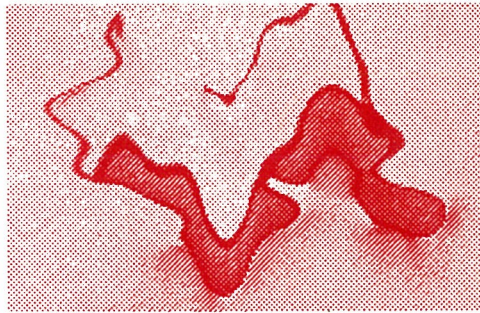
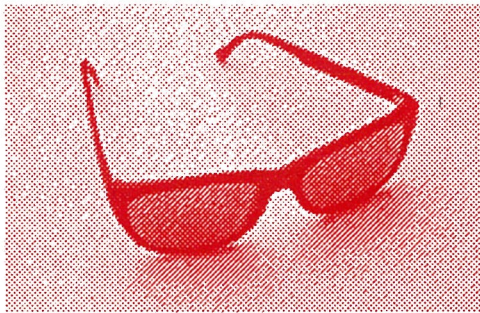


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## Surfing the Net

A rapid expansion in the use of Internet in the past year has brought an explosion of media interest, which has in turn exacerbated the growth. As when anything unregulated appears, the first media assumption is that it centres on sexual perversity. And that indeed has been the way that the media have been handling the Internet: virtual sex, message transvestitism, children viewing pornographic still and motion pictures, etc, etc. This is as unbalanced a

viewpoint as would be an article on the Press which began and finished with David Sullivan. But it provides the peg for the inevitable control discourse: regulating bulletin boards, limiting the privacy of messages, etc.

The tiresome "information superhighway" verbiage at least slips gently past that stage. The UK government's May 1994 consultative report on "Information Superhighways - Opportunities for Public Sector Applications in the UK" gives several reasons to distrust the Internet: for example "no billing system for use", "investment in the infrastructure is quixotic" and "the degree to which access is open". Positive recommendations! But the UK Government hopes to be saved from involvement in such an open structure by the white knights of commercial providers. For Mr. Waldegrave's Ministry of Public Service and Science, the future can be none other than the electronic shopping mall.

These values were accidentally subverted by the Net's origins in the linked military computers and the later link to academic institutions. Academics and students have been the main net users and their informal activity has widened the definition of "research" as the legitimate net use beyond recognition. Net users strongly disapprove of anything resembling the creeping commercialisation which Mr. Waldegrave seeks. Those commercial services which do exist are struggling to justify their "value-addedness".

Insofar as the net lacks commercialisation, "major players in the market", etc., media interest has lacked an obvious peg. It has thus involved writing-up fairly marginal services, lists, and academics surfing on theory about the use of multiple identities, etc. But ideas of disembodied pan-sexuality, etc. soon become tired. Statements of high post-modernist principles can, disturbingly, look flimsy in contrast to Christian fundamentalists' arguments on real issues such as abortion. These are more rooted in experience than one more trip around post-modern decentering.

Discussions on the net itself attempt to theorise the networking of the participants as a "virtual community". But does the extent of basic community go beyond the simple fact of the form of communication? Like CB radio, net talk can be just an end in itself, and often founders once it has passed the "What's the weather like where you are?" level. And the idea that there are always more incoming messages to be read can be an immense distraction from doing anything else - such as writing this article!

However, the net has a great deal of potential for use by communities of interest, people who already have the basis of trust. The proof of the strength of these networks will be in the ease or difficulty with which they can build themselves while shaking off governmental restriction. And for people involved in projects like "Here & Now", it also has the potential for dropping back from the formality of paper publication to something far more transient and conversational.

For the moment (and I hope this is the only lapse into technical speech) it should be mentioned that articles from this and previous issues of Here & Now are available by ftp from [etext.archive.umich.edu](ftp://etext.archive.umich.edu), where they are in directory pub/Politics/Spunk.

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# The Search for Security

## Notes on Desocialisation.

The corrosion of community is beginning to be a major source of discontent with the current order. The ordinary experience of this corrosion is not emancipation from the drudgery of work, housework and all the other imposed tasks of surviving. It's more a growing sense of despair and retreat – ducking any of the issues of a community for the haven of a home, even if it's only a telly and a well-bolted door. With victimhood an ever-present possibility the issue of public safety returns to haunt an order which claimed legitimacy on the promise of delivering security.

Established orders have tended to be viewed by their opponents as some kind of stasis, a unchanging fixture to be undermined and overturned. Destruction, dislocation, dissolution have been on the side of the rebellious angels, security, tradition, social peace have belonged to the camp of oppression and uniformity. When evidence of widespread disenchantment with the current social insecurity emerges, oppositionists find it hard to deal with. If the system is a fixed unchanging edifice of hierarchical power, surely social derangement is always positive, or rather, negative. Therefore the search for security and stability is wrong, reactionary and oppressive. And yet the yearning for community and social harmony remains one of the few popular impulses which conforms with a revolutionary critique of capitalist society.

This question, 'the social question', is rapidly moving to centre stage in both the official political theatre and in the theatre of everyday chat and argument. Insofar as there is a convergence in concern between the populace and the political class people should look out; that sort of 'meeting of minds' usually only benefits the political class. I want to sketch out an explanation of the current social insecurity the better to demarcate the interests of the populace from that of the political class, and in the process avoid both conservative despair and revolutionary self-deception. The current malaise is real, but it is not new; it does have revolutionary implications but not in the way most revolutionaries might recognise.

First of all, a few arguments have to be disposed of in order to make sure that no one gets the wrong idea. What I'm talking about does include 'crime' but is neither adequately described by that term, nor does what usually falls into that category necessarily match up with the phenomena I'm going on about. All sorts of hucksters and entrepreneurs operate in the crime business, both 'for' and 'against' and I have no wish to add to their sales pitches. 'Crime' as a descriptive word is practically useless for anyone interested in the truth. It covers a multitude of quite harmless practices, quite useful practices and quite pernicious and vicious practices. Similarly 'crime statistics' are just part of the armoury of one of the combatants in the generalised war of all against all. Anyone who needs convincing should take a quick look at Geoffrey Pearson's 'Hooligan: A history of respectable fears' which charts the utterly manipulative way crime statistics are used, the better to advance various vested interests. The fact is that historically, more and more behaviours have been introduced into the crime category. It's very hard to know from the figures whether any 'crime wave' is a real increase in 'anti-social' behaviour or just the result of new techniques of surveillance, detection, and punishment – a 'law wave'. A lot of the increase in crime this century can be put down to the growing formalisation of punishment (largely inspired by the increasing confidence of the managerial classes to intervene in areas usually left to the copper's 'discretion') whereby formal recordable cautions replaced the informal one, plus a probable clip round ear/beating up. So although 'crime' and 'criminal statistics' make up the spectacular background to what I'm talking about, they are not useful as descriptive terms and they don't cover the half of it.

There is a general discontent about how people get on with each other. This most comes to the fore in moments of personal experience of

being ripped off, or of knowing people who have been so 'treated' by their fellows. There is a sense that predatory behaviour is on the rise, that burglaries, muggings, personal attacks, rape, and personal abusiveness are endemic. This, together with examples of behaviour which is extreme, but which the community failed to intervene effectively in



(the James Bulger case in Liverpool, and the Rosie Palmer case in Hartlepool are examples of incidents where a lot of the anger centres around the inability of local communities to look after themselves) combine to produce a state of mind which established cultural commentators like to dub 'nostalgic'. In contrast to the caricatures the pundits like to swap across the columns of the broadsheets, popular nostalgia is usually quite specific and particular, giving both time and place about events which showed to the speaker that 20 or 30 years ago you could leave your doors unlocked in Armley, or that student digs only had to be locked when there was a bit of hanky-panky going on. I've heard too many tales, reflecting just the sort of personal detail to render it hard to dismiss, that neighbourhoods were both more friendly, safer and generally more convivial thirty years ago than they are today. I've also met too many old people living under unofficial curfews in the present, not to think that the street and the park have become less public places, less the common property of the general populace, more the territory of various gangs of young men.

Nostalgia is a reasonably universal sentiment. Pearson's book finds that 'declinist' rhetoric regarding social order has been pretty constant throughout the last 150 years. On the specific question of community spirit it's quite possible that things have been getting progressively worse, despite the fact that all sorts of interest groups feed off this regret in order to pursue their own social agendas. The danger lies not so much in a yearning for a mythical past (or perhaps it is a memory of a carefree but secure childhood) but in succumbing to those forces which would seek to use that longing for purposes of securing and expanding their power over society. At the same time the sort of knee-jerk iconoclasm which inspires the majority of contemporary cultural commentators conceals interests no less vicious than those of the resentful Conservatives. These two contenders for power feed off each other by establishing positions in relation to each other. Real life, although elsewhere, remains vulnerable to the machinations of each. All sorts of interests and political manipulators are buzzing round the community pot. All remain convinced that they're the only players in town. What the following intends to do is short-circuit such confidence by identifying the causes of the current social insecurity and in passing point the finger of responsibility at all the agencies which, in claiming a cure, only killed the patient.

### The Expropriation of the Community

Communities exist on the basis of a shared interest. It could be a park, a forest, waste land, a street, a club, a city or even a market in the days when markets retained some connection with fair exchange. A community exists because there is a material benefit for people to engage in a shared activity. This in turn creates friendships and mutual aid which often advance far beyond the original shared interest. Common property is often the source of the shared interest. Because it belongs exclusively to nobody it belongs in a limited way to everyone, it's everyone's business that it isn't ruined or devoured. The history of industrialised societies has been the progressive erosion of these shared

interests (and the activity which it produces) through both the actions of predatory entrepreneurs and the intervention of private and state corporations. As more things become property (either state or private) there is less and less commonality around which communities can form. In fact what has happened is a recurring struggle of people to reconstitute communities from what has been overlooked or not yet drawn into the hands of specific interests. So, after the enclosure of common land and the consequent urbanisation, people founded communities on neighbourhoods in cities based on their need as urban workers to combine to defend themselves against the rapacious employers. New communal rituals and institutions were set up, such as Saint Monday, in order to protect people from the life-threatening hardship of industrial toil. Similarly traditions from the countryside and the rural past were maintained in an attempt to slow the relentless industrialisation of everyday life. These pleasures and pastimes became themselves the object of predatory schemes (for part of the story see the pamphlet 'The Subversive Past' by the Pleasure Tendency.). Industrial progress has seen the constant dissolution of sociability followed by attempts by people to reconstitute it on a different basis. If there is a trajectory it seems to be the steady drift of these communities away from control of the means of subsistence. Lacking a hold on access to the means of life always renders the desocialising process more easy. The absence or diminution of community in the country today has its roots in the constant tendency of capital to dispossess communities of their shared interests, be it in the form of common land, working practices or streets. Coupled to this has also been a tendency towards the prevention of sociability, a continual forestalling of peoples' attempts to recapture conviviality, unless it happens to fit the managerial orthodoxy of the time.

### Totalitarian Liberalism

This is the ideology which underpins the two forces 'social managerialism' and 'moral entrepreneurialism' (see below) which are the more active elements in the dissolution and prevention of sociability. When I worked in an old psychiatric hospital in the 1970s I had my rationalist enlightened prejudices outraged by a colleague who genuinely believed that a gypsy's curse would ruin your life and who, as a result, always respected them. I shook my head over the persistence of such obscurantist and irrational sentiments. It was years later, when coming across naked hatred for gypsies (incidentally, by someone in the same profession) that I found myself wishing gypsy's curses **did** work, the better to sort out the tidy-minded bigotry of the vindictive classes. Later still I read Keith Thomas' classic study of the witchcraft persecutions in England 'Religion and the Decline of Magic' where he suggests that the rise in the persecution of witches coincided with the decay in the belief in their power. The new rationalism, far from being universally emancipatory, merely dissolved the deep social reciprocities whereby antagonists could live together in uneasy tension.

I mention this in order to knock the halo of benevolence off the enlightened liberal view. As much as enlightenment was about extending the boundaries of social possibility, it was about asserting particular interests (that of the intellectuals and scientists) as universal ones, it was about one specific kind of rationality kicking out another. Intervention was based on an assumption of popular irrationalism, thereby justifying the manipulation and ultimate destruction of the arcane pathways whereby disputes are settled in the traditional community. With rationalism came proceduralism (and the explosion of clerical pedantry), with legalism came just deserts (and the absurd tariff of punishments whereby crime achieved an exchange value). When all the wings of the Enlightened inheritance agonise over the failure of the system to bring harmony and bicker over the relative merits of the punitive over the therapeutic approach, it is right to remember that such an inheritance involved the dissolution of other ways of maintaining social security. My grandfather told me of how wife-batterers were targeted by the women of a Bolton community by banging pots and pans outside his house – has its replacement by an army of social workers and their support services improved the situation, or only 'changed' it? Is it not the absence of precisely this sort of community control which is the source of so much insecurity today?

Furthermore liberalism emancipated the individual from the constraints of community without being able to establish any coherent limits to the operations of the individual. With the loss of the traditional view of human life as ordered to a given end the management and organisation of human beings becomes a recurring problem. By and large contemporary social arrangements are geared around means (the economy and the State) as if they were ends, the goal of being alive as a human being. Thus the category of the public (or political) increasingly be-

comes full of disputes over administrative questions (to the terminal boredom of the populace) while rarely dealing with the point of life (in my opinion the achievement of a good life, but that's another story) which is relegated to the personal. Liberalism enshrines the divorce of politics from ethics, in the name of freedom from religion, but as a result reduces the public sphere to surveillance, administration and policy formation operating utterly contingently, in the sense that the maintenance of the means (the economy and the state) always takes precedence over the question of ends (what is the good life?). To avoid the experience of being solely instruments of the economy and the

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state there is a search for identity, and a will to rediscover former roots and old affiliations, neither of which necessarily solve the problems of the present since they re-emerge with all the trappings of modernity (statecraft, the politics of panic, exclusivity and specialisation).

### Social Managerialism

This occurs when the functions of the community are hived off into various specialisms which function within the wage labour economy. Although it has its origin in Christian pastoralism it came into its own in this century. From middle class charity workers dishing out money according to the tidiness of working class homes (thereby earning the designation of 'deserving poor') to the wholesale professionalisation of community concerns in the form of Social Services departments shared interests are turned into local state programmes and procedures. Not only does this introduce non-communitarian values into social life, it also actively undermines people's willingness to get involved: How many times have you come across people frightened to involve themselves in quite straightforward conflicts because of the knowledge of professional briefs which carry their own logics and rationalities. And the ubiquity of such briefs perpetuates the community inaction which social managerialism feeds off. Far from having an interest in the resolution of such problems social managerialism has a role in perpetuating them and searching for more and more evidence of 'dys-function' (of which there are plenty of examples) thereby ensuring community passivity. Finally, by subverting mutual aid it operates on the frontline of 'Taylorising' social care, dragging it into the cash nexus and wage economy which provides for unlimited inspection and surveillance of everyday life under the guise of seeking 'value for money'. It's part and parcel of the expropriation of the community, but it is also utterly unable to reverse the desocialising process it claims to cure. Because the complete managerialisation of everyday life is impossible – there simply isn't enough wealth to pay for it – it merely acts as a perpetually pre-emptive strike against the community re-appropriating those functions. Mutual aid is replaced by vertical dependence. At the same time further expropriations continue, such as the theft of time, restrictions on access to the means of living, impoverishment which mean that communities have less and less resources available on which to base a challenge to social managerialism.

### Work and Poverty

The fact is most people are just too knackered to spend their hard-earned 'free' time in the community. The other side to this is that other people are just too desperate to consider the humanity of the person they're ripping off. In the age of human resource management human beings are treated as modes of access to labour power by their bosses, and modes of access to commodities by their hopeless neighbours. The imposition of work dissipates the community, while the imposition of poverty intensifies the war of all against all. The origin of industrialism itself lay in its ability to produce need which could only be assuaged by participation in wage labour. The hopes of Marx and others that this would lead to 'socialisation' – the tendency of capitalist production to integrate more and more of the individual, private la-

bour processes into large organised collective forms, with a corresponding sociability— have been dashed (at least in the first industrialised nations). The integration of human life into capitalism has taken place in such a way as to dissolve non-capitalist social relations, including those which workers develop for themselves (this is, after all, what radical managerialism is all about). The result is not only poverty, and a poverty that doesn't have access to alternative means of sustenance which don't involve predation, but also the corrosion of the collectivity necessary to take on capitalism and re-appropriate the social product. Instead new forms of collectivity emerge which are far more ambivalent in their relation to sociability.

### Collective Egocentrism

Faced with reduction to the status of instruments of production and consumption, there is a search for identity. This takes the form both of resurrecting old allegiances – the resurgence of ethnic nationalism in the former Soviet Empire would be one example— or making new ones –the people with disabilities movement, the gay movements, the black movements. For some these are the new entities upon which human sociability can be rebuilt, but there is much in these allegiances which fuel social corrosion rather than overcome it. For example, there is the strict inclusionary/exclusionary criteria used to justify membership. Based on a dismissal of human empathy and imagination (“No one who is not one of us can possibly share our experience”) and firmly locked into moralising statecraft (“If you don't conform you are giving ammunition to the enemy”)—a symptom of the prevailing influence of ‘moral entrepreneurialism’ (see below), these new formations appear to have given up hope on some sort of communal resolution and recognition of differences. Instead their orientation is towards the State and culture industry as the prime agencies of inducing ‘change’, based on an assumption of hostility from other people.

### Moral Entrepreneurialism

Collective egocentrism reinforces the sense of fragmentation undermining the possibility of shared interests beyond personal attributes. In the vanguard of this (by no means inevitable) turn-out of events is the moral entrepreneur. These are often the agents of various campaigns and movements which ‘handle publicity’, but which are in unofficial and unrecognised leadership positions. On the whole moral entrepreneurialism takes disputes away from the possibility of horizontal resolution and plugs into the vertical methods of the state and culture industry. In calling for ‘positive images’ and awareness campaigns it conforms to the view of the populace as essentially childish consumers who cannot follow a sensible argument or feel for someone else.

Moral entrepreneurialism is the canonical form by which a whole host of social and political processes, campaigns and organisations are now conducted. Moral entrepreneurs are those who promote new anxieties and concerns and manufacture ‘problems’ as the necessary means of creating a market for the palliatives and solutions which they are peddling. As with all capitalist enterprise, it is necessary to remember that the cart comes before the horse. By exhibiting the problem in one particular way, it ensures that only one particular solution is suggested, namely the one they had in mind before they started the campaign, set up the helpline etc. At the same time an atmosphere of moral mayhem, of generalised fear and loathing further dissipates the necessary trust which would be the precondition for popular, horizontal solutions.

### Vested Disinterests

The profitability of social problems is nowhere more clearly visible than in ‘crime’ itself. The crime industry has burgeoned: private security firms, locksmiths, alarm manufacturers, insurers, loss adjusters, private gaolers, electronic tagging producers. The list could go on. Add to that the army of counsellors and self-employed quacks offering their panaceas to traumatised victims and the interests in there not being a solution to desocialisation pack a pretty punch. Add to that the widespread re-design of city centres into protected zones so that people deemed important enough (those with the money!) can feel comfortable and shielded from the consequences of a desocialising society, then there's every reason to propose that too many have too much to lose for anything to be done. There's also the added value to the state in there being a general panic about crime—not only does this deter trust and solidarity from developing into dangerous counter-forces, but the pool of resentment becomes resource which can be dipped into in order to provide enthusiasm for repressive legislation, such as the

Criminal Justice Bill.

### The Promotion of the Peer Group

It is not my intention to pretend that there are actually existing communities just ready and waiting to swing into action if only the above excrescences were removed. The depressing reality is that such parasitic forces flourish on an already diseased host, indeed have contributed massively to its demise. Nowhere has progress had a more deleterious effect on sociability than in its erosion of self-generated norms and values. The assumption of radicals that the capitalist economy is ultimately dependent upon the authoritarian family, patriarchy and deferred gratification unravels in the face of a reasonably adequate economy functioning amongst the ruins of such institutions. The culture industry is as much an influence on teenagers (and younger) as the parental voice, the influx of women into the labour market has neither necessarily challenged work norms, nor has the downgrading of fatherhood heralded an appreciable increase in well-adjusted, autonomous individuals prepared to question their pre-packaged role in the capitalist economy. Nor has the deeply unfashionable status of deferred gratification prevented the accumulation of vast amounts of wealth by modern capitalists. Capitalism has proved itself remarkably independent of one particular system of values. It might be truer to say that as a



system of values itself, it has no need of any other. A constant that it appears to have stuck with over the last 150 years or so has been the identification and advancement of age-specific ‘generations’. From the class system of schools to the media obsession with decades, social arrangements under capitalism gravitate towards a segmentation based on age. I suspect one of the many reasons for this is that it is easier to impart the non-norms and dis-values of the culture industry when there's not too much competition about from older people and their memories. (Memories are OK as long as they are marketed by the Heritage Industry first). I know I wouldn't be the person I am (a mixed blessing!) without the tales of WW1 I heard from my grandfathers, or the experience of knowing and listening to all the older, eccentric people in my family who were so different from my contemporaries at school. It is also worth noting that families produce a quite idiosyncratic way of viewing the world which provides an alternative to the official version promulgated by the various educational institutions a child is put through. The promotion of the peer group is an attempt to rubbish all that. The culture industry homes in on the sense of newness a young adult feels in order to loosen the ties that both family and community provide. The decline of the apprenticeship mode of learning and coming into the world (through a rite of passage?) is a specific example of the way peer groups are nurtured, accepting no guidance unless it be from the culture industry which feeds their delusions of separateness from older people. What began in the dismal segregations of school classes continues well into the 30s or 40s unless the presence of a child brings the importance of tutelage back into focus. The experience of the family and community, although flawed, has at least one redeeming feature—they introduce people to the feelings and desires of very different others. The peer group skirts the same danger as other collective egocentrism – the neutralisation of the faculty of practical intersubjectivity, or less jargonistically: inability or refusal to treat different people as similar beings to oneself.

## The Way Out

Desocialisation is a process, not an event. It cannot be tied to a single cause, in the sense that cultural conservatives like to blame the 60s or post-Thatcherite socialists the 'culture of greed' in the 80s. It appears to be a constant feature of capitalism, but it predates its rise. Anxiety about it appears to come in waves. Throughout the 19th century such anxiety coincided with the rise of threats to the political order such as the Chartists. Such a coincidence seems less apparent today. That might give oppositionists the chance to look at it clearly and not shy away out of fear of 'reaction'. There does appear to have been an intensification of the process in the last 10 years. The decline and defeat of the last bastions of working class voluntarism – the trades unions and their associates – seems to have removed the final constraint on non-working working-class youth. Another manifestation of the dissolution of self-generated values. The proliferation of iconoclastic authorities is another contributory factor. But no amount of guff about the restoration of family values, a return to the 'politics of hope', or a religious revival can succeed, precisely because the social moment upon which these values rested has passed.

The loss of community is beginning to be seen as a material deprivation. Attempts are being made to re-establish and fortify community-creating institutions. Festivals are being resurrected, old practices are being resuscitated. (I attended Whit Friday celebrations in the Tame Valley in the Pennines. Despite a massive police presence, road blocks and so on, and fear-inducing notices about beer only being drunk in plastic beakers, the whole event was a delightful piss-up. All the villagers took over their streets, brass bands marched by, and there was no trouble that I could see. The mix of people on the streets ensured a trouble-free event – from children aged about 3 to their grandparents there was no opportunity for a peer group of young men to take over. And with the children staying up well into the night there was a constant deterrent to anyone looking for trouble.) Just as people are rediscovering their interest in the environment as a commons inviting their shared concern, so the community itself is becoming a good demanding public protection.

