for his part failed to give sufficient weight to the dangers posed by this threat to a future revolution. This criticism, however, must itself be qualified in a number of ways, is a far cry from the claims of Bakunin and the anarchists that Marxism was a theory that aimed at the subjection of society to state.



2. Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

A closely related question is that of the dictatorship of the proletariat, one of the most abused and misunderstood terms of all of Marxism. The question of the transition from capitalism to socialism, and Marx's view of it, is an extremely complicated one that cannot be covered in a few paragraphs. But the point here is simply to dispose of the grossest misunderstandings of the term, fostered by its appropriation by the Bolsheviks, and by the related fact that dictatorship has come to have a quite different meaning today than it had in Marx's time. As Dolgoff puts it, there was then a "loose sense in which the term 'dictatorship' was used by nineteenth-century socialists — to mean simply the preponderant influence of a class, as in Marx's 'dictatorship of the proletariat'". (Bakunin on Anarchy, P. 12) Or to put it more precisely, the dictatorship of the proletariat means the rule by the proletariat as a class, and the suppression of the bourgeoisie as a class. It is perfectly compatible with, and indeed presupposes, the most thorough-going democracy within the working class. The best brief exposition of the Marxian concept, and how it differs from Leninist concepts of dictatorship, comes from Rosa Luxemburg's 1918 polemic against the Bolsheviks:

"We have always distinguished the social kernel from the political form of bourgeois democracy; we have always revealed the hard kernel of social inequality and lack of freedom hidden under the sweet shell of formal equality and lack of freedom — not in order to reject the latter but to spur the working class into not being satisfied with the shell, but rather, by conquering political power, to create a socialist



The Continuing Debate

democracy to replace bourgeois democracy — not to eliminate democracy altogether.

"But socialist democracy is not something which begins only in the promised land after the foundations of socialist economy are created; it does not come as some sort of Christmas present for the worthy people, who, in the interim, have loyally supported a handful of socialist dictators. Socialist democracy begins simultaneously with the beginnings of the destruction of class rule and of the construction of socialism. It begins at the very moment of the seizure of power by the socialist party. It is the same thing as the dictatorship of the proletariat.

"Yes, dictatorship! But this dictatorship consists in the manner of applying democracy, not in its elimination, in energetic, resolute attacks upon the well-entrenched rights and economic relationships of bourgeois society, without which a socialist transformation cannot be accomplished. But this dictatorship must be the work of the class and not of a little leading minority in the name of the class — that is, it must proceed step by step out of the active participation of the masses..." (Rosa Luxemburg, *The Russian Revolution*, Ann Arbor paperback, P. 77-78).

jected economic determinism and what he called "crude materialism" out of hand. He did not attempt to reduce all phenomena to economic ones; it is necessary only to read any of his political works to be convinced of this. As Engels says, "According to the materialist conception of history, the ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the only determining one he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract senseless phrase." (letter to Joseph Block, Sept. 21-22, 1890, in Lewis Feuer, ed., *Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, P. 397-398.)

Anarchists like Paul Avrich, however, have their own view of 'what Marx really meant'. See how Avrich crudely contrasts Marx's and Bakunin's views: (Bakunin) "rejected the view that social change depends on the gradual unfolding of 'objective' historical conditions. He believed, on the contrary, that men shape their own destinies..."

It is unfortunate that Avrich has never read, for example, Marx's third thesis on Feuerbach: "The materialist doctrine (of Feuerbach) that men are the products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are the products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men that change circumstances and that the educator himself needs educating." Or *The Holy Family*: "History does nothing, it 'does not possess immense riches', it 'does not fight battles'. It is men, real, living men, who do all this, who possess things and fight battles. It is not 'history' which uses men as a means of achieving — as if it were an individual person — its own ends. History is nothing but the activity of men in pursuit of their ends." (Bottomore, ed., *Karl Marx, Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy*, Pelican, P. 78.)

4, 5, 6. The nature of the revolutionary organization; authoritarianism and libertarianism.

This is again a very complicated question: it is impossible to do justice to either Marx's or Bakunin's views in a short and rather polemical articles that aims at challenging certain gross misconceptions rather than at evaluating and criticizing their ideas and practice in a rigorous and comprehensive way. It is necessary to understand, first of all, that the ideas of both Marx and Bakunin, as expressed in their writings, are in certain respects contradictory; neither Marx, nor certainly Bakunin, was consistent throughout his life. Secondly, the practice of both men was sometimes at variance with what they advocated. Neither was able always to live up to the standards set down. Both men displayed considerable streaks of

arrogance and authoritarianism in their own personalities.



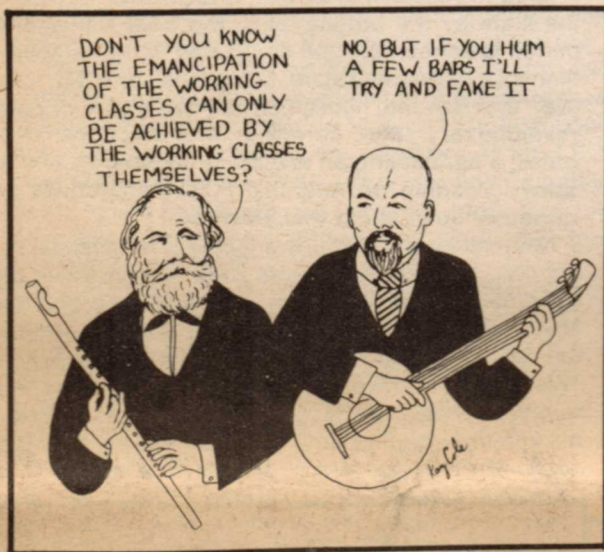
Nevertheless, there remains a body of writing and practice that makes it possible to evaluate what Marx and Bakunin stood for.

I shall argue that a serious examination of the question yields the following points:

1. Bakunin deliberately distorted and falsified Marx's views on the issues under dispute.
2. The accusation that led to Bakunin's expulsion from the International, that of heading a secret society which aimed to infiltrate and take over the International, was true. (Since this seems to be accepted by most historians, this point will not be pursued. See for example Woodcock's *Anarchism*, P. 168, or Aileen Kelly's article in the January 22, 1976 issues of the *New York Review of Books*.) The only point worth noting here is that the "authoritarian" federal structures of the International that Bakunin protested against so vehemently in 1871 and 1872 were introduced to the International shortly before, not on the initiative of the General Council of which Marx was a member, but on the motion of Bakunin's supporters, with Bakunin's active participation and support. It was only after he failed to gain control over the structures of the International that Bakunin suddenly discovered their "authoritarianism".
3. The charge of authoritarianism and dictatorial views can be directed against Bakunin with a great deal more justification than they can against Marx. Bakunin's deliberate misrepresentations of Marx's views on the state were noted earlier. Bakunin was obsessed with the idea that all Germans held identically authoritarian views, and consistently attributed the views of some of Marx's bitterest enemies, such as Bismark and Lasalle, to Marx. Marx's fury at this tactic is a matter of record. Bakunin, in many of his polemics against Marx, argues from the premise that Marx must obviously be authoritarian because he is a German and a Jew, who are by definition authoritarians and statists. (Because of selective editing, this is not evident in Dolgoff's Bakunin anthology.) Bakunin even went further, claiming that Marx was part of an international conspiracy with Bismark and Rothschild. Such accusations are of course not worthy of reply, but surely they make it clear that it is necessary to treat the "facts" and arguments of the man making them with the greatest caution.

A similar disregard for the most elementary rules of evidence, not to mention decency, permeated most of Bakunin's polemics against Marx. He charged, again and again, that Marx advocated a universal dictatorship, that he believed in a socialism "decreed from the top down". He ignored Marx's lifelong insistence that "the emancipation of the working classes can only be the work of the working classes themselves", and Marx's intransigent opposition to the state. Nor did he attempt to support his accusations with the facts or quotations. In reading Bakunin's caricature of Marx's views — the only "version" of Marxism most anarchists have bothered to familiarize themselves with! — readers will search in vain for one single quotation amidst the hysterical confusion of wild, unsubstantiated charges. There simply are none.

(Almost as bad as those anarchists who lambaste Marx for his "advocacy" of "democratic centralism" and the "vanguard party". Is it really necessary to point out that these concepts were developed long after Marx's death, that Marx never belonged to an organization practising either; that he consistently opposed tiny conspiratorial sects of his day; that he made it a condition of his joining the Communist League that they scrap their closed, undemocratic organizational forms; that he always, and angrily, re-



3. "Economic Determinism".

The question of Marxian materialism and Marx's emphasis on the relations of production is an extremely difficult one which simply cannot be dealt with intelligently in a brief article. At this point it is possible only to say that it raises difficult problems which have to be seriously analyzed. However, while a re-examination of Marx's theory and the admitted contradictions in it are on the agenda, it must be said that the typical anarchist portrayals of it and objections to it are ill-informed misconceptions that contribute less than nothing to the discussion. For example, Marx was not an economic determinist; he re-



: Bakunin vs. Marx

fused attempts by socialists of his day to single him out for special honours or titles in the movement?)

And has it been completely forgotten that one of Marx's chief themes in his criticism of Bakunin was the latter's eternal fascination with conspiratorial, manipulative, sectarian, politics?

For there is, unfortunately for those who believe in anarchist fairy tales, a substantial body of evidence for the contention that Bakunin held precisely those "authoritarian" views which he brazenly attributed to Marx. Those who seek evidence of a penchant for dictatorial, Machiavellian politics will find a good deal of material in the writings of not Marx, but Bakunin. (This is not to say that Bakunin consistently held such views; there are serious contradictions in his thought amounting to a basic polarity.)

Bakunin's advocacy of post-revolutionary state, which continued most of the forms of the pre-revolutionary state, such as parliament, army, elections, etc., was noted earlier, and can be found, for example, in Bakunin on Anarchy, P. 153. Similarly, despite his much-vaunted opposition to any form of independent political action by the working class, one can find him advocating, in his letters, not simply political action, but working class support and action on behalf of bourgeois political parties. (See for example Bakunin on Anarchy, P. 219). And elsewhere, one finds him advocating nothing less than that anarchists run for Parliament. (Bakunin on Anarchy, P. 218).

Nor are these merely products of his naive, youthful days, which are so often used to excuse some of his grossest aberrations, as for example when we find the 'young' Bakunin (at age 35) writing appeals to the Czar while Marx, four years younger, is advocating the revolutionary overthrow of the state. No, these pronouncements, and many others like them, are issued privately at precisely the time that Bakunin is publicly proclaiming his opposition to Marxism because it advocates political action by the working class, and a transitional dictatorship of the proletariat in the immediate post-revolutionary period.

It is also worth contrasting Bakunin's proclamation of the principle, for the future anarchist society, of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work" (my emphasis) with Marx, who held to much more radical principle, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs".

Or consider Bakunin's Rules for his International Alliance, not a passing whim, but the organization to which he gave his primary allegiance while participating in the First International. Here is a sample, written in 1869: "it is necessary that in the midst of popular anarchy, which will make up the very life and all the energy of the revolution, the unity of revolutionary thought and action should be embodied in a certain organ. That organ must be the secret and world-wide association of the international brothers..."

"... the only thing a well-organized secret society can do is first to assist the birth of revolution by spreading among the masses ideas that accord with the instinct of the masses, and to organise, not the army of the revolution — that army must always be the people, but a revolutionary General Staff composed of devoted, energetic and intelligent individuals who are above all sincere — not vain or ambitious — friends of the people, capable of serving as intermediaries between the revolutionary ideas and the popular instincts."

"The number of these individuals should not, therefore, be too large. For the international organisation throughout Europe one hundred serious and firmly united revolutionaries would be sufficient. Two or three hundred revolutionaries would be enough for the organisation of the largest country."

As the authoritarian Marx said of this libertarian idea: "To say that the hundred international brothers must 'serve as intermediaries between the revolutionary idea and the popular instincts,' is to create an unbridgeable gulf between the Alliance's revolutionary idea and the proletarian masses; it means proclaiming that these hundred guardsmen cannot be recruited anywhere but from among the privileged classes."

When one sees the views of Bakunin and Marx side by side, it is difficult to remember sometimes that it is Marx, not Bakunin, who is supposed to be the father

of "Marxism-Leninism" and Bakunin not Marx who is supposed to be the father of "anarchism."

Bakunin's authoritarian tendencies were at their most extreme at precisely the time that he was splitting the International. This was the time of his association with the notorious Nechaev. Most anarchist sources treat this as a passing aberration on Bakunin's part, and indeed he did repudiate Nechaev when he found out the true nature of his activities.

But the fact remains that Bakunin did enter into partnership with Nechaev, and under his influence wrote a number of tracts that displayed a despotic, Machiavellian approach to revolution that far surpassed anything he ever accused Marx of. The authorship of some of the pieces in question is under dispute, but the relevant point is surely that Bakunin allowed his name to be put to even those pamphlets he did not write, and that he actively worked to have them distributed knowing they bore his name.

In these pamphlets, Nechaev and Bakunin advocate a new social order, to be erected "by concentrating all the means of social existence in the hands of Our Committee, and the proclamation of compulsory physical labour for everyone," compulsory residence in communal dormitories, rules for hours of work, feeding of children, and other minutiae. As the "authoritarian" Marx put it: "What a beautiful model of barrack-room communism! Here you have it all: communal eating, communal sleeping, assessors and offices regulating education, production, consumption, in a word, all social activity, and to crown all, Our Committee, anonymous and unknown to anyone, as the supreme dictator. This indeed is the purest anti-authoritarianism..."

When one looks at Bakunin's views on authority and revolution in detail, it is hard to disagree with Marx's and Engels' claim that Bakunin and his followers simply used the word "authoritarian" to mean something they didn't like. The word "authoritarian" was then, and remains today for many libertarians, a way of avoiding serious political questions. For the fact that not all authority is bad; that in certain situations authority is necessary and unavoidable. As Engels says, "A revolution is certainly the most authoritarian thing there is; it is the act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon — authoritarian means, if such there be at all". And some form of authority, ie., decision-making structure, is necessary in any form of interaction, co-operation, or organization that is social rather than individual. In a socialist society, it will still be necessary to make decisions about things; these decisions will necessarily reflect the will, ie, the authority, of the majority. This is not a violation of collectivity, but an absolutely indispensable component of it. To say, as many anarchists do, that they reject all forms of authority, even that which is willingly accepted, even that which is the result of democratic decision-making, is simply to advocate either rule by minority, or a return to the purest form of free-market capitalism, as is advocated by the "libertarian" right. No amount of talk about "consensus" or local autonomy or individual initiative will alter this fact. Consensus is not always attainable, because sometimes people do not agree. Then a decision-making process is necessary, and if it is democratic, the minority will have to accede to the majority. Autonomy and individual initiative can still have the fullest possible play, but this does not alter the fact that the authority of the majority has prevailed in the question at hand.

There is another aspect of Bakunin that must be confronted because, like his ill-defined views on authority, it has remained a part of the anarchist movement. Running through all of Bakunin's thought and subsequent anarchist thought and practice is a dark thread, an infatuation with violence, with destruction for the sake of destruction, action for the sake of action, distrust of logic, intellect, and knowledge, a love for conspiratorial, tightly controlled organization. For the most part, these things remained subsidiary to his — and his successor's — genuinely libertarian and humanistic instincts.

