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FIVE PENCE

RULING CLASS CONSPIRACY

ERIC TOMLINSON and DENNIS WARREN have re-joined the increasing number of people convicted on political charges. These two building workers lost their appeal last week against their conviction under the 1875 Conspiracy Act. They, with other workers were convicted of conspiracy to intimidate workers to abstain from work, unlawful assembly and making an affray. They now have to serve out the remainder of their 2 and 3 year sentences.

But their 'crime' in the eyes of the State was that they played a prominent part in organising "flying pickets" during the 1972 building workers' strike. Such tactics, learnt from the coalminers, tipped the struggle against the employers in favour of the strikers. Without it, there seems little doubt that the strike would have been a defeat. As it was, the adoption of the "flying pickets" by numerous area strike committees sorted out and got rid of the 'lump' from hundreds of sites.

However, the authorities are always quick to spot any threat to their power and privilege. The use of the conspiracy act makes it easy for them, for no offence has to be proved. The conspiracy in fact is that of the ruling class against the

people. Wherever workers struggle for social justice they will be opposed by the police and the courts. It was the authorities who conspired to bring the prosecution against active trade unionists. They were not the only ones involved, but they were singled out. For twelve weeks during the summer of 1972 building workers organised themselves to fight their longest national strike in living memory. Their 'crime', like that many more, was that they adopted new tactics. They were not content to close down their own sites and sit back and watch the tele, they took the struggle to the 'lump' gangs who were only too willing to do the bosses' bidding.

At the time of the prosecution the mass media had been well prepared with speeches from Tory ministers and legal pundits on picketing. The mass pickets of the miners were condemned and attacked because the "flying pickets" prevented men from going about their normal work. In other words picketing

had become too effective. An example had to be made at the Shrewsbury Crown Court where the sentences were first given. They were deterrent sentences as a warning to all trade unionists. The harsh sentences were meted out to intimidate all workers. It is always a matter of conjecture whether these deterrent sentences have worked or whether if their appeal had been allowed pickets would adopt more aggressive attitudes. Certainly the police want no changes to the present picketing laws, which the trade union movement are pressing the Labour government for reforms. At the moment a picket has no right to talk to a lorry driver or a worker arriving by car.

But picketing, like the direct action it supports, is only successful when enough people take part. Solidarity remains the answer to all workers' struggles. Isolation and diversions make it easy for the employer.

So far the Union of Construction, Allied and Technicians has only put forward resolutions demanding legislation which would prevent the use of conspiracy charges and belatedly started to collect money for dependants and legal expenses. The major opposition has, like during the actual strike, come from rank and file trade unionists. Committees of trade unionists have campaigned for their release and now these efforts will have to be redoubled. All trade unionists should rally to their support, since an injury to one is an injury to all.

P. T.

NEWS from BELFAST

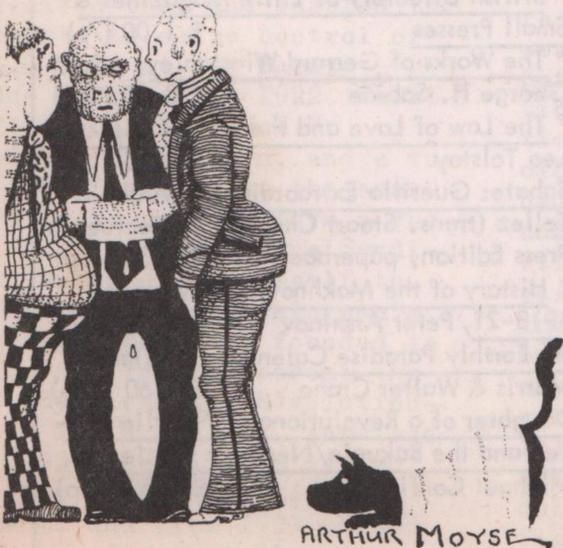
MONTHS AFTER the event, recriminations between the various factions involved in the stoppage of work last May continue and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) journal Combat attacks Ian Paisley for failing to support the stoppage until victory seemed assured. Paisley was not alone in this attitude, however, as factories in Protestant towns outside of Belfast continued in production until electricity supplies were cut off, and Craig and other leaders of the United Ulster Unionist Council (UUUC) did not jump on the Ulster Workers' Council (UWC) wagon until it became clear indeed that no effective measures to deal with the situation were going to be taken by the security forces. As one of the para-military forces most actively involved in the stoppage, the UVF may have expected some help from Paisley during the recent election, but they were in for a disappointment as the ex-graduate of Bob Jones University does not believe in sharing power with anyone and he put up a candidate in West Belfast, thus ensuring that the loyalist vote was split

between Paisley's candidate and the UVF nominee, Ken Gibson. It is futile for Combat to point out that "No one played a more active role in the overthrow of the power-sharing executive and Assembly than did Mr. Gibson and his fellow volunteers in the UVF and other para-military groups". Exactly; but having helped achieve the end that Paisley and his colleagues desired, the UVF and others are to be denied their share in the spoils of victory. "Power sharing", as the Belfast Newsletter described it, "which was, and is, the final concession," has gone and having got rid of the SDLP (Social and Democratic Labour Party) - temporarily at least - Paisley and his cronies are unlikely to share what power they have with the UVF.