A number of problems remain. While public cynicism towards the State (the realisation that it cannot even provide security for its subjects) is widespread, there is a danger of all sorts of para-states jumping in to fill the vacuum. The rise of vigilantism has revealed some of the problems. While informal arrangements between people in a street to keep an eye on each other's houses is fine – a step which many are taking –

setting up patrols without any community accountability or method of intervening in the process can lead to exactly the sort of specialisation which reproduces a police force. (The latest example of this is in Birmingham where local Asian men have set up patrols to drive prostitutes and their clients out of their area). That's why it's important to encourage all members of the street to get out in the open when there's trouble, not just the young, fit and 'committed'. It changes the situation from a war between opposing interests to a show of community power against predation. It may be disorderly and argumentative, as particular interests vie for influence, but it avoids the pitfalls of the triumph of might, where as in State operations, the weak and vulnerable are punished and the strong and guilty go unchastened. Such actions also bring the question of 'due process' into consideration.

Nor has the vital importance of protecting and extending mutual aid really sunk in. Too often it can get formalised into semi-official schemes or become part of the 'Green pound' network, thereby reproducing the cost-benefit analysis mentality which transforms sharing from a social process to an economic transaction based on a narrow calculation. However, as capitalism becomes less organised, and its attempts to politically control people more and more deranged, stepping out of the wage labour economy looks more and more like a reasonable proposition. Not only can the taxation which feeds an overblown bureaucracy be avoided, but the mind-numbing directives, policies and guidelines can pass one by. Unplugging from the official economy may not be permanent or total, but the new relationships gained, the exchange relations established, set up a mutual reliance which can be the beginning of a sort of community. (I've seen quite racist white people end up working with Asians on this sort of basis).

As more and more people realise that their hopes for a good life, including civility and respect for others, cannot be found within the existing state and its economy, then the idea of a construction of new forms of community outside those edifices become more compelling. The radical project should turn away from addressing itself to the state and its surrogates – they positively feed off such attention – and should concentrate on constituting those communities whose very existence will de-activate them. This does not mean that there will be no conflict with the State, it is forever engaged in the project of administration and control and is thus an obstacle to such endeavours. But such conflicts should be incidental to the more pressing task of re-appropriating communities. In the dark days of further desocialisation they might be the only light there is.

John Barrett

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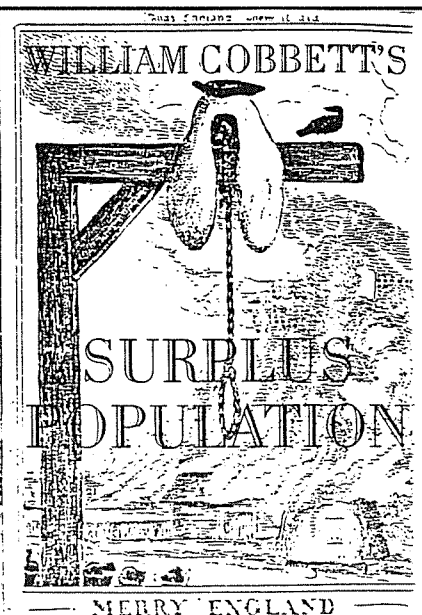
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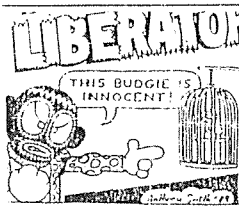


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Real Life Confession:

# News from Thuringia

from a contact of BM Blob in East Berlin

As you know I'm rather phone shy, and living in East Berlin does not help, as you've always got to queue half an hour for a phone box..

Instead I enclose a glimpse of the situation here. Not too bad, in spite of the massive offensive one has to endure in every aspect of life - housing, city redevelopment, work, dole and the like. What would be required to counter all this at the same time? Popular racism is also depressing, indeed there's a lot of gloomy stories, for instance people living near an immigrants' home who asked the council their street to be forbidden to foreigners or passer-bys who shouted 'jump nigger' at a black guy who was about to commit suicide from the top of a building on the Ku Damm. And as he did and broke his legs, the comment was 'now we'll have to pay for his hospitalisation'!

Nevertheless one feels there's no fatality in this let alone hopeless racist bastards. For instance, the leaflet that we made about the immigrants' hostel was widely read and discussed in the neighbourhood. Mainly because it broke away with the habitual 'autonomous' incantations. the 'radical scene', Wildcat included, is a pain in the arse indeed. they don't even realise how tired and estranged people are from their politico rituals.

The good thing when discussing with people here is that they don't take capitalism for granted. They were born into it, even had an 'anti capitalist' education which in some ways plays its part, and the great hopes they might have had when the wall went down are long gone. Also, you always have to deal with the 'wessi' boss, the 'wessi' landlord, the 'wessi' bureaucrat, which gives some kind of a common identity, in a negative way. Of course all this is matched by the traditional German pessimism, the ghosts of law'n'order and nationalism, and above all a feeling of powerlessness towards all those changes. But at least there are modest attempts to preserve social links, which I find much more interesting than the ritual confrontation-seeking of the so-called 'automen'. having said that, there is also a slight difference between Wessi and Ossi 'radicals'. The latter can sometimes be witty and imaginative. *For instance, they sabotaged the Potsdam city Jubilee by printing a huge amount of bogus invitations to the official reception, promising free beer which of course attracted a large crowd which turned angry towards the official when they couldn't get a drink. then they went to a conference by the former defence minister (Potsdam is a garrison town) and forbade him to speak by clapping hands non stop, till he shouted 'stop this stupid applause!' and the cops evicted the public.*

In fact not only Neues Deutschland (which is not on sale in West Germany) but also local newspapers express some kind of sympathy for the miners, whereas the western media treats them with blatant contempt. TV crews went so far as waking up hunger strikers at 5 a.m. for an interview, telling them angrily; do you realise that you cost us 50000 DMarks a day? ! And 'alternative' journalists from the Tageszeitung merely look for 'exotic' descriptions for their readers, to whom the other side of the Elbe is still some kind of 'wild East'. Actually, this conflict is another sign that the gap is widening between East and West, even though of course many individuals in the West are showing support. But anti-'ossi' prejudices are there, and the power exploits them: according to a Treuhand representative, Bischofferode miners are 'social romantics' (what a compliment!); and the miners' union boss says; 'unfortunately have they parted from solidarity' i.e. solidarity with the bosses. By the way, among many responsibilities, this union leader, Hans Berger, is a Social-Democrat MP, and a member of the BASF management board, the very firm to which Bischofferode closure will profit! As many union branches and rank 'n' file unionists nonetheless support the movement (some of them are even on hunger strike as well), an open crisis within the unions could possibly occur.

Since Dec. 10th '92 the potash miners in Bischofferode (Thuringen) occupy their pit, which still bears 'the proud name of Thomas Muntzer'. Since July 1st about 40 men and women are on hunger strike. the 700

miners made numerous demos And symbolic actions. On may 17th 400 of them picketed the Treuhand in Berlin, pelted bureaucrats with eggs and scuffled with the cops. They receive a fairly big support from groups and individuals throughout the country, but none from the union.

The decision to close the pit is typical of the way the Treuhand handles the privatisation of East German businesses. No question of profitability or quality here, let alone social considerations. The only concern is to enable a West German company, the BASF (nothing to do with videocassettes to gain a European monopoly on potash trading. it is just one among the many presents that Brigit Breuel, the thatcherite top Treuhand bitch, made to her friends in the industry. As for Bischofferode, not only the pit but also several sub-companies and small businesses will have to close down, which is really the last straw for the area. Already 1200 miners had been made redundant, which means 75% of their wages, themselves being 40% below West German miners'.

## Desperate Measures

It is clear to everyone that the unions are not willing to engage in any industrial dispute, especially since the steelworkers strike earlier this year ended in bitterness without any significant gain. "Who goes on strike now strikes against himself". So wen a recent government campaign: the pressure is on to prevent any open breach in the social consensus. but wildcat strikes are illegal and lead to immediate dismissal, and the potash miners are in no position to match this, hence the desperate form of action they resort to a hunger strike. nevertheless they are in high spirits, and refuse any kind of compromise: they turned down offers of paid schemes, 'give the money to the unemployed instead', or full wage without production (like the Italian 'casa integrazione'). Such a stance is a new thing in this country, and doesn't go unnoticed, given the widespread discontent among East German workers.

The Bischofferode area is a traditional catholic stronghold. The only official support they get comes from the church the bishop came for a Sunday mass in the pit, and he urged the government 'to avoid social explosion') which no doubt contributes in preventing a radicalisation of the struggle (to think there's a dynamite factory just beside the mine!). In the post-wall euphoria had many of the local people joined the CDU, and the following disillusion has been the more embittered. "Herr Kohl, shall we expel you to Chile?" (a witty reference to Honecker). The social democrats are met with the same distrust: however since they agreed on a so called "solidarity pact" with the government, one can barely spot the difference between both. Some nazi came over to a meeting to try and fish in those troubled waters, but he wasn't let a chance. If they can exploit urban teenage anger, it seems really unlikely that the far right can cash on workers' discontent. The reformed stalinists of the PDS are more successful. Indeed, 'Neues Deutschland' the former GDR Prawda, is the only newspaper which consistently reports on social struggles in the East. And Gysi, the former PDS chairman, is the miners' defence lawyer. However, the communists appear nowadays inoffensive, and there's little chance that they can regain prestige. "They're bastards but we need them".

In the last few days, there were joint meetings between the potash miners and other workers from other factories which are about to close as well in the Eichsfeld area - Kahla porcelains, Suhler hunting weapons, and Thuringen Fibers. four other potash mines are bound to close as well in the near future, though no one knows which ones, in an area where the unemployment rate is already 50% high!. So that what is at stake at the moment is no longer the Bischofferode mine alone, but the future of the area as a whole. And the growing solidarity that they can enjoy (financial as well as demos, street blockades, exhibitions, meetings a.s.o.) is strengthening them in their uncompromised stance. it shouldn't be an easy job for the unions to 'take the commands and

Continued middle, Page 10

# Germany Refeudalised

by Christoph Monzel

The development Germany has been going through in the last five years since unification seems to be puzzling the rest of the world. But what was then, in 1989, all too hurriedly prophesied has not come about and the opinion must be voiced that the harbingers themselves probably never expected their wildest prophesies to materialise. Germany has not been transformed into *The Fourth Reich* - nothing could be further from the prediction - though it has changed palpably. I shall return to that topic later but, first of all, it would be worth soothing some qualms about what, in the event, turned out to be infertile.

Since 1992, the press in Germany and elsewhere has been obsessed with the fascist threat in Germany — a danger which, the experts claim, has effectively been countered by stable institutions and civil-courageous demonstrators. The thrust behind such arguments is that, although Germany is more or less highly susceptible to a resurgence of national socialism, the democratic system - on which we can all rely - is safe, sound and unassailable.

## A curious case of Retrogression

Well, I would argue that this scenario offers virtually no explanation of the current situation in Germany. It is not 1933 into which Germany is in danger of retrogressing and any analyses to that effect miss the point completely. It is 1913 that is variously re-manifesting itself in Germany today, more than anywhere else in the western world, and this is the assumption that should not be dismissed so lightly. Indeed, it's more than conjecture; the circumstantial evidence is there for all to see.

During the years leading up to the First World War, a certain French commentator dubbed Wilhelm I *le vibreur* by which he was referring to the Kaiser's dual predilection for confusing Europe with his impetuous vacillations and, at the same time, for aspiring to epitomise conservatism. It is my belief that Germany today is being re-exposed to similar elements of instability.

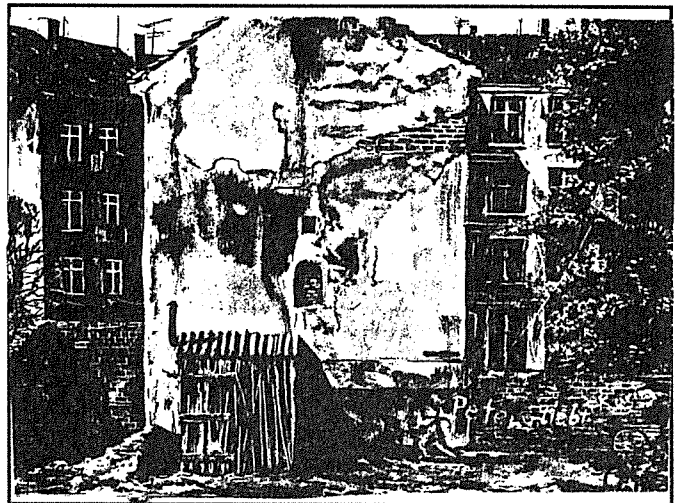
One new irony here is that modern Germany likes to view itself as "the pinnacle of progress". Nevertheless - and this is peculiar - we are witnessing an increase in the attempts to abolish precisely that which gave rise to such a feeling. In the main, the new German self-assuredness is based on the concept of "advanced democracy" — welfare statism and institutional accountability thanks to which the spirit, the very essence of western civilisation is deemed to have been realised if only in terms of administrative structures.

Now, however, a retreat is being made from this essence and the new self-esteem is predicated on its mere shell. The implementation of superficial forms of the Modern is imparting to the Germans a self-awareness that verges on a neo-Wilhelmism that will, again ironically, dig at the very foundations of the Modern.

To recapitulate:

- For a short time in its history, Germany embodied the Modern; and
- thus created a feeling of self-esteem which, in turn, gave it, Germany,
- the chance to expunge the Modern from its very being and return to conservatism without, however,
- relinquishing that feeling of self-esteem.

The constitutional history of the Federal Republic of Germany can be divided into three main phases (even if that third phase has hardly begun). In the first phase, the fifteen years following the passing of the Basic Law after World War II, the German Constitution was something alien: it did not relate to the reality of the country it so framed. True, in those days, most western states were more or less conservative anyway but the Federal Republic surpassed them all, located somewhere between France and Salazar's Portugal. The freedom of the individual, for example, was defined by the Catholic Church rather than by precepts of liberal democracy. It was only in the middle of the 1960s that the seeds planted in the postwar constitution began to bear fruit - ignite if you prefer - and, within a short decade, the Federal Republic of Germany actually began to overtake the other western states in terms of personal freedom. The astonishing thing is that the other aspect came into being too, something



that genuinely has its roots to German history: the concept of social justice.

In terms of political freedom, the other western states had always been ahead of Germany both in theory and, more importantly, in practice. In terms of social justice, however, one has to concede that for the second half of this century Germany has - in the long run - achieved a certain leadership role (despite the occasional setback). This is not so much a new quality; more the extrapolation of something that was always inherent.

This era, in which one felt that Germany had at last come to its senses, appeared definitive — indeed, almost irrevocable. For more than two decades, the majority of German citizens were prepared to identify with this unique combination of western-european political tradition and German social equality. Indeed, it still proves the basis for what is sometimes referred to as "constitution patriotism". One thing is clear: the construct only obtains in that particular combination. Remove the social equality element and the edifice begins to crumble.

In the 1980s, some timid attempts were made to decouple the two aspects — attempts that had little effect. With Germany Unity, all this has changed: the Federal Republic of Germany is beginning to regress behind those two postulates. Simultaneously, and this confirms the suspicion that the third phase of federal constitutional history has commenced, that core of free-



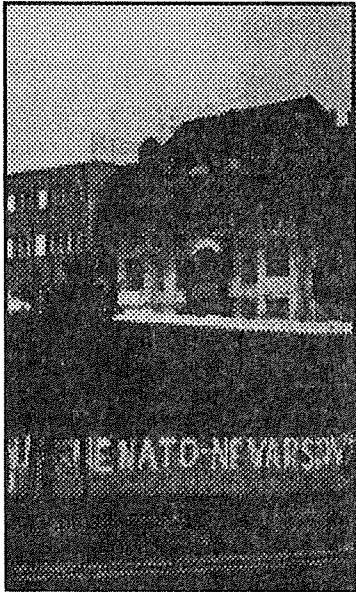
dom is coming under attack. It must be emphasised that this does not amount to an all-out attack on "democracy" as such. Equally, it would be wrong to see democracy directly at risk. Nevertheless, this same democracy is beginning to be infused with a strange content.

### The heart of conservative thinking

The reader may recall that Susan Sonntag once described Germany as "the heart of conservative thinking". And that at a time when the statement was not particularly apt — i.e. when the Federal Republic was permeated with the liberal *Zeitgeist*. If we assume that the pole of conservatism is not a fixed but a moving one, then it follows that, in the middle of the 1980s, the conservative pole of western society was to be found in Reagan's America. Just think, two years ago, Vice-President Quayle made a dismissive remark about single mothers and was forced to retract almost immediately. Had the same incident taken place a few years earlier, he would have got away with it.

That pole can move; it has moved; and it is now unequivocally in Germany. It was fascinating to observe, for instance, how

Johannes Gross - Germany's leading conservative columnist - should boast that the number of illegitimate births in Germany is much lower than in France or in England. Only a few years ago - as opposed to the USA - such a comment would have brought him a hail of ridicule. After all, Germans had done their best for one and half decades to embrace the new lifestyles emanating from San Francisco. More women lead a 1960s-type life in Germany than anywhere else in Europe — privately, that is. Nonetheless, curiously enough, Gross is seismologically correct: the hippies of yore have clearly struck some compromise with German discipline and breeding.



Conservative society is stealthily being re-installed in Germany. Conspiracy theorists will be disappointed: there is no master plan; there is, however, a tendency. The wholesale immigration of the past few years contradicts this thesis only superficially since it is obvious that, in this way, one of the most indispensable features of conservatism can flourish, namely, a hierarchical society as opposed to a more equal one. What one may perhaps not wish to impose on a fellow countryman or woman can more readily be expected of an immigrant or ethnic German. Towards the end of the 1980s in the Federal Republic of Germany, it became hip to employ African or Polish women as cleaning ladies. Thus the middle-classes could enjoy a completely new sensation: servants with a colonial or pan-German touch!

In Germany, the old institution of street newspaper seller disappeared years ago in common with many other facets of life that functioned to serve luxury or something worse. Recently though, the sight of refugees from Asian countries selling newspapers on streets in the provinces has become a frequent sight. It won't be long before African asylum-seekers take to polishing our shoes! In other words, "services" have been resurrected which had become superfluous as technology evolved and/or as the working class had become less subservient, services which, before the First World War, were taken for granted. And the absurd thing is that the word "reactionary" is being pushed as "progressive" - humanitarian in fact - now that immigrants from the Third World carry out these menial acts.

Not that the indigenous German lower classes are not being put

(back) in their place. Calls from the conservative parties for a "secondary" workfare market have been heard repeatedly since unification, a job market where decent wages are no longer paid and where the forgetful unemployed can have the opportunity of being reminded what work is like. The same think-tankers foresee jobless school-leavers being given the chance to get a "taste of work" — for a pittance, of course. The much-heralded collective bargaining system in Germany is being ubiquitously assailed and many smaller-sized companies have already abseiled from the tariff round table in order to submit their workers to low-pay-no-sack agreements (as was, incidentally, predicted in *Here & Now* N° 11). The right-liberal government here has just deregulated working practices so that, for example, mothers are "free" to work night shifts. Holiday rights are being eroded on all fronts. Employees are expected to put in voluntary overtime so as *not to put their jobs at risk*. The Chancellor, in a much publicised statement last year, accused his fellow Germans of living in a "leisure park" — i.e. of not working hard and long enough. Berlin - to many a virulent symbol of ruling-class bossiness as exemplified in the figures of Frederick II, Bismarck, Hitler and Honecker - has been redesignated capital of the new (?) Germany.

Needless to say, such permanent pressure to step up performance for ever fewer rewards - at a time when the *Das Handelsblatt*, the German *Financial Times*, predicts a "profits explosion" (April 1994) - is only possible within the framework of continuing immigration and unemployment. As for hierarchical society *per se*, new developments in Germany partly border on the ridiculous. Lufthansa recently issued its passengers with a questionnaire soliciting information about one's aristocratic title. In certain class-conscious shops, staff are again being addressed in the feudal third person which would be tantamount to re-introducing the master-servant "thou" form in anglophone countries.

All these features have emerged since unification in 1989, the defeat of bolshevism having intoxicated the German ruling class. If anything, we might reasonably have expected some sort of bourgeois explosion in East Germany in the wake of socialism's demise. But what we are now being openly confronted with is more a process of *refeudalisation*, as prewar landlords - or, more accurately, heirs who have never had anything to do with the East - reclaim "their" former possessions in the east.

### Expropriating nazi cliches

As already mentioned above, the much fêted "fascist threat" in Germany is greatly exaggerated. In Rostock and elsewhere, it was/is a case of the deprived (both self-appointed and genuine) expropriating nazi and racist clichés rather than being motivated by them. The nazi revival threat is a scenario painted by the more naive thinkers — amongst them a good many leftist intellectuals, smacking their lips at the opportunity this time round of showing the fascists what's what. Not possessing the gift of mental stratigraphy, the German Left has never been able to identify with the fundamental experience of the melting pot. More important than the nebulosity of establishment antiracism, however, is the realisation that Social Darwinism is being re-instated in Germany via the twin tools of immigration and unemployment. Horkheimer once spoke of "uncontemporary parts of the populace". Well, you can find them in Eastern Germany.

In other words, the political elite has unilaterally terminated the social contract it paid lip service to during the run-up to unification, abetted to a certain extent by nonaction on the part of the left. It is no surprise that the elite is only too ready to project the negative aspects of its own history on to the poor in the East and it is one function of marginal neonazism that, by being so open to criticism, it serves to deflect from the new Wilhelmism.

Alert readers will be asking themselves why, then, the Germany ruling class has recently tightened up the immigration and asylum laws so drastically ... as a sop to the chimera of neonazism? The answer probably lies in the desire to roll back the decline in the German birthrate and eventually create a new underclass of



its own. Over the past few years, since unification, Germany has been host to a socio-political experiment of unprecedented scale: a two-pronged attempt to exchange one underclass for another and to turn back the clock. In comparison, the back-to-basics campaign in GB seems - and is - paltry.

thing wild, romantic and Teutonic, nor for anything nazi and savage but more - and this is worrying enough - for the German-bourgeois mentality of the Gründerjahre always aspiring towards the empty best. Ultimately, I suppose, it's all a question of expelling doubt which, to paraphrase Hesse, is non-German anyway. One cannot escape the impression that, in Germany today, the Stasi is more appreciated than Dostoevsky. There's definitely a hankering for a time when one knew one's place and when grey areas were a thing of the future ... and this is unsettling.

- Translated by P.F. Wood

In Germany today, the type of chap that used to predominate from around 1870 to 1914 has reappeared — a brief stroll through a traditional university town will confirm this. The fashion of the Modern that Germany once tried to make its own is being discarded again. Not for some-

1 Translator's note: But the servant has to reply with "you". Mozart, for example, who was incensed when his employer Archbishop spoke to him in this haughty manner. See: *Mozart Myths* by William Stafford (Macmillan 1991 pp 183-184).

### Thuringia continued from Page 7....

remove the dubious flag of factory councils initiatives' as a IG chemie bureaucrat wished in a letter (betriebsrate factory councils are legal rank 'n' file groups whose official task is to advise and inform the unions, they are not allowed to call for a strike. However in Bischofferode they took the initiative of the movement, though they didn't support the call for nationwide hunger strikes issued by the miners).

Considering the more than 60 year old suppression of working class struggling traditions, the power of the organisation of 'social consensus' (though this is increasingly shattered) in this country, plus many blows that east Germans already suffered in the past 3 years, this movement, weak as it may be, is a refreshing sign which might act as a catalyst for the anger, which can be really felt everywhere in East Germany, towards what is considered, rightly enough, as Western capitalist colonialism. **Long live social romanticism!**

## ANARCHIST / ALTERNATIVE AWARDS NOMINATIONS 1993/4

**In alignment with Anarchy in the UK & Vegan Wholefoods Incorp. we invite you, the virus spreading alternative consumption, to vote in the following categories:-**

### I Greatest contribution to the spread of anarchist ideas in Britain:

- |                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| a) Albert Meltzer    | b) Ian Bone    |
| c) Margaret Thatcher | d) Vi Subversa |

### II The most enterprising collective in the milieu:

- |                    |                                   |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a) AK Distribution | b) Libertarian Alliance           |
| c) Chumbawumba     | d) Advance Party (Right to Party) |

### III The most exciting event:

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| a) The founding of Wanstonia          | b) The Anarchist Summer School in Glasgow |
| c) The clash with the cops -Greenwich | d) lesbian romance in 'Brookside'         |

### IV Most challenging title of the year:

- |                    |                          |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Proletarian Gob | b) Bad Attitude          |
| b) Aufheben        | d) 'Carry on Recruiting' |

### V Of waning interest:

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| a) Derek Beackon           | b) Class War Federation/Organisation (delete as applicable) |
| c) Claudia aka Class Whore | d) Dave Douglass/Echanges (delete as applicable)            |

### VI The most despised outfit:

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| a) East London Psychogeographical Association | b) R.C.P./S.W.P. (delete)  |
| c) Here and Now                               | d) Column 88 (exterminate) |

### VII Open Category:

Most promising newcomer/ revival.....

