

LABOUR FOCUS ON EASTERN EUROPE

A Socialist Defence Bulletin on
Eastern Europe and the USSR

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Patients at the Troizkoye mental hospital in the USSR.

RUSSIAN PSYCHIATRIST SPEAKS OUT on Psychiatric Abuse

Yugoslav 'Praxis' Group on Socialists and Human Rights

Labour Focus on Eastern Europe

Statement of Aims

A growing number of socialists and communists are taking a stand against the suppression of democratic rights in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The Labour Movement has international responsibilities in this field as well as in the field of solidarity action with those struggling against oppression in Chile or Southern Africa or Northern Ireland.

But up to now socialists have lacked a source of frequent and reliable information about events in Eastern Europe. Coverage in the papers of the Left remains scanty, while reports in the bourgeois press are selective and slanted. The first aim of **Labour Focus on Eastern Europe** is to help fill this gap by providing a more comprehensive and regular source of information about events in that part of the world.

The mass media give ample space to Tory politicians and to some from the Labour Party who seek to use protests against repression in Eastern Europe as a cover for their own support for social inequality in Britain and for witch-hunts against those who oppose it. At the same time campaigns run by socialists in the Labour and Trade Union Movement for many years concerning victims of repression in Eastern Europe are largely ignored by the media. The second aim of this bulletin therefore is to provide comprehensive information about the activities of socialists and labour organisations that are taking up this issue.

Labour Focus is a completely independent bulletin whose editorial collective includes various trends of socialist and marxist opinion. It is not a bulletin for debate on the nature of the East European states, nor is its purpose to recommend a strategy for socialists in Eastern Europe: there are other journals on the Left that take up these questions. Our purpose is to provide comprehensive coverage of these societies with a special emphasis on significant currents campaigning for working class, democratic and national rights.

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In these ways we hope to strengthen campaigns to mobilise considerable influence that the British Labour Movement can have in the struggles to end repression in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

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CORRECTION

In Issue No.3, the person who wrote the article on NALGO and Polish Defence Activity was Phil Jones from Forest of Dean NALGO.

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EDITORIAL

Andy Klymchuk Should Be Freed

Official Soviet press charges against Andy Klymchuk, the student teacher from London arrested in the Soviet Union in August, point to one conclusion: Andy Klymchuk should be released immediately.

Radvanska Ukraina (Soviet Ukraine) says that the KGB arrested him because "films with coded information and directives from one of the foreign emigre centres of Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism concerning the undertaking of hostile anti-Soviet acts" were found in his possession. Perhaps they were. But if we strip away the rather sinister, spy-like tones of the accusation what we are left with is the charge that Andy Klymchuk was carrying written material hostile to the Soviet Government. Whether the material was on film, on paper or on tablets, whether it was in English, Ukrainian or code is completely irrelevant: he is accused simply of possessing anti-Government propaganda while touring the Ukraine. Carrying such material in the USSR cannot be considered a crime by any thinking socialist or communist.

This does not mean we would necessarily have the slightest sympathy for the content of such propaganda. Most of the Ukrainian political organisations in the West are very right-wing and the Labour movement in Britain would completely oppose their outlook. But neither before nor after the overthrow of capitalism would we sentence any of their members to 7 years in jail and 5 years' administrative exile for possessing anti-socialist propaganda, however virulent. Yet that is the possible penalty facing Andy Klymchuk under one of the three articles of the Ukrainian Criminal Code being cited against him. Nearly 200 years after the French Revolution and 60 years after the October Revolution socialists and communists can have no difficulty in seeing the reactionary character of such legislation.

If the Soviet Union was a weak, embattled state, struggling for survival against foreign armies of intervention and a white terror orchestrated by much more powerful imperialist states we could understand some confusion between a foreign tourist carrying some literature and the armed advance guard of the counter-revolution. But everybody knows that the Soviet Union is the most powerful state in Europe today.

Very few socialists in Britain know much about the Ukraine: most people would have great difficulty grasping what is meant by the supposed menace of "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism". But to put it mildly, this phrase has an extremely elastic content in the hands of official Soviet writers. For example, there is a book called *Our Soviet Ukraine* which has been banned in the Soviet Union for 'bourgeois nationalism' and which circulates illegally: its author is Pyotr Shelest, First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Ukraine and member of the Politburo of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, until his sudden removal from power in 1972. While he was in office his book, printed in 100,000 copies, was widely praised by the official press. Thus, the phrase "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism", which has done long service as a basis for arrests ever since its use during Stalin's terror in the Ukraine during the 1930s, has covered a multitude of "crimes".

The Soviet authorities have also talked about Andy Klymchuk carrying "directives", as though there were some powerful underground organisation directed from abroad and carrying out acts of sabotage and disturbance in the Ukraine. Such talk can be taken no more seriously than the lurid tales in the News

of the World about monstrous international terrorist conspiracies to subvert Britain. There has indeed been a significant movement of opposition to Soviet policies in the Ukraine during the 1960s and 1970s and this movement has continually raised the issue of national oppression. But to imagine that such a movement - containing by the way, many Socialists and Marxists - has been organised from abroad is simply the fantasy of a police mind. The right-wing Ukrainian groups abroad are in no position to direct anybody in the Ukraine to do anything.

And if they were, what would that signify? How is it possible 60 years after the Russian revolution for right-wing nationalist groups to gain support in the Ukraine? In a society in which the insecurities, inequalities and powerful vested interests of capitalism have been overthrown, the social basis for reactionary movements can reappear only when the government is seriously abusing the political rights of the population. And if that is what is happening today in the Ukraine then jailing those carrying a handful of emigre tracts is a complete diversion from the real issue: namely changing the oppressive policies which make such tracts attractive to the local population.

If the Soviet authorities continue to hold Andy Klymchuk the effect will be to highlight for hundreds of thousands of British students and workers an unhealthy political situation in the USSR and some repressive laws that have nothing in common with socialist democracy.