The May stoppage undoubtedly accounts for the bigger than usual trading losses shown by Harland and Wolff shipyards this year, and even though proposals for a degree of workers participation in management are in the pipeline it is a certainty that worker

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AIMS
AIMS OF INDUSTRY



ARTHUR MOYSE

"I'VE A PLEA FOR HELP FROM A MR. SCANLON -- HE'S HAVING TROUBLE WITH THE WORKERS."

MEN'S RESISTANCE

WOMEN, RESISTANCE AND REVOLUTION, by Sheila Rowbotham (Pelican, 35p)

IMAGINE a book published in 1974 with the title "Men, Resistance and Revolution". It sounds ridiculous. That an important book called Women, Resistance and Revolution should be published towards the end of the 20th century is some indication of how far we have yet to go, in what is still a man's world and a conservative one at that. Inevitably such a book asks more questions than it answers. But in a way the most encouraging thing about it is its lack of certainty; we should be grateful that the author, a committed Marxist, is honest enough to admit to being confused on many aspects of feminism and revolution: "I have many ignorances and much hesitancy, which can't be cleared just by thinking about them." This is refreshing when too many radical women are intolerant, dogmatic and narrow-minded.

I read another book of Sheila Rowbotham's, Hidden from History. I didn't enjoy it and learnt little from it; it was too condensed; so full of facts and information that it was virtually unreadable. You felt it was written from a sense of duty - i.e. the necessity to write history strictly from a woman's point of view - rather than from any passionate desire to communicate. Women, Resistance and Revolution is also a sort of history book, but it's more concerned with tracing the history of political and social thought by and about women, and trying to relate them to current issues.

There are chapters on women's movements in Russia, China, Vietnam, France. England is covered from the 17th century to early this century, but not beyond. I only understood why this was when I read Woman's Consciousness, Man's World (also in Penguin) and discovered that the two were originally intended to form one book. Logically they still are one book; one complements the other, and while Woman's Consciousness... stands up well on its own, Women, Resistance and Revolution hardly does.

Some of the historical sections are perfunctory, sometimes the language is dense to the point of obscurity -- for instance, whatever is "anarchosadistic individualism"? But the book comes alive whenever what Rowbotham is saying relates to her own experience and preoccupations. The best passages reveal an understanding that comes from shared experience, and there are even glimpses of humour. Of the hypocrisy of the upper class Victorian family man towards

women, she says, "There is nothing like bed for reducing a theoretician to human proportions." It can't have escaped her notice that this remark applies equally well to large numbers of today's jargon-spouting male lefties.

There are some bizarre revelations too. For instance, homosexuality is a crime in Cuba (rings a bell? -- yes, ditto Russia, 1934), and this oddity: "makeup for young Cuban women is often the symbol of defiant liberation from the traditional control of parents". Liberation? It sounds a bit like England in the 1920's: do they shock the men by smoking too? Or are Havana cigars still macho? And this (still in Cuba): "the idea that sex is for the woman's pleasure as well as the man's -- that is the taboo of taboos". So much for Castro's brave new island.

Sheila Rowbotham's definition of what female oppression means, goes well beyond Marxist orthodoxy: "Subordination has a hundred shapes; it needs innumerable combined transformations. Socialism is not only the ending of class oppression or exploitation at the work place, but in every area of human experience. The regions of consciousness are not capable of tidy delineation, and the spheres of subordination interact." It may sound vague, but it's the only realistic way to approach what is still in many ways an amorphous and ill-defined subject.

What is also right is her determined call for a "new feminism". It seems that many socialists are unwilling to learn from the past: Marx, and Lenin, assumed that when capitalism was overthrown, other kinds of liberation would follow more or less automatically. In Russia they didn't. What Emma Goldman called "the internal tyrants" remained. And most left sects ignore those particular tyrannies - in family and sex relationships - now. So the author is right to demand "a distinct movement now, as a precondition of revolution, not its aftermath".

Implicit in this demand is an awareness of what happened in Russia in the 1920's. However, Rowbotham is too soft on Lenin. She gives a brief account of his conversation with Clara Zetkin, which somehow manages to convey the impression that Lenin's views on sex and the family were enlightened and progressive whereas in fact they were narrow and puritanical. The Revolution left intact authoritarian relationships and the fear of free-

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TO BLAZES WITH MONEY!

WE ARE given to understand that we live (if that is the word) in a period of inflation. Inflation is rather like the common cold or cancer, everybody can diagnose the illness but nobody knows the real cure.

Indeed some of the cures and side-effects are worse than the disease; 'deflation', a very popular Tory remedy, brings outbreaks of unemployment and cuts in public and social services. The Labour party's idea of 'disinflation' is almost the same thing, taken more slowly and with a different name. 'Reflation' is another Labour party remedy: this is rather homeopathic in its application, since it's just more of the same, applied in the hope that in time it will go away - just like the common cold. In their quest for cures the witch-doctors of economics have discovered an unique variation in the sickness - in which they obviously take great pride since they have given it a new name, 'stagflation': that is to say that we, the English, or the world economy, have succeeded in producing two contradictory symptoms at once -- an increase in the demand for goods and services causing inflation, and a falling-off in employment, causing depression. Isn't bacteriological life wonderful?