*To be conducted by Single Transferrable Vote, administered The Elections Deform Society.*

# TECHNOLOGICAL DESPOTISM

by Ian Tillium

## - RAISING THE HIGH GROUND

In 1991 two American business professors, including one from the Harvard Business School, published a book called *2020 Vision: Transform Your Business Today to Succeed in Tomorrow's Economy*. (Davis and Davidson 1991). Although riven through with a kind of Parsonian functionalism, it's nonetheless a very readable bourgeois account of the info revolution, and in addition it's a good source on where exactly this society thinks it's going and wants to go. In this article I want to use it as a peg on which to hang various thoughts on the question of present and future technological change.

Davis and Davidson allow themselves a few annoyingly 'schematist' passages, but their basic model seems pretty much on the ball. Having described how the "industrial economy" based around rail, electricity, and the car was ended by means of an information revolution which gave prime place to the generation, storage, processing and transmission of information, they show fairly convincingly how the "information economy" is now having to watch the inevitable rise of its eventual successor: a "bioeconomy" based around genetic engineering, nanotechnology, and neurocomputers.

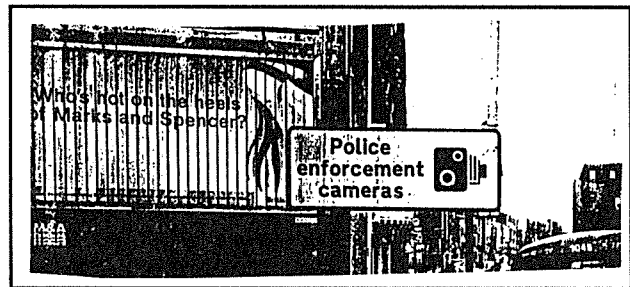
Drawing an analogy between the information revolution and the industrial revolution, they compare the "infostructure" (they don't actually say 'information superhighway') with the original rail network. This leads them to the following model of change:

Big businesses and entire industries build each infrastructure, yet their economic value is dwarfed by the even greater productivity of new businesses and new industries that come into being as consequences of the newly laid foundation....Each economy in history has relied heavily upon a particular kind of infrastructure, one that is peculiar to the technology of its era. (pp.30-32).

Given who they are, Davis and Davidson obviously have no concept of the proletariat, but it's necessary to recognise that those of us who do have yet to develop a serious and useful concept of technological revolution. There are, of course, discussions on post-Fordism, dispersed Fordism, etc., but it has to be said that most of them are academic and unreadable. Moreover, not only do they seem to concentrate above all on work in industry and transport, or just work, they're also usually written by people unlikely to have known any life-long workers anyway.

The situation's little better in what passes for the revolutionary movement, and even a recent debate published by *Echanges et Mouvement* (1993) has done little more than to set the idea of 'destabilising fragmentation' against the idea

that uniformised consumption patterns are evidence for the reconstitution of a 'homogeneous social formation.' These (Continental) generalisations may be well-meaning, but they say more about their authors' artistic tastes (and level of hope) than they do about reality, the two opposing views of which are ultimately both reducible to a pretty mundane and basically patronising ouvrierism. Meanwhile the (North Atlantic) Wildcat people are still wondering (1994) whether the global expansion of the proletariat creates possibilities for permanent communism which weren't available to the poor in Mayan times, to say nothing about their implicit comparison of the massacre at Waco to the Albigensian Crusade. I wouldn't want to be obscurantist, but what about an empirically-based consideration of present trends?



We are a long way from having a developed proletarian view of technological change, free from both back-to-nature crap as well as progressivism. In fact, the poverty of theory can be described in even simpler fashion: the would-be revolutionary movement just hasn't got to grips with the question of what techno-change actually means. For Chrissakes, there's not even a decent critique of TV! Since the most obvious cultural change to come is likely to be the spread of interactive TV — which will change 'life' as much as the spread of ordinary TV did in the previous period — the absence of a critique in this area alone is lamentable.

Unquestionably, our learned business professors are trying to trumpet the glories of the ruling society's development, and they lack the slightest hint of the oppositional sense even of, say, a Packard, let alone the attitude of today's various anti-capitalist factions. In fact, they're total bastards, putting corporate performance above everything, and salivating at the organisation-to-business conversion represented by deregulation, privatisation, and employee share-ownership. (pp135-36). But even so, their book is useful in terms of an overview of what we're up against.

In what follows I shall look first at a few aspects of the changes currently underway; then, in abstract and general terms, at the inadequacies of existing views of technological change; and finally at the overall *class significance* of the information revolution, touching especially upon its 'biological' aspects.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

It's a commonplace that the direction of technological change is closely bound up with the interests of the weapons and intelligence sectors. It always has been. Marconi worked with MI6, Turing with the forerunner of GCHQ.<sup>1</sup> Less well known, though, are the implications this has for changes in the *infrastructure*.

To start with a non-technological analogy, take MI5. Obviously an organisation which keeps four million keys in a basement in London doesn't get all flustered whenever it sees a locked door. Unsurprisingly, as several sources have noted, it enjoys a very cosy relationship with the major locksmithing outfits. Locks are the way they are partly because of MI5.<sup>2</sup>

### Telecommunications

Nor should MI5 be expected to activate special procedures when faced with someone using a phone or a computer. It's old hat that MI5 much prefer to have bugs already in place which last indefinitely. Fitzgerald and Leopold revealed as long ago as 1987 that one of MI5's faves was the 'carrier current device': imposing a VLF current on someone's electrical ring, this enables sounds to be picked up from a special device plugged into any socket serviced by the same sub-station. (pp. 188, 198).<sup>3</sup> People with reason to think their homes are bugged have often reported engineers coming to fiddle with their leccy with very weak excuses. Another kind of bug doesn't even have a current: it's just a tiny plate sensitive to sound. When buggers point a microwave beam at it, the vibrations alter the electromagnetic echo and it's a cinch to reproduce the sound. This kind's been around for 40 years. (pp.200-03).

In 1971 the Pentagon proposed to Nixon that a special gadget be fitted to everyone's telly, whereby the President could turn on every set in the country in a time of emergency. (Mander 1977, pp.27-28). A couple of years ago in the UK, when it was thought that the fifth TV channel would transmit on the wavelength reserved for video, the suggestion was made that engineers would be sent round to adjust every video player accordingly. Now in 1994 the word is that owing to Maastricht all electrical sockets in the country will have to be made compatible with the two-pin European standard. A special device will have to be installed in everyone's house. Any idea that design may be other than market-led hardly needs spelling out.

Already, using intelligence satellite software, Murdoch's Sky TV can remove reception of their own channels from anyone using a card number which is known to be illicitly duplicated. Judging by the fact that mobile phone handsets will soon be able to be vetted individually (*Guardian* 24/11/93), a similar capability will no doubt also become available in relation to specific tellies. Stopping the reception of TV channels may not sound like much — it may even sound like a good idea — but what's more important is the general rule that *surveillance leads to control*.

As the phone, small computer and telly increasingly merge into a unified commodity (Davis and Davidson, pp.33-36), the design details of the coming phoneutervision will undoubtedly be partly determined by the needs of the State. (One can predict that within a few years it may well be hard to buy a TV without a built-in modem). But it won't even matter if you haven't got one, since the same will also be true of what you plug everything else into.

## Road Transport

Parallel changes are underway in this means of communication too. Haussmann's redesign of Parisian thoroughfares to help the State prevent insurrections now seems archaic. Already in Oslo virtually all cars have been fitted with electronic gadgets which bleep roadside computers at all entry points into the city. Each entry costs £1, with people being sent notices when it's time to add more credits to their gadgets. (Both the docking and the adding of new units is done directly on computer: the gadgets are just for location and identification). Meanwhile, cameras snap randomly at transgressors, and if you're unlucky you get fined.

Last year, UK Transport Secretary John McGregor went to meet opposite numbers in Scandinavia to take advice on introducing a similar system here. (*Guardian* 11/5/93). Norway and Sweden, of course, used to be front-line countries in NATO plans for land warfare. But they're not now, and the UK never was. All the same, a similar system began 'pilot operation' in Cambridge last year. (*Guardian* 3/4/93).

Meanwhile, the US National Security Agency (NSA) has used an intelligence satellite to track a car from one side of the US to the other, using software known as geographical information systems or GIS. Along with stuff about an 'integration' with 'remote sensing,' the scientific literature in the GIS field now routinely includes articles on 'socioeconomic applications.'<sup>4</sup> In the UK, BT have announced their intention of using US satellites to track their drivers. It looks as though the pilot area this time will be Manchester. (*Daily Record* 27/12/1993). Wise investors won't be buying shares in tachometer manufacturers.

### The Social Olfactory

The last example I shall give is smell. The capabilities here don't seem to have reached the draconian levels reached in other areas, but they're instructive nonetheless. Smell too has both 'surveillance' and 'direct influence' aspects. As far as is known, its surveillance aspects are currently limited to spying on a sub-group of the electronically tagged in the US: namely, some of the people ordered to abstain from alcohol and drugs, who are fitted with gadgets which sniff these substances out and report transgression accordingly. (*Sunday Times* 5/9/93).

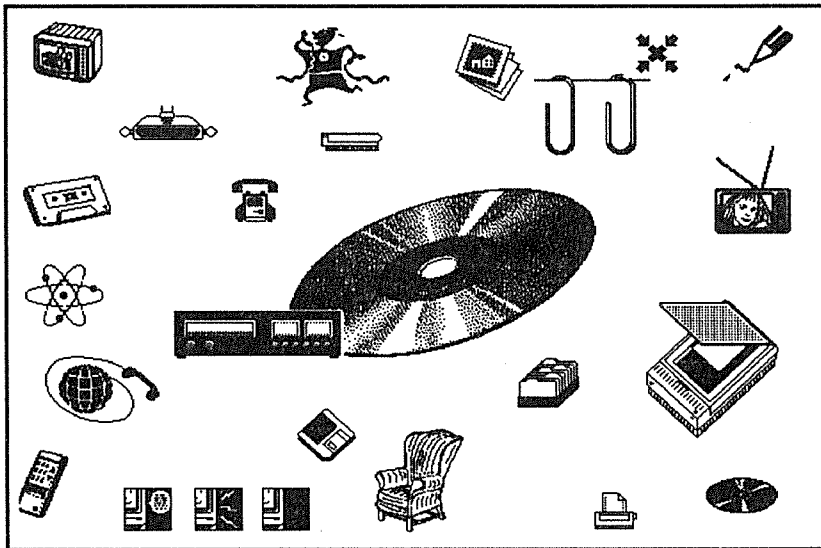
In the UK this method of surveillance has yet to find favour, but it's an altogether different story with the use of smells which exert a direct influence. These have been used in shops since 1993.<sup>5</sup> (*Sunday Times* 11/4/93 and 24/10/93). They work in four main ways: first, to cause relaxation (i.e. of critical faculties — you're not supposed to doze off); second, to evoke memories associated with particular types of product (the smell of coconut oil in travel agents, cut grass in greengrocers, leather in car showrooms, flowers in shoe-shops, etc.); third, to encourage 'theme shopping' (brandy and Xmas pud in department stores in December — and look out for chocolate smells this Easter); and fourth, to encourage subconscious association of a particular smell, or 'perfume logo,' with a particular store.

Some shops are also using the chemical which bonds newborn babies to their mothers, and indeed it's this 'product' which is the most instructive. Since most of us wouldn't recognise it consciously, it's more accurate to call it a behaviour-modifying chemical agent than a smell. It would surely be a mistake to think the State's very far away. As George Dodd, the bastard in charge of the Institute of Olfactory Research at Warwick University, puts it: "This is a very exciting time. Smells have enormous potential to influence behaviour."

## An Overview

Faced with these aggressive moves on so many fronts, what's the bottom line? Well first, just because they really are out to get you doesn't mean you should be paranoid... Or at least not yet. The NSA base at Menwith Hill near Harrogate, as is well known in some circles, may have the capability of tapping into all UK phone lines<sup>6</sup> — but people who are worried just don't use the phone. For the time being, much the same applies as regards electrical circuits: if you want to keep something quiet, say it outside, get your own generator, or go leccy-free. (For all I know, it may be enough just to turn off your mains. Anyhow, my focus here isn't on the problems of either bank-robbers or 'revolutionary combatants'.)

Along with surveillance — first of some people, then, by computer, of everyone — the other side of the pincer movement is direct influence. The more hi-tech and widespread



the surveillance, the more hi-tech and widespread the control and influence. Massification's over: what's happening now is control's informatisation, digitalisation. Domination isn't dependent on marketing, but it does follow similar lines of development. It's just more 'universal.' Just as magazines can be printed nowadays in different editions for each target market — or even, like one issue of *Time* in 1990, for each individual subscriber — the trend is towards technological control being computer-customised according to the rulers' precise needs in relation to each population, neighbourhood, household, and ultimately, each individual. The necessary infrastructure is being built up now.

The main point is that a pervasive infrastructure of surveillance and control is being built in a way that cannot be resisted. (Its construction, that is). It's not about a few men in black suits, or the Post Office Investigation Department, or Gerry Gable. Nor's it about, say, someone looking at your file, or the now primitive idea of ID cards, or cameras in Marks and Spencer's zooming in when cheques get written for between £42 and £50. They're out to get *everyone*. The rulers' main enemy is always within — but the issue's not 'preventive civil war.' **A wholly new terrain is in formation, as a preliminary.**

## TECHNOLOGY AND CLASS STRUGGLE<sup>7</sup>

So — how does this fit in with the class struggle? Well, in negative terms, it's pretty obvious that in a world of satellites and genetic engineering, no sound theoretical basis for understanding struggles in the future can be derived simply from cheerleading the struggles taking place at the moment — whether that means the occasional wiping of VDU screens

and floppy discs by magnet-wielding office workers, or the irritation of selected Royals by modem-wielding hackers. In itself, though, rejecting the anarcho teenybopper view doesn't get us very far, and so I want now to point to the inadequacy of two more 'global' approaches.

## 'Orthodox Marxism'

The view here is that technological change represents the development of 'objective conditions' which are increasingly more 'revolutionary.' But since, as others have argued, capitalism can't, in the usual sense, be 'late' — it won't 'collapse' — this type of thinking just doesn't cut the mustard. (Pannekoek 1934, Aufheben 1993). Even a first glance indicates that this is the case. First, looking at microwave towers or nuclear power stations, no sane person would think how much more in place they'd be in a free society. Second, once it's understood that the proletariat has always fought *subjectively* against its reduction to mere labour-power, it makes little sense to see even unemployment brought about by new technology as increasing any 'objective' tendency towards social revolution. How could one show that such an 'objective tendency' actually existed? And third, there's no evidence yet that *really* chronic problems for the system are caused by anything but active resistance from outside it. Technology isn't necessarily associated with the appearance of major cracks in the system.

On further examination, the idea of capitalist 'decline' (or 'decadence') appears variously to be academic, stupid, philosophical, tautological, or just plain wrong. This becomes clear when we consider that the future holds but three possibilities: first, capitalism could continue to accumulate and invest surplus value, and thereby

change the world (if it doesn't, then it's not capitalism); second, it might be destroyed by revolution; and finally, it might be superseded by some new kind of despotic and exploitative society with a non-value basis yet to be defined.

Since something only declines if it approaches its doomsday, in the present context we need only look at the second and third cases. In the second, then, to say that the strengthening of revolutionary forces would correspond to a weakening of the forces of capital is simply a banality. It's pretty obvious too that revolution would be preceded by troubles which had brewed up for some time, corresponding to major weaknesses in the system. But given the subjective, assertive nature of revolution, it hardly makes sense for those who seek revolution to define the underlying tendency in terms of any objective decline. In fact, it doesn't even make sense for those who wish to stand above the struggle as observers, listening out for the jangle of our 'radical chains,' since the possibility of the third option shows that even severe problems for capital don't *necessarily* make revolution more likely. In practice, maybe they will, but that can't be shown theoretically from the nature of capitalism.

In the third case, exploitation would persist but in non-capitalist forms.<sup>8</sup> To be fair to the idea of decline, we should admit that this could happen if, for reasons other than proletarian revolution, capitalism reaches a point where it just can't go on. This may result, for example, from an ecological or biological crisis brought about by capital-determined technological change; it may also come about if working class power grows to a point where the amount of surplus-value produced just won't permit the requisite level of capitalist organisation or rationality. Never say never: the emergence

of a new system of exploitation is a definite theoretical possibility. It may even be intrinsically stronger relative to the dispossessed than capitalism is. If that's the case, though, capitalism will have paved the way for a 'higher form' of exploitation: in other words, it won't have 'declined,' it will have *succeeded*. It may even appear to have been a transition.

If, on the other hand, the new system were intrinsically weaker relative to the dispossessed than capitalism, it would admittedly make perfect sense to speak of objective capitalist decline. Capitalism would have failed itself. But who can say now how easy it would be to overthrow a new system which presently isn't even in gestation? And how easy is it to overthrow capitalism, anyway?

The idea that capitalism is in decline *now* is doubly nonsensical. The plight of a few Lloyd's names and American building societies just isn't enough to permit such a conclusion. Even in an advanced country like France, substantial portions of agriculture were being capitalised right up to the 1970s. (See Goldner 1991). This clearly represented extensive rather than intensive growth, the *spread* of capitalism, not its decline. Intensively too, capitalism is hardly experiencing major problems in developing the productive forces, and rapid technological change is in fact the best evidence that capitalism progresses. What does make sense is to think of the decline or decadence of *particular capitalist forms* (the gold standard, colonialism, Soviet-style bureaucracy, etc.) which capitalism then replaces with other forms: it's this sort of approach towards capitalist progress in general which will enable us to reach a better understanding of capitalism's technological revolutions.<sup>9</sup>

This is not to deny, of course, that development does mean occasional *crises*. Why else go off the gold standard, or convertibilise the rouble? But economic crisis doesn't, empirically speaking, have to weaken capitalist rule at all. Most revolutionary uprisings do indeed start as bread riots brought on by specific crises, but not all crises lead to riots, not all riots become uprisings, and not all uprisings turn revolutionary. Nor have specific crises ever seemed to posit the introduction of a new despotism which wasn't capitalism. On the contrary: in themselves, sectoral or local crises seem to be good for the system, not bad. To think that the crises and struggles of the past necessarily point to even bigger ones in the future is simply a matter of belief.

### Autonomism

Nor can the autonomist view be made to stand up. To be sure, there is an undoubted elegance in the 'methodological' idea that "capital is a social relation of struggle" (Clever 1979, p.71), that the structure of capitalist society is defined by two competing "subjectivities" (Negri 1979, p.44). But the crass analogies with classical warfare that one associates with autonomism fail dismally to throw any light on global technological change.

In the class war, as in conventional military encounters, one must begin with the closest study of one's own forces....When the enemy regroups or restructures, as capital is doing in the present crisis, its actions must be grasped in terms of the defeat of prior tactics or strategies by our forces — not simply as another clever move."(Clever, p.42).

If capitalism must continuously revolutionise the forces of production, as it must, this kind of thinking appears quite hollow. The class struggle is not a battlefield, and even if it were, it wouldn't be like the film about one in North Africa in WW2 which Clever refers to.<sup>10</sup>

If the possibility — however large or small — of a non-capitalist exploitative future is enough to destroy the idea of necessary capitalist decline, the heralding by technological change of capitalist society's entry into a new period or 'stage' of domination is enough to bring down the autonomist understanding of crisis at the first hurdle. Negri and others may well have been right that it was working class struggle which undermined Keynesianism and eventually brought it into crisis, but they were methodologically completely unable to understand what came after and what's yet to come. There is no reason to assume that the crisis of Keynesianism was a crisis of capitalism — or, indeed, that capitalism itself has ever been in crisis. The laughable idea of 'permanent crisis' would seem to be little more than a product of narrow-minded academics desperately seeking to draw conclusions of 'universal' importance from their own cloistered work.

Just consider knowledge, intelligence, science and technology. Don't the rulers find them useful? And if they do, where's the class struggle determining developments in chemistry, or fibre optics, or artificial intelligence, or genetics? It's pushing credibility too far to say that no fancy microwaves or satellites are a match for horny-handed sons and daughters of toil with their backs up — or that microwave technology wouldn't take its present form if it hadn't been for struggle. The invention of Cray supercomputers, cloning techniques, binary nerve gas, the satellite and the field-effect transmitter (a wireless bug) simply didn't involve Johnny Capitalist grabbing some power from the workers. Nor did their deployment. Johnny already had the power to make sure that all the world's research scientists were working in his labs. *With that power he made some more power*. This idea is one which autonomism finds it impossible to get to grips with.

It's all too easy for Clever and others to suggest that the only alternative to a superficially dynamic but really two-dimensional autonomist view is to see everything as a result of 'clever' conspiracies. It's not. Debord, for example, writes of 'invasion' and 'lines of advance' (1988, p.4) without either pushing autonomism or putting everything down to conspiracies.<sup>11</sup> In terms of the military analogy, technology alters the *terrain*: it raises the *high ground* to levels where its opponents would find it useless even if we could seize it. Recognising this is fundamental to any proletarian view of what's going on, of 'this world we're entering.'

A second criticism concerns the chronic over-concentration, despite appearances to the contrary, on industrial 'restructuring' and the worker: and in particular, on the 'rapid response' customised manufacturing, just-in-time delivery, and 'total quality' management first introduced by Japanese transnationals. In very simple terms, it would appear self-evident that in fact these are only instances of a differentiated social control which operates on a much wider level. Those who, like Negri (1990), ultimately support Western capitalist 'freedom', are unlikely to understand this.

In the second part of the article, I try to provide a few pointers towards an alternative view, based upon a somewhat broader critique of technological developments.

### THE TENDENCY TO CONTROL

#### From 'Information' economy to 'bioeconomy' ?

Davis and Davidson show convincingly that the new terrain will be fleshed out not only by developments in the information economy, but also by the coming biological revolution, involving both biotechnology and neurocomputing. If biotech represents the application of technology to life, the latter represents the application of models of the brain to comput-

ers.

Biotechnology, based on genetic engineering, has two obvious fields of application: agribusiness, and the basically murderous business of capitalist 'medicine,' both with effects on the human gene pool which are unknown but likely to be disastrous. Anyone who thinks otherwise would be best advised to ask themselves why Thalidomide is still being given to pregnant women in Brazil. (*Daily Mail* 2/6/93).<sup>12</sup> While the full effects of the biorevolution can't really be foreseen at the moment, what one can predict is that forms of surveillance and control will appear directly at the biological level. DNA testing will be nothing compared to capitalism's potential uses of knowledge produced by the multibillion-dollar Human Genome Project.

If, as Davis and Davidson suggest (p.194), the distant future is where computers, genetics, and micromachinery (or even nanomachinery — gadgets built up atom by atom) are "one and the same thing", it's easiest today to concentrate on the aspects of the bio sector which directly involve information. Put another way, this means looking at the extraction of information from, and the insertion of information into, the individual human being. As will be seen, these fields are not at all ephemeral: they already exist. They provide, in fact, modernised definitions of two of our old adversaries: surveillance and control.

From this viewpoint, then, the model of industrialisation, leading to informationalisation (now midway through), and then bio-isation, can be simplified. Rather than representing two separable things, informationalisation and bio-isation mark the *onset* and *development* of a single new despotism which will replace liberal capitalism globally.<sup>13</sup> In terms of the class relation, the 'information revolution' appears even as a transition.

## MIND CONTROL CAPABILITIES

If biological revolution obviously involves the exploitation and control of the human body, when considered together with the information economy and the State it also immediately raises the issue of mind control. In fact, this is a field with a long history, already tackled by a number of authors: issues covered include CIA and US Army Intelligence experiments with LSD and psilocybin; CIA and US Naval Intelligence experiments with radio activation of electrodes in the brain; the controlled use of narcotics and hypnosis; the sending of auditory messages via microwaves; telepathic transmission and direct psychokinetic influence; and the use of electromagnetic 'zapping' weapons.