Past events in the Ukraine suggest a particularly sinister implication of Andy Klymchuk's arrest. In 1972 a Belgian student was arrested after he had distributed literature to some Ukrainian dissidents. His case was used as a starting point for a round-up of hundreds of people throughout the Ukraine, including Leonid Plyushch, and the KGB was able to use the image of foreign agents in its drive to discredit oppositionists. Have elements in the KGB considered repeating a tactic that seemed to work well in 1972?

So far in this editorial, we have followed Radvanska Ukraina in assuming that Andy Klymchuk did indeed have something in his case. But he may not have: no trial has yet been held. We have also assumed that he is not the victim of either a KGB plant or a KGB provocation. But it is unlikely that such questions will be answered conclusively before Andy Klymchuk is able to return to England.

In this issue we publish information about various aspects of the Klymchuk case. There is every sign, at the time of writing that the National Union of Students Executive is going to take up the case and campaign for the release of Andy Klymchuk. Other sections of the labour and trade union movement should also involve themselves in the campaign and make the Soviet authorities aware that they will lose a great deal of good will in the British Labour Movement if they press ahead with the trial of Andy Klymchuk.

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If Labour Focus is to continue to appear we urgently need your help, especially in the form of subscriptions. If you have one already, get your friends to subscribe, or send us the names of people you know who may be interested. Our address is:

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SOVIET UNION

Experiences of a Soviet Psychiatrist

By Dr. M. Voikhanskaya

[Dr. Marina Voikhanskaya is a psychiatrist who, before her emigration to England in 1975, spent 13 years working in various Leningrad hospitals. After protesting against the internment of political and religious dissenters in prison hospitals and attempting to help them, she found herself the object of attention from the KGB, ostracised by her colleagues and demoted in rank within her hospital. Since her emigration she has continued to campaign against psychiatric abuses in the USSR, and the Soviet authorities have taken their revenge by refusing to allow her 11 year old son permission to emigrate.

In August Dr. Voikhanskaya will speak at the International Congress of Mental Health in Vancouver, and at the World Psychiatric Association's Congress in

Honolulu. At the last W.P.A. Congress the President had stated, concerning Vladimir Bukovsky's appeals about psychiatric abuse: "to keep silent about such an ignominious situation would weigh heavily on our conscience". But the Soviet delegation, using diplomatic blackmail and manoeuvre, succeeded in imposing exactly that silence. The Soviet authorities can not afford the blows to its prestige which result from international criticism of this method of dealing with political opposition, and is expected to resort to fairly extreme methods to prevent its humiliation at the coming W.P.A. Congress.

We print below the text of the speech that Dr. Voikhanskaya will give at the Honolulu Conference.]

In such a way Ponomaryov became my patient. For some reason I did not understand, this calm, polite and normal man had been put on 90 milligrams of haloperidol a day by my colleagues. Then he was transferred to my care; and I had to decide what to do about him. Through the efforts of a colleague and myself he was discharged three weeks later. This was not easy, as the district out-patient clinic, into whose care we had to discharge him, did not want to accept him. The head of the clinic said that he was "politically troublesome" and he would "soon start writing letters again".

The next time he was back in my hospital was in September of the same year, shortly after he had posted a letter to President Podgorny asking to be allowed to emigrate. He wrote that even though he had a higher education and could speak many languages, he had been deprived of the right to work. This letter had been intercepted by the postal censorship, which is a department of the secret police, or the KGB. He was released nine months later, immediately after the British Royal College of Psychiatrists had passed a resolution mentioning his name.

But three months later, in October 1975, he was summoned to the out-patients clinic, and from there forcibly interned again in the same hospital. The clinic psychiatrist who ordered his internment, Dr. L.D. Fedoseyeva, explained the reason for her decision to Mr. Mikhail Bernshtam, a friend of Ponomaryov and also of myself. She said that his letters of protest had been hindering the work of public bodies. These letters were a symptom of the aggravation of A.D. Ponomaryov's illness, which manifested itself in nothing but these letters. Thus his normal behaviour was not an indication of his health.

Bernshtam: What sort of letters were they?

Dr. Fedoseyeva: Neither I nor the doctor treating him has read the letters, but we know their contents. They are the letters of an ill man. They aren't anti-Soviet, but in them he expresses a low opinion of the Soviet government and in general writes cynically about our leaders.

Bernshtam: If you haven't read the letters, how did you justify Ponomaryov's hospitalisation?

Dr. Fedoseyeva: We possess information and an evaluation of the letters from competent authorities.

Psychiatry is a science, the application of which is unusually vulnerable to abuse. Abuse can take different forms in different countries. I want to discuss some aspects of Soviet abuses because I have first-hand experience of them.

I began working as a psychiatrist in 1962, in a Leningrad psychiatric hospital. My career there was typical of hundreds of other psychiatrists in the Soviet Union.

But in December 1973 my professional life changed completely: I discovered that in section 8 of my hospital, the section for the most seriously disturbed, there was a man who was quite sane - an artist who had been put there by the KGB. I visited him almost every day over a period of several months and I can say confidently that he was in no need whatsoever of hospitalisation.

Later, I became acquainted with 13 ex-patients from various prison psychiatric hospitals and ordinary psychiatric hospitals, and in my own hospital, three more sane people. They had all been confined - for a single reason - their political or religious beliefs did not coincide with official Soviet ideology. I had known about this practice for several years, but had not previously had direct contact with it. Let me describe to you how hospitalisation happens. I'll take just one example - a patient of mine in 1973, Anatoly Ponomaryov. Age 44, an engineer. In 1968 he spoke out openly against the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia at a meeting in the Leningrad Institute where he worked. Two years later, during a search of his room, the police found satirical poems written by him and a copy of Solzhenitsyn's



Dr. Marina Voikhanskaya pictured in Leningrad with her son.

"Open Letter" to the Soviet Writers' Congress. As his dissent was purely political and as there were not enough documents to make it easy to sentence him to prison, and as, moreover, he made it clear during the criminal investigation that he could not be intimidated, it was more convenient for the authorities to declare him insane than to put him on trial.