Nevertheless in spite of all this quackery there have been practical steps to halt the plague. Medical prophets and pioneers are rarely honoured till too late -- witness Semmelweiss, Pasteur and Co., all reviled in their lifetime. We have seen something similar recently in dealing with this new plague.

Every patent medicine addict knows that one of the symptoms of inflation is too much money in slow circulation. This money, sooner or later, means a demand for goods or services which must be fulfilled and paid for by ever-increasing amounts of money. Any citizen who withdraws money from circulation by saying it is assured-

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ly a patriotic loser, since the value of the money even plus interest will decline with inflation. This fact was kept from patriotic savers in wartime, as also was the fact that real patriots would destroy their banknotes and even forego the interest-bait. This would be real economic patriotism!

As ever in British crises, a man arose. Keith Mervyn Sharp, a company director of Keighley, Yorkshire, burned £16,000 in 1959 notes and buried the ashes in the garden. In this way he withdrew £16,000 from circulation (without interest except possibly horticultural benefits). Did he get thanks? Was he acclaimed for the pioneer he was? Will he get a mention in the economic textbooks along with Keynes and Gresham? No. All that happened was that those spoilsports the Inland Revenue - believed to have a substantial interest in the present economic fuck-up - fined Mr. Sharp £5,000 and £450 costs leaving his economic example still £10,550 to

the public good - gone up in smoke!

Alas. Mr. Sharp found his father's hoard of £16,000 and failed to declare it to the Inland Revenue, since it was in obsolete money, not changed without trouble. Hence the Inland Revenue. It wasn't even allowed to stay as fertiliser (money doesn't even grow chrysanthemums!) since the G-men dug it up.

But Mr. Sharp has shown the way. Incinerate not only the documents! Have you money to burn? To blazes with money. My joint has gone out, these fivers don't burn very well. Have you a light? A tenner will do.

J. R.

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MEN'S RESISTANCE...from Page 2, dom. As the Solidarity pamphlet on The Irrational in Politics put it, "The repressive mechanisms whereby female subjugation had become internalised in the minds of millions of women were not even suspected."

I hope this book's readers won't be exclusively female (a hope not encouraged by the off-putting cover on the Penguin edition, which shows a stereotyped chain-bursting butch old bag --courtesy Marx Memorial Library). Women's liberation can, obviously, only be understood in a context of general liberation. But how to come to terms with existing revolutionary groups? Rowbotham discusses a topic on which there's been endless debate in recent years. To put it at its crudest, radical women have a choice of isolating themselves in what too easily becomes an exclusive and excluding movement, or of becoming submerged in male-dominated movements. Sir Walter Walker's vision of dedicated women manning (sic) the soup kitchens when the red hordes threaten, has long been a commonplace in the catalogue of women's grievances against the left.

Both these tendencies can lead women to a paranoid hatred of men which is now common in the USA, less so here. It is ultimately both absurd and very destructive, personally and politically. It's instructive to recall Emma Goldman's description of the American suffragettes:

"...the great movement of true emancipation has not met with a great race of women who could look liberty in the face. Their narrow, Puritanical vision

banished man, as a disturber and doubtful character, out of their emotional life. Man was not to be tolerated at any price, except as the father of a child, since a child could not very well come to life without a father."

It's not hard to see the problem but it's immensely hard to discover ways of overcoming it. It's no less depressing than the hostility of men who clearly have a multitude of reasons for preserving the status quo in most areas of their daily lives.

What this book lacks is practical suggestions. There is virtually no mention of current feminist activities in Europe (the nearest to it - chronologically speaking - being the excellent and moving section on Algeria). Rowbotham gives no indication of what strategy might be evolved towards strikes - women's strikes, women supporting men's strikes and vice versa - though she has touched on this thorny subject in Women's Consciousness, Man's World. And what of other forms of industrial action, what of pursuing reforms in education, housing, health and at work? Should any of these activities be intensified, transformed, or even abandoned?

We all need to be able to hope, and Sheila Rowbotham's vision of the possibilities within us all is encouraging, if not optimistic. But I would have been glad to see in her book more detail, more about specific actions and particular campaigns. Because after all, as she says herself, we learn from doing things.

J. E.

DEAR MR. CROSLAND

IN YOUR speech at Brighton on October 30th you raised, very tentatively, the question of housing standards. Are they too high? Can we cut them to speed up the production of houses, or to make the cash go further? Casting doubt on the validity of housing standards usually happens on the Tory right ("are we pampering the poor?") or on the anarchist left (John Turner's observation that the important thing about housing is not what it is but what it does in peoples lives). In mainstream Labour Party circles the Parker Morris standards are a sacred cow, and the fact that you raise this issue shows how desperate you are. This is no wonder since last year's output of houses in both the public and private sectors was the lowest for decades, and now the brickworks are cutting production 'for lack of demand' so that next year, predictably, the stumbling block will be a brick famine.

You said "We face a short term emergency situation - cannot we provide more homes, more quickly, more cheaply, at least for a five year period while the emergency is still with us?" And you asked your Department to "conduct an urgent review of the problem and the options open to us", declaring that "I find our present situation so harmful, so intolerable, that I now place them firmly on the agenda for public and informed discussion by the experts."