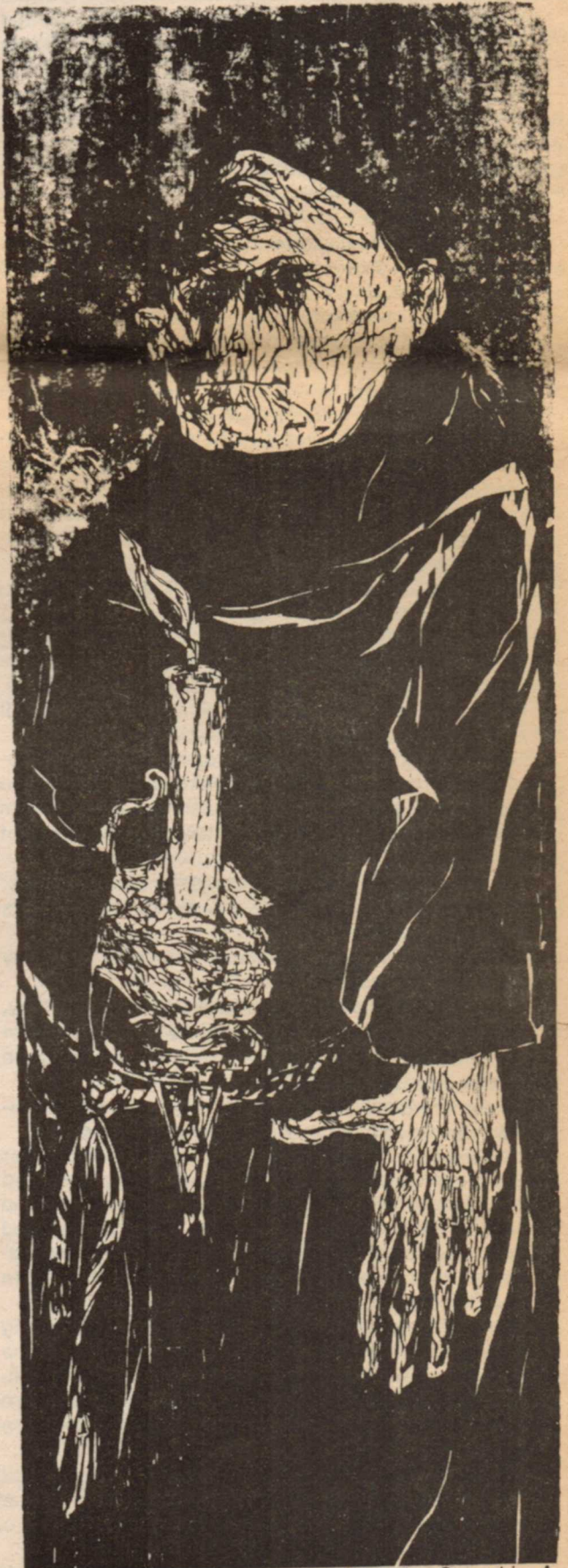
During the period of Bakunin's association with Nechaev, who was attracted solely by Bakunin's dark side, this aspect took over. Then, confronted with the realization of this dark thread in practice, in the person of Nechaev, Bakunin shrank back in genuine horror. However, as Aileen Kelly notes, "even then he managed to integrate Nechaev's villainy into his own fantasies, writing to his astonished friends that Nechaev's methods were those of a "pure" and "saintly" nature who, faced with the apathy of the masses and intellectuals in Russia, saw no other way but coercion to mold the latter into a force deter-

mined enough to move the masses to revolution. Such reasoning, Bakunin concluded, 'contains, alas! much truth.' "

Kelly continues: "This grotesque assessment of Nechaev is very revealing. At a time when the gap between man's empirical and ideal natures seemed enormous, Bakunin, albeit reluctantly, concluded that if men do not wish to liberate themselves, it might be necessary for those with their highest interests at heart to liberate them against their will."

To Bakunin's credit, he continually struggled against the implications of this aspect of his thought. Always fascinated by all the 'revolutionary' short-cuts, he nevertheless remained loyal as well to his libertarian instincts, and it is this aspect of his remarkably polarized vision that he left as his lasting heritage. The anarchist movement that he fathered has also been plagued by the same polarity, by the tension between real libertarianism on the one side, and the sometimes irresistible attraction of anti-intellectualism, terrorism, and conspiracy, on the other. The anarchist movement needs to come to grips with Bakunin's ambiguous heritage. And to do so, it also needs to come to terms with Marx.

Ulli Diemer



Standing Monk, a woodcut by Nicholas Sperakis. A book of Sperakis' woodcuts has been published by Smyrna Press, Box 841, Stuyvesant Station, New York, N.Y. 10009, U.S.A.



BOOKCHIN ON TECHNOLOGY

Murray Bookchin's collection of essays, *Post-Scarcity Anarchism*, provides an important challenge to Marxists who want a living Marxism.

He argues for a liberatory technology and describes inventions and scientific advances that make it possible. That it is necessary is shown by the ecological harm resulting from our present use of technology. He then argues that only a decentralized society will be capable of using the technology he proposes and locates tendencies for such a society in the development of communes, affinity groups, and other forms of positive opposition to centralized and bureaucratic society. At the end of the book he gives his impressions of the French General Strike of 1968 and his analysis of why it did not advance to the overthrow of the old society and the construction of a new one.

Let's deal with Bookchin's discussion of technology. First Bookchin argues that 19th-century technology brought a sense of promise that scarcity could be ended. "It seemed to the revolutionary theorist that for the first time in history he could anchor his dream of a liberatory society in the visible prospect of material abundance and increased leisure for the mass of humanity" (p.88). However to bring this about required planning for a long period of toil. Redistribution of wealth with little to distribute as Marx and Engels rightly saw would merely return us to the old struggle for survival.

Marxism's answer was a transitional proletarian state to plan the economy. The anarchists hoped without much evidence that this stage could be avoided and argued with strong evidence that it would be dangerous. According to Bookchin neither side really won the argument because the low level of technology would have caused problems for either a "proletarian state" or "mutual association". However while the problem was still being argued in such terms technology sped forward. While socialism was (and still is) glorified as a society where toil was ennobling, technological advances took place that allow for a reduction in the amount of labour necessary to do the world's work. Already the possibility of a greatly reduced amount of toil finds quantitative expression in proposals for guaranteed incomes.

"This quantitative approach is already lagging behind technological developments that carry a new qualitative promise—the promise of decentralized, communitarian lifestyles, or what I prefer to call ecological forms of human association".

According to Bookchin the open-ended development of technology, the breakdown of tasks to Mechanical operations that machines can perform have occurred along with certain new features of machines.

1. They have the ability to correct their own errors; they are self regulating, eg. thermostats and lights that adjust to darkness.

2. Machines now have sensory devices, eg. X-ray machines and radar.

3. Machines can now exercise judgment, memory, and skill. Computers can remember facts, perform complicated logical exercises, and can evaluate routine processes.

Technological advances embodying these principles can be applied to virtually every form of toil.

The present technology could be used to further existing tendencies toward centralization and bureaucracy. However it could have an opposite and happier consequence. Computers that once required miles of wiring and weighed 30 tons have been replaced by computers roughly as big as a bedside AM-FM radio.

Larger machines have been developed too. Rolling mills can be built that are a fraction of the size of the huge mills existing in Hamilton let alone the enormous mill planned for Nanticoke (23,000,000 tons production per year, more than the entire current Canadian output.)

The present system is geared to an international market. The new technology could not hope to meet such a demand but it could satisfy the steel needs of several medium-sized communities.

Multi-purpose machines have been developed as well. Drills can now use a range of gauges to drill holes of various thicknesses. Thus a variety of goods can be produced by using them.

An additional aspect of modern technology is the possibility it offers of a new relationship with nature. "Some of the most promising technological advances in agriculture made since World War II are as suitable for small-scale ecological forms of land management as they are for the immense industrial-type commercial units that have become prevalent over the past few decades". (p.115) This is true for such processes as the feeding of livestock and for farm machines.

Agriculture could continue to be agribusiness or it could become husbandry with the promotion of a variety of flora and fauna.

Regional resources could be used too. Old resources that now exist only in small amounts could now be of value again.

The present single source energy economy could be gradually abandoned as solar energy could meet 20 - 30 per cent of our energy needs and other forms could be applied as well.

The point is that this new technology would be less dangerous but would require a new society different not only from what exists but different from most currently envisioned. Such a society or rather societies would be decentralized using primarily the natural resources and technology available in the immediate area.

Production would be for smaller markets. Political units could more nearly approach a size allowing for face to face contact.

Man could regain respect rather than fear of the natural environment as the daily evidence of his dependence on it would be part of an ecological society—one that encouraged diversity as not merely the most pleasant but also the most efficient form of agriculture. If "many ecologists now conclude that we can avoid the repetitive use of toxic chemicals such as insecticides and herbicides by allowing for a greater interplay between living things" then the form of agriculture best suited to our needs requires not the domination of nature but more of a partnership with it.

What does this mean to Marxists? Marx was the greatest critic of technology. He wrote unsurpassed analyses of the technology of his day and revealed modern technology to be an alienated form of human labour that could be used to reduce toil rather than adding to it.

However this technology required the centralization of production in his view and the disciplining of the working class and one-man management. An individual performer of a musical instrument he said is his own conductor but a symphony requires a con-

ductor. The analogy between the craftsman and the factory was thus very clearly drawn

This analogy was not lost on the Leninists who brought one-man management to its apogee. Unfortunately, while Marx may have had some justification for his conclusions based as they were on the most advanced research then existing present-day Marxists have no reason for following this path. Instead

Marxists must take up Marx's task of the critique of technology and see if it can take a liberatory direction. The Frankfurt School and Herbert Marcuse especially have criticized technology under capitalism but always with the assumption that the closed system of instrumental reason that it tries to create can succeed or at least prevail indefinitely. There is no hint in Marcuse or Habermas that systems theory as a means of domination could be self-defeating. Instead for Marcuse the critique comes from outside the system. For Habermas the process of rationalization is checked if at all only by the presuppositions of communication that imply a normative content to speech. Rather a feeble hope! An a priori argument for the inviolability of language.

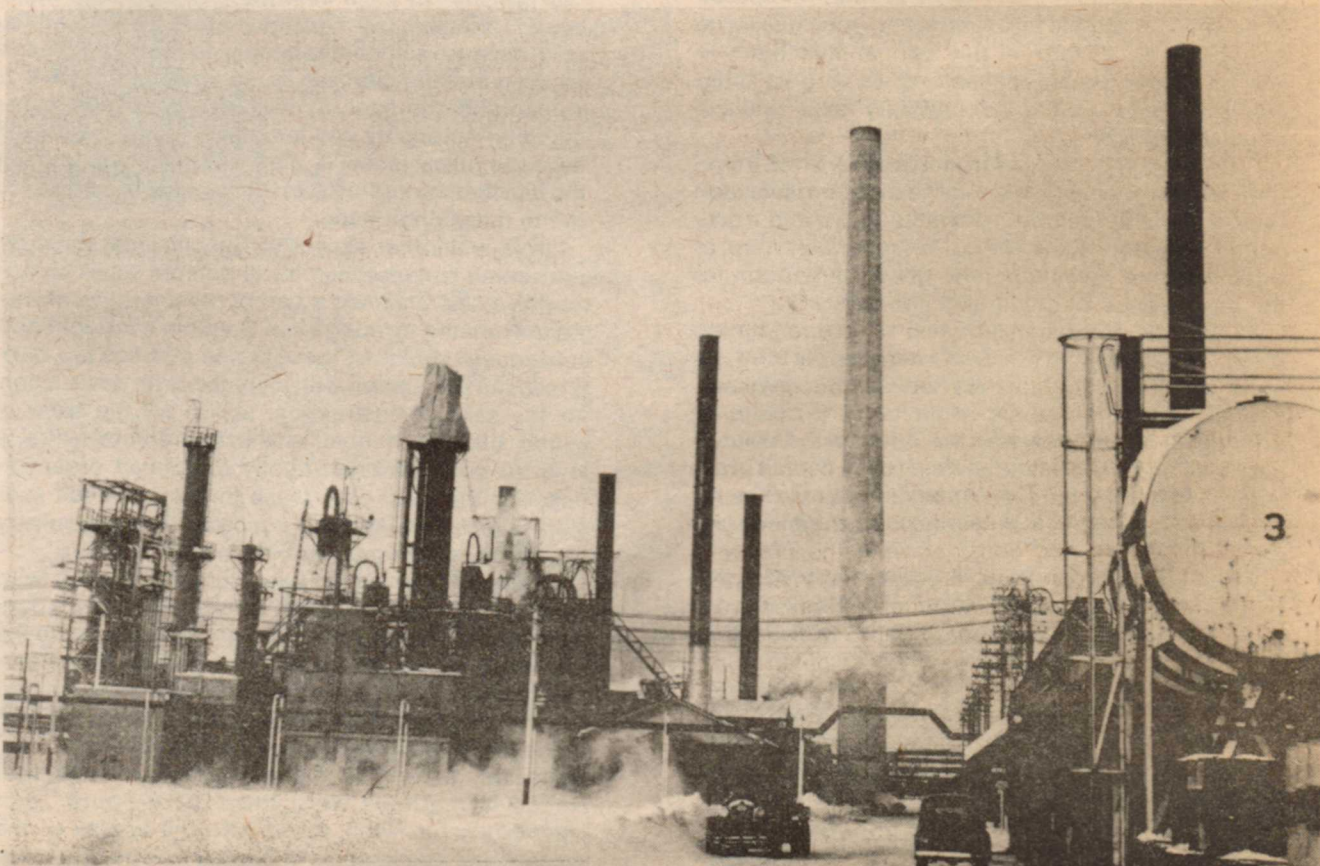
If Marxists want to develop their theory to take account of the new needs and possibilities of technology, they must admit that if this theory is not exhausted on this topic it remains to be developed. As good a place as any for them to start it remains to be developed. As good a place as any for them to start in gaining knowledge for their arsenal would be Post-Scarcity Anarchism.

After praising the book a few words of criticism may be in order.

For example Bookchin believes that such a thing as an ecological breakdown would occur. "Ecologically bourgeois exploitation and manipulation are undermining the very capacity of the earth to sustain advanced forms of life". (p. 36). "The contradiction between the exploitative organization of society and the natural environment is beyond co-optation: the atmosphere, the waterways, the soil, and the ecology required for human survival are not redeemable by reforms, concessions or modifications of strategic policy" (p. 38) While technology can't solve all the problems it creates it is possible to adjust human expectations to accept a deteriorating ecology. In Los Angeles there are smog alerts and the acceptance of an environment that has been barbarized is already far advanced. Thus an ecological crisis no more than an economic crisis is purely objectivistic. It depends to a large extent on political criteria. What do people expect; what can they be forced or persuaded to tolerate? Further one needn't have a blind faith in science to expect that some attempts can be made to adjust us to a worsening environment through technological manipulation. Moreover Bookchin does not emphasize the possibility of economic crisis. Not a breakdown: such a thing never happened and never will happen. The economy is of course no longer the unregulated chaos that was under competitive capitalism. But now that the state has to step in to regulate the economy it creates tensions that it may not be able to resolve. However Bookchin emphasizes the problems of prosperity and unfulfilled expectations rather than the tensions due to economic crisis which the state must both regulate and exacerbate.