So from January 1971 until the end of 1972 he was interned in a special (that is, a prison) psychiatric hospital in Leningrad. There he was treated with chlorpromazine. He caused the authorities no trouble, and so was released quickly - two years later - with a diagnosis of simple schizophrenia, as an invalid with no right to work; he was given a very small pension. At the end of April 1974, just before the 1st of May celebrations, he was again forcibly hospitalised. The Soviet authorities often confine so-called "socially dangerous elements" to hospitals for two to three weeks during Party congresses, Soviet public holidays, and visits by foreign statesmen.



Two patients getting treatment in a Soviet psychiatric hospital.

Bernshtram: Which authorities do you mean?

Dr. Fedoseyeva: Surely you understand

Bernshtram: Nonetheless?

Dr. Fedoseyeva: Well, officials of the KGB They make a political judgment and phone us, advising us to intern Ponomaryov. For us to make a medical diagnosis it's **enough** to know simply of the existence of anti-government letters: there's no need to read them.

Bernshtram: But still - a diagnosis based on a phone call from the KGB ... you have not read the documents, yet you decide the treatment. I don't understand that.

Dr. Fedoseyeva: You won't understand it either - after all, you're not a specialist

Ponomaryov remains in section 8 of Psychiatric Hospital Number Three in Leningrad to this day. One of my friends, an associate of the Moscow-based "Working Commission to Investigate the Use of Psychiatry for Political Purposes", who spent two months as a patient in the same section and was only released after an intensive campaign on his behalf in Europe, told me earlier this year in a telephone conversation from Moscow that Ponomaryov was being given 300 milligrams of chlorpromazine a day. This had made him feel very depressed. The head doctor of his section had on several occasions said to his mother, when she asked when he would be discharged: "Don't you understand that he is not here because he is ill - only because he behaves the way he does."

How has it happened that so many hundreds of people are - without medical justification - undergoing forcible treatment in prison or ordinary psychiatric hospitals, or are living under constant threat of being locked away? Their only abnormality is that they demand that

human rights be observed - or that they believe in God - or that they want to emigrate.

How has it happened that the psychiatrist, whose role is to help the mentally sick, is crippling the healthy? How is it that doctors, whose duty is to help the suffering, have turned into assistants of the secret police?

Let me try and tell you, again on the basis of my personal experience. When I found out that the artist I mentioned earlier was a patient in my hospital and I paid him my first visit, the head doctor of the section - a young woman - warned me (until then we had been good friends) in stern terms: "**He's sane, but don't tell anyone, and keep your nose out of things.**"

In spite of this I continued to visit him. Two months later a new section head was appointed. He immediately summoned me to see him and, first in a friendly tone and then threateningly, attempted to dissuade me from visiting the artist. By the end of our talk he had forbidden me to enter his section at all. When I still went on visiting the artist during family visiting hours on Sundays, my colleague lost no time in reporting the fact to the KGB, and on the following Sunday I was actually searched by the doctor on duty. When this too had no effect, I was subjected to two solid sessions of intimidation by the hospital administration, the second of which ended with the hospital's trade union representative coming and joining in. Interestingly during these sessions both the head and deputy-head doctors began by referring to the artist as a mentally sick person but then went off into a rage and called him a criminal and an anti-social element.. They issued me with various threats, e.g., that I would lose my job.

By that time the KGB had become interested in me. Four months later there was a meeting of the hospital staff at which my "anti-Soviet behaviour" was discussed.

One of the doctors, a Party member and a section head, said with simulated sweetness that I was undoubtedly mentally ill and that they must have me put to bed at once and must start treatment. Some of the doctors even began to discuss my diagnosis. At this point I became really scared - after all, the admissions section was immediately below us. But I was saved by one of the senior psychiatrists who said: "We've gone too far - of course she's sane, but she's ideologically alien to us."

I hope my evidence has helped you to understand that what is happening in the Soviet Union is not a question of differences in diagnosis or of different schools of psychiatry. It is the corruption of the very foundation of medical ethics. It is in your power to help hundreds of psychiatrists in the USSR who have been drawn into the crime of using psychiatry as punishment only because they lack the courage to say **NO** (I don't condemn most of them - it really is very difficult - and sometimes even dangerous - to say **NO**).

Many psychiatrists do, of course, avoid involvement in quiet or covert ways, and a few doctors have made public criticism of the abuses, though mostly by writing anonymously. I know of only one doctor, the young Kiev psychiatrist Semyon Gluzman, who has had the courage to say no openly, loudly and with full reasons, and he got seven years' in a forced-labour camp and three years' exile for doing so. He has now served five of his seven years in camp. You can help him by campaigning for his immediate release.

Even more details on the corruption of Soviet psychiatry have now been provided in the brilliant book **Punitive Medicine** by the Moscow medical assistant Alexander Podrabinek. I have read this book and can vouch that his facts and his analysis correspond closely with my own picture of Soviet psychiatry. (It is interesting to note that his methodology and conclusions are remarkably similar to those of a book

written simultaneously in England by Dr. Sidney Bloch and Peter Reddaway, **Psychiatric Terror: How Soviet Psychiatry is Used to Suppress Dissent**, a book just published in the U.K. and U.S.A.)

By contrast with Dr. Gluzman and Mr. Podrabinek, Professor Snezhnevsky, Professor Vartanyan, Professor Morozov, Professor Nadzharov, and other like them have compromised themselves beyond

recall. And although they have, of course, been influenced by the political system under which they have made their careers, and which is highly intolerant of social and political deviance, they have also consciously chosen to do what they do. They have completely blurred the borderline between police functions and medicine, a borderline which needs to be kept as clear cut as possible.

What we can and must do at this congress is to prevent the World Psychiatric Association from slipping into the same betrayal that marked the last congress in Mexico City in 1971. On that occasion great hopes were aroused and then dashed to the ground when the WPA leadership yielded to Snezhnevsky's threats and barred any discussion of Vladimir Bukovsky's documentation.

The Klymchuk Affair

Helen Jamieson examines various aspects of the arrest

1. NUS officials prepare campaign

A number of NUS officials have taken the initiative to call for the establishment of a committee for the release of A. Klymchuk.

The first meeting of the NUS National Executive will not take place until late September, but Andy Klymchuk's Father has already received a letter from NUS Secretary Trevor Philips expressing concern over the arrest. Another executive member, Mick Antoniwi, Chairman of NUS in Wales, has also contacted Mr. Klymchuk

and pledged his full support.