Historically, one case with a tartan flavour was the work done by Ewen Cameron, sometimes known as the 'Scottish Mengele.' Stirlingshire-born and Glasgow-educated, this 'experimental' and 'applied' psychiatrist was a leading behaviourist who began to work for the American military cause shortly before Pearl Harbour. Although both lobotomy and electro-shock were already known in the 1930s, during and after the war there was a massive growth in America of 'coercive psychiatry' (i.e. torture) and it was there that Cameron was to play a major role. (Thomas, Part 2). This was the era, of course, when 'brainwashing' scares made at least one of the US government's scientific aims crystal clear.

Eventually coming to work for CIA chief Allen Dulles, Cameron ran numerous CIA mind control projects from his base at McGill University in Montreal. These included the experimental use on 'non-volunteer subjects' of LSD and other drugs, massive doses of electricity, and a torture technique known as 'psychic driving' in which revelations extracted from patients under psychoanalysis were played back to them over and over again via a helmet they couldn't

take off. Cameron's main technical sidekick, the Englishman Leonard Rubenstein, formerly of the Royal Signals Corps, ran a related project called 'Radio Telemetry'.

President of the powerful American Psychiatric Association and first president of the World Association of Psychiatrists, Cameron was no minor figure. Called in to examine Rudolf Hess, and then by Dulles to give advice on the Gary Powers affair, he took on a role which in Britain was played by right-wing scumbag psychiatrist William Sargant, who used to get called in to 'examine' apparent Soviet defectors. (West, p.209). Make no mistake, psychiatry and psychology are not areas the secret state turns a blind eye to. Anyone who's ever come up against a Home Office medical doctor will be aware of the depths to which it is possible for a human being to sink.

For anyone who's interested in mind control but not that read-up, good places to begin are the books by Marks, Schefflin and Opton, and Thomas, the pamphlet by McKinney, and the recent articles by Cannon and Chamberlain in *Lobster* and *Open Eye* respectively. From those and other sources, there's enough evidence to show that States have been putting resources into this kind of stuff ever since WW2, when both sides got in on the act. The origins of some techniques undoubtedly go back further still, well before Dachau, to the beginning of the electrical era and beyond. It has to be said that opponents of capitalism who willingly ignore this field just aren't serious.

Unfortunately, though, whilst critics of this stuff are almost all aware (and afraid) of its truly horrific implications for the future, most of those I've read seem to have focused only on



specific projects in the past or present, and on the harassment and torture involved. Whether out of pessimism, or fear of ridicule or worse, their remarks about the 'technofascist' future have usually been off-centre or parenthetical. (One exception to this has been Packard).

Here I shall mention only a few areas, and cannot claim to deal with the field in any great depth. My intention is solely to suggest some sort of a context, so as to provoke some kind of a discussion in radical circles on overall trends (rather than the masculine complicity/rivalry of tale-swapping, which is more usual).

## Electronic Control

For years, more behaviour-altering electro-weapons have been known than just electro-shock. Not surprisingly, though, one of the main founding fathers (in the West, at least) was a psychiatrist: the Spanish 'doctor' Jose Delgado.<sup>14</sup>

The work of Delgado, who developed techniques for manipulating behaviour through electrical brain implants, marks an important stage in the development of the modern scientific ethos. (Schefflin & Opton, chaps. 7-8). In an early experiment, rumoured to have been carried out in the 1930s (Lawrence 1967), but made public only in the 1960s, he fitted electrodes into the brain of a bull. Deliberately goading the bull to charge at him by pressing a button on a small black box, Delgado then pressed another button to stop it from running him through.

CIA psychiatrists later carried out similar experiments on Vietcong prisoners in Vietnam, implanting electrodes, seeing how well they could induce defecation or vomiting or

murderous aggression, and then burning the bodies afterwards. According to Thomas, some of the American methods were later taken over, at the same hospital, by the Vietcong. (pp.287, 354). More recently, there have been various reports of individuals having implants in their heads in peacetime.

Once again, we find surveillance as well as control. In 1971 a sociologist (Smith) and a criminologist (Ingraham) wrote of how gadgets could be implanted in 'deviants' which also transmitted physiological data concerning adrenalin flow, respiration, muscular tension, etc. As Schefflin and Opton point out (p350), costs would permit the electronic 'incarceration' of around twice as many people as are currently in jail. Since tags already can and do sniff out the presence of drugs, this isn't at all a scenario for the distant future.

By now, the zany-named 'electronic tagging' is a method of individual electronic surveillance which is already in fairly widespread use: in the US some 45 000 people are currently wearing these hi-tech balls-and-chains, including persistently truancy schoolkids in Tennessee. Even this tagged population, however, is less than the figure dreamt of in 1971 by NSA scientist Meyer, who wanted computer-monitored devices to be attached to roughly half of all those arrested. (Schefflin and Opton, pp.351-53). In this plan, 'transponders' would communicate individuals' location to 'transceivers' in city streets and important buildings. Meyer describes how banks would be forewarned of the presence of any bad boys in the vicinity.

Meyer's thinking was echoed in late 1993 in the *Sunday Times* (21/9/1993), when Norman Macrae called for widespread tagging of "far fewer than 1%" of the UK population (i.e. less than 500, 000 people). Obviously thrashing around for some sort of liberal-democratic justification for what he was floating, he painted it as, among other things, a rape prevention policy (just like a 'good war', presumably). Women hitch-hikers in 2010, according to Macrae, would be able to check electronically if any tagged man offering them a lift had a conviction for rape. Norm, you're so caring!

It's anyone's guess as to what types of direct influence are currently available or being researched in connection with such penal devices. But not surprisingly the issue hasn't been ignored. I doubt if the people who fed the idea to Macrae are unaware that Ingraham and Smith also called for the direct electronic control of the tagged people's physiology.

If, at one time, controlled behavioural manipulation only worked in conjunction with implantation — sometimes with prior hypnotic suggestion (see Lawrence) — nowadays implantation isn't necessary (see Becker, and sources in Cannon). One 'wireless' technique involves the coding on to a microwave transmission of a message which the brain then interprets as sound. (See sources in McKinney). These messages are known as 'pulsed audiograms,' and McKinney has recently shown how they're currently being used in an American secret State project (on non-volunteers) which began in 1989. Other projects with non-verbal audio effects have been reported in India, Russia, Sweden, and the UK. (On the Verneys in the UK, see Chamberlain 1993).

All this may well be a mere glimmer of what's to come, and we under-estimate the vileness of our enemies at our peril. Since the logical move in terms of both surveillance and direct influence is for the 'information content' to increase, serious consideration shows that the 'technofascist' nightmare of the control of large populations via electromagnetic waves, if capitalism lasts, is only of a matter of time.

If accurate *differential* control of large populations may not yet be possible without tagging (or prior hypnosis?), *mass*

control certainly is. As a US Army report has shown, microwave radiation can be used to alter behaviour in much the same fashion as Delgado's electrical stimulation, inducing insomnia, fatigue, memory loss, hallucinations, etc. (Cannon, McKinney; see also Brodeur). The effects of low-level microwave radiation, just like those of the ELF fields of electrical goods and power-lines, have correspondingly been subject to a pretty consistent cover-up (Becker, Brodeur).

Robert Becker, the pioneering bio-electricist once nominated for a Nobel prize, also describes (pp.224-26) how by the 1970s and 1980s our old enemy Delgado was running extremely low frequency (ELF) experiments on animals, without the need for implants. The more one delves into this stuff, the more the different sub-fields seem connected. But at the same time, the more the general tendency seems apparent.

Becker describes too how in the 1990s, the entire US population is being exposed to a 'ground wave emergency network' (GWEN) designed to help the State maintain communications after a nuclear attack. This involves the use of a third part of the electromagnetic spectrum, namely very low frequency (VLF), and is indeed quite remarkable, given that the chances of a future nuclear attack on the US are virtually zero. Becker is a top scientist, no John Allegro-type nutter — sadly, not even averse to animal experiments — which makes his epilogue, with its ringing cry against electromagnetic mind control by the military, all the more transfixing.

### Parapsychology

If the physical/physiological explanations of psychic functioning remain hypothetical, or vague, or hidden, or incomplete, it's nonetheless a fact that telepathy and micro-psychokinesis (the controlled 'mental influence' of probabilities in random systems) have long been demonstrable in laboratories around the world.

At least one aim of research is easy to see: namely, the accurate transmission of binary data, even if only of a few bits. I would suggest that all the research into 'psi-hitting' personality types, psi-inductive environments, psi training, etc., being carried out at Edinburgh and elsewhere (see Morris), should be understood primarily in this context. All this kind of stuff has obvious uses in the world of human-intelligence espionage. So does all the stuff about the mind-to-computer interface.

But other research aims are harder to make out. Whilst the importance of this field as a whole is obviously very great, the precise lines of development are curiously hard to define. More specifically, the growing 'open' interest in the relevance of electromagnetic fields, particularly the Earth's, will probably remain obscure for some time. (See Radin et al. 1994).

We do know, however, that psi is an area into which companies like AT&T and Sony are currently ploughing substantial resources. According to various 'straight' researchers, technological breakthroughs may happen suddenly and quite soon. (Broughton 1991, pp.345-64, Radin 1993a).<sup>15</sup> As with electricity and the microchip, there's no reason to think that any developments here will find themselves undeployed in the enhancement of social control.

### The Nightmare of Psi-Tech

In a recent article in the psi field the Edinburgh-based former AT&T parapsychologist Dean Radin has described results showing 'individual footprints' in the influence of random systems. (Radin et al. 1994). In other words, it looks possible to distinguish the presence of a specific individual through the effects of his or her psychic functioning. It might be said



that this foreshadows the development of a capacity towards which science has long been tending: the identification electronically of individual brain-patterns. Genetic fingerprinting is only a beginning.

The bio side of the infotech nightmare will be here when this possibility becomes turned into technology, when the implementation of that technology becomes massified, and when the information gathered thereby gets used. The nightmare of 24-hour surveillance of everyone's mind, and the corresponding control by electronic means, would be quite in keeping with developments which began around the time of WW2 and which are still going on. And when this kind of capability goes into orbit, whether in 10 years or 50, the methods used by those people fighting for revolutionary liberation will of necessity have to change completely.

Developments parallel to this are almost as hard to foresee exactly as those of 'accidental' genetic mutation. But this is the direction in which capitalist domination is heading. This is what the present 'transition' is towards. It makes worldwide social revolution ever more urgent, and it's what revolution would prevent. It is something all rebels with a taste for analysis have got to get to grips with.

## THE NEW PERIOD

The easiest conclusion to draw would be that proletarian revolutionaries should get back to Luddism PDQ. Since, however, it is not at all clear that any of the developments referred to will actually cost jobs, and since few of us in the advanced countries or elsewhere have any 'reserves' to fall back on, the parallel with the industrial revolution is somewhat useless.

Getting into pessimism's another option. Those who don't sell out or drop out, drink. But we shouldn't forget that the theorists of totalitarian 'bureaucratic collectivism' in the 1930s were all proved wrong. Capitalism didn't solve its problems; it didn't establish or give way to 'total' domination, and workers and other proletarians continued to struggle. For the time being, it doesn't look as though the next 30 years will see capitalism replaced by an altogether new *type* of exploitation.

But capitalism certainly will, if not destroyed, enter a new 'stage': one of a *technological despotism* which then develops on various fronts according to its own rules. (The term 'technofascism' is good but possibly too backward-looking).<sup>16</sup> Just as formal domination of the labour process simply isn't the same as real domination based upon a continual raising of productivity, nor is the latter really the same once electromagnetic and biotechnological surveillance and influence are exerted over every body and mind.

Some things, of course, won't change. The need for a world human community, communism, will remain in our being, and, if there's no revolution, short of a massive genetic

mutation there'll still be bosses and controllers on one side, and the dispossessed on the other, where they need us but we don't need them. (There'll probably continue to be an under-ground of one kind or another too).

One thing in particular is worth remembering: if the bosses were unable to get better access than the rest of us to healthcare and food, then they'd no longer put any effort into being bosses, and the entire capitalist system would break down. David Rockefeller just couldn't keep going if faced with a lifetime's prospect of having the same state of health and the same access to medical treatment as a proletarian.<sup>17</sup> (It's very likely already that the level of preventive medicine among the super-rich is very high indeed. How many members of the Royal Family get cancer?) Capitalism's not only about the accumulation of the productive forces; it also has necessarily to be about the rich and the poor. In terms of enforced differentials in consumption, *exploitation will remain visible*.

There'll be some kind of resistance everywhere. It may be easy to point to capital's limits, as the French group La

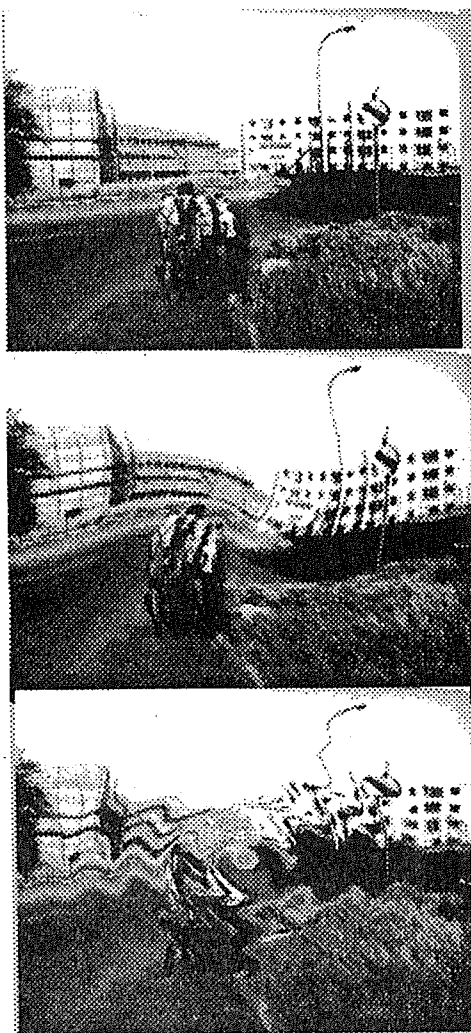
Banquise (Ice-Cap) did, by noting that whilst bacteria and robots don't do real work the "technicians, workers and researchers" around them do; and that "the day when the proletarian necessary to its functioning folds his arms, the bacterium comes to a standstill." (1986, p.70).<sup>18</sup> But the word "worker" (*ouvrier*) here remains strangely undefined, the reference to the "day" is too vague, and one wonders what form 'arm-folding' might actually take. Whilst recognising that resistance by (former) scientists and engineers is definitely something important,<sup>19</sup> rebels will also want to work out what the rest of us will be doing, where our power will lie on an everyday 'structural' level, and where the radical flashpoints are likely to occur involving parts of the working class.

Talk of 'hyperreality' and 'cyberspace,' whether 'beyond Bladerunner' (Davis 1992) or not yet, will no doubt increase in popularity in the literary and chattering classes. Really all one can do is laugh, since these ideas are obviously more useful to people a bit higher up the ladder: the scum who run Apple or AT&T or Sega or Sky, say, or Hollywood, or even perhaps the academic research councils. They're probably of as little actual use to chatterers as they are to proletarians. Since the

world isn't made of stories, or even of language, concepts like these only obscure things and are the opposite of revolutionary critique. Linguistically and conceptually, capitalist dictatorship's real 'abolitionists' definitely won't be treading the sci-fi path. **They'll try to understand the reality.**

March 1994

**Postscript: A Leaflet circulating Scotland - Hands Off Our Babies !! - comments on the bar-tagging clamour after the baby Abi Humphries abduction in Nottingham. Send an SAE to Here & Now (Glasgow) for a copy.**



# Way Beyond

The basis to Mike Davis' prognoses in this excellent pamphlet is found in his earlier book *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*, Vintage (1990). This beautifully written book is a detailed and comprehensive account of the economic, social, political and cultural conditions and forces that have gone into creating modern LA. Further that these conditions and forces prefigure the probable future development of other large metropolitan cities in an increasingly fragmented and technologically obsessed Late Capitalism. The current pamphlet focuses on the theme of social control and although Davis eschews the term 'postmodern' as belonging to the hyper inflation of meaningless concepts, his account might be interpreted by some as a dissection of the 'Postmodern City'. There are echoes of Foucault in the analysis with a big difference - whereas Foucault seemed to be talking about the control potential rather than the actual operation of modern power-knowledge technologies, Davis suggests we have already arrived at a situation of 'a seamless continuity of surveillance over daily routine.' His account is firmly on the ground and his thesis is illustrated with persuasive examples from actual developments in LA in the here and now.

Davis's detailed study of LA (1990) argues that LA is fast becoming the archetypal 'mega-city' of the future. If we accept this argument then LA offers us a glimpse into the future - a future characterised as an 'official nightmare' - a dystopia of unprecedented qualitative and quantitative hostility, crime, surveillance and social control. In *Beyond Blade Runner* (1992), this argument becomes summarized and focused in a comparison and analogy with Ridley Scott's 1992 Science Fiction film *Bladerunner* set in a future anti-utopian LA in the year 2019. Even events portrayed in the film are seen as 'strangely anachronistic' compared to what the real LA is already becoming.

Davis's analysis and description invites us to witness emerging tendencies and patterns in LA that prefigure the 'carceral city' (see Stan Cohen's watered down version in *Against Criminology* (1988)) of the future - a city in which both public and private space is highly zoned on the basis of security, surveillance and social control technologies, and which is deeply divided along ethnic and class lines. In particular, Davis points to tendencies towards 'the militarization of the landscape' partly associated with the uprising of Spring 1992. Events since - recession, corporate flight, budget cuts, a soaring homicide rate, and a huge spree of gun buying in the suburbs - confirm that social polarization and spatial apartheid are accelerating.

Davis's social control map of the city emphasises the emergent patterns of the 'cityscape'. Burgess's famous diagram of the 'North American City' (Chicago) is transposed and adapted into a map to the future of LA. Burgess's original dartboard portrayed a 'human ecology' organised by 'biological' forces of invasion, competition, succession and symbiosis - the five concentric zones into which the struggle for the survival of the fittest (as imagined by social darwinists) supposedly sorts urban social classes and housing types. Davis's map preserves such 'ecological' determinants as income, land value, class and race, but adds a decisive new factor: *feared*.

The themes of the pamphlet can be summarised in Davis' term 'virtual scanscape' or that the boundary between architecture and law enforcement becomes further eroded, and video monitoring of Downtown's redeveloped zones becomes extended and this *comprehensive surveillance constitutes a virtual scanscape*:

"..video monitoring of Downtown's redeveloped zones has been extended to parking structures, private sidewalks, plazas, and



so on.... a space of protective visibility that increasingly defines where white-collar office workers and middle-class tourists feel safe Downtown. Inevitably the workplace or shopping mall video camera will become linked with home security systems, personal "panic buttons," car alarms, cellular phones, and the like, in a seamless continuity of surveillance over daily routine. Indeed, yuppies' lifestyles soon may be defined by the ability to afford *electronic guardian angels* to watch over them."

The idea of scanscape is meant to convey a sense of discreet and not so discreet forms of social and psychological control operating at the level of the topography of the city itself. That fear eats the soul of LA is demonstrated in the current obsession with personal safety and social insulation. Davis argues that middle class dread of progressive taxation, large scale unemployment and homelessness have created a political consensus that insists the budget must be balanced and entitlements reduced. Private physical security replaces social security.

'Rebuilding LA' (after the 1992 uprising) simply means 'padding the bunker'. It is this bunker mentality that has become the 'solution' to social problems, and Davis describes a widespread *desocialization* and privatization of social relations. As city life, in consequence becomes more *feral* (wild, brutish), the different social milieux adopt security strategies and technologies according to their means. The resulting pattern condenses into concentric zones. The bull's eye is *Downtown*.

Davis details the process whereby the old office and retail core was shifted to a new core leaving Downtown to rot. The new core and its land values was physically segregated and 'protected' from the old core in the Downtown area, *behind a rampart of elevated freeway walls, concrete pillars and high security skyscrapers. Traditional pedestrian connections between the new and old cores were removed, and foot traffic in the new financial district was elevated above the street on pedways whose access was controlled by the security systems of individual skyscrapers.* (The core began to be shifted after the 1965 Watts Riots/Rebellion, when the authorities were warned by law enforcement agencies that a black 'inundation' of the central city was imminent!). 'Situational crime prevention'

# BladeRunner



Graphic art by James Koehline

and the 'defence of space' so beloved by liberal crime prevention bureaucrats at the Home Office has hardly begun elsewhere to involve the relocation of whole city centres (yet - and Docklands is still not seen as a 'fortress'). This consequence of a radical privatization of downtown public space - with its ominous racial overtones - occurred without significant public debate or protest.

The riots have seemed to vindicate the foresight of 'Fortress Downtown's' designers. New Downtown is known as 'Bunker Hill'. During the Riots, security staff of the great bank towers flicked a few switches on their command consoles and were able to cut off access to their expensive real estate, while the old business district was being smashed, looted and burnt. Bullet-proof steel doors rolled down over street level entrances, escalators instantly stopped and electronic locks sealed off pedestrian passageways. The riot-test of Corporate Downtown's defenses has only stimulated demand for new and higher levels of security. Davis talks about '*intelligent buildings*' run by a security computer able to automatically screen and identify its population, that become a combination of bunker and fire-base (packed with deadly fire-power).

Beyond the scanscape of the fortified core is the halo of barrios and ghettos that surround Downtown LA. This 'Free Fire Zone' shelters new immigrant families and single male labourers: This tenement zone remains the classic breeding ground of teenage gangs (over 100) - a gang map of LA today is coextensive with the geography of social class. Tribalized teenage violence now spills out of the inner ring into the older suburban zones. The inner ring remains the most dangerous sector of the city where homicides are the more than any other neighbourhood in the US, and where the nearby McArthur park has become a fire-free zone where crack dealers and street gangs settle their scores with shotguns and uzis 930 people were murdered there in 1990.

Apart from the rent-a-thug culture, the inner city also spawns a vast cottage industry that manufactures bars and grates for home protection. The *prison cell house* is emulated in stores, shops and other buildings, and 'insurance companies may make such riot-proof bunkers virtually obligatory in the rebuilding of many districts. Local *schools*, meanwhile, have become

even more indistinguishable from jails - fortifying school grounds and hiring armed security police - 'daytime detention centres for an abandoned generation'. Public housing projects have come under routine harassment and targeting by LAPD - police exercise increasing control over freedom of movement - residents of every age are stopped and searched at will.

The key to Davis's main argument about urban social control is found in the special enclaves that are emerging that cut across the dartboard of the cities fundamental socio-economic patterning. Davis calls them *social control districts (SCDs)*. They merge the sanctions of the criminal or civil code with land use planning to create the '*disciplinary order*' characterised by Foucault and applied to the late 20th Century city. SCDs are both '*real and ideal*' and can be distinguished according to their methods of spatial discipline: *Abatement Districts*, self-financed through fines or special taxes, allow intensified law enforcement against specific local problems; *Enhancement Districts* - represented by the 'drug-free zones' surrounding public schools, add extra federal/state penalties or 'enhancements' to crimes committed within a specific radius of public institutions; *Containment Districts* - designed to quarantine potentially epidemic social problems. For example, Downtown LA's '*Homeless Containment Zone*' - spillover of homeless encampments into surrounding council districts is prevented by their 'containment' (official term) within the overcrowded skid row area known as the 'Nickle' to its inhabitants; The obverse strategy is formal *Exclusion Districts* that exclude the homeless and other pariah groups from public spaces.

One legacy of collective hysteria over child abuse was the city of San Dima's creation of the US's first '*child molestation exclusion zone*'. This Twin-Peaks-like suburb was sign-posted with the warning: 'Hands-off! Our children are photographed and finger-printed for their own protection'.