Tom McLaughlin

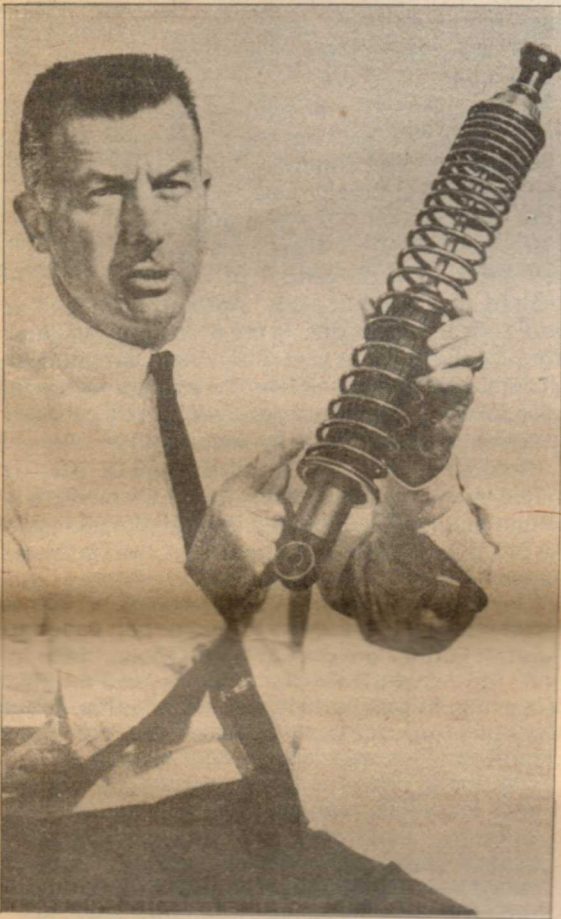
Post-Scarcity Anarchism, Murray Bookchin, Black Rose Books, Montreal



Some thoughts on organization

What is the type of organization that we, as anarchists, libertarian socialists and libertarian Marxists, should be working towards? What should be our immediate organizational goals? It is not enough to simply deplore the present lack of serious organizational work amongst anti-authoritarians. Some sort of concrete plan must be set forward to deal with the circumstances we find ourselves in.

In order to find out what sort of plan we should put forward we should first take a long hard look at the present state of our movement in this part of the world. In doing this we should neither overestimate our strength by labelling every decentralized protest movement anarchist or libertarian (often these movements are merely temporarily decentralized as various authoritarians are working mightily to take them over). Neither should we overestimate the strength of our opponents to the extent that we advocate imitating their propaganda style and organizational forms slavishly. This is not going to gain us the



recruits they presently make; all it will do is attach us as a tail to the commie dog. And doom us to eternal marginality! I feel that we should recognize the inherent limitations, in our context, of the commie style and concept-revolution.

To deal with the most obvious fact first, the romantic idea of The Revolution (do we always have to capitalize it?) as a gigantic street fight is ridiculous in the extreme. In the first place the present military forces in North America are too strong to be defeated by military insurrection. The most that such a frontal assault on the state could produce is more repression. Second, should an insurrection succeed by some miracle (molotov cocktails and 303s against Phantom Jets — fat chance!) we would be confronted by the fact that our societies (Canada and the U.S.) are hardly of the type that could survive the chaos involved in a civil war. Perhaps five per cent of the population have any access at all to self-sufficiency. Revolutions are not glorious events where everyone goes out singing the Red Flag, shoots the police, hangs the boss and immediately takes possession of all the wealth of the world in pristine mint condition. They are long, bloody, destructive, and, above all, chaotic events. Just think what would happen if the majority of people no longer had Safeway and Macdonald's to gently nurse them. No rhetoric please about "people will work these things out". They'd starve. How many millions are you willing to see sacrificed to the glorious future? Also, stop and consider what the first response of starving people is — **THEY WANT A STRONGMAN TO SAVE THEM.** Finally, I don't think that any reasonable person could deny the fact that the atomic umbrella that our empire has built up to supposedly protect itself against the Russian empire is also trained on us. Do you expect to put up a barricade high enough to stop a missile?

Second, we have to recognize the main barrier to non-insurrectional revolution (this is not equivalent to non-violent revolution) is the inability of liberatory

organizations and actions to build up a competing system. We do not live in a capitalist society where the ruling class reacts to threats to its hegemony by either repression or bribery. We live in a managerial society where the inner dynamics of the competing and co-operating bureaucracies drive them to integrate threats, to turn them into means of strengthening themselves (though repression is still often used). Our response to the ruling class should be not to try to push them with demands (they love it), but rather to build up links between the various isolated struggles. A new system should be built. Food co-ops should be linked to strikes. The mostly urban based left should re-investigate its relationship to the countryside. ETC, ETC, ETC.

The building of such links should be intermediate level goal. We have to get ourselves together first, but this eventual goal should be kept in mind. We cannot imitate the commies and set up our organizations with no other goal than to put pressure on the ruling class, especially since the jackpot that supposedly comes at the end of this process, the big time revolution, is probably impossible. Such organizations will either be marginalized or will be integrated a la the Communist parties of west Europe. The commies, if they do consider 'links' necessary, think that the function of link should be reserved to the party alone. This should not be our goal also. The links between struggles will not be built just because a group intervenes with theory. We must proceed to gather the technical resources that these links will need. This is a question that should occupy our thoughts now, not at some in the future. What exactly will be the resources that various struggles will need to link up? Transportation? Radios? Computing power?

Anyway, moving from the future into the present, what is the present state of the anarchist movement in our part of the world? Our organizations that span localities such as the SRAF or the IWW (I realize that the IWW is not 'exactly' anarchist, but it is close enough to be counted as libertarian) comprise perhaps 1000 members, at a liberal estimate. Other organized anarchists, and other libertarians, comprise perhaps double that amount, once again at a liberal estimate. A pretty poor showing in a population of over 200 million. The number of convinced anarchists who are not members of formal groups comprise perhaps ten to fifteen thousand. I think that these figures point out an immediate task. What is the matter with the two large scale organizations? Why do the majority of anarchists refuse to join them? Even more importantly, why are the vast majority of anarchists unorganized? I don't believe that it is because they are all individualist anarchists.

I would like to deal with the latter question first. One of the great reasons why the majority of anarchists are unorganized is that many anarchists consider that any specific anarchist organization is somehow 'counter-revolutionary', an imposition on the people. Organizational libertarians have failed to criticize this position thoroughly enough. This is perhaps the most important 'theoretical' task of our movement. It was good to see the article 'Why the Leninists Will Win' in the last issue of the Red Menace as a beginning of this criticism. While the non-organizational anarchists may refuse to help us in practical work they still read anarchist literature. Perhaps we can persuade them of the contradiction of refusing to work on specifically anarchist projects while working in organizations controlled by far less savory groups and individuals as many of them do.

As to those unorganized anarchists who are afraid to declare their anarchism because of possible loss of



jobs, harassment, etc., I feel that they should not be allowed to act as brakes on the more militant members.

Now, as to the main organizations in North America, the SRAF and the IWW, it seems that their main problem is the fact that they offer little in the way of organizational resources to groups affiliated or to members. Each city or locality is almost totally self-contained. The accumulated experience and resources of long term groups are not made available to neophyte groups. The result is an immensely high rate of turnover and mortality in newly formed libertarian groups. The local narrowness of the member groups of these organizations has to be overcome. At the present time we should not be thinking so much of expanding the presently existing groups as of forming ones in new localities.

With all of the above in mind, what are the concrete tasks that we should be thinking of at the present time? The first task is probably the correction of the lamentable state of our press. The libertarian movement does not have a North American paper, even though it has dozens of magazines. The appeal of magazines is inherently limited. Our goal should be the establishment of a weekly (if possible) newspaper, enjoying wide newsstand distribution across North America. The most likely candidate for such an organ is the Open Road, published out of Vancouver. Its present publishing frequency is far too infrequent (4 times a year). Serious attention should be paid to increasing its distribution to the point where it can begin to publish more frequently. If necessary, this may mean giving consideration to the idea of canvassing the libertarian movement for funds for the support of full time staffers for the Open Road.

The second task is probably the establishment of a serious program of publication of various materials, utilizing a press and other materials that are *our own* and are not dependent on some government grant. Maybe such a thing already exists. If it does, however, its existence is mostly unknown to the general North American libertarian movement.

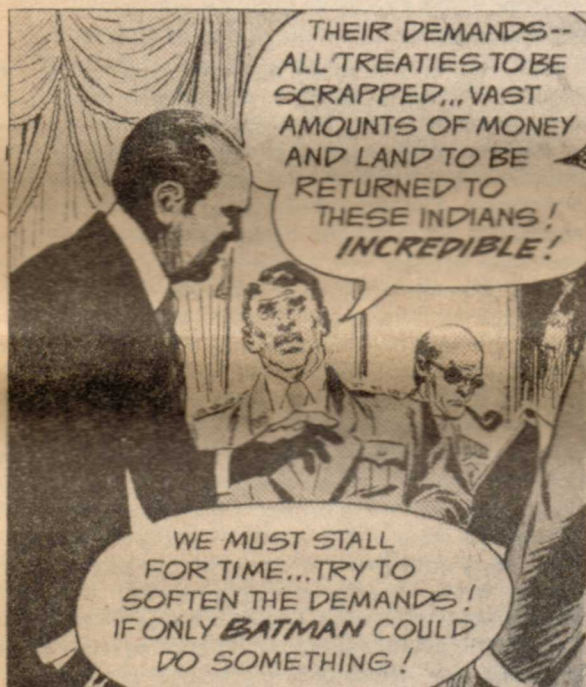
Which brings up still another point. Just exactly what is the state of our present resources? What materials, printing resource, speakers, advice, knowledge, etc. do the various isolated N.A. libertarian groups have available to help each other? Too little interchange of a practical nature has taken place between groups. This should be one of the immediate tasks also. The establishment of a serious program of touring speakers should be uppermost in our minds at the present time.

Many of the above tasks are already being thought about in a disjointed fashion amongst libertarians. Some are even being acted upon. The problem is that the action undertaken by isolated groups falls into a void the minute it goes beyond their local horizons. Believe it or not, we do have trans-local groups (the SRAF and the IWW). While criticisms can certainly be made of these groups, it is still incumbent on libertarians to make them from within the organizations in question. It is useless to carp and complain from the outside, while refusing to help in the transformation of these organizations into effective organisms.

P. Murtaugh

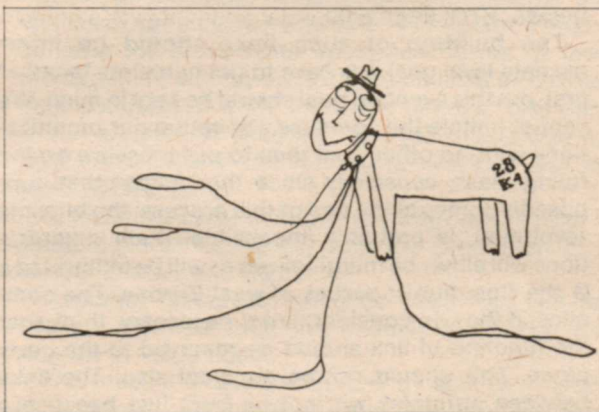
Everything you wanted to know about sects but were afraid to ask

Let me warn any of you with dirty minds that this discussion is about organizations—not orgasms. I have borrowed freely from the following: Murray Bookchin's Classic essay, "Listen Marxist!" Paul Cardan's writing for Solidarity (London), Greg Calvert and Earol Neiman, A Disrupted History: The New Left And The New Capitalism, Michael Schneider, "Vanguard, Vanguard, Who's Got The Vanguard?" Liberation May and August 1972, and Michael Velli Manual for Revolutionary Leaders (A superb satire compiled and edited by Lorraine and Fred Perlman of Black and Red 1972). I wish to thank Andrea Walsh, Simon Rosenblum, Ray Larken, and Barbara MacAdam for their suggestions and criticism. All responsibility for errors, misconceptions, etc. in this article belong to them.



All the old crap of the thirties is back again--the shit about the "class line", the "role of the working class", the "trained cadres", the "vanguard party", and the "proletarian dictatorship". We are witnessing a Lenin revival. What makes matters worse is that some of our friends are participating in this new Lenin renaissance — they claim to be making an uneasy peace with Lenin but history reminds us that the workers at Kronstadt also made an "uneasy peace" with Lenin. Most of us have experienced the difficulty of carrying on productive discussion in public meetings without being afflicted by a plague of Trotskyists, Maoists, etc., all happily "intervening", all of them convinced that all questions are closed, that they have all the answers, and that their task is to share their wisdom with the less fortunate. Of course, all the sects are not equally bad and for some strange reason, the best and the worst are usually versions of Trotskyism.

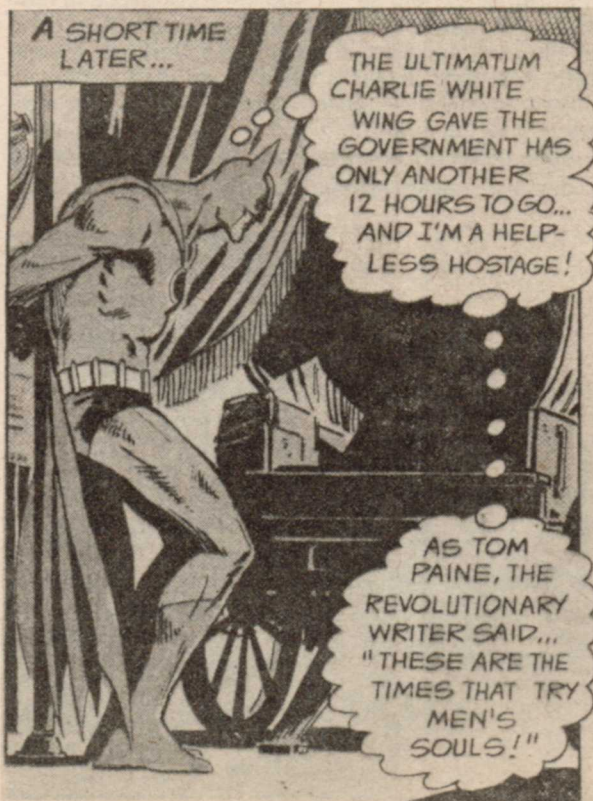
Before getting on with this article, I would like to share my favorite sect story. I arrived in New York City to do graduate work and, as I approached the main entrance to the university, I heard a fellow yell, "Eighty per cent unemployment in Seattle. Form a Labor Party. Read the Bulletin." The Bulletin, I soon found out, was the organ of the Workers' League and the soothsayer was named Harvey. A large aircraft company had recently shut down a plant in Seattle and the unemployment rate had reached approximately fifteen per cent—how Harvey blew it up to eighty per cent, I never found out. Needless to say, I was somewhat taken back and amused by Harvey's sloganeering and decided to have a little fun with him. I approached and denounced him as a revisionist. The unemployment rate in Seattle was ninety-two not eighty per cent, I claimed, and he should know better than to spread capitalist lies! An hour later, I had registered and as I left the building, I



heard Harvey screaming "Ninety-two per cent unemployment in Seattle. For a Labor Party. Read the Bulletin." Then there was the incident in the *Guardian* where one group denounced another for opportunism. It seems the accused had quoted Stalin simply in order to take advantage of his popularity with the American working class!! Someday, a collection of sect funnies will be published. Let me suggest a title: "Communist Infantilism, A Left-Wing Disorder". The cover would have a picture of Lenin naked in order to show that the emperor has no clothes but possesses sharp teeth.

...The greatest tragedy of the present impasse is that the reversion to Leninist forms and Maoist rhetoric has stifled much of the life-affirming content of the New Left and has warped its sense of personal and public values. The return to dogmatic rigidity and life-denying values which colors the present (hopefully transitory) period is indeed unfortunate when one realizes that ever greater numbers of Americans are searching for a meaningful political alternative to both the sterility of their private personal existence and the impotent quadrennial spectacle of the humpty-dumpty politics of the ballot box.