Mark Akrill, Secretary of Hull area Students' Unions, and Nicholas Fairburn, Students' Union Secretary at the college of higher education where Andy Klymchuk studies, have both taken up the case. They have already begun contacting local unions and have written to the Soviet Embassy.

Trevor Philips has sent out invitations to various trade unions, M.P.s, student and

other organisations to send a representative to a meeting on 5 September at the NUS headquarters to form a committee for the release of Andy Klymchuk. Anyone wanting further information should write to: Trevor Philips, NUS Secretary, Initiating Committee for the Release of Andy Klymchuk, National Union of Students, 3 Endsleigh St., London WC1.

2. Who is Andy Klymchuk

He was christened Andrij Mikhaailovich Klymchuk but is known to his friends as Andy. The son of a Ukrainian refugee, now a railway worker in London, and an English mother, Andy Klymchuk is a second year trainee teacher at Hull College of Further Education. His trip to the Ukraine was a 21st birthday present from his father, enabling Andy to travel to the Ukraine for the first time in his life and to meet his aunts and uncle still living there.

Very many young Ukrainians in Britain are put into one of the nationalist youth organisations by their parents. A spokes-

person for the main organisation, the Ukrainian Youth Association, no doubt eager for some free publicity, informed the Foreign Office that "Andrij Klymchuk was a member of the Association" and this information was duly passed on to the British press. But the tense is highly misleading: Andy *had been* a member of the Association until he was 16 when he was taking his O levels but had not been involved in it since.

The Ukrainian community in Britain is a very tightly knit one and even the younger generation often remains closely linked to a

circle of Ukrainian friends. But our investigations have failed to discover Ukrainians among Andy's friends: he seems to have moved in circles completely outside the community. And among his English friends we have not been able to find one who had noticed the slightest interest in either English or Ukrainian politics on Andy's part.

When the British Consul visited him in prison in Lviv, his message to his girlfriend, Jan Green, was to find someone else to take his place with two student friends who were buying a flat in Hull with Andy.

3. The Course of Events

Saturday 25 July: A tourist group including Andy Klymchuk flies from London to Kiev, capital of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, at the start of a fortnight's trip through the Ukraine and Moldavia ending in Moscow.

25 July: In Kiev Andy sends a telegram to his relatives in the Ukraine telling them where he will be staying and how they can contact him. This is the normal procedure when wishing to meet relatives who live outside tourist cities.

25 July to 30 July: The tourist group visits Kiev, Odessa in the southern Ukraine, then moves on to Kishinev, capital of the Moldavian Soviet Republic. Some members of the group notice how Lucy, the official Intourist guide takes an apparently particular interest in Andy going everywhere

with him. The group's luggage travels separately between stops.

30 July: The group travels from Kishinev to Lviv (spelt Lvov in Russian), the major city of the Western Ukraine. When they arrive, Andy and his room-mate Jaroslav Zajac, a Wolverhampton factory worker, discover that their luggage has gone astray. When they enquire, officials tell them it had been sent on to Moscow, their next stop, by mistake.

31 July: As planned Andy meets an aunt and uncle and spends the day with them. Because he is suffering from stomach trouble a doctor is called and gives him medicine.

1 August: Andy's other aunt is due to meet him at his hotel in the morning. At 7.55am

Andy goes out for a walk and asks his room-mate to wait in the room till he returns in about 10 minutes, in case his aunt should arrive in the meantime. At 8.15am the aunt arrives and waits. She remains at the hotel all day. Andy does not return.

2 August: The tourist group travels as planned to Moscow. Intourist officials claim that they do not know where Andy is.

2 to 6 August: The group is in Moscow. Jaroslav Zajac is visited by the KGB who return his suitcase and question him. His suitcase has been broken into -- the lock is broken -- but all his belongings are inside. The KGB officials ask him to sign a series of papers and he does so, too frightened to even check their contents. When other members of the tourist group hear that Andy Klymchuk has been arrested some

plan to stage a protest, but British Embassy officials tell them not to stage any protest but to leave matters in the hands of the Embassy staff.

Friday 5 August: The Kiev Home Service evening news broadcast in Ukrainian announces that a British tourist has been arrested by the KGB.

Saturday 6 August: The tourist group flies back to London.

Tuesday 9 August: The British consul in Moscow flies to Lviv where Andy is being held and speaks to him. She is told that he is in good health.

12 August: The Times reports that Andy Klymchuk has been formally charged under Articles 62, 64 and 70 of the Ukrainian Criminal Code (see details below).

5. The Soviet View

The Kiev daily, *Radyanska Ukraina* (Soviet Ukraine) announced on 6 August:

"In August of this year the organs of state security, which are attached to the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian S.S.R., detained and arrested Andrij Klymchuk, a citizen of the United Kingdom who came to the USSR with a group of tourists from England, whilst he was undertaking hostile acts.

Films with coded information and direc-

tives of one of the foreign emigre centres of Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism concerning the undertaking of hostile anti-Soviet acts on the territory of the Republic were confiscated from specially prepared secret hiding places in his possession.

"Agitation or propaganda carried on for the purpose of subverting and weakening the Soviet regime or of committing particular, especially dangerous crimes against the state, or the circulation, for the same purpose, of slanderous fabrications which defame the Soviet State and social system, or the circulation or preparation or keeping, for the same purpose, of literature of such content, shall be punished by deprivation of freedom for a term of 6 months to 7 years, with or without additional exile for a term of 2 to 5 years, or by exile for a term of 2 to 5 years."

A large sum of Soviet currency earmarked for the financing of these criminal actions was also confiscated.

An investigation is taking place."

An investigation is taking place."

4. The Charges

In other words, these prison terms can be imposed merely for the preparation or keeping of supposedly 'slanderous' material against the regime: it is not necessary for the authorities to prove that Andy Klymchuk had actually distributed anything.

Article 64 of the Ukrainian Criminal Code reads as follows:

"Organisational activity directed to the preparation or commission of especially dangerous crimes against the state, or to the creation of an organisation which has as its purpose the commission of such crimes, or participation in an anti-Soviet organisation, shall be punished in accordance with Articles 56-63."