Post-Riot Southern California seems on the verge of creating yet more SCDs and emerging technologies offer opportunities to test cost-saving proposals for *community imprisonment* as an alternative to prison construction. Creation of social-refuge heaps for the criminalised minority - to concentrate bad apples into a few hyper-violent, anti-social neighbourhoods. A number of devices have been proposed to help confine this 'underclass': the systematic establishment of discreet *security gateways* that will use some biometric criterion, universally registered, to screen crowds and bypassers. Most ominously, the use of LANDSAT satellites linked to Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to surveil the movements of tens of thousands of electronically tagged individuals and their automobiles. Drug offenders and gang members can be 'bar coded' and scrutinized by satellite that will track their 24 hour itineraries and automatically sound an alarm if they stray outside the borders of their *surveillance district*.

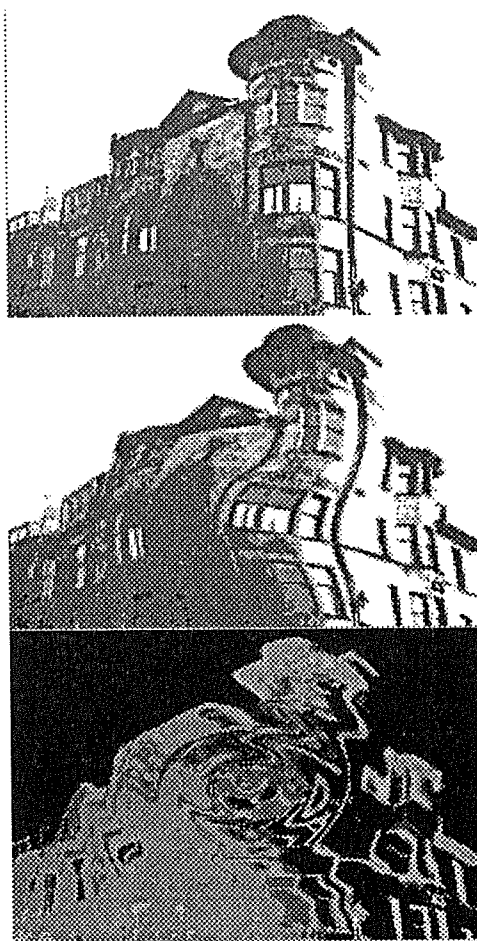
The primary motivator of all this is the protection of the middle class from the consequences of desocialising and fragmenting capitalist urban policies, and as a response to their anxieties. Cities become a composite of '*Gated Communities*' - originally found in the middle class suburbs as 'restricted residential districts' surrounded by high security perimeter fences and electronic security systems, using private policing, have now spread to more ordinary residential neighbourhoods. Davis's nightmare scenario is urban terrorism as a response to urban deprivation and these new forms of control.

Whether the reader is *having* the nightmare or is *in* it, the implicit clarion call of this pamphlet is to civilise and make convivial public space against tendencies towards a highly stratified privatisation of space. Perhaps a defence of the values of the 'old European cities' is in order.

Colin Webster

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<sup>1</sup> The extent to which State intelligence services provide economic intelligence to 'home industries' obviously helps determine the extent to which 'nation-States' still exist as economic entities. For the moment this extent still seems very large. See, for example, the role of the French foreign intelligence service (DGSE) in commercial espionage in Europe and the US, which began to receive publicity in late 1992. Leaked CIA reports of around the same time portray Japan as the main American rival, showing that all the "world-system" stuff about a geopolitical fusion of these two powers is probably just the academic hail-the-new-world-order guff one might expect from people in the 'geopolitical' field. If information (or intelligence) is power, then the 'ultra-imperialist' or 'one world government' view would imply that the various intelligence services — i.e. those belonging to multinationals as well as to States — would come up against each other less and less. This does not appear to be the case (yet) even if technological revolution does seem to induce greater organisational bonding between companies, and between companies and specific States. In short, it seems much more likely that Japan's economic strength will eventually bring her to a position of military hegemony — or actual victory — over the US. As American nationalists, Davis and Davidson only say that who gets pole position will be decided by the end of the 1990s.

<sup>2</sup> A contact once said that the best available lock in Britain was inferior to the worst one in France. Someone should do a study of lock quality in different countries...

<sup>3</sup> The naive might think this an accidental by-product of developments in baby alarms, but it's more likely to be the other way around. Likewise nowadays you can pay BT — the UK's largest company — to bug your

house through your phone while you're out. Good old market demand, eh?

<sup>4</sup> A whole book on the subject is Martin 1991. Re GIS, there's a real need for a few people with technical knowledge to start explaining what's going on in a fundamentally critical fashion. One of the very few people to talk about GIS, albeit with no 'expert' knowledge—as far as I know—has been Mike Davis. (1992).

<sup>5</sup> The covert use of smells has been objected to by the Liberty group (formerly the National Council for Civil Liberties). But just as Murdoch is smashing down the 'Chinese walls' of national broadcasting legislation, the use of smells clearly makes a nonsense even of the law of assault. One wonders just how much longer civil libertarianism can go on.

<sup>6</sup> Some sources say it does so continuously, others say it only taps long-distance calls, the rest having to wait until the lines are all optical fibre before they're tapped as a matter of course.

<sup>7</sup> I take it as read here, first, that capitalism is a world society based on the extraction of surplus value from the dispossessed, and, second, that a future society without alienation or exploitation can't be won any other way than through proletarian revolution. Smug Here and Now-type intellectualism notwithstanding, this recognition doesn't imply adherence to any ultra-leftist, 'left communist,' or traditionalist ideology. What it should mean is a commitment to fighting the ruling class, and to reaching some kind of understanding of the historical movement of class struggles in the past, present, and future. Some people, of course, will know better: especially those whose flimsy reformism places them firmly on the post-left; or whose chattering-class values situate them somewhat hopelessly where the fringe intelligentsias of left, right, and centre meet and mingle; or whose uneasy affairs with various means of distraction up Post-Modern Creek have pushed them to reject reality as...well, a reality. But that's their problem.

<sup>8</sup> Just because the idea of capitalist decline usually implies an idea of 'barbarism' as an alternative to 'socialism,' we shouldn't throw the baby out with the bathwater. If the idea of 'socialism' (when opposed to communism) should be rejected as social-democratic, and the idea of necessary decline doesn't stand up, it would be unfair to reject the idea of 'barbarism.' Since no-one is satisfactorily theorising either 'barbarism' or the secular continuation of capitalism, advances here might well give us a much better understanding of communism.

<sup>9</sup> A note on terminology. The establishment of capitalism is understood as socially revolutionary, as is its possible destruction by means of the seizure of resources by the dispossessed. Its own development is seen as only economically revolutionary. Capitalist economy, unlike previous economies, continuously and necessarily changes society, but it does so without changing society's basis in capitalist economy. Capitalism's 'technological revolutions' are understood as being fundamentally economic.

<sup>10</sup> Cleaver tries to moderate the analogy in a footnote, but only to say that the working class isn't an army.

<sup>11</sup> Like the common Trot view that anarchists are 'against organisation,' the head-in-the-sand rejection of the idea that 'everything's a conspiracy' is a rejection of a view that no-one actually holds (with the possible exception of severe psychotics). A full critique of anti-conspiracism is long overdue, but preliminary consideration would suggest that its prevalence is greatest among the middle classes. More specifically, its roots would seem to lie in the intermediate public-sector 'policy-making' strata, which can only function properly if most of their members have a substantially warped view of why it is that they get paid. Enjoying status, these people just can't accept that while they're busy 'providing a service' to punters in positions which are apparently lowly and demeaning (patients, tenants, 'clients' being social worked, droppers-in, bus passengers, etc.), their own position vis-à-vis the ruling elite is arguably even less dignified. (How many AIDS-sector social workers get together, for example, to doubt the Wellcome-

backed hypothesis that HIV is the main cause of AIDS, when this hypothesis has largely detremined much of what they do? How many would agree that a scandal may be about to break which is far bigger than Thalidomide?). Those at the top and bottom of the ladder, meanwhile — including the vast majority of the working class — usually have no great illusions about the real process of decision-making, whose domination by a tiny, ruthless, cynical, self-serving elite they understand very well.

<sup>12</sup> The mafia logic of the big corporations is perhaps best illustrated by a single example, that of AZT, which was developed as an anti-cancer drug, but was then licenced and sold as being anti-AIDS and then anti-HIV. Governments were obviously unwilling to welsh on a deal by tearing up contracts to buy it after research showed it was ineffective against cancer. How many hundreds has it killed already? (See Sunday Times 12/12/93, 27/2/94, and 6/3/94, Open Eye 2 (1993).)

<sup>13</sup> They don't mark its 'birth' and 'maturation,' since neither capitalism, nor exploitation, nor human society full stop, constitutes a living organism.

<sup>14</sup> It's definitely worth noting that the scum who pioneered electro-shock (Castelli), lobotomy (Moniz), and radio-controlled electrical implants (Delgado) were all trained in fascist countries: Italy, Portugal, and Spain respectively. See Thomas 1988 and Cannon 1992.

<sup>15</sup> According to gossip, the first commercial patents are expected to be filed in Japan. Military applications, meanwhile, are reportedly already available.

<sup>16</sup> The word 'technocrat,' which now means little more than a smartly-dressed politician, is probably unrescuable. But the question of terminology remains quite important. It's perhaps worth noting that no totally convincing term has been found to describe even the period we've left. (Any fool can see that the term 'modern,' just like 'postmodern,' is just a joke, and 'Keynesian' is hardly explanatory). 'Liberal capitalism' is suggested above only 'heuristically,' and is doubtless inadequate.

<sup>17</sup> It is just conceivable that in such circumstances people like Rockefeller, Murdoch, etc. could be replaced by psychos (scientific/techno psychos, for example) who'd be willing to have a low standard of living just for the pleasure of making proletarians eat shit. But I don't see any tendency towards that happening. How many of the ruling elite in Japan, for example, would give up their paper-free, hi-tech, bum-washing, scent-spraying toilets (5 million Japanese homes had them by 1991) to live like the poorest 40% who don't even have public plumbing? (Or: how many would consider giving such stupid gadgets to the poor?)

<sup>18</sup> This view of the bioeconomy appears to be a reapplication of what Castoriadis said about automated industry. (1960-61, p.283). But things aren't that simple. Nevertheless, the points raised in this excellent but still untranslated article by La Banquise deserve much greater consideration than it's possible to give them in this present blurb, which is pitched at a less abstract level. The authors argue that capital can never become what it seeks to become: alive. It can no more introduce 'robotisation' [sic] than it can absolute slavery; it needs living labour, which necessarily implies, albeit negatively, human activity. The most fundamental contradiction of capitalist society is that which operates between life (or living activity) and death (dead labour, or capital). As capitalism robotises production and brings about biological revolution, it demonstrates vitality and solves some of its contradictions, but it can't break down the human being altogether.

<sup>19</sup> Scientists as a group shouldn't be let off the hook. It's all too easy to think that at least they're not as bad as they were under the Nazis, when — don't be fooled — most of them probably are. That said, any who do get out and fight back, of course, definitely deserve respect...not to mention safe housing..

# Corrupting Left Intellectual Culture

by Tom Jennings

## 1. FROM DIVERSITY ...

In the last couple of years *Here & Now* has steered clear of the grand theoretical schemes which many people use to try and get our heads round the important trends of our times. There are recurrent themes, such as the need, or hope, for radical renewal, reiterating just how far the Old and New Lefts are past their sell-by dates ... plus the insistence that commodity relations and social alienation are furthering their grip. But much less often, now, do articles periodise history according to the Spectacle of the pro- and post-situationists, post-Fordists, or Gus Macdonald's Third Assault (*Here & Now*, issue 5), for example. Instead, some tentative dalliances with post-modernism and cultural studies have led to more focused analyses of specific social arenas. Sociological and cultural research is mined for subversive potential and insights that overflow respectable academic or critical opinion, and which exceed the desires or intentions of its authors.

By looking at the modes of operation and social implications of professionalism, academicism, managerialism, media, marketing, science and technology expertise, and the contours of current and developing (consumer) cultures - without too narrow an insistence on any of the more familiar leftist jargon - a space may have been opened in which to look again at a broader application of radical theory. Even if this is premature, it could encourage an assessment of what future directions should be taken. Given the conspicuous vacuum of ideas on the rest of the left, there doesn't seem to be much to lose. If all language is, in any case, as riddled with theory as the textual analysts tell us (even, or especially, when posing as or appearing to be common sense, neutral, or simple) then avoiding explicit theorising is merely a trick, a rhetorical device, destined to be unmasked as soon as more general conclusions are sought.

### Promiscuous Knowledge

A provisional conclusion from *Here & Now's* attention to the power of middle class discourses is that the major problem with theory revolves around who comes out with it, in what context, along with and linked to what practices, and for what direct and indirect purposes - as much as the content, truth value or inherent significance of the ideas themselves. Given that any kind of rationality which poses as universal attracts a righteous and severe suspicion, how will it be possible to articulate or use theory, without immediately becoming just as irrelevant and discredited as many people now perceive these activities to be? Rather than playing down or apologising for theory, a more honest and appealing strategy may be to stress its tentative nature, intrinsic assumptions, dubious origins, contradictory components and self-reflexive and self-critical operation; and to demonstrate that these are among its most important and useful attributes.

A way out of the impasse of left thinking means first of all relinquishing the grandiose claims of communist and revolutionary theorists (Lyotard 1984), instead trying to concoct unexpected interpretations from the symbolic material of culture and ideas (Featherstone 1991, Gorz 1993, Ross 1989). This means making sense of grass-roots, oppositional political and social currents using theoretical tools that relate to this history in conjunction with our own direct experiences and those of people involved in the same events and processes. But because the

legacy of ideas that comes to us is one of outrageous arrogance and almost wilfully blinkered determinism, we plainly need explicit checks and balances on the imperial tendencies of marxist theory. Marxists after all, even if not academics, are really no more than dissident economists (some are very, very dissident).

But the development and contestation of economic domination has to be one axis of understanding, even if the classical marxist interpretive subordination of all variables to the dynamic of capital in history is refused. The diverse strands of 'libertarian marxism' are crucial here (eg Aufheben 1994, Plant 1992, Ross 1991, Witheford 1994). Secondly, the mediation of knowledge specialists (such as the 'new' middle classes) in operating productive, reproductive and regulative spheres of society is also taken as fundamental. Recent sociological work on the fine-grained complexity of economic, social and cultural dimensions of class (such as Bourdieu 1984, 1991, Bourdieu & Eagleton 1992, Eder 1993, Frow 1993, Lee 1993) make the prospects of grasping this area more realistic.

My third point of departure is an area of theory - ('governmentality' - see Gane & Johnson 1993) which has been largely passed over in Englishspeaking radical currents, and which I use to bring out the partiality and unevenness of discourses which tend to present themselves as true, straightforward, seamless, and/or disinterested. All three perspectives have developed partly in academic research and debate as part of careers and institutional growth. However, for political implications as to what directions are worth following, the products of academic disciplines are in themselves virtually useless, not least by presuming and striving for the eternal centrality and market ascendancy of their own discourses - whereas the inevitability that they will need, at best, to be ignored or transcended would be, to them, unthinkable.

## 2.... FROM DIVERSITY, THROUGH PERVERSITY ...

Future articles will try to apply a strategic combination of these critical approaches (the history and development of capitalism; class/power structure and process; and governmentality) to a range of recent, emerging or popular theoretical orientations which are found attractive by people on the libertarian left or its potential supporters. These will include: analyses of science and technology, ecology, biology, computers; the social impact of the media and developments in art; critiques of identity politics and cultural difference; and explorations of consumerism, new social movements, and radical democracy and pluralism. The three interpretative methods will be mobilised so as to pervert, energise and limit each other, in addition to the literature and positions being tackled.

The aims of all this are: to draw together radical ideas which in today's fragmented social and political milieus otherwise remain isolated; to develop an approach to the questions of knowledge and leadership, which to me are the most serious problems inherent in radical politics; to build on the experiences of grass roots community and political action of recent decades - to find ways that our ideas and practices can find useful expression together; and to question the position and role of intellectuals and theoretical activity generally, asking how experts can be thoroughly kept in their place in radical politics without sacrificing the tremendous potential of theory in the search for ways to change the world; finally, to try and do this in a way that augments *Here & Now's* scope and intentions so far.

In reviewing these areas of left intellectual culture for political significance and potential no pretence of authority is implied, either of perfect understanding or fair interpretation, nor is academic status or institutional interest being defended. And while no-one should trust such claims of humility, neither should ideas in themselves ever be left alone or respected at face value, whether in awe, elitism, cynicism or defeatism.

### Desiring Domination

An overemphasis on the contours of the development of late capitalism as determinant and causal, can impede appreciation of the ways these variables are produced or co-produced, in a historical matrix which may involve more than one or two basic dimensions. The marxist pre-emptive determination of phenomena has been criticised by many radical theorists, some of whom fully appreciate the achievements of marxism but refuse to treat it religiously. For example, Foucault's studies of power and discourse (eg Foucault 1977 and 1979a) provide a framework in which to understand human history, in which processes of power are not translated or ultimately subsumed into the economy. It then becomes possible, for example, to treat adequately the limits and productivity of biological bodies (without resorting to biologism), and the effectivity of language through real-world historical and material practices (avoiding idealism) - in short, to conceive of the growth of systems of domination and resistance which may corrode or overwhelm the logic of capital (but more typically become intertwined with it). One such system is governmentality (Foucault 1979b).

With roots in Greek democracy, medieval Christian practices and feudal statecraft, governmentality is the basis of modern politics. Its forms of practice entail the knowing, calculating supervision of social and material forces. The State "becomes a particular form that government has taken, and one that does not exhaust the fields of calculations and interventions that constitute it" (Miller & Rose 1993, p77). Policies, strategies of control and spheres of expertise and influence (by diverse authorities: Johnson 1993) create fields of legitimacy and knowledge which require the power of their proponents. This knowledge constitutes the world-views of all those mobilised, as active agents and clients. It crystallises, as discourse, into rules, texts and practices, and precipitates institutional solidity (buildings, resources, 'man-power') whose inertia immediately conditions what is possible next (Latour 1987).

### Compelling Fantasies

Discourses are far less expensive and problematic for rulers than physical coercion. In addition to generating specific desired effects, they produce knowledges of individuals and groups that conform to their agendas. A discourse persuades, through translating one's interests into its own terms (Callon 1986) - and not only persuades, but enlists as a supporter of that discourse (in terms of behaviour, if not 'ideology'). Across the whole social field, the strength of this effect has been termed 'government at a distance' (Callon & Latour 1981). In mapping out regimes of truth (what can be known and said) and acting on people accordingly, the paraphernalia of governmentality has two specific attributes of interest to us. Firstly, it is arbitrary. Random, surprising, marginal, mundane, obscure or technical developments can catapult to the centre of the political stage, as long as the field of expertise in question argues the case effectively that it can solve a transient but pressing political problem. Also, the logic of government means that whatever is to hand has to be adapted to a new task, even if through accident or design this means using bizarre or hopeless tools (the present Tory government springs to mind!). Hence the "unplanned historical convergence of the disciplines of [humanistic] cultivation and the technologies of government," (Hunter 1993, p153); and in the opportunistic marriage of commercial tactics and the ethics of the psychological self (Rose 1989). In both these cases and many



others, it is utterly misguided and politically disastrous to perceive an all-knowing, all-powerful State/Capital conspirator.

Secondly the exercise of power must itself produce resistance as an intrinsic part of its operation - if it didn't there would be no social momentum to mobilise. Resistance also is arbitrary, and as likely to manifest itself unprogrammably as in an orderly fashion. So even in these days of the superpower of information, the chaos of the world can potentially work as much against authority as for it. But capitalism also benefits, in its ability to adapt, to maintain its forms amidst wildly fluctuating contents - even if this flexibility is so wasteful of human and material resources.

So, quite apart from its commodification (although that's bad enough), there are other extremely serious and deep-rooted problems with the colonisation of the intimate life-world by the rules and apparatuses of surveillance, calculation and administration. A general conclusion from this might be that the major limitation of most strands of modernised radical theory is that as well as refusing to acknowledge its own multi-aceted class-saturated anchoring (and the highly complex dynamics of class fractions this implies), it also fails to realise its role (or potential role) in the elaboration of governmentality. Furthermore the forcefulness of each of these two factors may derive, in part, from the effects of the other.

### Prostitution in Politics

Taken together these factors can provide a compelling explanation for the dislocation of political practice (among those purporting to have left political motivations) from those living through the same social upheavals, but who are neither interested in theory for its own sake, nor attracted by the jostling for status among those who are. For many of the latter, badges of ideology are merely vestiges of a subversiveness that long ago collapsed into a scramble for careers, secure identities, patronage, and politically correct or morally tasteful lifestyles. Since these ambitions mainly depend on cornering resources from the local state, welfare or education, it's no wonder that PC was such

an easy target (see, for example, Berube 1994). The despicable agendas of the New Right were at least perceived as honest, in their old-fashioned, openly corrupt, way (Thatcher on one side of the coin, Camille Paglia on the other) - compared to the self-deluding self-interest of the middle classes finding its ultimate expression in identity politics. Corporate mission statements of rights and equality are pretty shabby strategic and theoretical responses to the suffering planned for generations of working class women and black people. Something more meaningful will only come from purposefully perverse and scrupulously class-conscious theory (eg Butler 1990, Marable 1993) that expects and intends to bring into question all levels of vested interests, just as grass-roots political action always must if it's ever to achieve anything.

The challenge for the near future involves much more than the possibility of knowing 'what went wrong' with the left. Younger generations understandably have less patience with the various blindnesses and weaknesses of the radicals of recent decades. They're growing up with a far keener appreciation of the reality of globalisation, and the degradation of all life. What we may write off as apathy and narcissism in others can have more to do with what we deny of ourselves - conveniently projecting it into others. Our input now into all levels of oppositional activism, political involvement and ideas (not just in the areas we're more comfortable and familiar with) may have a significant impact on the patterns of recomposition and mobilisation that become possible. But not if our patten and demeanour only appear to hold the promise of disciplining and regimenting newly active groups who reach out from different cultures and sub-cultures, and from different geographical and discursive locations.

### 3.... AND FROM PERVERSION, TO SUBVERSION ...

At the very least, it can't be left to experts to assess their own bias. Intellect comprises an unconscious amalgam of the echoes of other people's material and ideological clutter, always already incorporated and more or less integrated into what we fancy is our own 'self', self-knowledge or identity. So, knowledge is fundamentally dishonest in appearing to be a property of individuals, because its material effects only ever appear in the coordinated social practices that accompany its use. The least that can be expected by trusting in well-meaning rationality is a network of mutually reinforcing intellectuals, who spiral off into orbit while the 'real' world continues to operate normally. The 'orbit' may be the higher reaches of a bureaucracy or academy, or a central committee or political affinity group (or publishing venture!), or some other formal or informal hierarchy. Business as usual will require the familiar submission to systems and techniques of management and control - exploiting personal, official and/or symbolic power - that make a mockery of the claims to heralding a radical alternative.

Two things at least should be necessary for radical movements to include knowledge specialists and information-based workers without undermining grass roots autonomy and effectiveness. Firstly, those whose expertise is rooted in institutional interests should be firmly and clearly acknowledged as such, and treated with corresponding suspicion. In particular, alliances of those with such partial interests would be extremely negative trends. Diversity within, as well as between, autonomous groups is a measure of progression. Secondly, in parallel networks, layers and groups, unattached or uncommitted intellectuals with no specific institutional investments, can represent the transient embodiments of an accumulated history and capacity of knowing and acting, while lacking the institutional backing, professional networks, discursive immersion, charisma or other attributes which would attract power or encourage demagoguery.

#### The Pleasures of Theory

In crude terms these two functions (which are, in practice, more complex and fragmentary) do to some extent correspond to conventional political visions of the role of intellectuals. The first is the middle class theorist or expert, whose obvious and specific biographical trajectory, institutional position, and immersion in

suspicious practices makes their special knowledge persuasive to some degree, but who is recognised as far too interested for the knowledge or the person to be politically trustworthy. And the second is the much more neglected (in left circles) position of working class intellectual, who almost by definition has moved away from traditional activities without shaking off the roots or the material position. Judged by academic criteria such a person doesn't rate, but politically a capacity to handle and puncture the pretensions of specific intellectuals, while being less likely to be swayed (lacking the corresponding material or symbolic investments) may be an essential safeguard, and a crucial point of passage and interpretation for information and ideas that could otherwise sediment into rigid paths, paving the way for dominance.