But the very language you used shows that you have not understood the issues. Firstly this is not a short-term crisis but a permanent characteristic of our kind of society, and secondly that the "experts" are the last people from whom to seek solution; look at the ones they have given us in the past. Wasn't it the experts who gave us high-rise housing and the problem it has bequeathed us? Wasn't it the experts who bulldozed the humble homes of every inner city district in a blitzkrieg policy of raze-and-rise, where the urge to raze has outstripped the financial capacity to rise?

You have fallen into the same trap as Lord Goodman who, as chairman of the Housing Corporation and the National Building Agency, has for the last 18 months been gaining applause for his remark that "it is only in a society where we have a government working day and night in our behalf that housing problems are insoluble," but who, when he came to give the Dimpleby Lecture to a vast audience on TV could only ask for a more rapid turnover of the correspondence on official desks and "the establishment of a single authority having total autonomy".

You and he see the homeless, the ill-housed and overcrowded, and the newlyweds just coming up for membership of the Housing Shortage Club, as inert objects: the raw material of policy, waiting to be processed by the Housing Problem Industry. But suppose we turn the whole subject upside-down and assume that ordinary people are the makers, rather than the victims of policy. We can then see a totally new spectrum of opportunities and possibilities, some of which the "experts" dismiss as irrelevant, some of which they know nothing at all about.

Let me spell out eight of these alternative approaches:

1. The idea that a house is a fully-finished, fully-serviced object right from the start, belongs to a very small part of the world and a very small stretch of our own history. All through history homes have started humbly and been enlarged, improved and adapted over time. Today in the exploding cities of Latin America, what begins as a straw shack becomes in about fifteen years a fully serviced suburban house, through the efforts of its occupier, who, starting with nothing, invests his own energy, income and ingenuity in his home. I could take you to houses in the Essex 'plotlands' started before such efforts were ruled out of court by our building regulations, public health

OPEN LETTER

and planning legislation, where exactly the same phenomenon could be seen. But for us, seeing housing as a commodity rather than an activity, a house is either complete from the moment of occupation or it is illegal. If only we were a poor nation we would see the absurdity of this. Suppose we forget that we are rich and try out a site-and-services approach to housing not in Lima but in the man-made wastes of inner Liverpool, not in Dar-es-Salaam but in Dockland. Provide a service core: kitchen sink, bath, WC and ring-main connection (this is where prefabrication really would be useful) put up some party walls (to overcome the fire-risk objection), and you will have long queues of families anxious to build the rest of the house for themselves, or to get their brother-in-law or some moonlighting tradesman or the Community Industry to do it for them, within the party walls. Such a carnival of construction would have important spin-offs in other branches of the social problems industry: ad hoc jobs for unemployed teenagers, learning a trade for ROSLA kids, and so on.

2. In the aftermath of the First World War, when syndicalist and guild socialist ideas were in the air, guilds of building workers tendered for and built large municipal housing jobs, with the active support of Christopher Addison, the Minister of Health (then responsible for housing) and of Raymond Unwin, the very distinguished housing architect who was at the time chief architect for the Ministry, as well as the financial support of the CWS Bank. Large numbers of houses were built, but the whole Building Guild episode was cut short by the mini-slump of the early 20s, the 'Geddes Axe' of cuts in spending and by the antipathy of the next Minister Sir Alfred Mond. Why is such enterprise, with such support, unthinkable today? What is so holy about Wimpeys or MacAlpines? Why can't we, instead of conducting a phoney crusade against The Lump, give it a twist in emphasis and motivation, and use worker-controlled building guilds as one strategy for getting house-building going again? (In another field it has been realised that instead of persecuting illegal child-minders, we should provide them with training and opportunities. Precisely the same approach is applicable to lump labour in the building industry.)

3. We have in London and elsewhere the extraordinary situation that local authorities and housing associations are buying up houses in the open market, and are then allowing them to stand empty for months and even years, awaiting conversion. One housing association approached the National Building Agency for a report on how they could overcome the embarrassing bottleneck between acquisition and occupation. They were rewarded with a load of professional verbiage: a sledgehammer to crack a nut. Contrast this experience with that of a group of seven students from the Architectural Association School of Architecture. Deciding, as part of their self-education, that they should demystify the contracting process, they formed themselves into a partnership and tendered for a conversion job for a well-known housing association. Deciding that the specification and bill of quantities were really a matter of guesswork since no-one really knew what work was involved until they stripped off the slates and lifted the floorboards, they guessed at an estimate which turned out to be the lowest, so they got the job. They financed their operations without difficulty by going for an overdraft to the same bank as their clients, did the conversion rapidly and economically, had no difficulty at all in getting the specialist labour for the bits they couldn't do themselves, and finished

TO ENVIRONMENT MINISTER

critical of the scheme, realising that discussions between an ad hoc building group like themselves and the potential occupants of the flats would have resulted in a quicker, cheaper job.

4. Squatters in North London boroughs like Camden and Islington have also set about restoring and improving houses, using voluntary labour and unorthodox materials, at an infinitely lower cost and much more rapidly than the councils could. John Pollard has provided calculations to show that not only are they housing people at no cost to the exchequer, but that the failure of the councils to act on their own behalf is losing them a phenomenal sum in Treasury grants (£1,200,000 he claims in the case of Camden) and is also losing precious years of house-occupation for people on their waiting list.