In other words, Article 64 carried the same prison and exile terms as Article 62. It appears that by charging Andy Klymchuk under both articles the authorities can sentence him to a total of 14 years in prison and to years exile for the two charges.

Article 70 appears to involve a smuggling charge but we have not yet been able to trace its exact contents.

Student disturbances in Estonian City

Detailed accounts of a large student disturbance in the Estonian city of Tartu have reached the West. Our sources -- the right-wing British journal *Soviet Analyst* and an Estonian nationalist journal published in Sweden called *Sonumid* -- are not necessarily trustworthy. But the fact that the official Soviet press refers to the incident and the wealth of detail in the eye-witness account printed by *Sonumid* indicates that the reports are authentic.

Estonia is one of the three Baltic states annexed by Stalin after the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939. Tartu is one of its main cities. All the Baltic states have experienced outbreaks of popular resistance to the Soviet regime since the war. The national question, cultural and religious rights have figured prominently in these outbreaks.

On 7 December 1976, the official Soviet Estonian paper *Edasi* (Forward) carried an article entitled "An Evening of Recorded Music with Additions" about events that had occurred 4 days previously at the Estonian Academy of Agriculture Student Club in Tartu. The article said there had been some trouble, first because more people had bought tickets for a show than could be accommodated in the Club Hall; secondly, because the advertised



The three Baltic Soviet Republics, showing Tartu in Estonia.

programme was cancelled because it was "too slight", and thirdly, because some "hot-heads -- with added courage gained from the bottle -- started raising a rumpus", then went "carousing around the town".

The eye-witness account in *Sonumid* written under the name of Studiosus presents a very different version of what happened. In the first place, the reason for the large crowd and for the cancellation of the advertised programme was the fact that the

show had political overtones, though formally a cultural event. The censors stepped in and changed the programme to the playing of gramophone records. As the Soviet press account admits the police were called in to disperse the students, but instead of dispersing they encircled the police outside the hall and started chanting a revised version of a traditional children's song: "Who's in the garden? Uncle Fuzz is in the garden." When police re-enforcements arrived the students threw bricks and bottles at them and started singing "My Homeland is my Love", an old Estonian national anthem.

The police retreated and the students took up a proposal that the student festival recently forbidden by the authorities, should be proclaimed there and then. They marched from Toome Hill where the club is situated towards the hostels where students from the Agricultural Academy and from the University lived. The student hostels on Pison and Tiigi Streets were contacted and the crowd of demonstrators grew considerably. Groups went into each hostel to explain what was happening while the rest stayed outside on the street shouting "Out! Out!" When some students asked why, the answer was "In the name of student solidarity!" and "Demand student demo-

cracy!" At one of the hostels the police tried to block the entrances, so people climbed out of ground floor windows to join the demonstration. Crowds of students came out of the hostel on Beton Street to join the demonstration.

The column, by now at least 100 yards long and numbering 1000, headed towards City Hall Square in the centre of the city. Greetings were chanted to institutions and buildings on the route: "Long live the kindergarten!" when they passed the kindergarten; "Meat and smoked sausage!" when they passed a food shop; when they passed the KGB headquarters they shouted "Out! Out!". The chanting became more political: "Open up the borders!" and "Freedom of Assembly!" and also "Live up to the Constitution!". This last slogan was met with a loud "Hurrah!" from the crowd and shouts of "Long live the Constitution!".

Then a struggle with the police broke out on a broad front and the demonstrators' unity was broken. Some dispersed, others retreated to Toome Hill with the police vans in hot pursuit. Students were beaten and dragged into vans. When one student, dragged off by the police was freed by his friends some police fired shots in the air. By 2:30 a.m. the clashed had come to an end.

During the march the police kept at a distance both at the front and the rear, calling on students to leave the march and shouting "You're only doing yourselves harm". At first some people shouted "Down with the Police!" but later, according to Studiosus, for self-protection, they responded to police calls with "Long live the Soviet police!".

The column entered Kingiseppa Street and as they passed the War Commissariat, which was heavily guarded by police, they shouted "Today a demonstration, tomorrow the Army!" perhaps referring to a standard form of victimisation of students in the USSR. They also shouted "All power to the students!".

All the streets leading to City Hall Square were blocked by police and police vans. Flashbulbs beamed light on the students as the police photographed the demonstrators for later identification: students pulled up the collars and hoods on their coats. A struggle broke out with police lines and some students forced their way into the square, tearing down a banner put up in celebration of Soviet Constitution Day.

The majority of those arrested were released before morning after signing statements. During the following week all

students were required to submit written explanations of what they had been doing on the night of 3 December.

Subsequent events in the higher educational institutions in Tartu are not known. But this incident illustrates two important general features of the situation in the Soviet Union today. First, the way in which efforts on the part of the authorities to suppress any open political life result in the tendency for such apparently innocuous cultural events as a student musical evening to become charged with acute political tensions. And secondly, when placed alongside other outbreaks of spontaneous mass protest in other parts of the USSR, the events in Tartu give extra evidence of preponderance of such actions in the minority republics. Since the mid-1960s, it has been above all in the Ukraine, the Baltic states and among the smaller nationalities like the Crimean Tartars, the Volga Germans and the Jewish populations that we have seen significant mass actions for political demands, as opposed to isolated protests from handfuls of intellectuals. The national question is undoubtedly one of the most explosive points of tension in a Soviet state where the Russian population now constitutes only a bare majority of the population.

By Oliver MacDonald

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

September trial for Chartists?

by Mark Jackson

According to *Le Monde* 13 August, the trial of Jiri Lederer, Ota Ornest, Frantisek Pavlicek and Vaclav Havel could take place in September. Except for the film director Ornest, all of them are signatories of Charter 77, and were arrested just after the appearance of the Charter in January (see *Labour Focus* No.1). Since then, Havel and Pavlicek have been released on bail, while Lederer and Ornest are still being held.