However tinged with utopianism (strategic romanticism and tactical adventurism), the twin conceptions of "participatory democracy" and "parallel institutions" formed the key notions of the New Left before the late 1960's. The New Left had accurately intuited that an organization is likely to make a revolution in its own image. If we cannot transcend the values of repressive civilization in our living and thinking, in our loving and acting, if we cannot develop a revolutionary life-style or mode of behavior which transcends the social norms of bourgeois society, then we cannot make a revolution. A good society can only be meas-



ured by the quality of individual lives and the quality of human relationships, and the revolutionary process must establish these values as primary. Leninism is incompatible with the life-affirming and libertarian values which a socialist movement must represent, and with a movement in which individuals develop the self-consciousness and self-reliance which makes them act as part of a determined and clear headed force which develops socialism out of the womb of capitalism.

During the 1960's, the bankruptcy of Leninist practice clearly revealed itself in the inability of the Leninists to deal creatively with the life-affirming, libertarian, and creative elements of the youth cultural revolt. Either the search for new life forms and new modes of self-expression were treated as "petit-bourgeois self-indulgence" or was channelled into "hatred of the ruling class". Nothing separated sectarian left organizations, in the eyes of young people, from the moth-eaten and rotten institutions they met on coming into the social world. And now a work from Leon Trotsky: "There are people who only succeed in remaining revolutionists by keeping their eyes shut. ("Introduction to "the First Five Years of The Communist International"). After years of positive development, the 1960's ended in what Marx called "all the old shit." Indeed, as he remarked, "the first time is tragedy, the second time farce."

The recent growth of the "new communist parties" brings with it the new party discipline which bears no trace of subjective liberation; it brings us, not a "new man" but a new left-authoritarian personality. Efforts to oppose the Bolshevik type of party with a different conception of political structure are branded as "anarchism, spontaneism, or ultra-leftism."

The social relations behind class consciousness are social relations between leaders and followers, social relations of subordination and control. They are dependence relations. What is meant by class conscious masses is people who submit to the will of a revolutionary leader, people who cannot dispense with subordination, control, and managers. Class consciousness is a euphemism for the mass psychology of dependence.

— Michael Velli

The Leninist "industrial cadre" never gets around to learning about any of the particular needs, desires and problems of their fellow workers. As a result of their perspective, their objective stance in relation to the working class is one of moralism—an attitude of "nagging the workers." The debate continues: to bore from within the unions or to bore from the outside. Meanwhile the effect on working people is the same--boring! Their slogans such as "smash the state apparatus" and "destroy the machinery of capitalist domination" may be politically correct in a formal way. But since, in those slogans, the act of "destruction" determines the form of the political agitation and propaganda, their immediate effect, from the subjective and mass-psychological point of view, is only to arouse anxiety and defensiveness within the working class. One wonder how anyone could believe



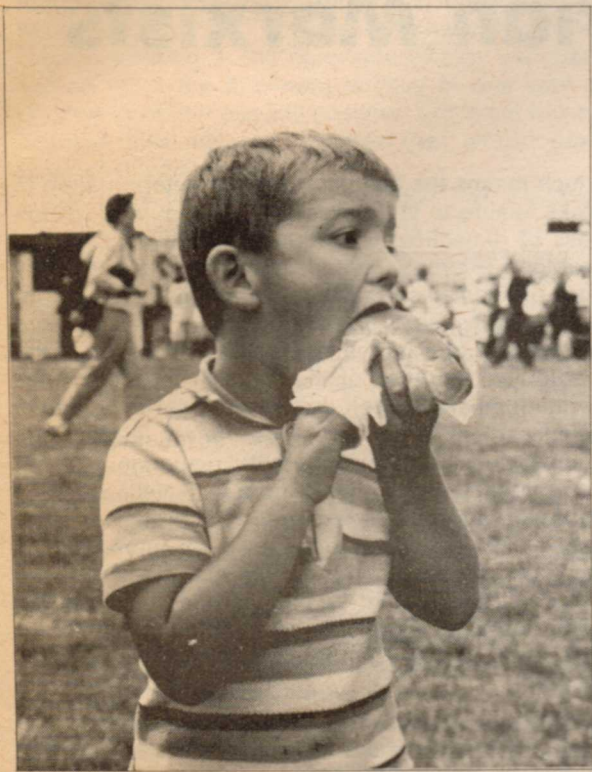
Dogmatist
(for G.P. and company)

You are fighting for mankind
while your wife leaves you
even your cat doesn't like you
and your houseplants are dying

When we told you
you couldn't head our group any longer
you quickly became a capitalist.

Chris Faiers

them when they say socialism develops not only the material productive forces but also the creative imagination of the masses when they themselves articulate their political beliefs as if they were reciting a liturgy. For instance, the dazzling esthetic appeal of the dictatorship of the proletariat! Marx (who was hardly a "cultural Marxist") was able to capture this development in the Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte:



The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionizing themselves and things, in creating something that has never yet existed, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of a past to their service and borrow from their names, battle cries and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honoured disguise and this borrowed language.

Why does Marxism-Leninism "thrive"? Part of the reason lies in the fact that modern society is geared towards crushing any attempt at self activity and at autonomous thinking. We are always encouraged to rely on others to choose and decide for us, and to provide the answers to all our problems. Many people, especially among the youth, are deeply disillusioned with the values of this society. Yet a number of them join Leninist organizations or become Jesus freaks or followers of some guru. This is not so surprising, considering the fact that in all of these outfits all the answers are provided. The disciples are relieved of the need to decide or choose for themselves. The Party line—or the word of the Master—does it for them. They are no longer burdened by the responsibilities of decisions to be made. A deep feeling of insecurity attracts people like a magnet towards any closed system of ideas which will relieve them from anxiety in the face of the unknown.

Other Leninist recruits have such a bad conscience about their bourgeois or petty-bourgeois origins that they make a fetish of self-denial and cultivate a martyred look as though they were bearing the cross for the entire working class. Revolutionary politics must not become the last refuge of neurotic rigidity and of the need for security. For as Wilhelm Reich pointed out many years ago: "In our thinking we must learn to go through changes. This is to be distinguished from lacking convictions. Our adherence to organization and transmitted ideas can get in the way of seeing the living reality and we must learn to recognize that."

Socialists should begin to understand their role as an active, self-conscious, intentional minority, as radical catalysts rather than as a vanguard leadership. Mistakes will be made but as Rosa Luxemburg declared: "Historically, the errors committed by a truly revolutionary movement are infinitely more fruitful than the infallibility of the cleverest Central Committee."

The Leninist sects are essentially part of the problem, not part of the solution. Fortunately, as Todd Gitlin has been quoted as saying American society continues to make radicals more rapidly than the radical movement turns them off. No matter what the number of left sect, we would rather fight for what we want (even if we don't get it in our lifetime) than fight for what we don't want...and get it.

Jimmie Higgins

Comics



Most attempts by leftists to produce comic books (as opposed to cartoon strips) are dismal failures. One of the few exceptions we've come across is Cover-up Lowdown, by Jay Kinney and Paul Mavrides, available for 75 cents from Rip Off Press, P.O. Box 14158, San Francisco, Calif. 94114, U.S.A. It's a well-drawn, well-lettered black-and-white book with genuine sustained humour and enough plot interest to make you want to read it through. It gives the 'low-down' on various cover-ups, and features 'Passing the Buck', which relates the history of a particular dollar bill, and The Amazing Pull-Out Total-World-Conspiracy Moebius Flow-Chart.

As a contrast, see 'Corporate Crime Comics' (Kitchen Sink Enterprises) a dismal piece of junk that features poorly-drawn, insipidly liberal-minded stories about corporate crime dedicated to the question: 'We must depend on big corporations — but how can we control them?' Even the fact that Kinney has done some drawings for this turkey can't save it from well-deserved oblivion.

Obscenity exposed

This January, a St. Catharines man who operates a chain of sex stores was found guilty of "possessing, displaying, and selling obscene sex aids". Police presented more than 200 pieces of evidence in court, including dildos, vibrators, crotchless panties, and candles, and key chains shaped like genitalia. The trial of course once again raised the whole question of what is "obscene" and what effect suppression has in creating the need and desire for that which it is supposed to suppress.

But the most interesting thing about the trial was the evidence of the police officers who made the arrest. Each was asked by the defence lawyer why he considered the objects seized to be obscene. And each one in turn replied that these were not the kind of things sold by Eaton's or Simpson's.

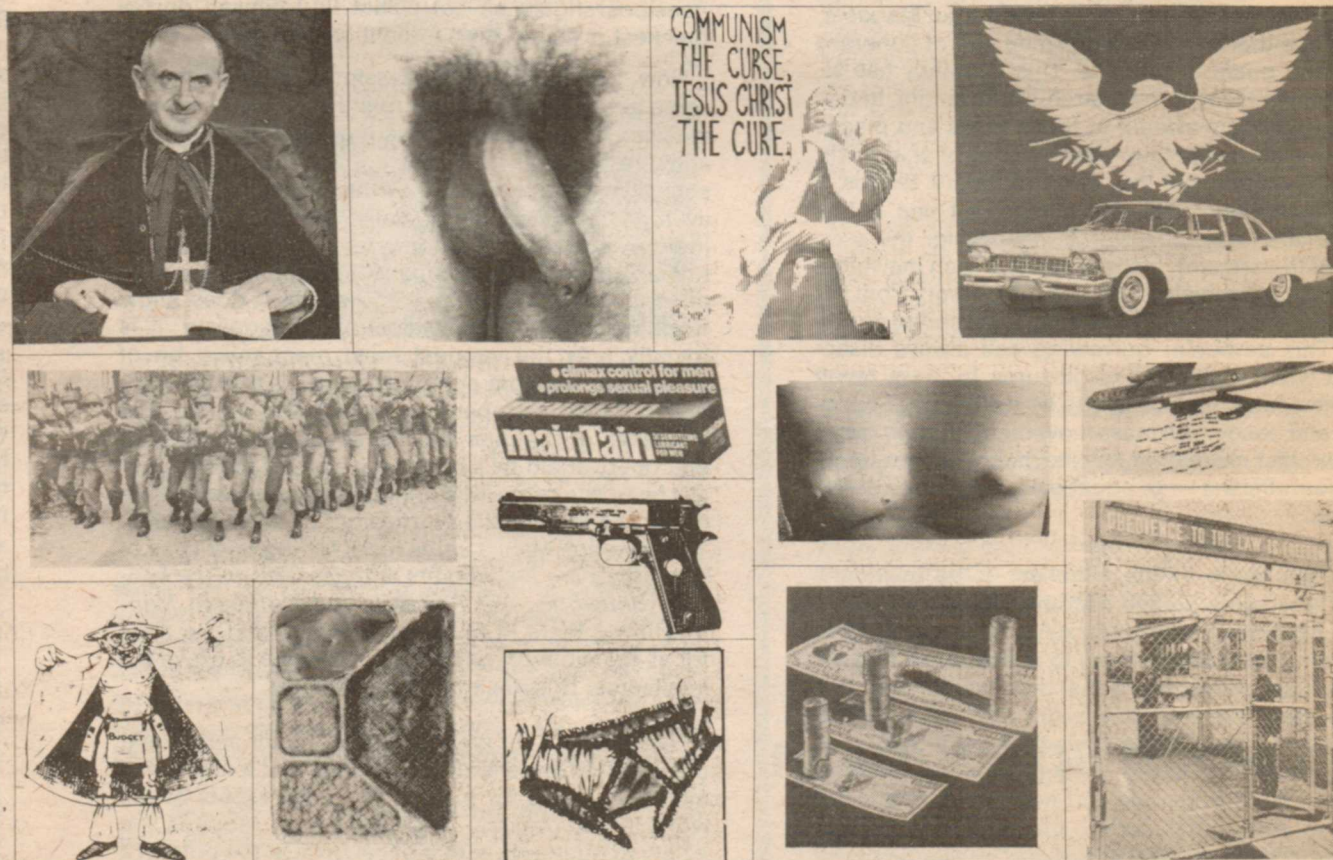
This, it must be admitted, is a criteria for judging what is obscene and what is not that is as profound as it is simple. It neatly and effectively slices through the impenetrable legal and moral tangle that has surrounded obscenity cases for so many years, and gives us a foolproof standard which, while it may appear to be arbitrary on the surface, actually represents what Hegel might have called the unfolding concept. It contains, in fact, the perfect unity of form and content, as well as the synthesis of quantity and quality.

Consider the root of the word 'obscene'. Literally, it means off scene. Something that is not seen or spoken of. Something taboo. Eatons and

Simpson's are the crystallized essence of capitalist social relations (in case of Eaton's Crystal Palace at Yonge and Dundas in Toronto, this is true literally as well as figuratively.) In this society of the commodity, "there is no vision except the dominant vision, no thought except the dominant

thought, and no reality except the dominant reality." There is nothing but Eaton's and Simpson's. Thus everything that is not Eaton's or Simpson's is obscene, in both meanings of the word: off scene, non-existent, not allowed to be spoken of, taboo, and, indecent, pornographic,

lewd, an affront to society's (ie. Eaton's) moral standards. As always, capitalism's underlying philosophy reduces in the final analysis to the police mind: Sex aids remain obscene until Eaton's decides to sell them.



CONTEST: Which of the above is obscene? Some of the above illustrations depict obscene things. Which are they? Explain your decision in 25 words or less.

The first three correct entries will receive a free subscription to The Red Menace.

The End of Dialectical Materialism:

An anarchist reply to the libertarian Marxists

Words I teach all mixed up in a devilish muddle,
Thus, anyone may think just what he chooses to think;
Never, at least, is he hemmed in by strict limitations.
Bubbling out of the flood, plummeting down from the cliff,
So are his beloved's words and thoughts that the poet
devises;
He understands what he thinks, freely invents what he
feels.
Thus, each may for himself suck wisdom's nourishing
nectar;
Now you know all, since I've said plenty of nothing to
you!
from 'On Hegel' by K. Marx

Libertarian Marxism is a rather recent development, as far as political theories and movements go. I suppose that a truly dedicated historian could dig up the bones of various defunct political groups and individuals who held similar views during the last two hundred years. Even the ever invoked shade of Karl Marx is dredged up, and once again we are treated to the spectacle of 'what Marx really meant'. This time though with a difference; through a libertarian Marxism. A Marxism that essentially reduces down to anarchist politics tied to Marxist philosophy. Is this mixture viable? I would say no, and the following paragraphs are my reasons.

What is libertarian Marxism? From my conversations with those who subscribe to this set of ideas it seems to me that there are basically two sincere reasons why people become libertarian Marxists and one insincere one. The sincere ones first.

People often move from 'pure' Marxism to libertarian marxism because of the obvious sterility and brutality of standard Marxist-Leninist practice. The first reaction is disgust with what their fellow Marxists have made of socialism. It is only later that these people work through the theoretical justification for their particular brand of Marxism. The problem is that in moving from a Marxist position to one of anarchist politics they meet not an organized serious anarchist movement, with its own theoretical apparatus but a fragmented, disorganized collection of small groups and individuals. In this vacuum libertarian Marxism grows as an alternative to the emptiness and vagueness of present day anarchism in this part of the world.