The unspoken third category to this schema is of course the majority of people who don't feel or think themselves to be personally 'knowing' (who are not as perverted, in this respect, as the intellectuals). The more sophisticated proliferation of points of knowledge and power suggested here can mean that no-one is in a position to so easily form those hidden agendas, or knowledge cartels, that intentionally or not restrict potential, and which mirror (basically they constitute) the hierarchies and patterns of domination which the participants assumed they were resisting in the first place. How useful the interpretive framework sketched out here may be depends on its application to specific problems, both at the level of understanding phenomena per se, and as part of the process of political action. But the insistence on a wide dispersal and diversity of knowledges and capacities, where no special interest groups are able to exert a consistent pre-eminence, may promote and exploit the older, informal expressiveness of wisdom, respect, affinity, maturity and mutuality. Along with the subversive potential of spontaneous, unmediated and unthinking passion, these really have no genuine place in the planned social world of government and commodity. Yet they would surely figure strongly in the practices and value systems of a free society.

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# Reformed Turkey Nuggets

"Social Justice, Children and Families"

by Patricia Hewitt and Penelope Leach (Institute for Public Policy Research, 1993)

We settle into the comfy chaise-long of fin de siècle democracy with a proliferation of easy-reading political pamphlets. To ensure our attention they are peppering with shock statements such as "child abuse is evil", "poverty ought to be wiped away", and "violence is wrong". After we silently scream "oh yes, yes" on behalf of the innocents, feeling morally refreshed, we may even feel compelled to contribute to the debate; we have entered the pact.

From now on, change comes in the form of words from the great and reverend; democracy gets to work. Shiny souls will slip into the squeaky clean corridors of power, and soon another report will supercede the old, embellished by recent legislation which our U.N. and E.C. membership has helped to secure into the baroque lock of no action. As we carve out a future in superstatism, we can look forward to even more grave accents, the odd Americanism and, as this booklet testifies, the racy language of playing fields - in global terms, the whole grotesque ball game of international p.c.

The commissioning body for this particular paper, the Institute for Public Policy Research, was set up as an alternative to the free market think tanks in Britain. That does not detract from the diplomatic keepy-uppy which results in no score. The report develops the work of the independent Commission on Social Justice, which merely bolsters the Labour Party's commitment to soft democratic debate. The meat of their argument is reform, in other words reclaimed slurry of bleeding hearts and a bit of a turkey.

The introduction sweetly informs the reader of a child's value, lest anyone doubted faith in the economic market; "In the modern global economy, when economic success increasingly depends upon investment in human resources, the quality of our children today is the best indicator of the capacity of our economic tomorrow." (p iv)

There follows a calculated description of a child's worth: one child reduces a woman's average lifetime earnings by two thirds; the logical conclusion may be that two children produce a wipe-out effect. As this report appears dedicated to confirming the value of individuals in term of their financial potential, the mother's lot appears to be hopeless. More hopeless now than ever, for we are informed that parenting in the 90's imposes enormous practical and economic burdens. This suggests the authors' class credentials. Few would claim life has ever been easy in the industrialised past, unless they were immune to the harsh practicalities of everyday life. The middle-class woman needs to affirm the sacrifices of her class, to forego the servants - save for nanny. (The upwardly-mobile echo that desire to be in command.) Salving her conscience, she must argue that all women deserve to pass the buck on tedious responsibilities.

Shocking revelations such as "Here and now, though, responsibility for the daily care and long term up-bringing of children is being left entirely to parents" (p.10) convince some that childcare should be bought in, whilst the mother competes outside to add to her social and consumer cachet. This is disingenuous because it is women who are brought in to do the childcare - and, in order for the economic argument to make sense, the carer must be paid less

than the careerer. The undiagnosed irony of sentences such as "Women are not going to give up their right to paid employment in favour of renewed economic dependence on men" (p.8) confirms the myopic outlook: Capitalism is here to stay - or, as they put it, pragmatic economics.

Stepping aside from the premise of economic promise, are there any points of value in this report, considering that a co-author is Penelope Leach, guru of the free-thinking Guardian parent? One may expect some suggestion of freeing children from adult stupidity. Instead the naivety expected from children transcends into the report's logic. The U.N Convention on the Rights of the Child is quoted as the role model: "State parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. For this purpose the child shall in particular be provided the *opportunity to be heard in any judicial or administrative proceedings affecting the child.*" (Article 12, quoted on pp2-3, my italics)

Any notion of liberation is swiped away with sweeping statements such as "We wholeheartedly endorse the National Commission on Education's recommendations for the introduction of pre-school education for all three and four years-olds." (p.27). Some arguments are countered with wishy-washy provisos that no one can disagree with. As an example, the general tone on page 26 suggests a striving towards collective state childcare, but is hedged by preceding "if that place is not her choice but her only option" reservations. Unfortunately the lie is all too clear. The belief is that any sensible person will want the option for developing responsible citizenship through some form of institutional care. There is no question mark over the role of schools: "The National Curriculum urgently needs to make room for all adolescents to learn about the demands of relationships" (p. 16) "So no matter how good the institutional arrangements made on their behalf, children will only benefit to the extent that parents feel able and willing to give it to them." (p.14)

Despite all the sentimental 'of courses', the report appears to conclude that children are an awful lot of bother. "Babies often ruin careers" and "babies can ruin the sex so heavily relied to keep partnerships glued together" - succinct descriptions of the hedonistic decadence we can expect on entering the millenium. Seminal influences aside, it might be better to cop out of parenthood, unless of course your career is staked on writing best-selling baby books or you are in the job of ensuring a fresh supply of babies heads for politicians to pat, and there's the rub.

**Kay Dickson**

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science textbooks; aiming for an integrative view without exaggerating the importance of actively suppressed political/criminal activity. In essence Scott's writing is valuable as a methodology which grounds the process for political change in a larger context, albeit less amenable to control; and as an act of faith which decreases the cynical assumption that the bigger the political mystery, the less likely we are to learn the truth about it..

**William Clark.**

# Childhood's End

A Response to "Escaping Childishness: the Case for a Conserver Party" by Robert Johnson

The "hedonist radicalism" of the 1960s eventually settled into a combination of demands for plurality and tolerance in lifestyle choice with a censorious attitude towards actually-existing social norms. An anti-family attitude may have aimed to subvert the supposed breeding-ground of authoritarian attitudes through which commodity society reproduced itself, but it snuggled in beside lifestyle purchase. The management of difference and intrusive social engineering had come to offer suitable professional career opportunities.

One attempt at a critical angle on these developments took aspects of the works of Richard Sennett and Christopher Lasch and argued in favour of "*the condition of anonymity which is privacy in public*". Such a liberal viewpoint could usefully be opposed to the idea that "transparency" was a better way to live and that anything else was just a token of repression.

It may be time to acknowledge the limits of such an approach. After all, it derives from, and refers to the virtues of, a society in circulation. The approach recognises managerial special pleading in the way that real issues play out, but has been unable to embody itself in new forms of activity. One response to that failure may involve a more critical attitude to liberalism itself; another digs deeper into liberalism in an attempt to imbue the political norms with a new ecological and ethical position.

Robert Johnson's pamphlet follows that second path. However, the problems which it faces in taking the ethical high ground are the same as those identifiable in a critique of liberalism.

For example, both positions see in current social conditions a dependency culture which erodes "untutored common sense, emotional reserves and intrinsic skills" (p.4) and qualities of "restraint..., moderation and obligation to others" (p.9). It is dangerous to locate such qualities as innate / instinctual or elevate them to a political-ethical position. Where they exist, they derive from something resembling apprenticeship: learning in and through a tradition to obtain a measure of things appropriate to accession to a community.

But under liberalism the commodity has corroded the values based on anything being handed-down. The Left was complicit in this progressivism, and continues to be so. Traditional values are marked as reactionary. For example, Simon Frith and Jon Savage ("*Pearls and Swine*", NLR 198) set up the "conservative ideal" of the "defiantly dull" allotment culture. They contrast this stolid figure with the "strange people - young, female, foreign, homosexual", whose "strange ideas" supposedly identify them as agents of social change (although usually under professional mediation). This allegiance to progressivism as the norm of social theory provides the difficulty in pigeonholing Lasch or the anti-Enlightenment positions of Alasdair MacIntyre's recent books.

Johnson discusses the inabilities of the socialist, green, social-democratic and conservative political agencies to base an agenda on anything other than progressivism. Through discussing the inadequacies, he intends to identify a constituency which is disillusioned by the existing parties and has withdrawn from politics. This apparently provides an opportunity to base a politics on ecological imperatives, such as that "Eco-politics can give a lead by restating the principle that the basic needs of everyone should take precedence over the demands of anyone" (p.5). But what agency is to exert that principle? It seems to invite the intrusion of a bureaucratic-technical agency. That can only further the malaise of disempowerment.

This attempted political renewal acknowledges the crisis produced by liberalism, but seeks position within the hollowed-out area of liberal politics, and even shies away from the real ecological oppositional campaigns. A sense of imperative is allowed to substitute for agency. But a bedrock of popular apathy plus a voluntarist layer of imperative-fired politicians forms a strange and even dangerous political structure.

Alex Richards

## Conserver - more reservations ?

Reading this pamphlet is to be encouraged. It is heretical, provocative and worthy of the background of 'Robert Johnston' a one-time libertarian socialist drawn into the politics of catastrophe. Exposure to well-constructed and short arguments like this are always good for critical awareness, as the tendency to dogma haunts us all.

Hot on the heels of their Euro result in 1994, where the Green Party trailed the anti-Maastricht Liberal Party and little Englander UK Independence and New Britain Parties in many seats, the red-green target receives the full blast and the tag of 'childishness' reminiscent of Lenin scolding the left communists.

Being aware of the author's pedigree, the first statement, bemoaning the failure of the green movement to "achieve any sustainable electoral success" reveals how far many travelled in the late 80s, and how their focus shifted from networks of direct action to propaganda tailored for voter acceptability. Although proceeding in a more novel direction our 'blues man' echoes other former leftists in Germany like Fischer and Cohn-Bendit who railed against 'fundamentalism' and marginal politics.

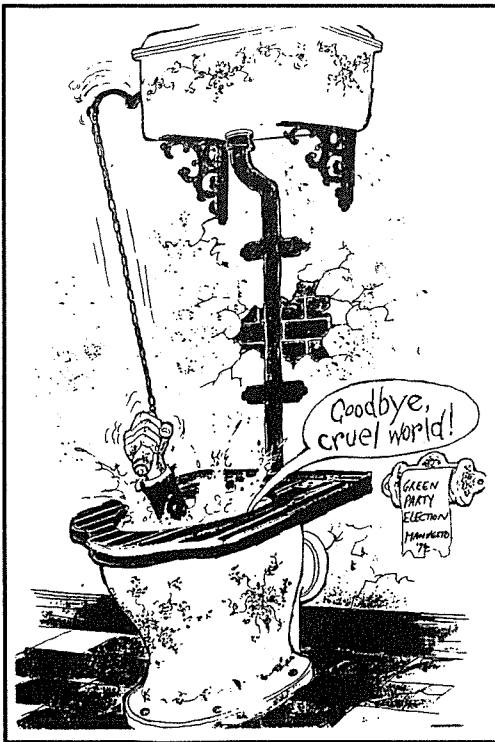
The tribute to Christopher Lasch in the endnotes is fitting, since many of the passages about the shallow nature of consumer life are imprinted with his analysis. This is no bad thing. This emphasis, the rejection of the politics of growth, the slag of alternativism, and the identification of social democracy (the two major opposition parties) as incapable of articulating any strategy of change (apart from managerial style), will strike a chord amongst Here & Now readers. His fellow (recent) influence is Sandy Irvine, a self-confessed deep ecologist.

Yet it is difficult to imagine this Conserver Party coming about, even although it is possible to concede that voters exist who would correspond more comfortably with its philosophy should the means exist to spread it. Lacking an electoral system which fosters such novel solutions, and the readiness of the media to cope with such a rigorous manifesto, just who are the people who will arise from their armchairs and allotments to spread the Conserver cause?

The answer probably lies with a new ecological panic, and the media's fascination for a 'new angle' but this would depend on a Johnathon Porritt or a single articulate media figure (precisely that which the Greens eschewed) to achieve some notoriety for the Party. But wait, if they were unfortunate they could end up with another David Icke!

There is something gloriously English about this pamphlet. A fact I find the more remarkable given the author's Lanarkshire roots. The ecological crisis is global, the green movement is global, so where is any international concern. Think global, act local seems to have been replaced by think National act local. No mention of regionalism. Nor of the authors previous identification of the 'civic spirit' doctrine in Scottish Calvinism. Yet there is the espousal of protectionism against

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the "intrusions of the national and multi national corporations". There is a 'rightward drift', not unusual in ex-revolutionaries, dismissive and distant from an apparently stagnant swamp.

Central to the pamphlet is the emphasis on economics. Here elements of 'Solidarity' ("for Workers Power!) market socialism can perhaps be seen in the advocacy of the market mechanism as a lever that can be used without expanding the productive forces.

For Conservers, "the fundamental contradiction at the heart of the world economic system is a declining resource base having to service an increasing population and a population increasing its economic activity. This is the makings of the ecological catastrophe". As a result "disparities in wealth distribution come closer to disappearing when we all take less than when we all pursue more".

This assumes a cross-class consensus made necessary by such an impending catastrophe. This is where the use of Conserver politics lies, as a submerged tendency which can be invoked as an overriding issue, an ecological D-Day with populist pressure toning down the worst features of the capitalist system, with policies to curb corporatism, favour small businesses through a turnover tax, reduce the level and blight of gross economic activity, and introduce austerity by way of the market (in tandem with the new value system of LESS)

A malthusian strain burst out on page 2 since "excessive pressures" arise from "too many people too many people consuming too many things too many of those things produced by inappropriate means". In the rush to counterpose conserv-ative to libertarian right economics as 'Scorched earth', the original understanding that population spiral is an integral feature of having so little, and being dominated by survival, seems to have been lost.

To round off, "The electorate needs an opportunity to vote for a party which truly represents the conserver ideals now that the Green Party....espouses direct action as a legitimate activity for a political party to promote and participate in". Perhaps the author contemplated this outside Solsbury Hill in his company car, wishing for a bypass to tear lumps from the 'pleasant land' being defended by the ragbag of roads protestors which the 'anarchoid' Green Party is now tail-ending.

Of course we are aware that direct action doesn't necessarily threaten a system, and is part of the 'body politic' of checks, balances and small victories. However, with his rejection of resistance, internationalism, separate class needs from a nation, his reliance on representation, and promoting the market mechanism to spread austerity, I can only conclude: "honourable motives (in places!) but the wrong politics" (page 6)!

*Escaping from Childishness, £1 + 30p post from 'Conserver' Publications, 30 Regent Road, Horsfirth, Leeds LS18 4NP.*

**Jim McFarlane**

## After School

### Compulsion Versus Liberty in Education by David Botsford

(Libertarian Alliance, 25 Chapter Chambers,  
Esterbrooke St, London SW1P 4NN)

The most recent set of education pamphlets from the Libertarian Alliance are something of a curio. In the 1970s, anti-school educational radicalism was usually associated with the Left. But as time passed and interest became career, the debate collapsed into a dreary set-piece between interest groups. Are schools under-funded? Do they under-perform? What should appear on the curriculum, Shakespeare or Alice Walker? The level of amnesia is such as to allow a Professor of Education writing for *The Observer* to describe Ivan Illich as a free-schooler and Gramsci as an anarchist.

But schooling remains in crisis. Managerialism is rampant as a way of exerting control over those people who fall into the roles of teachers and pupils. And if this increases the numbers rejecting the system, "truancy watches" are favoured means of maintaining the schooling system and its inherent absurdities (such as grouping people by age).

In these circumstances, any attempt to reopen the space of debate is welcome and David Botsford's pamphlets do that. Best regarded as a whole, they describe the statistical subterfuge which was used to impose compulsory schooling, and range through the absurdities of the English public school system to the days of the National Union of School Students (of which Botsford was a member) and to the evolution of home schooling - which, if not growing, has at least reached a steady state.

## Reviews

Botsford uses Toffleresque futurology to look forward and, for once, this may not be out of place. There is some erosion in the province of schooling. Firstly, there are increasing signs that the technical colleges may meet their intake targets by taking those of school age who chafe against the pettiness of school regulations. And secondly, technology-based training tools may reach the point at which they could allow informal provision of that which the teachers have claimed to be their own. Such factors could reopen the old education vs. training debate on shifted grounds, just when teaching is enfeebled by managerialism.

**Alex Richards**

## Escaping The Gallery

"Surrealism Always For The First Time"

(Kenneth Cox & Sarah Metcalf, 6 Aberdeen Grove,

Armley, Leeds LS12 3QY)

This short leaflet attempts to rescue Surrealism from its twin fates of the coffee table book and the academic library box file. Surrealism always present itself as a clean break from what exists. It must thus tangle with own history, so Cox and Metcalf declare what Surrealism is not: "not an art movement, not a style of painting, not a set of aesthetic techniques, nor a laboratory of literary experimentation".

All well and good, and necessary to any revival of surrealist practice. What is more dubious if any revived surrealism is to avoid past faults, is their rejection of the view that Surrealism had its origin in an organisational recuperation of Dada.

As ever, it remains to be seen how the rhetorical intensity of such avant-gardism can root itself in particular activity. This is especially so at the end of the century during which capitalism fed from avant-gardism to realise its own peculiar mundane "intensification of everyday life" in pursuit of the purchase of the marvellous.

**Alex Richards**

# Deep Politics and the Death of J.F. K.

**PETER DALE SCOTT**  
**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA**  
**£19.95 ISBN 0-520-08410-1**

This is an important contribution to para-political research which seems to have received very little attention. Scott has returned to the theme of the Kennedy assassination ( he was instrumental in presenting key evidence to the House Select Committee on assassinations in 1979 ) with the purpose of painstakingly re-considering his method of analysis. Fundamentally the book asks: "What were the structural defects in governance and society that allowed this huge crime to be so badly investigated ( or, in other terms, to go unpunished )? In simpler words, how could American Institutions harbour and protect such evil ?

Scott views the hunt for Kennedy's killer ( the main feature of most writing on the subject ) as symptomatic of a process of demonisation which projects external conspiratorial forces as impacting on a victimised body politic. He seeks to identify integral elements in what he calls the US deep-political economy. Although still seeing value in the analysis of parapolitics, he criticises it here as " too narrowly conscious and intentional " to describe the deeper irrational movements of society: it describes only an intervening layer of irrationality under our political culture's surface. Scott's original definition of parapolitics as " a system or practice of politics in which accountability is consciously diminished ", remains unchanged; but is now explained as only one manifestation of a new term, "deep politics", which is defined as " all those political practices and arrangements, deliberate or not, which are usually repressed rather than acknowledged". Some of these practices although fairly well known are rarely written about, " and the fact that certain procedures are repressed from public consciousness becomes itself suppressed". There are incidences when seeming connections between over-world and under-world enter the public realm, in the form of some inquiry or crisis ( such as watergate ), Scott sees deep politics as the underlying continuities which interrelate such crises/practices. An example cited of deep politics is the way Tammany hall " in alliance with ethnic gangsters, refined patronage and corruption into a working system for dividing the spoils in an ethnically divided New York City ". Since this arrangement was not consciously designed it should not be termed parapolitical. An example of para-politics would be the use of this Tammany connection by the US Government for the establishment of the first post war military occupational government in Italy and Sicily through the use of the Mafia. Despite this arrangement being paradigmatic of US foreign policy it is chronicled - if at all - in the history of organised crime, as with identical arrangements in Vietnam and Central America. The common denominator linking US Government backed organised criminals in Italy, Vietnam and Central America

being the highly centralised drug traffic.

Through this deep political analysis he seeks to look beneath public formations of policy issues into the bureaucratic, economic and ultimately covert and criminal activities which underlie them and the political culture which gave rise to the cover-up over the Kennedy assassination is the focus of attention here. This provides something of a symbiosis of governments/ intelligence agencies/ criminal associations and right-wing terror groups, while purposefully allowing for the recognition that the structural arrangements which incorporate organised crime into imperial systems are " not all para-political stratagems designed by those in power". Thus irrational forces are included as part of the social structure.

The implications of this is that the societal structure is less amenable to rational takeover. The need for a paradigm shift to determine large areas of experience at the same time is not simply a matter of evidence, which is of course suppressed, or rendered anomalous through the extent to which the extant paradigm is encodified in textbooks. Although he has no illusions concerning the impact of his work, it is more than just a skillful navigation of existing source material, one could describe it as redemptive : an attempt to engage in the

the exact opposite of a cover up. His competing paradigm, that of deep politics, also challenges alternatives which see overt government as not the lone area of power, such as the postulate of a "shadow government". This he sees as a reactive product of state resistance to sensitive topics, with investigators totalising their data and passing from an extreme reception of a systematic under acknowledgement on one aspect of deep politics - such as key elite institutions or the CIA - and concluding that this is a " key to all political mysteries". According to Scott such theories " do not challenge the most sensitive features of the conventional power paradigm. This is the belief that overt politics and deep politics have little to do with each other, a belief in which establishment media, hyper-structuralist Marxists and even shadow government conspiratorialists, all paradoxically concur".

Scott does not seek to answer the question of who is in control, the overt or the covert? He presents this as a false dilemma. His assertion is that the deep political paradigm goes beyond restricted unified explanations, and that its analysis can extend conventional political investigation into a larger, less restricted field of evidence: including para-political aspects and other processes disavowed from the political

Cont, on page 25

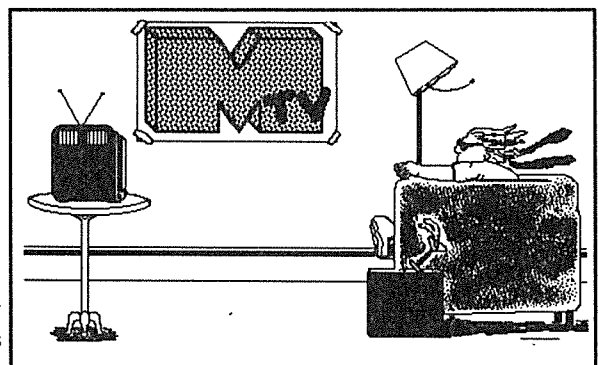
## T.V. O.D.

**Test Card F: Television, Mythinformation and Social Control**  
 (AK Press, 22 Luton Place, Edinburgh EH8 9PE, 1994, £3.95/ \$6)

*Test Card F* ranges across the whole field of media-fixated politics. As such, its tone is one of revulsion at the whole thing, or as the back cover says, it is "looting the ideological super-market of all its products".

The object of revulsion is also that which nonetheless fascinates: much of the book is a sustained talkback at the images which have paraded across the screen over the past few years, the constant claims to history in the making that degenerates to pink noise. The many detourned graphics crammed into the book echo that fascination.

Aspiring social movement generally organise with a view to experiencing themselves through their media representation. (See the letters to *The Guardian* on the Tuesday after any weekend demonstration, whining about lack of coverage. Observe too those campaigns which consist of nothing but



their representation, but which present themselves as successes - for example, *Charter 88*.) *Test Card F* rightly concludes that any social movement hoping for a real effect must avoid the fatal compromise with media fascination. Which opens the more difficult questions of building and communicating the self-understanding of activity outside the political norms...

Alex Richards

# Pot-Boiled ?

**LOBSTER MAGAZINE(S) NO. 26 THE CURIOUS TALE OF THE PREMATURE ANTI-MILITANT MEMBER OF THE SOFT LEFT AND THE FREUDO-ANARCHIST WITH SITUATIONIST TENDENCIES.**

**Wm Clark reports.**

Lobster magazine began in 1983. Its producers, Robin Ramsay and Stephen Dorril met up originally as JFK buffs, whose wider interests, they thought, were not covered by a magazine in the UK. They had been working on radical monthly magazines, Ramsay with the Post in Hull and Dorril with the Hammer in Huddersfield. Since Ramsay was on the Dole and Dorril had a wage working as a probation officer, the arrangement was that Ramsay would do the typing and printing and Dorril would pay the bills. The first issue appeared in September '83 with a print run of 150, prior to their recent split it had grown to about 1600.