The charges at the trial will involve such things as passing manuscripts to the West, or organising such activity, and Lederer is specifically accused of having contacts with Western diplomats and emigre centres, as well as with Polish dissidents. An especially sinister note is provided by the fact that Ornest is reportedly making a film for television with the security police, portraying Ornest's betrayal of the Republic and the people. This is apparently in return for the dropping of espionage charges against him. He is described in the *Le Monde* report as "physically ill and broken". The film will be shown either at the opening of

the trial or after the announcement of the verdict.

There is no news about the fate of others arrested in recent months such as Ales Machacek and Vladimir Lastuvka (see *Labour Focus* No.3). Both are still in jail.

Otherwise, harassment of the Charter signatories and others has continued over the past two months. The remaining spokesperson of the Charter, Jiri Hajek was called in for questioning by the police on 6 August and threatened with "serious trouble" if he did not promise to abstain from political activity. Another Chartist, and a member of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, Ales Brezina, was sentenced to 2½ years imprisonment for conscientious objection. A solidarity demonstration for Brezina was staged by 11 people "somewhere in Moravia" (the middle slice of Czechoslovakia). There are also reports of further dismissals from work extending to previously unaffected areas of the country outside Prague. A

Charter 77 statement estimates that "there are about one hundred persons at present without permanent employment for reasons which are in contradiction with Czechoslovak law and with international obligations which are binding for our Republic." (Palach Press)

Prague's Institute of Marxism-Leninism is likely to be closed down, because it is considered politically unreliable. Two staff members have signed the Charter. As a suitable counterpoint to this measure, *Palach Press* reports that the idea is being floated of bringing together purged lecturers and children who have suffered discrimination with regard to their education for political reasons, to form a kind of unofficial university. According to the report "Chartists are aware that for the proper functioning of their university, they would eventually need assistance from people in the West sympathetic to the idea."

Document

Charter Document No. 12 [On Position of Writers]

Article 28 of the Constitution of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic includes a guarantee of "freedom of expression in every sphere of social life to all citizens, especially freedom of the written word and of the press". Freedom of the written word and of the press clearly involves freedom of literary and scientific expression. The international covenant on the protection of human rights, accepted by the majority of members of the United Nations and ratified by the Government of the CSSR also speaks in this sense. The administrative discrimination and repressive practices currently applied to Czech literature are in direct contradiction to all these guarantees of freedom of expression including their further definitions and qualifications.

The state of Czech literary life today is a result of oppression motivated by vested interests, which leads to disruption and causes boundless harm. We would vainly search our modern history to find a more extended period, when such a great number of writers have been prevented from publishing, as has occurred since 1969. When the Union of Czech Writers was established in June 1968, it had almost 400 members. After its official disbandment, a new union arose, which had at its inception a mere 40-50 members. According to official figures, this number had risen to 164 members, who have passed through the screening grid of current political criteria. Only membership in the Union offers writers the possibility of normal work, the right to publish books and journals, to get permission to go abroad for study, etc., not to speak about scholarships, awards, grants or even those social benefits to which every working person has a right. The favouritism shown to the official writers, far from bringing about the much trumpeted growth of contemporary literature, rather brings about its decline, as is occasionally even



Brezhnev (left) making a point to Czechoslovak Party leader G. Husak

recognised officially, while on the other side of the coin we find extensive discrimination against the remaining writers, which means the majority of the national literary community and artistically the far more significant part. These writers are not only prevented from publishing other work in their fields, but are systematically pushed out into professions which are utterly inappropriate to their qualifications, without taking any account of the way in which this stifles the creative potential of the nation.

Two of the writers affected by this all-embracing discrimination have been in prison since January, another since last March, several others are now recovering from their imprisonment. Perhaps 90 writers of different generations of Czech literary activity are shut out of the national literature for the sole reason that they live abroad. Perhaps 15 authors who are banned or only specimens of whose works have been published (Adolf Branald, Dusan Hamsik, Miroslav Holub, Jaromir Horec, Bohumil Hrabal, Kvetoslav Chvatik, Ivan Kriz, J.R.Pick, Karel Ptacnik, Jiri Sotola, Jana Stroblova, Jan Werich, etc.) have expressed loyalty perhaps several times to the current political practice with regard to Charter 77, but it still remains true that they have not been allowed to publish for the last 7 years.

Besides these authors, totalling about 100, another 130 are affected [a list is attached to the document]. But there are a further 230 authors, belletristes, translators, textual critics, authors of reviews, and critical essays whose names we do not print because it would in all likelihood only make their civil and social situation worse. Altogether there are perhaps 350-400 writers who can't get published here. We are furthermore considering only Czech writers and in particular those in Prague, because circumstances do not allow us to gain closer contact with groups of writers outside Prague.

The appended list includes writers affected either by full or only partial excommunication. The latter, for example, means that they might only be allowed to put out translations or children's books - as for example Jaroslav Seifert and Vladimir Holan - or only republications of already known works rather than collections from the last few years. On the other side there are also writers who not only cannot publish anything, but whose whole previous work has been suppressed. This sometimes extends to a whole life's work and is very thorough. All their works have been taken out of cultural circulation, removed from public libraries and cannot be reprinted even in part. There are around 50 such authors, among them poets, novelists, dramatists, literary critics, but also historians, sociologists and philosophers.

..... They cannot participate in cultural life either as translators, as editors, or as publishers of literary documents from past centuries. Their names cannot appear in print either in references or in bibliographies. Often all literature about them is also put under a ban, so that the number of proscribed books amount to a thousand works and the shape and character of our national culture is deformed.

This discrimination against the majority of Czech authors, and the proscription of their works is in many cases accompanied by a continual campaign in the media, in the press, on the wireless and television, in which a series of writers are systematically denigrated, insulted, slandered and subjected to personal attacks without having the chance to defend their artistic or human reputations.

The list of victimised authors attached to this document is the result of simple critical investigation and bibliographical work. It is not a list of authors who are consciously associated, and it does not lay claim to completeness. Its only aim is to draw attention in a concrete way to the state of Czech literature and to the doubtful value of official documents, which keep silent about the existence of the majority of Czech authors and their work, who, despite all discrimination and despite all official pronouncements, still have a readership here, although a somewhat circumscribed one.