Other people approach libertarian Marxism from another direction, through anarchism. These people become fed up with the state of the present day anarchist movement and opt for libertarian Marxism, in the hope that it will provide some sort of coherent theory and guide to practice. This tendency has always been present in the anarchist movement, and is most particularly evident in those times and places where the emotional 'gut-feeling' idea of anarchism holds strong sway (ie the idea that theory, tactics, a plan, organization, etc. are unimportant and only a strong hatred of oppression is needed for the overthrow of the system). In these cases it is an inevitable reaction of anarchists to borrow their theory from the Marxists, in the hope of providing some sort of coherence. This particular borrowing has always disappeared when individual revolt turns to mass revolt and when anarchism ceases to be the resort of bohemians and becomes a mass movement. In such cases the anarchist movement has inevitably thrown up its own theoreticians — of equal calibre to those of the Marxists.

Now, we come to the clincher — the insincere reason why some people become 'libertarian Marxists', or any other flavor of Marxist for that matter. One of the things that Marxists fail to realize when they sit down to spin philosophy is that their insight that, in a class society, systems of thought also have a class character also applies to their own pet theory. For every theory of society is likely to be accepted by a particular class of people and not others, and every theory of society has certain objective effects if its acceptance becomes widespread. The effects of the widespread acceptance of Marxism are so obvious that only a blind man could fail to see them. Over fifty years of the bloodiest tyranny the world has ever seen gives ample proof of the nature of practical as opposed to theoretical Marxism.

Just as the theory of liberalism acted as a front for the rise of the capitalist class (and just as liberalism was not the only ideology suitable for this rise), so the theories of Marxism provide ample cover for the rise of a new ruling class. To serve such a purpose a class ideology must have certain characteristics. One, it must provide the oppressed class with a myth of the justice and rightness of the present set-up. Marxisms cover of abstractions about the 'proletarian dictatorship' obviously serve this function. Second, it must provide the ruling class with an acceptable 'moral' justification for their actions. Class societies that are founded on nothing but naked power don't tend to produce the type of rulers who have a good survival rate. Morale is an important factor in the survival of any society, especially morale amongst its leaders. Once again, the function of Marxist rationalizations in this area are too obvious to be mentioned. The final important characteristic that a class ideology must have is that it very possession must itself make a substantial difference in the very nature of the person possessing it. While 'libertarian' Marxists may be able to escape the first few charges, it is this aspect that betrays certain of them as what they really are. Perhaps I should try to make what I am saying a little clearer.

Most class ideologies are really not one but two ideologies. There is one ideology for the rulers and one for the ruled. To be brief and simplistic, under feudalism there is honour (and all the other ideological baggage of the lords) and salvation through meekness and obedience (and all the other Christian and patriarchal baggage). Under capitalism there is efficiency and justice. For the capitalist his system is best because it is efficient. The 'freedom' it provides supposedly ensures the optimum allocation of all possible resources. The process of becoming a businessman is also a long process of initiation into the correct knowledge i.e. the rules of a certain gamble. In his most unguarded moments the successful businessman will readily concede that the huge chance factor proves that 'justice' plays little role in allotting rewards in capitalism. The intelligent conservative position (what used to be called liberal) is precisely this — freedom produces efficiency. To the working class, however, the justification for capitalism is that it somehow empodies justice, that 'hard work is rewarded'. The strength of this conviction can be gauged by the fact that immense popular indignation can be whipped up against the unemployed or those on welfare, but anyone who tried to suggest that old age pensions should be cut would find himself on the quickest possible road to political oblivion.

Now, how does the possession of Marxist theory serve to divide people into rulers and ruled? A good idea can be gained by comparing the attitude of rank and file Marxists to 'what are the basic ideas of socialism' to the attitude of the leadership. To the average rank and file socialist socialism is about justice, equality, freedom, love—very simple and human ideas and ones capable of being expressed in plain language. If the average socialist does know anything at all about 'dialectical materialism' it is usually only the vaguest most mechanical bit of theory learned from popularizing tracts that his leadership thinks is proper fare for the rank and file. The socialism of the rank and file socialist is instinctive and not overlaid by a massive weight of theory. Usually he or she cares little for all the oppressive volume of tracts and theorizing turned out by the leadership. Your average Maoist cares more for the fairy tales of *how happy are the workers and peasants in the Peoples' Shitworks and Prefabricated Outhouse Manufacturing Plant in Shitsang Province* than he does for all the attempts of Maoist professors to prove the intellectual brilliance of Mao's thought.

Now, dialectical materialism is a very subtle and complicated system of abstractions and a method of mental calculus for manipulating the events of the world. Its successful practice usually requires the ability to quote obscure biblical texts at the drop of a polemic. Its use also requires the attainment of the mental habit of refusing to ask simple questions in ordinary English (or whatever language you speak). This sort of knowledge and habit is not picked up in a day. It usually requires a period of years of study —

which means the leisure or infinite determination to make leisure to study. Whether the doubtful usefulness of dialectical materialism in solving practical problems is ever shown to be real or not (it certainly does provide all sorts of convenient methods of confusing issues, so it may be 'practical' after all, in a twisted sort of way) the fact is that its addition to the ideological baggage of the socialist movement has certainly made the self definition of various people, usually intellectuals, as 'revolutionary leaders' immensely easier. The immediate response of most non-intellectuals to a barrage of senseless words is "gee whiz are you ever wonderful Mr. Professor". The natural respect that people show for knowledge is easily taken advantage of by various charlatans who know well how to give the appearance of knowledge. Some, perhaps a majority, of people are convinced that anything they cannot understand must be really brilliant.

"... took a book of logarithms, photographed a page at random, shone it high upon the blackboard, with the overhead projector.
Thirty seven, forty seven, from the Ampex Corporation.
Gleaming in its chromium plating, from the Ampex Corporation.
And they thought that he was very clever,
For they could not understand his logarithms."
—from Hiawatha's Lipid

The content of 'dialectical materialism' consists of unproved and unprovable assertions, along with enough obvious truisms to give it the air of plausibility. An argument about its 'correctness' could likely go on forever without any successful conclusion. The point is not whether this or that particular assertion is correct or not. The point is what the result of accepting a theory of byzantine complexity (with equally byzantine disagreements as to what is 'real' dialectics as the usual result) is on the socialist movement that accepts this theory as the truth. I would submit that it encourages the penetration of a certain type of individual into the socialist movement — the type who will proceed to establish his control over the movement because of his presumed 'intellectual brilliance'. I think that the history of all Marxist movements show that I am right. I would be interested to see if any Libertarian Marxists can answer this charge. That Marxism is bifocal, like other class ideologies (Marxism for the masses versus Marxism for the leaders) is a charge that is not simply a personal attack or 'intellectual baiting', but an important question that will have repercussions on the type of movement we are going to build.

I do not consider that everything that Marx said was wrong, and I do not consider that all libertarian Marxists are sinister conspirators. Yet I would ask the sincere libertarian Marxists to consider the results of what they advocate. The Theoretical discipline that they acquired while they were Marxists is needed in the anarchist movement. Their energies would be better used in the building of a coherent anarchist and modern theory than in trying to drag the rotting corpse of Hegel into the movement. I also do not consider that all intellectuals are somehow 'evil' and ever ready to take over a movement for socialism. I feel that our movement must do its best to attract the sincere seekers after truth among the intellectuals. We must, however, never allow any particular priesthood of 'those who understand' to come to dominate the movement. I feel that we must abandon systems of thought that encourage such priesthoods if we are to attract the type of intellectuals who will be of the most benefit to the anarchist movement.

P. Murtaugh



It is useless to use the threat of a victorious American Leninism as a goad to our greater activity. Leninism, in all its present variants is incapable of definitive victories in advanced capitalist society. Its practice has historically been that of militant reformists or initiators of primitive capitalist accumulation. It has been the absence of a capitalist class capable of organizing society that has allowed for its occasional successes. In this country and elsewhere their myths, the International Communist Movement, Maoism, etc., are already in advanced states of decay. Ten years of the "left" in this country have shown that there is nothing in the repertoire of the "vanguard parties" that the dominant society in one way or another does not already possess. Leninism has no critique and nothing to offer that would deny bourgeois legitimacy.

Not since the Russian Revolution has a Social-Democratic party been brave enough to use the slogan "All power to the Soviets". Contemporary Leninism is unable to do it in this country because: a) most of them still live in the Fantasyland of "national liberation struggles" and "socialist states" whose social practice has nothing to do with the overthrow of capitalism, b) conflict with anti-authoritarian socialists leads them to emphasize their Party form as the principle positive element (!!) separating their "revolutionary" political reformism and trade-unionism from that of conventional bourgeois groupings, c) the essentially manipulative outlook of the vanguard parties causes them to regard the councils as only another means to its organizational ends and so far, to overlook their significance. None of these conditions, however, can be considered permanent. The Leninists, while more encumbered by their ideological baggage than the "libertarian" socialists, are showing signs in Europe at least of shedding some of it.



Today's Leninists are capable, however, of sabotaging genuinely revolutionary social movements in advanced capitalist countries: a case in point being the activities of the PCF in France during 1968. The Leninists are able to beat heads and confuse people with their "transitional demands", "united fronts" and other vacuities drawn from their inexhaustible larders of catchphrases—but the Leninist parties and splinters are hardly the major problem the revolutionist movement has to face. The greatest difficulties are in the areas of empirical analysis, in the organization of theory and in the theory of organization.

II

Only a social movement can bring about the transformation of society along anti-authoritarian anti-capitalist lines. Such a movement must be brought to constitute itself out of the present conditions by the demonstrable truth of our analyses and by the applicability of our ideas if by anything we do. We can build and coordinate our organizations, but we cannot "build" a social movement (these thoughts are analogous to those expressed by P. Mattick Jr. in *Synthesis 3*).

The movement must have its theory, and while it is unlikely and even undesirable that we (who?) be its only formulators, this is no reason for the laissez-faire eclecticism which presently characterizes so much of the "libertarian left". Organizations must be created on a far larger scale than presently, but upon what basis?

A simple consideration of one or more of the present libertarian ideologies as adequate (or the truce born of the failure to agree on an ideology) is an invitation to disaster. Like the rest of the so-called radical left the anti-authoritarians are captives of traditions whose days are long passed. Anarchism, Syndicalism, Council Communism, these are dead ideologies because that is the only kind of ideology there is. The theory which does not continually reassess itself, the body of thought which considers itself completed, has already consigned itself to the graveyard of ideas. How quickly this comes to pass can be discerned by the speed with which the Situationist ideology has become moribund, attended to only by atavistic sects. This is not to say that these schools of thought have nothing to offer or that

there are not currents within them giving the promise of something new and better. But, until people are willing to admit that all the present formulations are inadequate, that the project of human emancipation must be rediscovered in the present against the backdrop of the defeat of anarchism, council communism and situationism, they will go nowhere.

Theory does indeed derive from practice but one needn't be so parochial as to think that one can only theorize about things he has personally committed to action. In addition to the task of developing a critique of the movements of the previous epoch, there is a wealth of experience generated by the last ten years of struggle that remains largely unknown, unanalyzed and unincorporated into the thought of the anti-authoritarian socialist movement as a whole, much less into the consciousness of the public at large. There has also been considerable development on the theoretical plane which should be assessed by the movement generally. Even the capacity of the anti-authoritarian socialists for empirical research is grossly underdeveloped when compared to that of the conventional left: our intelligence gathering function is at present inadequate.

III

The creation of a large organizational framework is a necessary concomitant to a social movement if the latter is to succeed. It must, however, be of such a quality that the movement is able to regard it as its own, to retake and transform them, as it comes into its own. Otherwise it must try to reconcile itself with the movement OUTSIDE and risk being a de facto party.

The need for a large organization notwithstanding, the question of organization is not one that can be answered quantitatively. Size is not the only criterion for effectiveness. The failure of the largest libertarian organization in history, that of the CNT-FAI was due neither to its insufficient size nor to its insufficiently "libertarian" outlook, as if libertarianism can be conceived on some absolute scale. It was rather the failure to transform its praxis and its incapacity to analyze the situation in which it found itself. I submit that the problem of the absolute sovereignty of the base (its insurgence) and of developing a thoroughgoing and flexible analytical capacity are still at the core of our difficulties. Any viable revolutionary organization is going to have to be capable of handling complex debate and continuous mutability.



It is of course evident that we do not have as yet a large organizational framework. It is the unfortunate product of the era of small groups (or the era of large-organizational incapacity, whichever view one wishes to take) that the role of small groups in the revolutionary process has tended to be realized out of proportion to their real achievements. The Petofi Circle and the Situationist International were able to spark revolts, but neither was able to prepare the ground for a protracted social insurgency of sufficient quality to readily change its tactics and reassess its theoretico-practice characteristics that are prerequisites to success. Such groups will always lack staying power, whatever their initial usefulness. The heroic days of the Promethean groupuscules are at an end.

In the way that such a metaorganization might come about, I feel that a functional or organic development is the most well-reasoned. Rather than postulate "an organization" and then squeeze the parts to fit, it would seem meet to have the functions (information gathering, theoretical-informational, journalistic, gatherings for discussions and activity,

etc.) come together and establish the most reasonable framework in order to coordinate their activities. In this way the organization would be constituted on an already practical and collective footing. Thus, it would not be the traditional "loose alliance", nor would it be a gathering under the hegemony of the initiatory group. The metaorganization can only be of a real value, of something that small groups recognize that they cannot do for themselves, for it to provide a sound basis for a viable large organization.

C. Dunnington

KICKED A CADILLAC (Dented a Daimler)

South Africa is very much in the news these days invading my consciousness again

like when I was a longhaired hippy
idealistic gravedigger — 22
and summerstudent Brian
who shared Bob Dylan graveyard duets
and was Anglo-Indian
recommended other culture to me
and so I went to see 'End of the Dialogue'
about South African apartheid
alone, one hot summer night

That was 7 long years ago
all I remember of that smuggled movie
is British—made RB '47s loaded with napalm
based 10 minutes flying time
from black African compounds
tales of murder, passes, degradation
reminded me of 5 years in Georgia
prison gangs amplified
Lester Maddox controlling a country

I am proud that sitting there alone
my anger built and built and built
until neatly filing out of the cinema
into London streets
a big white curbside Rolls or Daimler
or to me a 'Cadillac'
I freaked — I went completely fucking bananas
class elites — imperialisms — socialisms unheard of
I saw the enemy
and in my workboots I kicked the shit
out of that car
right in front of the theatre.
No one stopped me
nor applauded
and I didn't look back
as I strolled away

but I remember hoping
that the rest of the departing viewers
were kicking shit out of that car
in the calm and business—as-usual British way
as they streamed by

Later at Richmond station
I met a young black friend and I told him, shaking a bit
what I had done.
'Congratulations, Chris', he said,
'but that's not like you. You're
so peaceful.'
Right fucking on, brothers in Soweto!
I'm getting even more peaceful.
I'm trading my boots for a 303.

Chris Faiers

HEADLINE OF THE MONTH

Vorster may get mandate
to turn to dictatorship

Bain Ave. controversy

Note: The last issue of The Red Menace carried an article entitled "Bain Co-op Meets Wages for Housework". The article was a report on the political polarization that took place at Bain Ave. apartments, involving groups of tenants with sharply differing views of the future of the project, and was strongly critical of the role played by the Wages for Housework rent freeze group in the dispute. Printed below is a response to that article written by the three principal organizers of the rent freeze group. It is followed by a reply from Ulli Diemer, the author of the original article. The Red Menace asked representatives of the Bain Ave. majority to respond to the submission from the rent freeze group as well, but their response was not ready as of press time.

To the editor,

After reading Ulli Diemer's political thriller, "Bain Ave. meets Wages for Housework", we must say it is a fine piece of fiction. However sometimes the truth is more exciting.