5. Can't we learn another lesson from the squatters in the current case of Sumner House in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets? This is a block of flats built in 1929 which Tower Hamlets Council has been 'decanting' in order to carry out a thorough rehabilitation with lifts and central heating. It has been occupied by squatters (ordinary poor families on the Council's housing list) who in parleying with the Council have declared that they want to take the block over as a tenants' co-operative and to do their own rehabilitation in accordance with their own priorities -- which do not include central heating since they say they would have to turn it off anyway as they could not afford the bills. It remains to be seen whether the Council will co-operate or evict.

6. There is in Glasgow an enterprise sponsored by members of the Department of Architecture at the University of Strathclyde, called Project Assist. It has undertaken a rehabilitation programme for the typical old Glasgow tenement houses, with the co-operation of tenants or owner-occupiers, while the flats are still occupied. There is a mixture of tenures, and the project is so sensitive to occupants' wishes that it will by-pass a flat if necessary. It has a small team of nine men who work together on rapid and inexpensive installations of bathrooms and conversions of the typical three flats per floor into two. Glasgow Corporation itself in a massive change of heart has recently decided to undertake 28,000 rehabilitations. Both Glasgow Corporation and the Housing Corporation have looked very carefully at Project Assist, but I fear that the real lessons - intimate contact and co-operation with the families who live there - are going to elude them.

7. If housing standards were the vital consider-

ation, how is it that on one side of town, substandard private housing is cherished and continually improved by its occupants, while on the other, better-built Parker Morris standard council housing begins its cycle of deterioration the moment it is occupied? There is an urgent need to change to a mode of tenure which involves the tenants in the property. Every big authority has some housing which it cannot persuade people to occupy, so great is the stigma attached to it. It would be in the interests of maximum utilisation for these councils to give such property to co-operatives of would-be tenants to move in and rehabilitate it. The law, as it stands, precludes a council from adopting this solution. But if the DOE were to authorise such an experiment we would all learn a lot.

8. Even more suggestive is the experience of the USA, where following the total collapse of Federal housing policy, a variety of expedients are being tried out, including such attractive notions as "sweat equity", "urban homesteading" and several varieties of tenant co-operative. In St. Louis, where the famous Pruitt-Igoe project had to be blown up by the US army, there remained nine other public housing schemes. After a prolonged rent strike at one of them a team financed by the Ford Foundation recommended tenant control as a last resort. The team trained residents to run the estate for themselves. All staff, including the estate manager, were tenants. In the last few months the team has put the same programme into operation at three other estates in the city and has been called to Chicago and Newark to attempt the same thing there. They regard multi-occupation urban housing as the last frontier of dweller control: "If it can work there it can work anywhere." It is too early to say that this experiment is a success, but it does suggest an approach which is long overdue in this country.

Now, Mr. Crosland, in your speech you remarked that "The total resources we have available for housing are inevitably limited. It follows that the higher the standard of each individual unit, the lower the total number of units we can produce, and the longer we take to produce them." It sounds like elementary logic, but it is only true if we assume that the only factors in the provision of housing are the technocrats and the bureaucrats and the capitalist building industry.

The missing factor, left out of all the calculations, is popular involvement. Can we afford to go on leaving it out? This, and not the matter of standards is the real housing question.

Colin Ward.

In Brief

THE POLICE at their Federation conference rejected a motion calling for them to be given the right to strike. At the same time the central committee of the Federation was told to make sure that trade unionists working force was (the Guardian says) "kept at such a level" that if they did strike this would not "impair or imperil the efficient working of the service".

A RADIO programme and a book called The Last Secret (assuredly not the last) retold the

story of the Cossack prisoners-of-war (who had fought for the Germans) who were turned over by the British to the Soviet authorities. These Cossacks were tricked into surrendering, were herded by force into cattle trucks, many committed suicide, and eventually were thrown into Soviet labour camps or put on trial and executed. (Some of them were possibly summarily executed during the handover).

The Northern Ireland Office released figures showing that less than one-sixth of the people detained over the last eleven months had been detained

before and released. Detention orders have been signed on a total of 266 people since December 1973 and of these 43 had been detained previously, released, then detained again after varying periods of freedom.

AN INTERNATIONAL campaign succeeded in persuading the Chilean junta to release Carmen Castillo who was captured and wounded in a police shoot-out with the Movement of the Revolutionary Left. She was seven months pregnant. According to the International Committee of Jurists repression is worse now than at any time during the coup.

LETTER

Dear All,

While it is nice to see Monatte's side of the argument reproduced as well as Malatesta's, it's a pity that you could not have devoted some space to an historical comment. It has frequently been pointed out that the emphasis on a single union organisation and keeping politics out of the work place that characterised the early CGT and the IWW in America later played into the hands of the bolsheviks; it is not so often pointed out that Malatesta's position - by isolating anarchists - equally so did.

It ought to be emphasized that this was a position that Monatte did not maintain, but changed considerably later in his life; that indeed there was never the total rejection of political argument within the syndicalist movement that is suggested and that differing groups within the IWW and CGT (and at first within the CNT, as again later during the civil war, though regrettably the FAI prevented this operating for a long period) there was healthy and democratic debate between differing libertarian and other revolutionary socialist traditions.