Most Here & Now readers will know the story ( but its worth repeating ) of how in the mid-eighties, through writing on the Kincora Boys School episode, they were contacted by two "defectors" from the British secret state, Fred Holroyd and Colin Wallace. Dorril visited Wallace in Prison during his ten-year stretch for manslaughter ( it should be added he is generally considered to have been framed ) , and was somewhat mindswept by his allegations about covert operations in Northern Ireland and the mainland. Ramsay began to correspond with Wallace, and their attempts to comprehend and extrapolate on this can be found in Lobster no. 11, which should be recommended as a starting point for new readers. Launched outside the houses of Parliament with a 'cautious' forward by Ramsay's MP their revelations went almost completely ignored until the Spycatcher affair a year later. The subsequent media attention, which focused on Wallace, released from prison in '86, was eventually abandoned under suspicious, but not altogether surprising circumstances, as various media spooks screwed the lid back on what remain very sensitive disclosures .

The magazine is often described by reference to Colin Wallace but Robin Ramsay believes that they would have got there in



Lobster operates through documentation and exposure, but it also engages in ongoing educated guesswork, it has to, because of the cult of secrecy and evasion which pervades its field of study. Perhaps its thoroughness in

the end with or without him, certainly from No. 11 onwards, there seems to be a greater impetus in the voracity of the magazines investigative zeal . Lobster could be perhaps better placed within a history of a special strand of investigative journalism stemming from the early Time Out, the Leveller and State Research. It encompasses a wide field of para-political investigation which I can only provide a hint of here. Put very broadly it could be said to provide detailed analysis on the covert nature of the right, and forms counter claims against the notion that the right are not ideologically motivated, and have not, through various factions, institutions and agencies clandestinely manipulated politics.

As was mentioned they have recently, somewhat acrimoniously split up. In the past it has been said that we do not have any other magazine comparable to Lobster in the UK, well now we do :the split has resulted in two Lobsters both called No.26. It is most likely too early to identify any real divergence in content and/or approach between the two versions. On balance Ramsay's review section was more stimulating and hard hitting, this together with his energetic treatment of a range of miscellaneous items perhaps reveals his personal style of writing to be the more enlivening, indeed at times getting splendidly carried away, as with his response to the horrors of ELF (extremely low frequency ) weapons, This stuff is for real: potentially this is the biggest military technology development since the hydrogen bomb " .

What readers will continue to expect from both Lobsters is information which aids our ability to perceive the state in operation rather than as a mysterious abstraction . Despite the fact that they are now separate entities, both magazines will inevitably cross reference each other and share themes in the future: due partly to the simple fact that there is a dearth of honest analysis intelligent enough to penetrate the smokescreen of disinformation through which they try to peer, and also there is little writing which utilises the momentum and vision and knowledge represented by the previous body of research work, and anyway the spook-spotting community is a small one.

this respect, its bringing together of so many issues that the state has to cover over in secrecy, explains why it is so little studied; there is no money to be made out of this type of subject matter, also it is easy to forget that it belongs to the realm of small press magazine which are ipso facto discredited in the eyes of the average hack. In any case despite its high academic standards, basically the mainstream media - while patronising, and when fashion dictates, occasionally plundering it - don't want to know, and it is not alone here . At best it is a challenge to numerous assumptions which colour our view of politics, in particular the chronic omission of the activities of the secret service in political history; at worse it is its celebrated turgid screed of names, acronyms and footnotes.

The main article in the new Dorril Lobster is an examination by David Teacher of the Pinay Circle ( now termed the Pinay Complex ) a highly secretive European network of some of the more Machiavellian spirits on the far-right. This is a more expansive analysis than previous articles (knowledge of which are essential to comprehending it). It has been studied in the past by focusing on the UK connection through Brian Crozier and to a lesser extent James Goldsmith. Crozier's network of contacts was set up to , amongst other things, facilitate a Secret Service and far-right alliance, part of which injected propaganda, unattributed briefings and so forth into the ambit of policy makers, extending notions of counter-subversion into what is termed a strategy of tension. Seemingly his activities are paralleled throughout Europe as part of a network of inter-related individuals and organisations somewhat akin to our own Aims of Industry, Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism etc. Although the Teacher article goes into some depth, it was unfortunately written before the publication of Crozier's autobiography. While Ramsay manages to review the book (in something of a valedictory tone because it confirms a lot of their suspicions), given that the complexity of the subject matter, one cannot help feeling that a re-worked combination of both would have made for more rewarding reading, alas these days are gone.

# For Dispersed Fordism read Exploitation

The debate surrounding the text by Carlos which first appeared in *Etcetera*, the Barcelona magazine, has led to a pamphlet by Echanges/Advocom.

A more reliable translation of the text on *Dispersed Fordism*, reprinted in *Here and Now 13* first appears, followed by a letter in July '93 by Carlos to Henri Simon of Echanges in which he provides "more detailed information on the autonomous movement in Spain". He asserts it is crucial to comprehend that many of the young workers displaced from the countryside have proved, as with the Valladolid Renault dispute, to exhibit "very radical behaviour...being completely hostile to the unions".

From this observation, Carlos proceeds to question the relevance of viewing present class conflicts through the theory formed in the era of the classical proletariat, giving rise to a finalism, which conflicts with the present when "there is no longer a fundamental contradiction, there is only a conflictuality which spreads all over the developed capitalist countries through a lot of small unfair 'cheatings', crimes, insubordinations in the production sphere and in social life in general".

Although Carlos proceeds to deny that this means a capitulation to post-modernism but to "its radical transformation corresponding to the present stage in the development of the exploitation of the labour force", the cat is among the proverbial pigeons! Carlos now believes "it is impossible to develop any kind of serious analyses concerning the theory of communism, i.e. neither an inductive theory (trying to discover in the present struggles elements which could be seen as prefiguring communism), nor a deductive theory (proceeding from ethical, ecological, teleological.).....on the contrary it is an open process".

Such openness extends for Carlos into marginal spheres such as music and fashion, and resistance of new social movements around anti-militarism, housing etc..Crucially he asserts "we have to consider these new forms of solidarity as the problematic (contradictory) expression of the present phase of the capitalist system, as the expression of a decomposition of social life (parallel to the decomposition of the forms of the Fordist aggregation), and as the expression of a certain rise of the resistance of the exploited in the form of new schemes".

The final insight he offers to Simon is the prediction that the State is utilising social problems such as the drugs traffic to strengthen its powers of repression and surveillance in a cloak of public approval.

The objective of the pamphlet's publishers, however, isn't to give credence to such neo-marxist views but to view Carlos' theory in terms of a latest variant of "such wild phantasies" expounded chiefly by sociologists and ex-revolutionaries such as Castoriadis, Gorz, Daniel Bell, C.Wright Mills and Anthony Giddens. The response of Theo Sander, in particular, reads as if this world view was threatened. For example, Sander writes "we were convinced" that Carlos misses the point, and rewrites current struggles to fit his viewpoint. Proceeding in the same vein, "it was thus necessary to emphasize the elements of continuity in (working-) class struggle and working class structure". Hence Marx's famous dictum that "a new society could arise out of the dynamic of present-day society, almost without the knowledge of the participants..." is endorsed by Echanges.

In a less strident tone, Simon draws from the French experience to assert that it is easy to overstate the importance of new trends in industrial production and the de-



The Eclipse and Re-Emergence of the  
communist movement

gree in the past to which factory work exceeded rural labour, shopkeepers etc. From Italy and France, Simon identifies a historical legacy in coordinating committees in France and the COBAS in Italy from the 'workers councils' form.

Simon also seizes on trends contrary to decomposition, which include less hierarchy in labour tasks and the homogeneity disguised under mass culture "similar standard of living". Simon also questions the elevation of 'conflictuality' as an individualist response on the level of survival, a heritage within a lumpen mentality. In terms of the apparent linkage of class decomposition and party decline, Simon infers that a more complex process is at work explaining the irrelevance of ideological politics to workers today.

Sander's reply centres in the self-destructive impulse within capital based around its susceptibility to the falling rate of profit, hence viewing the 'Etcetera' theorists emphasis on one response of capital to circumvent this trend as essentially peripheral to the overall logic. Dispersed Fordism is a new variant of increased exploitation designed to induce greater productivity which depends on the logistics of heightened transportation and sub-contractual reliability. Carlos is said to have swallowed the ideology of this new managerial strategy and avoided the discrepancy between this design and the global reality.

A final note from Carlos reacts to Sander's tone and intentions, and seeks to relocate his observations within a framework of capital maximising exploitation without falling victim to a 'reductionism' he sees in Sander's approach. Paraphrasing from Marx he counters that "The proletariat is revolutionary in its struggle or it is nothing", and that his refusal to be deflected from the "deforming facts in daily life" means that any revolutionary analysis must be aware of this contradictory reality.

To do justice to this debate, you should obtain "*Myths of Dispersed Fordism*" from BM Box 91 London WC1N 3XX for £1.75 + post.

Jim McFarlane.

# Growing Up in Belfast and Glasgow.



After years of devoting his efforts to assisting the cause of Guy Aldred, with his United Socialist Movement, and "The Word", and latterly keeping the memory of the unorthodox communist alive E, John Taylor Caldwell has been persuaded to begin his own life story with *Severely Dealt With*.

This 'odyssey', an "intricate task of retracing intellectual and philosophical development, as Bob Jones of Northern Herald Books notes, met at first with a "typically self-effacing response". Years of recording the lives of others had perhaps led to an under-valuation of his own experience as testimony to the impact of the self in its initial struggle to imprint its will on a hostile environment.

Cushioned by a certain standard of welfare state and post-war upbringing, it can be a shock when the squalor of industrial life in the early 20th century is the backdrop for a comrade with such a sensitive demeanor as John. We have been exposed to numerous literary descriptions of "down and out" inner city slums, and the degree of poverty described in Belfast and Glasgow is captured with an intensity that is impressive.

The book travels a route through the first stirrings of consciousness, and gives a genuine account of the child's view of the world. Punctuated by asides to explain the descent of the family's fortunes, the historical period and its esoteric offshoots, the book records the consistent drive present within his self from an early age to create his own philosophy.

*"nowadays it would be said that I had a hyperactive mind. It was never still. It burned inside my head like a great flame in a little candle. It illuminated a stream of hazy visions, colourful dreams and profound thoughts."*

From a "trancelike state in which insomniacs aver they are still awake and observers declare that they have fallen asleep" he "drifted into a visionary world beyond experience" in which he now recognises that

*"this was the urge to return (which) is in all of us; the yearning for the womb, or the tomb...native to non-being: life is an interruption, an aberration, a wrench from the ineffable reality - a pain, a sickness from which we constantly try to escape in pretending to be someone else, somewhere else, in some other time. That is why escapism is such a major industry. No-one dares be himself. To seek self is to brave reality, and that could not be endured. All Art and Religion are struggles to escape, sometimes from the nightmare of being and sometimes from the truth of its extinction"*

While embarked on such imagining, not all thought was so philosophical but John refuses to divulge his "serialised daydream...lest I set Freudians in a flurry"!

The chapter 'Severely Dealt With' records the experience of schooling, and the sheer brutality and regimentation afflicted on working class children, "outcasts...herded into classrooms, not just to be educated, but to be disciplined, to be tamed. Hence order, silence, unquestioned obedience.....made to fear authority".

This was a time of change and potential upheaval, the end of the first World War, the partition of Ulster and 'Bolshevism' and the book records the subtle influences at work amongst the different layers of the downtrodden class. His mother answered his questions about riots spreading to his street in terms that "respectable people..don't go in for that sort of thing". However, such was the despotic influence of his own father, the domestic violence, that such worldly events offered a relief from the hunger and beatings that pervaded everyday life. This leads to the harrowing description of his own mother's death through such violence and his older sister's estrangement from the father who married to have sex, with ten unwanted children the result: "the very thought of affection would have turned him sour".

John, now 14, travelled on the steamer to Glasgow 'to keep house', his father having moved to escape debt rather

than the growing sectarian violence. The 'good old days' depicted was of a

*"big city, where the people lived' up closes' which had stone pipe-clayed stairs with a lavatory on each landing to do three or four more houses. At night many of the closes were occupied by the homeless, some of them addicted to a brew concocted of methylated spirits and an injection of coal gas from the stairhead lighting.*

*It was a tough city where many of the side-street dwellers wore cloth caps with razor blades sewn into the cap, and often carried cut-throat razors in case the need arose to cut a few throats. The 'polis' were to be feared: mostly big men who, like the Irish, spoke in amusing malaprops (for instance 'Come on get off', 'If you want to stand their you'd better move along')"*

One of the first incidents that stuck in John's mind was of a hanging at nearby Duke St. prison, a youth called Kean brought up on a culture of violence. He imagined:

*"beneath the bell's great hammer, having the sentence of the Court pounded into his mind in a last stroke of retribution".*

As it happened, he got a job as a page-boy in "The Picture House", for 2 years and this allowed further scope for his racing imagination. Although occasionally sidetracked by cinematic adventure, historical rather than romantic, the mind struggled with a philosophy that emerged firstly by dealing with God ("thereness"), and moving on by chance encounters with orators from subjectivist and 'marxist' pedigrees. One of these orators, 'Quinn', ironically committed suicide in a river he maintained 'did not exist'. Even today, a family organised as the Glasgow Humane Society fishes bodies out of the Clyde.

At the June '94 Book Launch for 'Severely Dealt With' organised by the Glasgow Anarchists, the actor Kenny Grant read the chapter "Never Again", in which 'Caldie' recounts the anti-war mood which typified Glasgow in the mid-20s.

*"On walls and roadways were thick pipe-clay chalkings: WAR IS MURDER, WAR IS HELL, NEVER AGAIN"*

The experience of the World War horror was an everyday reality.

Notoriety came the way of the family when the 'Cruelty' came to learn about the neglect of the children and their frequent beatings and the case achieved press attention. The book breaks off with the prospect of 'going to sea', but not before John recounts the impact of sexual awakening, which his philosophical contemplation had not prepared himself for, despite the callous womanising of his father. After a panic, believing he had contracted VD, he vowed to "keep strict control...clear of loose women...and solitary practices".

This is not a nostalgic trip through biography or a therapeutic exercise, but a compelling journey of discovery achieved in the most difficult circumstances. Recalling sectarian conflicts, and having lived a lifetime of propagandising for communism, John let's slip that

*"it took me another sixty years to realise that mankind is quite mad".*

But disappointment that capitalism continues, thriving on the escape from self which mass culture encourages, and the persistence of anti-social tendencies, hasn't extinguished the author's hope that the causes of war, exploitation and alienation are 'put to right' in a social revolution.

**Severely Dealt With: Growing Up in Belfast and Glasgow**, Northern Herald Books, 5 Close Lea, Rastrick, Brighthouse HD6 3AR for £5.95. *E Come Dungeons Dark*, (account of Aldred's life including his conscientious objection) Luath Press £6.95 (from AK).

Jim McFarlane.

# Philippe Bourrinet, LA GAUCHE HOLLANDAISE

[THE DUTCH LEFT] . Paris: *Courant Communiste International*, [1992]. FF120.

Translation to English currently underway.

Despite being published by the International Communist Current (left-Leninist, non-Bordigist), this heavyweight work on the history of the Dutch ultra-left is well worth dipping into. It's very likely to become the standard reference work on this important 20th century revolutionary tendency.

Delving as far back as the late 19th century and the extremist anti-parliamentary faction in Dutch social democracy associated with Nieuwenhuis, Bourrinet discusses early on the origins of 'Tribunism' associated with Pannekoek and Gorter from 1907. This might not be everyone's cup of tea, but I found the description of the development of the radical scene in Bremen after 1909 especially interesting: although not omitting such factors as the influence of Pannekoek and Knief, Bourrinet also mentions how the workers of this Hanseatic 'free city' on the Dutch border had been critical of SPD branches and trade unions for ages. It's a shame he doesn't say more about this city which gave birth to left communism.

There follow chapters on the Pannekoek-Kautsky controversy of 1912-13 (at a time when Lenin still thought the sun shone out of Kautsky's arse), and the opposition to the first world war. Next Bourrinet covers the opposition on an international level between the left communists and the Bolsheviks, with reference to such matters as the West European Bureau of the Third International. While the West European Secretariat, based in Germany, was controlled by the right (Levi and Zetkin), the corresponding Bureau, based in Amsterdam, was very far to the left and was strongly opposed to both parliamentarism and trade unionism. Both bodies were set up in 1919, the year the Labour Party-supporting Bolshevik government got the Moscow Narodny Bank going on King William Street in the City. After organising a conference in February 1920, largely attended by left communists — Sylvia Pankhurst as well as the Bremen uncontrollables — the Bureau welcomed the formation of the KAPD in Germany; and by this time there was also the possibility of it becoming significant in the Americas. Unfortunately, though, Bourrinet doesn't really explain how the Bolsheviks had the power to shut it down in May 1920.

Bourrinet then describes in great detail the history of council communism in the 1920s, with special reference not only to the various factions and splits in Germany, but also to the attempts to organise internationally, such as in the Communist Workers' International (KAI). This body was set up as the Fourth International in 1921, when Trotsky probably hadn't even washed the blood from Kronstadt off his army boots, but it never really got off the ground.

His next chapters concern the development of the Dutch 'councilist' ultra-left from the 1920s on, covering their positions on such matters as the transition to a new society (*The Fundamental Principles of Communist Production and Distribution* [1930], published in translation in 1990 by a 'councilist nutter' group in London) and the organisation question (*Towards a New Workers' Movement* [1935], reprinted by saner types in London in the 1980s). Bourrinet then shows how neither of these texts by the GIK (Group of International Communists of Holland, which lasted from 1927-40) were fully accepted by councilists internationally: the first was implicitly criticised by Pannekoek as too schematical, even if he agreed about calculating in terms of labour-time; the second was rejected as too pessimistic and liquidationist by the international "Brussels Conference" of 1935. (This was actually held in Copenhagen to help German comrades fool the Gestapo).

A third main councilist text of this time was *Theses on Bolshevism* (1934) (republished as *The Bourgeois Role of Bolshevism* by the Anti-Parliamentary Communist Federation in Glasgow in 1935, and reprinted, also in Glasgow, by some of the future founders of *Here & Now* around 1980). Whilst the term 'state capitalism' does appear in this text, Bourrinet shows how the GIK didn't invest it with quite the same significance as Rühle did in 1931 when he described a global 'state capitalist' tendency manifested as much in Germany as in the USSR. The American councilists, meanwhile, followed Rühle. No-one, it seems, followed the earlier, if highly rudimentary, KAI position that Soviet Russia was simply capitalist and not 'state capitalist.' The objection might be made that after Stalin's Great Leap Forward of 1929 this would have made little sense: but one might have expected someone to show how exchangeability, value, and capital continued to exist; and that would mean relating Soviet bureaucracy to these terms rather than concentrating just on juridical State ownership or formal rouble transfers between enterprises.

At the same time, none of the factions got round to discussing or even speculating about the actual workers' struggle against the Soviet

exploiters at that time. Partly this was a methodological fault on a theoretical level: you can't understand capitalist forms and categories without reference to the class struggle. But it was also a matter of having no effective contacts behind the early Iron Curtain.

At this point I'll bring in the info published by British military intelligence sovietologist Schapiro that the Russian Workers' Opposition's links with the KAI seem to have been dominated by Bolshevik secret service provocateurs. The WO, of course, was as antirevolutionary as Lenin and Stalin, but Miasnikov's Workers' Group, set up by people who left it, was revolutionary; and the point about manipulation of channels, credentials and information remains. There are times when contact between revolutionaries in different countries can be very dangerous for Business. To what extent were early possibilities of viable contact between communist extremists in Germany and Russia scuppered by the State?

The fourth main theme for the councilists of the 1930s was the 'collapse of capitalism.' Here part of the GIK, alongside the American councilists around Mattick (a German emigrant), got off on Grossman's theories about an objective decline caused by the tendency of the profit rate to fall. (Mattick can be seen as bringing Grossman's ideas together with Rühle's). Pannekoek balked at this, and argued in 1934 that capitalism could only really collapse if the proletariat made it collapse by having a revolution. (Somewhat ironically, his article on the "Theory of the Collapse of Capitalism" was published in English in 1977 by the 'socialist economists' behind *Capital & Class*).

Bourrinet then shows how the Dutch councilists were too weak to do very much during the second world war. Meanwhile, another faction broke away from Trotskyism, then from Leninism, to come together with former GIK types in 1944-45. Another international conference was held in 1947, this time really in Brussels but attended, it seems, only by comrades from Europe. (By mentioning how one of the participants, a Belgian anarcho-communist, had met Engels at a Congress of the Second International in the same city in 1891, Bourrinet hints at the gravity of the occasion.) This was the first and last time that Bordigists (from Belgium and France rather than Italy) and council communists breathed the same air.

It should perhaps have been possible to formulate some kind of active policy opposed to the kitsch macho-boy partyism of Bordigism and its offshoots. But seemingly it wasn't; and by the 1950s Dutch council communism had sunk back to the sort of quasi-existence and ouvrièrism associated in the 1960s with Informations et Correspondance Ouvrières (ICO) and from the 1970s through to the present day with Echanges et Mouvement. To be fair, though, the latter 'correspondence network' is often a useful source.

As Bourrinet makes clear, those people who took up the banner of councilism in the aftermath of 1968-69 were often open to ideas which he likes to refer to as "modernist": namely, those put out by such writers as Castoriadis, the Situationists (councilist from 1960-61 and very so in 1968-69, even if by 'councils' they usually meant mass assemblies), and the anti-democratic non-councilists Barrot and Camatte. They were always unlikely to remain strongly identified with ideas developed by previous generations before mass TV. The only place where councilism became established seems to have been Scandinavia, especially in Sweden, but this was largely among academic study-groups contemplating things like 'Capital-logic.' Mattick's course at the University of Roskilde in Denmark in 1975-76 seems to have been particularly influential.

These are just a few of the angles covered in the book. It's worth pointing out that since the 'Dutch ultra-left', like the German and indeed the Italian, refers to a political area rather than simply to events and ideas in the Netherlands, there's actually quite a lot in the book about goings-on outside that country. I found particularly interesting, for example, the stuff on the resurgence in eastern Germany after the second world war of a councilist tendency which had formerly been active within the AAU-E. Coming together with the anarchists of the former FAU, they were rounded up by security police in the Soviet zone and thrown into prisons and camps.

Meanwhile in the western zones, and particularly in West Berlin, there arose a strange grouping which declared its allegiance to council communism but spent suspiciously too much time concentrating on denouncing Bolshevism, and too little denouncing the United States. Members here seem to have come through the councilist KAU of the 1930s but then gone into the SPD. Another group in 1949 with similar politics seems to have been dominated by NKVD provocateurs. Ulti-



mately a tendency was formed which was inside official social democracy but with a nominally 'councilist' and 'anti-authoritarian' cover.

Bourrinet also mentions in a footnote how in the same year a left communist organisation in France (the GCF) was offered assistance by 'the Americans', which they refused. Around the same time, Gorkin, a former leader of the POUM, seems to have been instrumental in American approaches made to various groups to the left of Stalinism and Trotskyism. The further back one goes, the clearer a perspective one can get on this sort of stuff, so it needs to be gone into further.

I would have liked something on the link-up between councilism and C.L.R. James in 1956, when a re-edition of the latter's book *State Capitalism and Revolution* (1950) was introduced by Cajo Brendel and Theo Maasen, two leading Dutch councilists, along with Castoriadis. And some more on Marinus van der Lubbe, the Dutch council communist sympathiser who burnt down the Reichstag, would also have been welcome. But you can't have everything.

All in all, this is quite a monumental work. I'm sure there'll be something in it for everyone with an interest in the history of this tendency.

Neil Matthews.

## Reject Alternative Academia

### Dear Here and Now

Thanks for publishing my letter in issue number 14. At the risk of seeming pedantic, I should say that a small typo (or Freudian slip on your part rather confuses the main point I was trying to make in it. Your version reads "the text (ie, my booklet *The Decadence of the Shamans*) certainly attempts to affirm that there is no such a thing (as historical progress)". My original states "the text certainly attempts to affirm that there is such a thing", as the discerning reader will realise by going on to the next sentence.