We apologize for being so busy during the struggle that we forgot to read the "Libertarian Handbook on Working Class Behaviour, sec. 4 — Tenants." The managers of the Bain Co-op are also angry that so many people ignored their circulars on "How to Pay Rent Increases". Your articles is useful however, for amplifying a number of misconceptions that the Co-op managers and assorted leftists here pushed, in order to stop the struggle. But you were able to out-do even them—for they knew that they could never sell such a cornucopia of inaccuracies and distortions here at Bain. Since the points that we could take issue with are so numerous, it is best to isolate a few themes you chose to dwell on.

a) Perhaps the most amazing part of your analysis was the idea that the tenants were at fault for being interested in "putting more money in their pockets". You obviously feel that we would be better off trading in our standard of living for the Co-op's offer of "community control". Maybe you think we should organize next for an even greater increase — that would really impress the government with the Co-op's management capability! Ironically, that is exactly the track record of our Co-op leaders during the last two years. But as a fellow tenant said at one of the rent increase meetings, "What good is ownership if I can't afford to live here". Records show that between January 1977 and October at least 50 units have been vacated at Bain, and more are still moving. And we will be getting another increase of between \$11 and \$32 in a few months, the 4th in only three years.

For you to tell us, as tenants and workers, that we should not care about money, or organize against an 18% rent increase because we "walked into it with our eyes open" is an incredible piece of arrogance. Exactly what kind of identification with tenants do you or your magazine claim to have? What do you think past struggles at Bain or by tenants elsewhere have been about? Do you think that tenants fought against evictions, for rent control, and for better maintenance so that we could pay through the nose in a Co-op? Where have you, as a so-called community reporter, been for the last 15 years? Why is it OK with you for workers in the factory to want more money, while here in the community, money becomes a 'vulgar' thing. You are asking us to subsidize the left's ideal of "community control" with our free labour. The co-op like yourself feels that money and more work are no object whatsoever for tenants. If we want better maintenance, either we pay more or we live in a slum, unless we make up the difference with our own free labour, shovelling side walks, repairing leaky faucets, and building the "co-op spirit". And all the while, Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation pockets \$350,000 a year in interest payments from Bain tenants. This is really what Co-op and government "Non-profit" housing are all about. We are sorry to inform you that money is still our only defence against more free work for the State. Shutting up and waiting to see if the co-op — after more than 2 years of stalling — was really going to stop skyrocketing rents here was something we damn well were not going to do. We wanted affordable housing, good maintenance, and to keep our hard-earned money in our pockets. If that's asking too much, then there isn't a bit of difference between you and Trudeau telling us we are "living too high off the hog" and to lower our expectations!

b) One of your main obsessions was the composition of the group of tenants who were organizationally active, and the role Wages for Housework played in the struggle. Spiced with comments like, 'this group consisting primarily of members and supporters of WFH...' or 'now reduced to its original core of WFH people,' etc, your objective presumably was to portray the tenants who were active in our struggle

as small in numbers, and part of WFH only. Does it not seem odd to you that there was such a massive reaction from the Co-op governors, the City of Toronto, and last but not least — yourself? Or perhaps you could explain how a handful of tenants could possibly keep a struggle going for 6 months? In any case, you personally watched 137 tenants vote against the Co-op at the May '77 referendum on ownership here at Bain — a vote that was clearly against the control of our money and lives by either the Co-op or the government. We know, and we suspect you know, that your attack on Wages for Housework and the struggle here, is nothing more than a clear trashing of the many tenants who do not happen to share your ideas on how to fight for their needs.

Certainly Wages for Housework was involved in the struggle from early on. However it was a development far less mysterious or conspiratorial than you would have us believe. A tenant, who was in our already quite rebellious group opposing the increase, simply offered the resources of the Wages for Housework Campaign — both in terms of technical help, and also their experience, in making other fights for money and against unpaid work. No one thought this was odd — especially as most of the tenants who were active were also women (a situation which happens to be common in tenant struggles everywhere). Neither were there any cries of 'outsiders'. If you jog your memory as a community reporter, you may recall that help from outside groups and individual tenants was common in all the major housing battles like South St. Jamestown and Quebec-Gothic. Then as now, it was welcomed and needed to win. Solidarity among tenants wherever they live, is not our invention.

Also, in contrast to your idea that we had some sort of monolithic organization taking orders from WFH — quite the opposite was true. We made group decisions on possible routes of action, and no decision prevented any tenant from making their fight in any way they pleased — in fact, a number of tenants expressed their opposition to the Co-op on their own, which was something we always welcomed and encouraged. Perhaps this is why you saw the 'tactics' so far removed from your own and the left's rigid ideas of tenant struggles. Your conception of women's leadership and the role of Wages for Housework at Bain is clearly rooted in the traditional position that those with less power should submit to those who claim to represent 'the majority'. But when they do, their own specific interests are always lost. You say, for example, that 'of course the issues (of high rents, etc.) concern male and female residents equally'. In fact, the women were in the forefront of the struggle precisely because it effected them more. Not only do women with a second job have only half the money of men, but full-time housewives know that rent increases mean still more housework — more budgeting, bargain-shopping, and soothing family tensions which always mount up quicker when money is tight. Your comments claiming that tenants with subsidies — most of whom are women — are 'not affected' by rent increases because of increased subsidies is also wrong. Not only do they feel the increased poverty of their neighbours, but they themselves are further 'in the hole', as future wage increases simply mean a lower subsidy. Subsidized tenants, in fact, were among the most active organizers of the rent freeze.

What lies just beneath the surface in your article is not simply your objection to the role of Wages for Housework here (which you did not do much to find out about anyway), but rather the fact that you, like the Co-op managers could not stomach a struggle led by women which broke all the rules in the book because 'democracy' was the instrument of the more powerful Co-op forces against us.

c) Much of your thesis seems to rest on a rather dogmatic notion of "community control", and of course, the unquestionable virtues of "the democratic process". Had you bothered to include a few minor facts such as the wave of door-to-door visits by the Co-op office staff and council members telling tenants that supporting the rent-freeze would surely mean their eviction and/or loss of their rent subsidies — it might have put that vote against the rent-freeze in a more realistic perspective. Many tenants simply did not want to show their support publicly after having been intimidated. Who, after all, meets them at the Co-op office if they want something done, or if the rent is late? You might also have mentioned the fact that our so-democratically-elected council here at Bain had only 13 people running for the 12 positions, and about 45 tenants out of 400 voted them in. Or perhaps you might have explained why the Co-op managers frantically lobbied ward aldermen to change the rules set for the referendum on ownership immediately after the City committee had arbitrated a compromise between the Co-op and the tenants' organization. Had the rules agreed upon been used, we would have won the vote with 37% of the tenants against the

Co-op. You also conveniently described the Co-op meeting to evict tenants withholding rent as having "voted by a large majority to issue eviction notices". In actuality, although 120 tenants attended the meeting, most were disgusted with the affair, and the vote was only 57 to 23 — hardly a blazing majority of the Co-op. And finally, why if you and the Co-op are so concerned about the City of Toronto being the cause of our high rents, did the Co-op council decide to forgo action against the City for the misuse of \$300,000 — over the constant demands of tenants to do so for at least one and one-half years? Had you included these and other points, it would have of course been difficult for you to write your article at all. But for us here, it was precisely this kind of "democracy" and "community control" that we opposed. It was, in fact, our struggle for affordable housing that was trying to bring back tenant control — control that we had won in the past here at Bain by fighting back against the City.

You would have us, instead, 'form a disciplined corporate entity capable of dealing with the government bureaucracies which provide the necessary capital, and even in a sense, that tenants become their own landlord'. If you can't beat them, join them, right Ulli? The Co-op has always been quite cozy with the governments (while at the same time putting on airs of opposition of course). And this ownership deal was too good for the Co-opers to refuse. The City politicians would help the Co-op by changing the rules, and issuing eviction orders for the Co-op, and the Co-op managers would become the proud owners of Bain Ave., while many of us would be forced to move out. In return, the Co-op would of course, enforce rent increase, and generally keep the tenants from making any demands.

It was also quite useful to keep us split from the other City of Toronto Non-profit Housing tenants, who at that time were at the boiling point over their own rent increases — and watching Bain Ave. very closely. You certainly mystify the State, Ulli — which for you can only be in Ottawa or in some corporate office. But it was quite clear that for us as tenants at Bain, the actions of the Co-op put the State right at our doorsteps. Tenants here were not as confused about that as you are. At the rent-freeze meeting, a tenant who had seen landlords at Bain come and go, asked whether the speaker for the Co-op was 'working for the City'. Other tenants quite seriously wondered whether a red flag would go up in the courtyards after the Co-op took over. And we were quite right in associating the Co-op managers and the left with the State — for their position in the name of Co-op ownership and 'community control' was austerity, high rents, and free labour or forced eviction.

It is incredible to us that you underwrite this position simply because of the supposed 'democratic process' that was going on at Bain. Trudeau got elected democratically no? And as a Canadian Native put it at a Co-op general meeting, 'For our people, democracy is best demonstrated by the activities of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police against us'. If we were expected to wait to fight until the 'will of the majority' let us, whether at Bain or elsewhere, then not only the tenants here, but also women, blacks, native peoples, and others would be waiting in vain for the go-ahead.

Finally, where does the Red Menace stand in this controversy between the tenants and the Co-op managers at Bain? From the slogan on your back cover, "Capitalism is icky", it seems that like Ulli, you are not about to get your hands dirty with "vulgar things" like the struggle by workers for money. And maybe like the Co-op, you also long for a little hide-away subsidized by the free labour of the workers and tenants. If so — TOUGH LUCK!

For the Tenants Voice,
Linda Jain
Francie Wyland
Steve Oltuski



Ulli Diemer replies:

..The reply from the "Tenant's Voice" refers to my article as "a fine piece of fiction" and as "a cornucopia of inaccuracies and distortions". However, the reader will look in vain through the reply for any indication of just which facts in my article are supposed to be untrue or distorted, since the "Tenant's Voice" addresses itself solely to my real and imagined conclusions rather than to the facts I cited to support them. I suggest that readers go back and compare the reply with my original article: they will find that the central facts I cited there are not challenged in the reply, but simply passed over in discreet silence.

Where inaccuracies and distortions do appear, however, is in the reply from the "Tenants's Voice". I will leave most of these for later refutation by the Bain majority; here I just want to take up a few items that specifically misrepresent key aspects of what I said.

The reply states I advocate that tenants "form a disciplined corporate entity capable of dealing with government bureaucracies which provide the necessary capital" and "...that tenants become their own landlord". "If you can't beat them, join them, right Ulli?" they say. In fact, however, the quotation they cite has been blatantly taken out of context. It actually appears, as anyone can verify by checking the original article, as part of a discussion of the **potential problems** of co-ops, and is specifically made as a criticism. In the passage in question I state, among other things, that the Bain experience "does not necessarily mean that it is best to pursue the co-op route", that in a co-op "residents' control is greatly restricted by the fact that urban land continues to be controlled by the forces of the capitalist market", and that "one of the main drawbacks of the process of becoming a co-operative as it took place at Bain was the way it channelled the energies of a significant number of active and politically aware residents into legal and bureaucratic activities". To tear part of one sentence out of that discussion, deliberately misrepresent it, use it to make it appear that I am an apologist for the very things I am drawing attention to and criticizing, and use this as a pretext for launching into a long diatribe against my supposed views—views I have specifically rejected in the very passage the quote has been taken from — well, I think this kind of tactic speaks for itself.

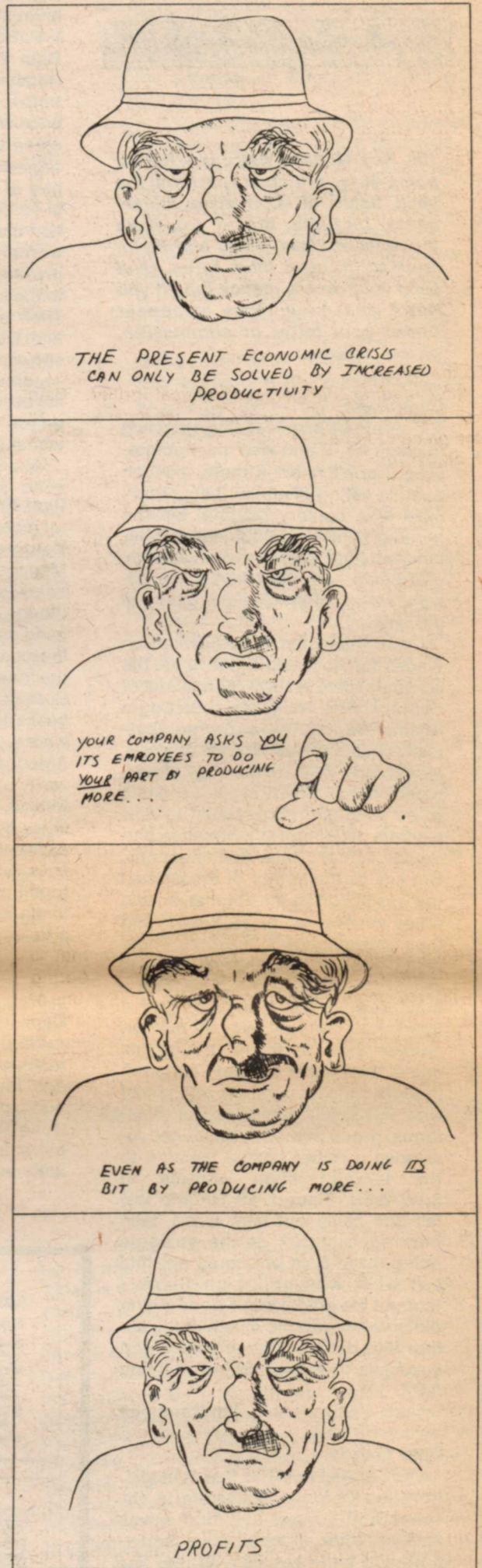
Elsewhere, they attribute to me the view that "tenants were at fault for being interested in 'putting more money in their pockets'", that "we should not care about money", and that "it is OK...for workers in the factory to want more money, while here in the community, money becomes a 'vulgar' thing". Nowhere did I say or imply anything of the sort. What I did say was (a) that "residents were of course interested in paying as little rent as possible...And they thought a co-op would be the best way of achieving that goal." (b) that the Wages for Housework stance was "a short-sighted position even in its own terms, since most co-ops do have a better track record on rents" (c) that if necessary residents were willing to make some short-term financial sacrifices in the expectation of benefitting financially in the long run, and that this was a valid decision, and (d) that the Wages for Housework position is a "vulgar form of economic determinism" because it is based on the premise that people will **only** respond, and can **only** be organized around, issues that have to do with putting more money in their pockets.

It is this last point that is the key to the elitism of Wages for Housework. They think they have discovered the key to the class struggle, and insist on fitting

everything onto their Procrustean bed. (The Trotskyists have essentially the same approach with their fetishization of correct "transitional demands" and "correct slogans".) Let us be clear: **there is no dispute at all about the importance and validity of economic demands, whether in the workplace or in the community.** What is under dispute is Wages for Housework's insistence that money is the **only** thing around which it is permissible to organize, their arrogant belief that working class people **cannot** be interested in anything except money, and their demonstrated determination to actually sabotage working-class struggles that refuse to stick to the narrow goals Wages for Housework has predetermined for them. In this respect, Wages for Housework appears as a degenerated version of Leninism. Where Lenin proclaimed that the working class could by its own efforts attain only a narrow economic consciousness, and added the corollary that it was the role of bourgeois intellectuals to bring socialist consciousness to it from the outside, Wages for Housework accepts the original proposition but adds a new corollary: the theory that it is the role of middle-class radicals (born-again under the all-encompassing rubric of "housewife", which conveniently erases all class distinctions) to **make sure** that the working class does not transcend the supposed economic limits of its consciousness.