Official publicists proudly bring up the number of original belletriste publications as proof of the growth of the official

sector of Czech literature. It is rather a problematical procedure to measure the value of artistic production by its quantitative manifestations, but even here the period for example between 1964 and 1969 gives a picture which is wholly to the disadvantage of the official arguments. Thus in the above-mentioned period 1964-69 1150 new works were published in Czech, ie. 190 books annually, while between 1971 and 1976 only 857 new works were published, ie. only an annual average of 143 books. Alongside the quantitative decline we should at the same time note the decline in quality.

The decline is still more evident in the sphere of periodicals. The ban on the publication of the work of the majority of Czech authors was accompanied by the banning of all the journals devoted to literature and art. At the end of the sixties there were a whole series of journals either of a literary character or closely connected with literature - weeklies, fortnightlylies, monthlylies, quarterlylies (*Literarni noviny* later *Listy*, *Plamen*, *Host do Domu*, *Cerveny kvet*, *Dialog*, *Arch*, *Tvar*, *Orientace*, *Sesity*, *Divadlo*, *Divadelni noviny*, *Impuls*, *Analogon*, *Divoke vino*, *Dejiny a soucasnost*, *Knizni kultura*, *Universum*, etc.). The print run as a whole was an estimated 400,000 copies. Today there exists just one monthly, with a minimal print run.

We could supplement the list which accompanies this document with an analogous list of Slovak authors, as Hana Ponicka attests in her unread contribution to the discussion at this year's assembly of the Slovak Writers' Union. Of the Slovak authors, belletristes, translators, critics and essayists, who Ponicka lists as excluded from public literary life, let us at least mention these names: Frantisek Andrascik, Jozef Bzoch, Fedor Cadra, Michal Cafri, Sona Cechova, Ladislav Dobos, Milan Hamada, Pavol Hruz, Miroslav Hysko, Zora Jesenska, Ivan Kodlecik, Jan Kalina, Agnesa Kalinova, Roman Kalisky, Peter Karvas, Miroslav Kusy, Albert Marencin, Stefan Moravcik, Zlata Solivajsova, Juraj Spitzer, Ctibor Stirnický, Dominik Tartarka, Ladislav Tazky, Julius Vanovic, Tomas Winkler, etc.

All these shocking realities do not only affect the narrow community of writers, but are only a feature of a general problem, for the question of freedom and of the sphere of the written word, affects every inhabitant and his/her basic rights, especially the right to free access to information and to the free development of one's personality.

The Public Proclamation no. 120/1976, of the UN covenant to which CSSR acceded in 1975, legally lays out the questions which we have dealt with thus: In the pact on civil and political rights, in the preamble, in the formulation on freedom from fear, and again in Part 2 no.2 a/b, concerning public defamations of authors and the literary profession, who are not to the taste of the administrators of the day, in article 17/1, where it is said that "no-one shall be exposed to arbitrary and illegal interference in their private residence nor correspondence, nor with illegal attacks on their honour or reputation. Again article 18/1 declares the "right to freedom of opinion, conscience or religion", while

article 19/2 declares that "each has the right to freedom of expression. This right includes the freedom to study, receive and disseminate information and opinions of all kinds, without regard to borders, verbally, or in writing, by artistic means, or by any other means according to one's choice." And finally article 22/1 states "Everyone has the right to found trade union organisations, and to join them."

The international pact on economic, social and cultural rights embodies the legal aspect of these questions primarily in these points: Part 3 article 6/1&2 speaks about "The right of everyone to make their living at work that they freely choose or accept" and about the "full productive employment" of the individual in this direction. Article 13/1 of this pact concerns itself with the right to education. It is clear that this also includes specifically literary education and education by means of literature: article 15 affirms:

"1) The states which are party to this pact recognise the right of everyone:

- a) to participate in cultural life;
- b) to make use of the fruits of scientific progress and take advantage of it;
- c) to profit by the safeguard of moral and material interests, which flow from one's scientific or artistic work.

2) Among the measures which have to be implemented by every state which is party to the pact in order to achieve the full realisation of these rights, are those which are necessary for the protection, development and diffusion of science and culture.

3) The states which are party to the pact bind themselves to respect freedom, which is essential for scientific research and creative activity."

As is clear from what has been said, a series of basic rights of our authors and their readers, which flow from our constitution and from accepted international pacts, are not implemented or are violated to an extent which destroys normal life in this sphere with all the consequences that flow from that fact. An improvement of this state of things can only come about through the full implementation of the above-mentioned pacts, which, by Proclamation 120/76 became a part of our legal code. Only in this way will the basic conditions be created for normal work and for the development of our literature, so that it can once again play, publicly and to a full degree, that role which it has always played at decisive moments in our history.

Prof. Dr. Jiri Hajek Dr.SC.
Spokesperson Charter 77
Prague 30 June 1977

(Appended is a list of 130 names.)

(Document made available by **Palach Press**. Translation by **Mark Jackson**.)

POLAND

Crosscurrents After the Amnesty

by Peter Green

On 24 July, after a widespread campaign of protests inside Poland and abroad, the Polish authorities released the last remaining workers jailed for participation in the successful strikes and demonstrations against price rises in June 1976. The authorities simultaneously released mem-

bers and activists of the Workers' Defence Committee (known hereafter by its Polish initials, KOR) who had been arrested after the death of the Krakow student activist, Stanislaw Pyjas in May.

As the KOR declaration printed below indicates, the amnesty was directly associated with a personal initiative of Edward

Gierek, the First Secretary of the Polish Communist Party. There are a number of indications that Gierek wishes it to be known that he has taken a stand against elements within the Party leadership who have wanted to step up repression against the opposition. And at one of his periodic private briefings for leading Polish journalists, Gierek is reported to have said that

in the current conditions in Poland the Party had to learn to live with an unofficial opposition.

LEADERSHIP DIVISIONS

The Amnesty seems to mark the end of a period after the April Central Committee meeting during which official pressure on oppositionist students and intellectuals mounted (See **Labour Focus** No.3). There seems to have been a concerted effort at that time by at least some sections of the Party leadership to push forward a general attack on the opposition. But resistance within the ruling circles is indicated by the fact that although speakers at the April Plenum publicly threatened strong action against students in Warsaw who had signed protests, and also publicly attacked a critical film called "The Man in Marble" (see **Labour Focus** No.2), there has been no strong repression at Warsaw University and the film in question is still being shown.