The difference is worth mentioning, largely because there is a considerable gap between those who think

**Letter** that the idea of historical progress is a bourgeois myth justifying all the iniquities of capitalism, and marxists, who consider that capitalism, like previous class societies, did represent a step forward for humanity in spite of all the horrors and alienation built into it, and in spite of the fact that capitalism has long ceased to represent any kind of progress anywhere on the planet.

A lot of people who write for *Here and Now* (eg Tom Jennings in his article on Class War in the same issue) seem to think that marxism is obsolete, and are either searching for some new social theory, or, more likely, deny the validity of any unifying theory of historical and social movement. Jennings' article was also not untypical in pouring scorn on the notion of an international working class.

I think there's a place for a 'cultural' journal which aligns itself to the revolutionary movement. The question raised by a lot of the approaches taken in *Here and Now*, however, is this: why does the bourgeoisie, its popular media as well as its hired 'thinkers', spend such a vast amount of time and money telling us that communism is dead, marxism is out of date, and the international working class a nostalgic echo of yesteryear? And what is the significance of the fact that the main trends in 'sophisticated' academic thought are those which seek to prove that there is no possibility of analysing history and society from a general theoretical standpoint? to come to the point, isn't *Here and Now* in danger of acting as the focus for an alternative academia, producing libertarian versions of the same non-theories being churned out in the universities? It seems to me that such a fate can only be avoided by consciously taking the side of the revolutionary movement. But that will require a thorough discussion of what the revolutionary movement is today - and what it isn't.

Proletarian greetings, **Alan Cohen,**  
London, 18 March, 1994.

### When Nationalist frenzy strikes..

is reprinted in *Anarchy* no.39. It documents the good work of Nationalists Anonymous in assisting sufferers of nationalist delusions. For example: "instead of rebelling against the economic sphere as such, against his role as a mere cog in a mega-machine beyond his control, he grovels before the dictates of 'his' economy".

Drawing from the increasing prevalence of nationalist fervour in Quebec, it is useful to draw a comparison back home. You pick all sorts of rubbish at your friendly neighbourhood anarchist printer, one being LIBERATION, a self-proclaimed "left nationalist quarterly". Their cover laments (beneath a suitable painting) - "Connolly and MacLean: when will we see their like again?" The content is lamentable, giving space to such washed out causes as the Communist Party of Scotland. However, other enterprising anarchists have the Layout contract. Just proves you can profit from delusions!

### Sack the lot!

What's all this fuss about a Vicar being sacked because he doesn't believe in God? This 'christian humanist', like all good liberals, believes in muddying the waters and expressing contemporary doubts about the conception of the Godhead. Of course there are small sects on the liberal side too, like the Unitarians, but we say "hands off the C of E"! The theology should remain tied firmly to the belief in God the Creator, the bearded old git, the unforgiving. Perhaps there is a case for getting rid of all this sappy Jesus shite too!

### Crusties Last Stand?

Despite the drama of rubber bullets on standby as crusties besieged the gates of Downing St., the Criminal Justice Bill has not been stopped in its tracks. It is designed to remove the right of silence for offenders, increase the ability of the State to mount surveillance on the public and crack down on protestors such as anti-roads protestors taking direct action. For many single issue activists it's as if Armageddon was nigh. For those libertarian revolutionaries who have always had scant regard for the boundaries of legality/illegality there will be an element of "told you so" in terms of the iron fist behind the State's velvet glove. However, the act of outlawing direct action, whether 'respectable' or not, is an attempt to corale those with any lingering respect for the Law behind the restraints of lobby politics without the extra ingredient of trespass or disrupting work on roadsites etc. Many animal libbers, crusties etc will not be deterred, although others will 'drop out' when faced with such obstacles. More determined minorities may make the mistake that this Bill/Act ushers in an era for more bombs & this will suit the State no end.

### Blair has Hair

One sober Labour leader, snuffs it, another takes over. So why comment? This one started from the 'soft left', is photogenic, has a young family, sounds south of England despite representing a Durham constituency and hailing from middle class Edinburgh. His claim to fame is that he is 'tough on crime', doesn't like dependency culture and speaks a lot about responsibility to 'the community'. Don't expect any gesture of solidarity with people taking direct action, far less with workers resisting closures, productivity deals etc. By trying to muddy the differences with the Tories, our resident psephologist tell us past experience may prevail, with 'last minute' doubts before voting for change, when change is reduced to style and 'good looks'.

### Pride vs Profit

"We're here for Pride - you're here for Money" was a banner that caught the eye (when translated from Italian of course) during the past Channel 4 'Football Italia' series. Although it could have been levelled against Roberto Baggio Asprilla or many of the other overpaid, overfatted stars of the Juventus v Parma game that day (20/3/94), it was actually a critique of Football as an industry. It would be nice to think, as I trundle back to the mundane terraces of Partick Thistle and their dour relegation battles (after the drama of the World Cup) that other fans in this passionate un-named Scottish city might reach similar conclusions. The poor relation has a Canadian tycoon, Fergus McCann, in despotic control, after a populist campaign to depose the old dynastic rule. The other is the richest (along with Man U?) club in British football, where belief in 'getting the best' players has to be tempered by the tradition of 'true blue' loyalist supremacy. If such dischord can arise in traditionalist sectors of Turin, however, perhaps there is hope that some of the views of the better (oppositional!) club fanzines can gain more support.

Jim McFarlane.

# THE POWER AND THE GLORY

I am slightly perturbed by what still seems to me to be a dominant current in *Here and Now* - that of smug armchair theoretician(s) as the *sole and justificatory role* for its existence. This perturbs me for two reasons.

Firstly on *pragmatic grounds*, - for the best practice of theory. My observations have confirmed to me that the Sits were right when they maintained that those who were the best practitioners (in practice/praxis/practical application) were also the best theorists, and vice versa.

Secondly, contrary to Leninist assertions still extant (viz SWP, etc.) the inane post modernist celebrations of the status quo, and the epistemic angst of post-structuralism - consciousness, confidence and critique mostly develop through struggle be it intellectual, sexual - political, ecological or political, or whatever. There have, however, been some murmuring in *Here and Now*, awkwardly becoming aware of a covert anti-feminist stance, (mostly probably inherited from the Sits), about the importance of adopting a 'culture of support' as one of the most positive aspects to have come out the women's movement. (It doesn't have to be uncritical support).

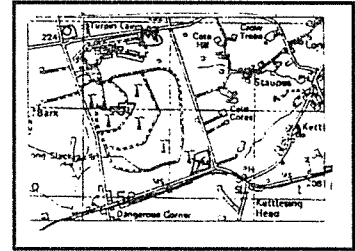
In view of this I would like to bring readers attention, if it an unknown factor, to the existence of a US spy station in North Yorkshire, and the current campaign to close it down. Menwith Hill is situated about 8 miles north of Otley and was given permission to be set up in the 1960's at the height of the cold war, with the ideology of monitoring US, and therefore 'our', enemies abroad. It is linked directly to the main US intelligence network, the National Security Administration, outside Washington DC. Now the Cold War is over, it is not being dismantled, but its operations expanded - members of OPAG, Otley Peace and Action Group, have discovered - through their repeated skilful and courageous incursions into the base. More radomes are being built to link up with satellites for surveillance and telephone monitoring.

Although I consider quite seriously Guy Debord's pessimistic latest conclusions (*Comments on the society of the spectacle*) that the 'spectacle', qua allegory of the present phase of capitalism and its mode of representation, *seems* at present to have achieved *almost* perfect closure as a system with no meaningful contestation possible, this should not be taken as a recipe for total pessimism. I, like many others, feel compelled, and am still quite determined, to help bring it about that this is not so, even if it only for the mere gratification of transgression/subversion still being one of the best sources of pleasure.

In commenting on "the spectacle's" growing implosion of secrecy, Debord, in characteristic rhetorical style of the inversion of the genitive, (the literary equivalent of Ivanisovitch's tennis serve), maintains that it 'dominates this world, and first and foremost as the secret of domination', as the existence of any system of domination is always denied within the discourse of power. Menwith Hill station's very existence and role is still *continually* denied. As well as monitoring countries and groups attempting to counter the crippling effects of US foreign policy and global interests, Menwith is now known to be using its telephone monitoring equipment for commercial

espionage, informing major US companies like Lockheeds, about the nature of rival company's bids for tenders, and thus securing the former's advantage. (This has been best revealed in a documentary shown on Channel 4, *Dispatches*, 6th Oct. 1993). Menwith Hill station, and its presence in the UK, is a physical manifestation of the most powerful capitalist country's economic, political and military domination, whose activities are continually denied.

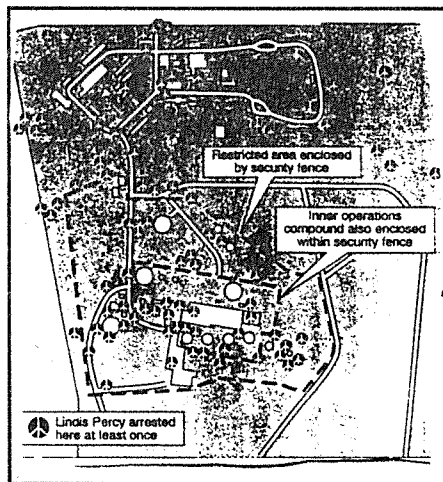
Not only that but its physical and concrete existence is somewhat masked. On the Ordinance Survey map, Menwith Hill station appears as designated by the symbols for TV and radio masts, but no sign of any



restricted areas, (Fig 1).

Shown on the enlarged map (Fig. 2). (The entire base is fenced round)

The restricted area, according to the (diffuse) spectacle's representation, *does not formally exist*, although it is



encircled by a barbed wire perimeter fence, a manifestation of the actual which can be experienced by a tear in your clothed! likewise the public right of way footpaths indicated on Fig 1, *no longer exist*. Anyone exercising their 'right' to follow the ordinance survey indications for a ramble, will, if they got that far without being arrested and escorted off the base, find that the 'officially designated' footpath will take them through two security fences into 2 restricted areas, and even into the giant, white, spherical 'ray domes' of one of the most secret listening stations - its existence kept so secret that according to the late Bob Cryer, MP 'many new MPs even have never heard of it' (no comment!).

Any (future) movement which seeks to abolish the existing conditions, their power relations, and the distribution and control of information and knowledge for the advantage of a few, should consider Menwith as an important strategic point, and support campaigns and incursions against its very real, although seemingly fantomatic existence.

(From Fig 2 it can be seen that the peace camp has moved from peace Corner, near the main entrance to the base, where North Yorkshire Council thoughtfully placed some large boulders one day - which are handy to sit on round a camp fire, but which make it a bit difficult to pitch a tent. So the peace camp has moved to the S E corner of the base adjoining the A59, which has a larger terrain, permitting the installation of caravans and an information point, it anyone fancies like dropping by for support or fancies a ramble along the footpath....)

Lucy Forsyth, West Yorks

## Listings

*A One Man Manifesto* is a Herbert Read anthology prior to the knighthood, selected by David Goodway. £5 from Freedom or AK.

Alex Comfort's selection of writings, Power and Death is published by Freedom for £5 and includes Science must Disobey, The Russian attitude to child sexuality etc.✦

*Alternative Press Review* Winter 94 included The Mass Psychology of Misery by John Zerzan, interview with AKs international books founder. Spring/Summer includes 2 reprints from No.14 of this journal plus Running Amok in LA, A Herbal self-abortion, Chomsky on Chiapas and the new global economy, Pornography and Pleasure by Sunfrog, and Forests of the Milk River. In future, the editor, Jason McQuinn will edit the A.P.R. while a New York collective takes over at Anarchy. 24\$ surface sub from \* C.A.L.Press, POB 1446, Columbia MO 65205-1446 USA. ▲

*Anarchist Review 1* is due out in late August from Glasgow Anarchists and features Surveillance Cameras, Roads issues, an Expose of Local Enterprise Culture, and Egotism revisited. Donation from POB 1008 G42 8AA

*Anarchy 39* has more excerpts from Manolo Gonzalez post Spanish Civil War, Neal Keating on rioting and looting, Keith Sorel on State Dept. Surrealism and John Zerzan's Time and its Discontents. 18\$ surface sub for this best seller amongst anarcho-mags from C.A.L.. ▲

*Aufheben No.3*, the impressive marxist journal, this time focussing on Auto Struggles: The Developing War against the Road Monster locating the present upsurge of anti-roads direct action in the context of capitalism's continued dependence on road traffic, while presenting a balanced assessment of the networks which have arose to contest the roads expansion. Part 2 of The Theory of Decline or the Decline of theory? on notions of decadence and subjects the SI, Cardan, Mattick, and the "Autonomist Current" to reappraisal. £5 for 3 issues except Europe (£6) or USA etc £8 (IMOs only) from Aufheben, c/o Prior House, Tilbury Pl., Brighton BN2 2GY.

*Bypass 2* (1 seems to have passed us by!) is the newly launched compendium of zines and magazines with attitude. £1 from Box B, 111 Magdalen Rd., Oxford OX4.

C.I.R.A. Bulletin 49 & 50 are archive listings located at CIRA, avenue de Beaumont 24, CH-1012 Lausanne, Suisse.

*Collective Action Notes*, articles on the refusal of work SAE to POB 22962 Baltimore MD 21203 USA.

*Common Sense 15* features Harry Cleaver on Chiapas (in context of NAFTA and the 'refusal of development'), the self-proclaimed Open Marxism section much of which is intensely academic, and The Time of Trial by Space on Lefebvre. £3.95 from PO Box 311, Southern D.O. Edinburgh EH9 1SF.

*Communism No.8* in English has translations from Belgian based G.C.I. with usual articles

Against the Myth of Democratic Rights and Liberties, Internationalism + AIDS, pure product of science! from BP54-1060 Bruxelles31.

*Counter Informations 38,39 & 40* include UN & present wars, disaffection amongst Yugoslav soldiers, Zapata rebellion, anti-racism, seeds of revolt on the roads, and 50 years of slaughter for PROFIT. Donations/SAEs to ph/CInfo, 11 Forth St., Edinburgh.

*Discussion Bulletin 65* includes debates on democracy and anarchism. Donation: POB 1564, Grand Rapids., Michigan 49501, USA.

*Echanges 72/73 & 74/75* is the bulletin of Echanges et Mouvement at BP 241 75866 Paris Cedex 18, France. On Guatamala, German anti-fascism critique, China, Fiat after Fiat + Bank & State struggles.

*Editions Lusmore* consists of text in Spanish and cartoons on exploitation and everyday life/hedonism. Enquiries: Apartado 226 07080 Palma de Mallorca.

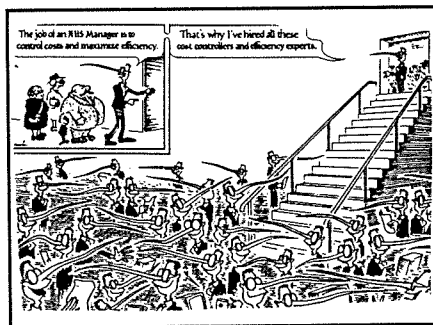
*Etcetera 22* in an Iberian language on Brasil's economy and state corporatism. No.23 on Restructuration at SEAT, IBM & Argentina. Ed.Etcetera, Apartado Correos 1.363 Barcelona, Catalonia.

*Extraphile*, the quarterly journal of the First Extranational with Potlach, Primitive Affluence for 3\$ POB 5585 Arlington VA 22205 USA.

*Green Line 111* On Ethnic Cleansing and the Protection of the Wealthy in the UK and Here come the Regionalists. Sub £9 from POB 5, Lostwithiel, Cornwall PL22 0YT.

*Green Perspectives 29* is devoted to History, Civilisation and Progress described as an 'Outline for a Criticism of Modern Relativism' by Murray Bookchin. This 12 page essay will hopefully be reviewed in H&N 16. SAE to POB 111, Burlington, VT 05402 USA.

*Health Service Wildcat* drawn by Donald Room is a series of often subtle cartoons in the style made infamous in Freedom. £1.95



from ✦ Angel Alley, London E1 7QX.

*How low can you go?* Directed at the Bone-Scargill inspired CWO? An auto-critique of putting the organisation first CW sectarianism? No, this is an expose by London Class War (plagiarising Trotwatch) of The Practices of the Social Workers Party POB 467, London E8 3QX.

*Kick it Over No.33* Why Anarchists tolerate sexual harassment? Topped up by the lesbian avengers, Ted Trainer on The Conserver Society & a challenge to Power Feminism. No.32 was on Living in the City & libertarian municipalism. £5 (cheques) to POB 5811, Sta A, Toronto M5W 1P2, Canada.

LPA Newsletter No.6 proclaims:

Smash the Occult Establishment while arranging a visit to the Valley of the Freemasons, East End Psychic War, & Powell and Benn, The Flowerpot Men. 6 2nd class stamps secures this entertaining broadsheet from LPA Box 15, 138 Kingsland High St., London E8 2NS.

*Mordicus*, June '94 Special USA edition including translations of the Aufheben no.1 article on LA, Midnight Notes & Street Voice. 30FF from BP11 75622 Paris Cedex 13.

No.10 on EZLN, anti-work & the Left, POB 175, Liverpool L69 8DX.

*Open Creation and its Enemies* by Asger Jorn, published by Unpopular Books with an 18 page Preface 'Getting things in Perspective'. Donation to U.B., Box 15, 138 Kingsland High St., London E8 2NS.

Organise 34 slags Nationalist Mythology in Ireland while promoting cross channel links. £3 sub from ACF, c/o ✦ 84 Whitechapel High St., London E1 7QX.

Proletarian Gob No.3 The Brutal Whiff of capitalism, Education. SAE from BM Makhno London WCIN 3XX (as seen in The Guardian).

*Subversion 14* features diatribes against the IRA/ British State connivance, the SWP & Militant and Trade Unionism as "Utter Cobblers". The paper that tightens the ligature round the throat of capitalism" from- large SAE to Dept 10, 1 Newton St., Manchester M1 1HW.

*The Art of Catching a Bus* consists of the hard hitting poetry of Jim Ferguson, with a cover derived from Angry Press Artworks. Available through AK Catalogue (22 Luton Pl., Edinburgh) for £5.95.

*The Bush telegraph*, magazine on cannabis paper £1.50 from Box BT, 21 Cave St., Oxford OX4 1BA.

*The Idler* new journal promoting loafing. Combines slobbery with modern culture. No.4 includes Idle Idols No.4 Kurt Cobain. £1.50 from 51 St. Stephen's Gdns., London W2.

*Thee Data Base No.3* featuring Censoria - Fighting for the Right to Party, UFO's are Real, and Sacred Mushrooms. 2 first class stamps for Numbers 1&2 on Genesis P.Orridge, Smart Drugs, VR, The Tory Occult, Dadanarchists. 4 first class stamps constitute a sub from PO Box 1238, Glasgow G12 8AB.

*Underground Issue 3* is a broadsheet featuring graphics from Graham Harwood and short pieces by Matt Fuller, Sadie Plant & the gang. From

*Variant Numbers 15 & 16*. Due to wrecking Scottish Arts Council manoeuvres to withdraw funding Variant may have ceased publication. Hopefully not. No.15 has Post Politics interview with Castoriadis, Experimental Music festivals, Steve Reich and Beryl Korot's Musical Hybrid & reviews of art, CDs, books. 16 has Alastair Bonnett on The New Primitives, Simon Ford on the Destruction of the Avante Garde and Sara Diamond on Gender and technology. £3.50 + SAE each back-issue from New Visions, 73 Robertson St., Glasgow G2 8QD. (fax 041-221-7775/ph 041-221-6380).

*Wildcat no.17* from BM Cat London WCIN 3XX. Nailing it's colours firmly to the anti-civilisation, anti-progress communist mast with articles on Somalia, Waco, violence and vanguardism.

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Articles, reviews, letters welcome, The editorial collective reserves the prerogative over whether to include material.

If you can send texts on 3.5" computer discs in ASCII or Word formats, this would be a help but isn't essential.

Articles are Anti-copyright but we appreciate a copy of any magazine it is reprinted in etc.

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Harassment Policy displayed on Leeds Noticeboard recently

## HARASSMENT POLICY GUIDELINES FOR MANAGEMENT

### 1. Introduction

Harassment which can be labelled as sexist or racist may be experienced as offensive. It is the responsibility of management, therefore, to ensure that harassment or intimidation of staff should be, as far as possible, nonsexist and nonracist. Training in politically correct harassment and intimidation techniques will be provided for all line managers as a matter of corporate policy.

Intimidation differs from other kinds of disciplinary action in that there may be a fine line between evidence which is acceptable and evidence which is not. Thus whereas some people may see fabrications and fantasies as "unacceptable" it is not generally realised that to others these may be justified in achieving strategic objectives. In order that management are able to carry out the intimidation in an atmosphere free from the threat of debate and discussion therefore, the following guidelines are being issued as policy directives.

### 2. Definitions:

2.1 **Offensiveness** refers to any act by a member of staff which may be found objectionable by a member of the management inasmuch as it is deemed to be a threat to their self-esteem or damaging to the positive self-image of management in general. This includes inappropriate 'humour' or unwelcome critical comment as well as any statements, spoken or written, behaviour, gestures, tones of voice or facial expressions signifying a less than wholly enthusiastic endorsement of the prevailing corporate ethos as determined by senior management. It also includes the dissemination of fraudulent memoranda, bogus guidelines etc.

2.2 **Harassment**, according to the Dictionary, means "To trouble, worry, distress with annoying labour, care, perplexity, importunity, misfortune, etc." [from harasser (1562.) 'to tire or toyle out, to spend or weaken, wearie or weary out by ouertoyling; also, to vex, disquiet, importune, harrie, hurrie, turmoile, torment'] This definition is clearly based on deep-rooted classist prejudice and bias against enterprise; in particular it does not show awareness of the need for proactive management. The Dictionary is therefore inoperative, and harassment is here defined more constructively as the imaginative creation, by any means necessary, of a challenging working environment for selected employees, for the purpose of mobilising positive commitment to corporate goals and empowerment of management to effect a sense of ownership of change on the part of all staff.

2.3 **Intimidation** is the adoption of measures to pre-empt the need for formal procedures in disciplinary actions, as a result of which employees' ability to conduct a defence is restricted. The purpose of intimidation is to increase awareness on the part of all employees of the need for change.

2.4 **Incrimination** refers to the recommended procedure for progressing complaints against members of staff by the use of words such as anti-discrimination, equal opportunities etc.

2.5 **Sexism** is any act by a male which may be interpreted as attempting to disregard the relevance of gender differences to any aspect of the working environment. It may also be applied to the refusal to treat persons who make complaints about sexism more favourably than persons who do not. This is not an exhaustive list. This definition supersedes earlier, contrary usages.

2.6 **Racism** in the present context refers to an unwillingness to accept physical appearance and/or cultural or ideological allegiances as sufficient grounds for differential treatment, or an inability to correctly identify and classify people according to the officially-approved racial categories. Training (see 3.4) will be provided in order to ensure that staff are at all times aware of the overriding importance of race in any assessment of student performance etc. This definition supersedes earlier, contrary usages.

### 3. Management of Responsibility

3.1 It is the responsibility of management to ensure that all racism and sexism be treated as the responsibility of employees rather than management.

3.4 Training in racism and sexism is vital and such training will be provided for a staff who need it.

### 4. Job-Satisfaction

4.1 It is important that students at the University are able to carry out their studies in an atmosphere free from the threat of dissent. Students who find material displayed which is critical or which presents difficulty have the right to complain directly to management.

4.2 All staff have the responsibility to maintain a positive and healthy attitude. An incident of depression or discontent will be regarded extremely seriously and can be grounds for dismissal.

4.3 It is often difficult for people who are feeling depressed to take effective action and this can therefore create an appropriate opportunity for constructive dismissal.

### 5. Harassment Procedure

Any person wishing to initiate a harassment procedure against a member of staff must be able to approach a sympathetic but responsible member of management who can provide advice on how to utilise the institution's racism and sexism policy to deal with the employee concerned. Training will be provided for anyone wishing to do so.