Where this thinking leads became rather clear at Bain: Those residents who share the objective of forming a co-op—the vast majority—are characterized as the enemy, even though they are far more representative of women, the poor, and the working class (the group Wages for Housework claims to represent) than the rent freeze group. The rent freeze group is played up because it is led by women who are taking on "management" or "the co-op". (The terms are used interchangeably, and it is stated, quite falsely, that "the Co-op managers would become the proud owners of Bain Ave.") Never mind that the co-op consists of all residents, who all share ownership equally, and that major decisions are made at face-to-face meeting anyone can attend: the residents, we are assured, are manipulated by the executive. Who is on the executive? Twelve people, nine of them women, three of them single mothers on social assistance. They pay the same rents as everybody else. Never mind, they are not representative. How did they get on the executive? Well, they were elected, but elections are just bourgeois democracy: Trudeau was elected, and he isn't representative. But wasn't the decision not to hold a rent freeze made at a well-attended meeting, after a great deal of leafletting, canvassing, and face-to-face discussion, by a 120 to 16 vote? Yes, but the leafletting by the pro-co-op group massively defeated again in a referendum where 87 per cent of residents voted by secret ballot? Ah yes, but that's voting, and that's bourgeois democracy, and that doesn't count, remember? The government should intervene to impose the will of the minority on the majority. (But isn't the government itself the main example of bourgeois democracy? Never mind, let's not go off on tangents...) Besides, the people who favour the co-op want (collective) ownership of their homes, so they can't really be working class or poor, since we all know homeowners are bourgeois. Everybody knows only tenants are really working class, and even then only if they agree with Wages for Housework...

Thinking like this can't be argued against. But then maybe it doesn't have to be.



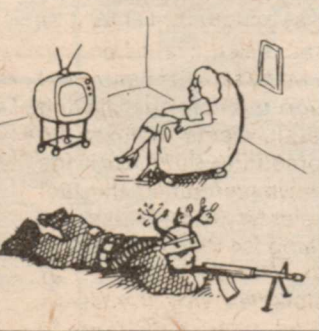
HI, THIS IS "DUKE" WAYNE IF YOU'RE UNEMPLOYED AND LOOKING FOR A JOB WITH BALLS - I'VE GOT THE ANSWER - M.T.I.



MERCENARY TRAINING INSTITUTE!



THAT'S RIGHT, YOU CAN LEARN MILITARY TECHNIQUES RIGHT IN THE PRIVACY OF YOUR OWN HOME.



AND WE CAN GUARANTEE IMMEDIATE JOBS. JUST CONTACT OUR PLACEMENT OFFICE - IN ANGOLA.



The above cartoon is from "Tube Strips", by Bill Plympton. Plympton is a New York cartoonist who is said to spend all his time in front of the TV set. At any rate, all the cartoons in this delightful collection are from the world of television — featuring people like Walter

Cronkite, Richard Nixon, Gerry Ford, and Patty Hearst. Tune in for the whole program. The book is available from Smyrna Press, Box 841, Stuyvesant Station, New York, N.Y. 10009, U.S.A.

DONATIONS APPRECIATED

If the Red Menace is to survive, it has to pay its bills. To do that, we need help from you. Subscriptions and sales are the financial backbone of The Red Menace, of course, but so far they haven't been paying the bills. To get by, we have been relying on donations from people who consider The Red Menace important enough to give additional financial support to. Please send us whatever you feel you can afford: The Red Menace, P.O. Box 171, Postal Station D, Toronto, Canada.

Letters



The Red Menace welcomes letters, comments, criticism, pats on the back, tidbits of information, literary gems, pictures, etc. If you have thoughts or ideas others may be interested in, send them to us. (And send your excess money too.) If you don't want your name to appear under your letter or submission, please indicate.

Comrades:

I have just been reading/glancing through No. 2 and was much impressed. I don't know if there is much point in listing of all the things that I liked at a cursory reading, eg. the humour (which was not just another leftist attempt to be funny but actually was humorous) the clean, crisp design, variety of articles etc. but I just did anyway.

I was interested in the article on Wages for Housework (WFH) vs. the co-ops since in 1975-76 I had a lot of contact with WFH and Struggle Against Work (SAW) in Toronto. I basically accept the SAW/WFH analysis, particularly that of the now (fortunately) defunct SAW since it seemed to be so much more related to how workers in general and myself in particular actually face job situations. But just as the author of the article I too was put off by the dogmatism and crude economism of SAW/WFH and their over-reliance on the state. There didn't seem to me and still doesn't seem to me to be any real contradiction between their analysis and a libertarian perspective. In fact an analysis such as theirs strengthens one of the weaker parts of libertarian thought which is concrete analysis of what is actually going on. But an informal group of men in Kitchener developed a rather hostile reaction to the leninist style politics of SAW/WFH. Since I left Ontario last fall and came out here I had been hearing rumours of the struggle going on at Bain but could not find out what was going on there. I thought the article was a good example of left reportage in which the author lays out his own prejudice and succeeds to a large extent in being fair.

Jim Campbell

Dear friends:

I got an issue of 'The Red Menace' from the Octopus Bookstore in Ottawa, and I must say that I was amazed: after all these years, somebody out there agrees with me! For the longest time, I thought that all theory and action on the left in Canada was tied up in Marxist-Leninist bullshit and the libertarian left was aemic and/or weak. To me, the publication of the Red Menace signals a revival of the kind of anti-authoritarian left politics that I have always held near and dear.

Anyway, to aid in continuing Red Menace's subversive meanderings, enclosed you will find a money order.

Randy Barnhart

Dear Friends:

I was excited about the contents in the current issue of the Red Menace.

But one question still has not been answered to my satisfaction: What is the difference, if any, in your mind between libertarian socialism and anarchism?

Oh, yes, there was one article about libertarian socialism which stated at the end that anarchism failed because it failed — how has it failed to

begin with? I am thinking, in particular, of the Spanish experience. Anarchism in itself did not fail but rather the opposition of the socialist and Stalinist parties to the needs of the people expressed through anarchism.

I also read with great interest the Bain Co-op article re: Wages for Housework Committee. I have had both personal and political experience with this group and do, indeed, agree with the author of the article regarding their totalitarian tactics. As part of the women's movement here in Toronto, I take exception to the notion that the WFH group is part of the women's movement — they have proved to be just as disruptive with feminists as they have anywhere else. Their critique of population control and women's work in the personal sphere is accurate but their "economic determinism" (as stated in your article) is and will continue to divide them from the rest of the women's movement.

Pat Leslie

Dear Friends:

I recently received — unsolicited — Volume 2, Number 1 of the Red Menace. Thank you for sending it. I enjoyed the magazine as a whole, though what makes it stand out in my mind are the two concrete articles — the one on working in libraries and the one on the tenants' struggles. Both of them stand out as among the best articles I have recently read anywhere. (If you see the journal Radical America, I urge you to look at the essay by John Lippert on a wildcat in Detroit, which I liken to these two articles in The Red Menace). Personal experience, social analysis, and critical strategic questions are all woven together. Great stuff! I urge you to try to dig up, encourage, develop similar articles in the future.

Peter Rachleff

Dear friends:

Thanks for sending us your magazine 'Red Menace'. We read it and found it very good, with some interesting articles. We thought the Open Road was the only libertarian paper in Canada, but we were pleasantly mistaken.

Pete Webb,
Zero

Dear Friends:

Many thanks for your Summer 1977 issue of The Red Menace. We think that this latest issue of your paper is particularly good. You bring to the surface many important points on anti-authoritarian thinking which are missed in the all too many superficial magazines which are circulating. And the element of satire you bring in is also very good: your send up of Mao is hilarious.

Love and freedom, Hennie Mulder
HAPOTOC
Amsterdam

Dear R.M.

Thanks for sending me the summer issue. I found it well worth reading, and am looking forward to the next one.

I hope you do get some shorter articles and features as you asked for, because I think it would be a good addition.

The graphics were mostly good in my estimation, but I would like to see more of real live people and things, instead of only drawing, etc. After a while it starts looking like Saturday A.M. TV...

Larry Kisinger

Dear Red Menace:

I read your Vol. 2, No. 1 from cover to cover and now I need some copies to give my friends! What got to me, especially, were, your inclusion of discussion at the individual and interpersonal level as well as more abstract articles, and second, your humour (and layout) — these latter make it easier for my friends to read too!

Not to forget the relaxed, open-minded tone of the whole paper — as opposed to grumpy didacticism.

Best of luck,
Bill Deacon

Dear Red Menace:

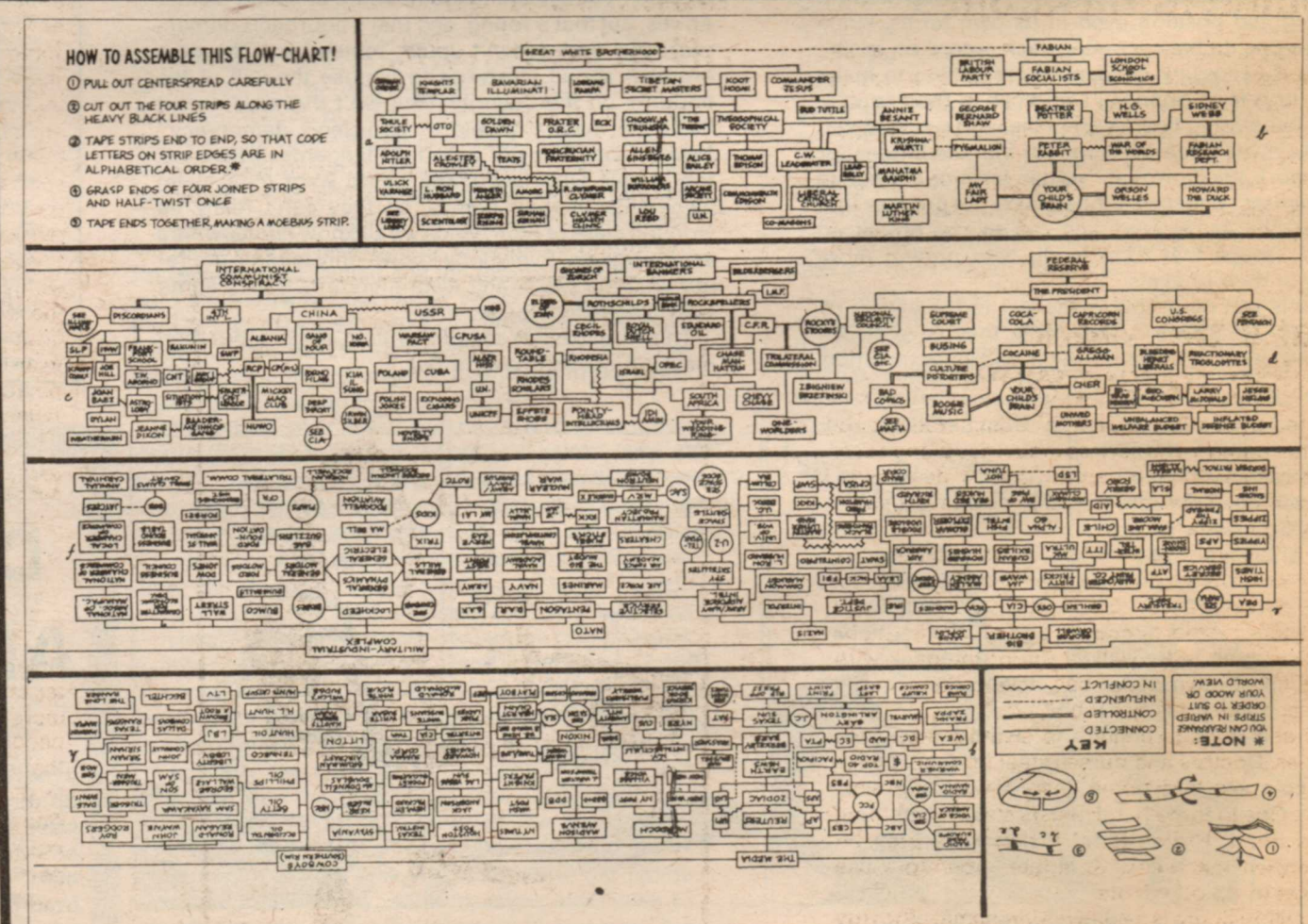
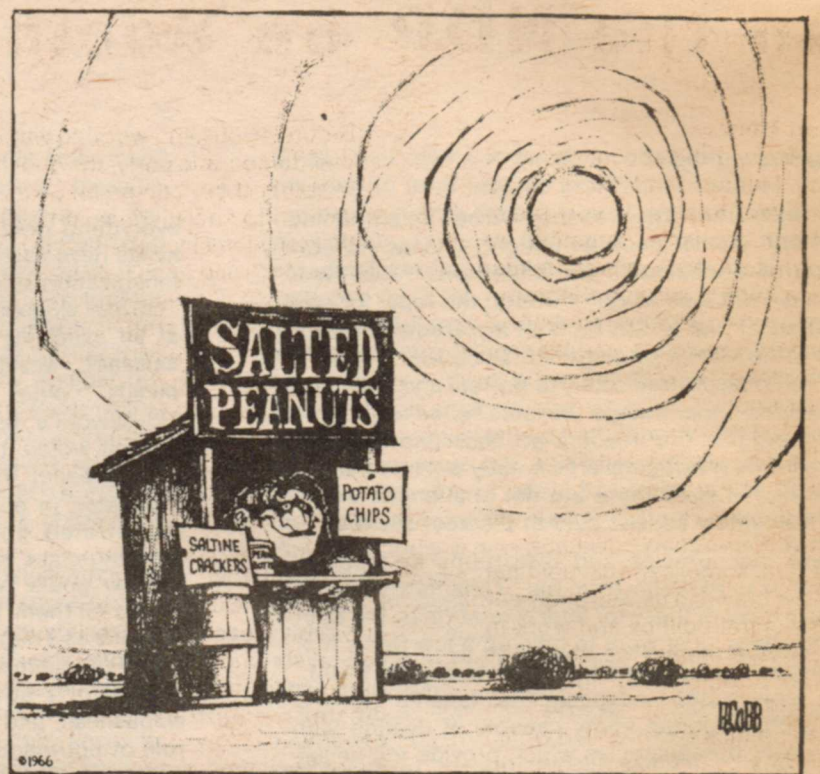
I fortunately obtained a copy of your newsletter. Most people would not go beyond the front cover. However I found the articles and comics a refreshing change from the massive amount of drizzle that is published in our modern times. You present a different viewpoint which I feel deserves further investigation.

P.A.

Dear people:

I like the idea a lot. I especially like the "non-sectarian" character. You don't seem to think that you have the revealed word from God that papers like the Fifth Estate have.

Stephen Soldz



From Cover-Up Lowdown, by Jay Kinney and Paul Mavrides. Published by Rip Off Press, P.O. Box 14158, San Francisco, Calif. 94114; U.S.A. This is only a small

fraction of their 'Amazing Pull-Out Total-World-Conspiracy Moebius Flow-Chart. It is truly amazing folks.

Can the NDP be Socialist?

Dear Red Menace:

I just received the second issue of The Red Menace and there is no doubt in my mind that you are a RCMP front. The issue contained little or no rhetoric and was very readable. Since such a situation is in opposition to over one hundred years of "left" history, I must assume the repressive forces of the state are trying to pull a fast one!