When the bulk of the syndicalist movements throughout the world were represented at a conference of the Red International of Labour Unions (which the bolsheviks designed to be the industrial junior partners of the Communist International) and learnt that workers' control in the Soviet Union was a myth, the revolutionaries broke away to refound the International Workingmen's Association; in so doing they broke with the tradition of a single union organization. Though Monatte and Rosmer were not at that stage among the CGTU(*) minority that became the CGTSR, the fact that they launched Révolution Proletarienne and campaigned for a political programme within the larger union is evidence that they were not prepared to abandon the anarchist

part of their message for a false wider unity. (Indeed despite Rosmer's close personal ties to Trotsky, R.P. refused to affiliate to the International Left Opposition, or even to enter into the same relationship to it as the RILU had had to the Communist International). Their belief in staying within the larger union federation is certainly consistent with the premises in Monatte's 1907 speech - an expression of an anarchist-type entrism - the need for anarchism to be expressed where the workers are and in a form reflecting their own immediate desires.

The fuller meaning of Monatte's case is illustrated by the fact that in this country Monatte's disciples concentrated on building rank and file organizations leaving the formal union structure aside as irrelevant; it is well known that the early shop stewards' movement and even the movement for industrial unionism and the Triple Alliance, the Clyde Workers' and the South Wales Miners reflected the agitation of syndicalists and De Leonists. One can examine this agitation and both its results and defects, and see that it was by no means as apolitical as one might gather from the words of Monatte's speech. They did not certainly campaign seriously to break the ties between the trade unions and the Labour Party, largely because they ignored the union structures, and by and large in the union hierarchies it was only the right wing that opposed the connection. They did try to build shop floor unity despite the divisiveness of the union hierarchies and explain that the leaders kept workers divided to maintain reformist power and that reformism could not lead to socialism. Certainly they did not add sufficiently loudly that more leftist reformers

might find that uniting the unions would better serve the same aim. Nevertheless for a generation their message was clear and anarchistic, and the fact that this found a second reflection with a wing of the Labour Party and even the Fabians embracing semi-anti-state policies in the form of guild socialism is evidence that the message was not buried.

Monatte's speech perhaps reflected undue optimism, in the aftermath of the CGT's adoption of what is still regarded as the full syndicalist programme, it would obviously have seemed that from outside the old anarchist movement French anarchists had created a new one (at one stage of the Committee of 100's career I recall having the same feeling) and no doubt this assessment was not sustained by events. Nevertheless put at its lowest, fifteen to twenty years later, most French anarchists had come to anarchism through syndicalism, and had it not been for the heady excitement of the pre-1914 days of the CGT the French anarchist movement might well not have survived.

Moreover for years after the C.P. had stamped its identity on to the French unions the syndicalist tradition still ran deep. I remember that in 1952 or 3 the Federation Communiste Libertaire (Fontennis) received a letter from an opposition faction within the PCF on precisely this basis. They had come into conflict with the party hierarchy, they were immediately accused of anarcho-syndicalism and automatically they looked for a group which was active within the same union federation. It is unfortunate that the connection between the history of the shop stewards' movement and ourselves is not sufficiently well-known that similar groups within British stalinism do not look to us (rather than the Trots) as co-heirs of what is good in their history.

Fraternally,
L. O.

(*)George Woodcock, in Anarchism (Pelican, 1963) records(p. 305): "When the war was over, the Russian Revolution, with the concreteness of its achievement, became an equally disintegrating influence. Within the C.G.T, it created vast divisions of opinion. The communists and the revolutionary syndicalists at first entered into alliances and formed a Centre Syndicaliste Révolutionnaire with the Confederation, of which the anarchists, led by Pierre Besnard, gained temporary control. In 1921 the Centre split away to form a rival organization, the C.G.T. Unitaire. Again the anarcho-syndicalists at first

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Oh, Mr. Porter!

A WISE MAN once said, I give you five minutes to get out of the bar or I call the Law. No, begin again. Juvenal, who could claim to be the Mary Whitehouse of the Roman scene circa 110 A.D., stunted the intellectual growth of countless generations of western middle class youths by informing the audience, in the course of his Satires, that Orandum est ut sit mens sana in corpore sano. Which as every don knows is "A sound mind in a sound body is a thing to be prayed for" and it was left to Logan Pearsall Smith to kill this deadly evil saying with his "An improper mind is a perpetual feast". There is a belief among the ancients that the death of appetites is a virtue to be desired but the pleasure and the joy of youth is an iron digestion that enables one to eat anything and everything placed on the board, an empty, open and enquiring mind that will accept all the intellectual slop poured into it and the pleasure of being permanently randy as a barnyard rooster. Age will dictate that we suck slops, that all art and literature can be no more than a rehash of last year's fashion and that lack of sexual ability will force the croaking voice to demand a return to the Old Moralities. Fortunately none of these things have captured me for their victim, for I can still dodge Time's winged chariot to take my place in the queue at the Odeon in London's Haymarket for an hour and more of mental masturbation.

The film The Night Porter is being sold to the public, purely

LETTER continued from P.6

seemed to have the upper hand, and they succeeded in provoking, in various parts of France, a strike movement whose failure discredited them and enabled the communists to seize control of the C.G.T.U. at its Saint-Etienne Congress in 1922. Shortly afterward the C.G.T.U. joined the Profintern, and a further split ensued, as the anarchists broke away to form a Federal Union of Autonomous Syndicates, which allied itself to the International Workingmen's Association recently founded in Berlin, and in 1925 became the C.G.T. Syndicaliste Révolutionnaire. The C.G.T.S.R. survived until 1939, but it was never more than a small sectarian movement, and from 1923 onward anarcho-syndicalism played an insignificant part in French working-class activity." --EDS.

as a sexual tease in the same manner as Last Tango in Paris, and in doing this they commit a disservice to all those involved in its creation, for what Liliana Cavani has done is to advance one more small step into that twilight zone of human understanding. The story, and no critic appears to have made the connection, is almost a retelling of Faulkner's American novel of the Deep South, Sanctuary, wherein the degenerate criminal takes a woman by force and in sexually degrading her turns her from a victim into a willing accomplice. It is now Vienna ten years after the war and Dirk Bogarde as a small time Nazi war criminal is in hiding under the cover of night porter at a fashionable hotel. He is recognised by a woman guest who, as a young concentration camp victim, he tortured and debased for his sexual pleasures. They meet, and it is no longer torturer and victim but a man and woman enjoying their roles of sadist and masochist in their sexual play. Our whole culture, in the main, is based on the dark enjoyment of violence and I saw this film as a worthy essay in the exploration of sexual violence as opposed to political or military violence, and as such it deserves to be examined.

As a film it is magnificent pantomime with beautiful camera work and the acting of Bogarde cannot be faulted, yet throughout the film I had a feeling of unease. Ten years or so ago there took place the great debate on the permissive society and on stage and film and, to their honour, in the underground press, the limits of the English language were extended as honoured words were once more reintroduced onto the printed page. But in the matter of the human translation on stage or film the question was continually asked, 'what actor or actress who valued their craft would agree to openly copulate before an audience'. The question has been answered, for the time begets the mummies. The old world hard core porn makers had no such problems for male and female prostitutes did it willingly as nor more than an easy, well-paid job (why do they always wear their socks?) but what can the rising mummer say if called upon to take such a role. That Bogarde and Charlotte Rampling played out this sexual fantasy is understandable for the film can be classified as a minor work of art or a solid social document, but the forlorn group of elderly men and women standing stark



JOSEPH E. LEVINE presents for ITAL NOLEGGIO CINEMATOGRAFICO
The ROBERT CANNON EDWARDS / ERA DE SIMONE Production

naked in the concentration camp scene are employed simply as film extras, and I hold that they have been degraded to make an entertainment and we who love horses should not do this to humans.

There are three areas of accepted human frailty to be explored as entertainment and they are bestiality, shit-eating and mother fucking, and the first is a commercial norm of the Swedish pornographic industry. But what happens when the good script drops onto the film maker's desk? Who will perform with the Swedish pig and will we pay to watch a fellow human degrade himself for our pleasure? When the American spacemen began making the jounries into deep space the American government space agency had the shy-making task of explaining to the American public that the spacemen's piss had to be chemically recycled for them to re-drink it, and come the jounrys into outer space then the matter of shit-eating and cannibalism will no longer be an academic one, for in deep space man will literally live within a sealed coffin of his own making. Rome has stated, in relation to the Andes air crash, that cannibalism is morally justified to sustain life and we now wait for the film on the crash and the ruling. On the printed page we can go along with the intellectual argument but when we call upon actors of their vanity to act out these things, when we call upon middle aged men and women to stand stark naked in all the pathos of age for a handful of coin, then all morality is gone. Bogarde the actor played an SS man filming concentration camp victims for his own sexual amusement and we queue to watch the film of the film within a film, and in doing so more middle aged men and women will be hired for small pay to strip and stand for our amusement and their shame should be our crime. The Moors murderers and the concentration camp guards carried this sexual play to its logical and ghastly conclusion and for that they should be rightly damned, but do not let us fall into the error of believing that mass complicity plus culture justifies our part.

Arthur Moyses.

BELFAST. . .continued from P.1

participation, being plugged as a remedy by parties of the right and left, will not solve the problem. However, they recall an occasion a few years back when some workers showed that they had their own ideas about what a competitive, free enterprise business system really meant. At that time a certain firm engaged in joinery began to earn a high reputation for the craftsmanship of its products and its ability to tender keenly competitive quotations for contracts. Following a police investigation, some of its employees were arrested and it was discovered that they were at one and the same time employees of Harland and Wolff --no need to guess where the timber and woodworking machinery came from. The participants in the venture simply clocked in to work in H. & W. early in the morning and later walked out, after procuring the necessary materials, and carried on their "own" business.

The people in the bowler hats and striped pants have their own peculiar forms of trickery and a recent example shows that the capitalist system manages to retain its own sense of priorities regardless of who suffers. There are people living in bomb-damaged premises within the Belfast ghettos who have to wait some time before the leaking roof or the damaged sewage system is repaired even though they have been awarded damages by the courts. Some sharks are buying up such houses at rock bottom prices, claiming the awards, and not bothering to carry out repairs for the tenant.