Seriously, I thoroughly enjoyed the issue — especially the article on the Bain Co-op. The article on office work was also useful. The issue deserves the widest distribution possible.

There are some serious political differences between us. I strongly advocate electoral politics and work in the NDP. Nevertheless we share the goals and principles of libertarian socialism. Enclosed is an article of Canadian politics and the NDP which I would very much like to see reprinted in The Red Menace so that your magazine can be a forum among libertarian socialists with opposing views.

Best regards,
Simon Rosenblum

Socialism and social democracy

A debate concerning socialism vs. social democracy has begun to engage the left. One expects to find substantial discussion regarding the New Democratic party but the Canadian left is surprisingly uninvolved in the NDP. The NDP is a social-democratic labor party, partly based on and largely financed by the trade unions. Contrary to most Canadian leftists, I believe that the NDP, whatever its past and present shortcomings, can eventually be turned into a socialist party genuinely committed to the creation of a radically different social order.

Before discussing working within a social-democratic party, the question of whether there can be an electoral transition to socialism must be dealt with. Many leftists argue that the parliamentary 'road to socialism' is not a road at all; it is a dead end. The most common complaint is that the capitalists would never permit it and the Chilean tragedy is used as a definitive example. It is true that ruling classes don't just fold up their tents and slink away. Capitalists, if ever decisively threatened, will put up the strongest possible resistance, by whatever means they have on hand, to prevent their own extinction or harassment. But it is not true that this inevitably means armed resistance by capitalists and their military forces. Democratic traditions in advanced Western countries seem strong enough to allow one to envisage a major onslaught against the power of capital without risking the survival of democracy. Although often dismissed as 'revisionist' such an analysis was made by Marx and Engels who suggested that a socialist transformation in such countries as England and Holland, with their deep-rooted democratic traditions, might be relatively peaceful. The electoral alliance between the French Socialist and Communist parties may favorably resolve this question in the 1980s.

The electoral arena must be entered if socialism is to be put on the agenda of Canadian politics. The alternative is a politics outside the established formal democratic framework that continues to occupy a mystical never-never land. Such theorizing may intoxicate the militants, but it remains a fantasy. As long as the parliamentary route is available, a party that does not attempt to gain power through it will not be taken seriously. As a recent editorial in *In These Times*, an American radical paper, maintained: 'A movement that does not submit itself publicly to

the judgment of the people can never hope to gain their confidence and loyalty.' It is a tragic irony of 20th century history that the socialist and democratic traditions became to a significant extent, divorced. Again the words of an ITT editorial: 'To reject 'bourgeois democracy' not only confuses substance with form, but also implicitly or explicitly rejects democracy itself.'

Following from this orientation is the question for Canadian socialists of whether to work within the NDP or form a socialist party. The latter might seem like an attractive option but the close relationship of the labor movement with the NDP makes it extremely difficult for such a party to gain any constituency. It is by no means accidental that such attempts inevitably end up as small fringe groups lacking the strength to be taken seriously. Unlike the Democratic party in the U.S., the NDP is clearly a 'workers' party and enjoys deep loyalties as a result of this attachment. It is of little use to claim that the dispersion of illusions about the NDP will produce a climate in which a new party could take root: established parties are not disestablished that way. Only after an alternative has emerged do masses of people change their allegiance. Consequently, a meaningful socialist force can only be built through working to transform the NDP into a socialist party that can be the instrument for socialist victory in Canada. As indicated by efforts to transform the English, German and Swedish labor parties, the task is not an easy one and failure is at least as likely as success. Social-democratic parties have a striking tendency toward increasing conformity but there is no immutable law that says the NDP must always oppose socialist politics. Difficult or not, it is clear that if socialists cannot win over the membership of social-democratic parties they are unlikely to influence the general population.

Since the NDP (at least, on the national level) is far removed from the seats of power, there is a much greater opportunity of changing both its policies and leaders than has been the situation in England, Germany and Sweden.

It is true that there can be no purely parliamentary approach to socialism. Fundamental political change occurs only after a prolonged period of ferment and conflict within the principal cultural, social, and economic institutions of society. This necessitates what German student leader Rudi Dutschke called 'a long march through all the institutions of society.' The radical transmutation of the existing social order in a socialist direction will require a lot more than electoral legitimation and, within a complex and diffuse scenario, must include many different forms of action, pressure and struggle. The NDP must be transformed so that it actively intervenes in the day-to-day struggles of working people. The problem is to make the NDP capable of giving institutional expression to greater participation, to make it the leader and not the controller of — or substitute for — participant and democratic action. A reformed NDP must be present at every contradiction and conflict in society, and at every effort at invention and creation. The NDP must learn the necessity of making the question of socialism vs. capitalism central to all its public activity. This is the only way in which the consciousness of people, rather than the opinions of voters, can finally be changed.

SUPER-FAST RELIEF

Never before
anything like it!

Dr. Scholl's Zinopads not only give fast, nerve-deep relief... ease new or tight shoes... but also remove corns one of the quickest ways known to medical science. Try them!



Creeping contradictions

Revolution ruled out

Joe Clark, the leader of Canada's Progressive Conservative party, has ruled out revolution as a way of dealing with Canada's economic problems. While there are serious problems, which are all the Liberals' fault, they can be dealt with without resorting to economic revolution, Clark, the leader of the federal Conservatives, told an audience of businessmen recently. Mr. Clark is federal leader of the Conservative party.

What's the world coming to, anyway?

The United States Department of Commerce has reported that crime in the service industries alone costs U.S. business \$9.2 billion a year, mainly due to dishonest workers. Total loss to all business is estimated at \$30 billion a year.

Ripping off business takes all forms, according to the report. Truck drivers and dock workers steal cargo; teachers and students rob schools; bank clerks and loan officers juggle accounts and make fictitious loans. (One vault teller walked out of the bank with \$168,000 in a brown paper bag, telling the security guard it contained his pet rabbit.)

Lawyers and doctors collude to swindle insurance companies. Doctors and nurses steal from hospitals. Hotel employees take home linen, towels, curtains, rugs, etc. One in three hotel guests steals something from his hotel. Professional lockpickers prey on coin-operated machines. Computer operators use computers to rip off clients.

The \$30 billion figure is said to underestimate the true cost, because it does not include insurance premiums, police and security costs, expenses for prosecution, etc.

Sad, isn't it?

Don't sponge off government, says Philip

Britain's Prince Philip, who has won considerable attention and popularity in the media recently for his outspoken views, has put himself on the record as calling for more individual initiative and less depen-

dence on the government. Philip, while noting he is not an anarchist, said the main problem with society today is the way people rely too much on the government, and not enough on their own hard work and initiative. The virtues of free enterprise and the work ethic are being lost, said the prince. Philip, looking healthy and in good spirits despite the fact that he has been without work himself and on the dole for the past 58 years, called on state-owned enterprises to reduce their work forces and strive for greater efficiency. His comments were welcomed by British Left-wingers, who praised his seeming willingness to lead the way in making sacrifices for the good of the nation: Prince Philip's own wife holds a government job in an industry where both the number of people on the payroll and the wages being paid them have been rising rapidly.

Discrimination Exposed

In a series of exclusive articles, 'Canada's National Newspaper', The Globe and Mail, has revealed that class discrimination exists in China. In a much-praised expose, the Globe's Ross H. Munro — who was immediately expelled by Peking — says that in China people of certain class backgrounds have better chances of getting higher education and getting more desirable jobs. He also discovered that some people in China get paid much better than others, and that not everyone has access to free medical care. In this, of course, China stands in vivid contrast to Canada, where — thank God — the most complete equality and social justice prevail, thanks at least in part to the Globe's militantly socialist defense of egalitarianism and social justice on the home front.



We received a great deal of help in producing this issue from friends of the Red Menace. Thanks to Joe Szalai, Steve Izma, Bill Culp, Wayne Bell, and Goz Lyy.

THE RED MENACE

A Libertarian Socialist Newsletter

Who are we?

The Red Menace is a libertarian socialist newsletter published by a small collective of people living in Toronto and Hamilton. We call ourselves the Libertarian Socialist Collective.

What do we mean by calling ourselves "libertarian socialists"? Partly, that question is answered more fully elsewhere in this issue (see Contents on page 1) and partly, we are still trying to work it out ourselves. But we share some fundamental ideas:

What do we believe?

We believe that capitalism, the social system we live under (in whatever bureaucratic, "mixed", social-democratic, or "free-enterprise" variation) is deeply and fundamentally destructive of individuals, relationships between people and societies. There may be times when it produces progress of some kind, but its overpowering reality is always its warping and crushing of the potentialities of human beings and societies. Our society and its advanced industrial base give us the possibility of creating a world of abundance in which human needs and creativity shape the future. Instead, capitalism gives us chronic poverty and economic crises, war, alienating and meaningless work, commercialized leisure, immobile bureaucracies, a deteriorating natural and urban environment, oppression of minorities (and majorities), chronic social and "personal" problems, sexual frustration, trashy culture — in short, a crazy, miserable world that seems to be going downhill fast, with no one in control.

For many, many, people, "that's life". That's the way the world is, and there's nothing we can do about it except try to make the best of our lot.

For us, that's not enough. We believe that people can make their own future if enough of them want to badly enough, and act together to do it. We want to overthrow the capitalist system and build a new world in which freedom and creativity can flourish, a world in which people are in control, in which they run things democratically and collectively. A libertarian socialist world.

Such an alternative vision of the future can never be legislated, decreed, or installed by a coup-d'etat. It is far too revolutionary for that, for it requires that people change themselves even as they try to change society. Consequently, it requires active participation from the vast majority.

Right now, of course, we are a tiny minority, not a vast majority. But we believe that our ideas are reasonable and exciting, with the potential to capture the imaginations of those who now put up with this society.

The Red Menace

Our purpose in publishing *The Red Menace* is to reach people with our ideas, to develop and clarify those ideas, and to give other people the opportunity to share their visions and experiences through its pages. Through it, we hope to make contacts with people who like our ideas, and to start working with those people. We would like to branch out into other kinds of activities directed at social change as well: *The Red Menace* is not an end in itself (although the enjoyment we derive from creating it is.)

If you are interested, please contact us

We need your involvement

Thinking about society and how it could change is something that everyone does. It is not the exclusive province of a few theoreticians. We would like as many people as possible to contribute to this newsletter. We are especially interested in brief, to-the-point comments on specific problems: ideas, observations, etc. A couple of paragraphs or a page that offers a good insight is worth more than a long dry treatise that says nothing new. Nor does your contribution have to be "definitive": the tentative, the exploratory, is often the most fruitful.

Among the things we are interested in: articles about where you work, where you go to school, where you live, where you shop, where you play. Articles about political activities and organizations you are/have been involved in. Criticism and evaluation of what's happening on the left, in the women's movement, in society at large. Poetry. Observations about culture, everyday life. Book reviews. Artwork. Revealing anecdotes. Questions you don't have answers for. Questions you do have answers for.

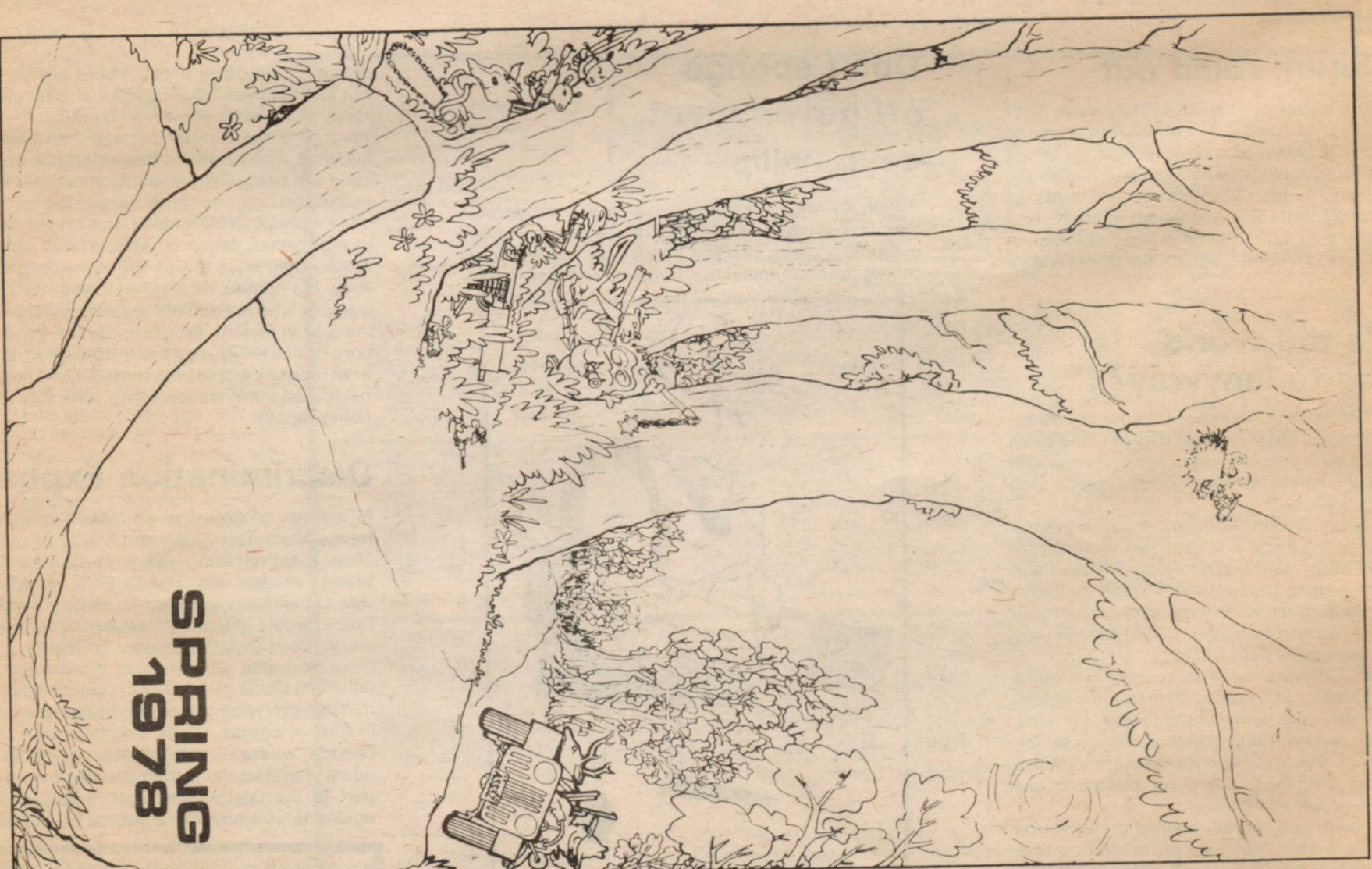
We need your money

We need money to put out *The Red Menace*. Each issue costs us roughly \$500 to put out, enough that we would appreciate financial help from those who like it and wish to support it. Our first two issues have been sent out free — future issues will be sent out only to those who indicate their interest by subscribing or by sending us their own creations. (However, *The Red Menace* will be sent out free to those who can't afford to pay, and those who have already sent money will continue to receive their subscriptions.)

Our subscription rates are \$3.00 for 4 issues, but if you can afford to send us more, please do. Our address is:

The Red Menace
P.O. Box 171
Postal Station D
Toronto, Ontario
Canada

THE RED MENACE



**SPRING
1978**

Volume 2, Number 2

.75

A Libertarian Socialist Newsletter