When awards are paid directly to a solicitor he may invest the sum in a special short-term high-interest investment account and keep the claimants waiting for a long time before they are paid; even junior barristers have complained that they may have to wait a year before their fees are paid. Not a bad racket when you consider that about £10,000 invested by the solicitor can earn him a few hundreds interest in a comparatively short time.

H. B.

IN BRIEF

THE GUARDIAN reports that at a lecture to the Howard League for Penal Reform "Prisons were described as lawless institutions which ignored the rights of prisoners".

Mr. John Grigg, treasurer of the National Campaign for the Abolition of Capital Punishment, said that the restoration of the death penalty for terrorism would not be a deterrent, and would turn unpopular leaders into martyrs. In a recently published booklet, Murder and Capital Punishment in England and Wales, published in cooperation with the Howard League, Mr. Grigg's further reasons for not hanging terrorists: 1) it would not prevent the terrorists' friends from taking hostages while the terrorist was on

trial; 2) it would encourage reprisals; 3) it has been pointed out that it is impossible to define any category of crime sufficiently rightly and the Homicide Act of 1957 has shown this; 4) innocent people could be wrongly convicted and the punishment is irreversible.

AN assistant prison governor was fined £25 at Cambridge court for possession of cannabis at a farmhouse which police raided.

BUS CREWS in Leeds staged an unofficial strike to protest about Sikhs being allowed to wear turbans on duty. Recently two Sikhs were suspended from duty on full pay for wearing turbans on duty.

Sancho Panza

THE VERITABLE SPLIT. . .

We have recently advertised in our bookshop column and mentioned in "New publications" (26 Oct.) The Veritable Split in the International: a Public Circular of the Situationist International.

Don't order this from us. They didn't like what the writer of the "new publications" column said and have withdrawn supplies, at the same time declining an invitation to write for our readers what we said that was wrong.

M C

HELP fold and despatch FREEDOM on Thursdays from 2 p.m. at Freedom Press, followed by get together with refreshments.

We have a number of requests for speakers to put a case for anarchism. These mainly come from colleges and usually they pay expenses. Will any comrade who is willing to speak at these meetings, please contact Freedom Press.

Thurs. Nov 14: The Social Contract: Why Anarchists should work in the Unions (N. Lond.ORA) at Earl Russell pub, Pancras Rd N.1. at 8 p.m.

CORBAY ANARCHISTS for activities write 7 Cresswell Walk, Corby.

COVENTRY, Peter Corne, c/o Uni- of Students, Warwick University Coventry CV4 7AL

MANCHESTER SWF weekly mtgs. enq. Sec. c/o Grass Roots, 178 Oxford Road, Manchester 13.

Some London anarchists meet socially at Duke of York pub, 47 Rathbone St. London W.1.7.30 pm

ALTERNATE SUNDAYS Hyde Park Anarchist Forum, Speakers Corner 1 p.m. Speakers, listeners and hecklers welcome.

Contact

INT. LIB. CEN/CENTRO IBERICO Sat. & Sun from 7.30 pm. Disco &c. 83A Haverstock Hill, NW3 (entrance Steele's Rd, 2nd door) Tube Chalk Fm or Belsize Park.

Fri, 29 Nov. Nat. Secular Soc. public meeting in Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq. London WC1 7.45 pm Church School and Ghetto School chair Barbara Smoker, var. spkrs.

NEW YORK: Libertarian Book Club Fall Lectures Thurs. evgs. 7.30 at Workmen's Circle Center, 369 8th Ave. (SW cnr 29 St) admis's'n free. Nov. 14 Irving Levitas, Dec. 12 Don Georgakas and Leonard Rubenstein: Art and Anarchy.

PORTUGUESE Libertarian Mvemt needs books, pamphlets, free copies a anarchist pubs, money & ideological support. Movimiento Libertario Portugues, Rua Angelina Vidal 17-2^o-E, LISBOA 1.

HARDY PERENNIAL Walt Whitman Anarchist calendar 1975 13p inc. post from Kropotkin's Lighthouse Pubs. c/o Freedom Bookshop.

PRISONERS:

PAUL PAWLOWSKI doing two years. Postcards to Paul Pawlowski, 2 219089 H.M. Prison, Heathfield Road, London SW18 3HS

DUBLIN ANARCHISTS Bob Cullen (7 yrs), Des Keane (5 yrs) Columba Longmore (4 yrs). Address for letters & papers: Military Detention Centre, Curragh Camp, County Kildare, Eire.

STOKE NEWINGTON FIVE Solidarity Committee, 54 Harcombe Rd. London N15. Needs donations to provide study books for these long term prisoners.

GIOVANNI MARINI Defence Committee, Paolo Braschi, C.P. 4263 2100 MILANO, Italy.

THREE held re kidnapping of Spanish banker: postcards to Octavio Alberola Sunilach, Prison de Fresnes, 1 Av. de la Division Leclerc, 94261 FRESNES, France, and to Ariane Gransac-Sadori & Jane Helen Weir at Prison de Femmes, 9 Av. des Peupliers, 97100 ST. GENEVIEVE DES BOIS, France.

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