At the same time, the authorities have been able to resist successfully demands for official enquiries into both the police brutality following the June 1976 strikes and the death of Stanislaw Pyjas in the spring. The mystery of Pyjas' death has still not been cleared up, but some new information suggests that the killing was not carried out in a professional way. It appears that Pyjas was not in fact dead when he was found early on the morning of 7 May. He died later that day in hospital and before his death a friend in Krakow was able to see him in hospital. That friend then left Krakow for Lodz but failed to meet the people expecting him there and has not been seen since. The consensus within the opposition is that Pyjas was killed by extreme right-wing elements with links inside the Party and the police.

UNDERLYING PROBLEMS

Although the Amnesty has created a more relaxed atmosphere, the underlying prob-

lems confronting the Polish authorities have not been tackled and these point to a continuing instability within the country. No policy has been put forward for tackling the inter-locking economic problems of heavy debts to the capitalist world, heavily subsidised food prices, and a continuing acute shortage of food supplies, especially meat. It is expected that a Party conference will be held at the end of the year to decide on a set of policies to tackle these problems. In the meantime, the July plenum of the Central Committee concentrated on the theme of house-building and the subsequent barrage of press coverage of house construction suggests that the authorities are attempting to compensate for dissatisfaction on the food front by stressing the government's achievements in the drive to solve Poland's acute housing shortage.

Another continuing problem for the Party leadership is that of devising a modus



Stefan Olszowski, reputed leader of "Euro-Communist" faction in Polish Party leadership.

vivendi with the working class. While the authorities are desperately striving to find a way of avoiding any sharp conflict with the working class on the economic front, there

is a growing recognition that some new political approach is necessary: hence, the renewed discussion of various forms of increased worker participation at factory level and other such schemes. But as yet no significant initiative has been taken on this front.

In addition there is the problem of relations with the intellectual and student opposition. The Amnesty has not produced any clear policy on the part of the Party leadership for handling relations with these forces. Undoubtedly one wing would like the leadership to adopt a plan for crushing all organised opposition groups. But another possibility might be to try to reach at least a tacit understanding with the KOR, presumably allowing it to continue the production of bulletins but ensuring that it refrains from any attempt to mobilise support for a set of precise political and social demands and that it eschews any effort to establish organised links with working class activists.

EURO-COMMUNISTS

The evolution of the balance of forces between the different political groupings within the higher Party organs will have a crucial bearing on the way the Polish authorities attempt to tackle the multiple crisis. The existence of conflicting groupings within the leadership is beyond dispute, but the precise contours of each remain obscure. One theory is that Gierk's balancing between two distinct groupings, leaning one way, then another according to the pressure of circumstances. Prime Minister Jaroszewicz is generally recognised to be a leading figure in a conservative faction interested in a programme of economic retrenchment, sharp reduction in economic ties with the capitalist West and a political style mixing nationalist and workerist demagoguery with stronger action against the intellectual opposition. Another faction, identifying

Continued on page 22.

Documents

1. Workers' Defence Committee Declaration After Amnesty

WARSAW, 25 JULY, 1977.

On 23 July, Professor Edward Lipinski was invited to a meeting with Witwold Rozwens, chef de cabinet for the Prosecutor General. He was informed that, thanks to an initiative by Edward Gierk, all workers currently imprisoned in connection with the events of 25 June 1976 were to be released; and on the basis of the decree granting an amnesty, further proceedings against members and activists of the KOR would cease. That same day all investigations and proceedings against members and sympathisers of KOR were withdrawn and the following were released from custody: Wojciech Arkuszewski, Seweryn Blumsztajn, Mirosław Chojewski, Jacek Kuron, Jan Litynski, Antoni Macierewicz, Marek Majewski, Adam Michnik, Piotr Naimski, Wojciech Ostrowski.

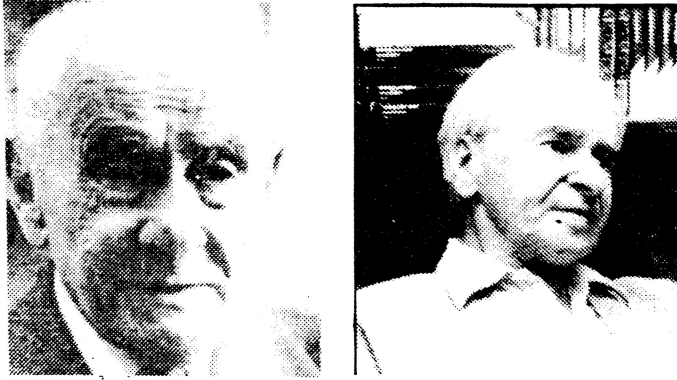
We greet this decision by the authorities with satisfaction, seeing in it the expression of a realistic position, taking into account the

voice of public opinion.

We thank the Polish Episcopate. We thank those taking part in the protest hunger strike. We thank the Student Solidarity Committee in Krakow, the signatories of the letter signed by 17 intellectuals on 18 May, the 18 signatories of the citizens' petition to the Sejm of the Polish People's Republic dated 28 May, as well as the confiscated appendix to the letter of the 18 containing 120 signatories from Lublin. We thank the signatories of the letter of 125, the 349 signatories from the village of Zbrosza Duza signed under the letter dated 26 May, the signatories of the letter from 33 Wroclaw academics, the 629 students in higher education in Krakow, the 99 signatories from Lodz higher education establishments, the signatories of the confiscated protest by Gdansk students, the 97 miners from the "Gliwice" mine.

We thank the Movement for Human and Citizens' Rights whose representatives issued a declaration on this matter. We thank all those who through their individual actions contributed towards the release of those imprisoned and under arrest.

We thank Polish organisations in the emigration, overseas trade unions, intellectuals, students, social and political activists and all people of good will. We are fully aware that today we are still not in a position to embrace the full dimensions of the movement which grew up in defence of the imprisoned members of KOR so undoubtedly we must have overlooked numerous actions, particularly overseas. We would like our expressions of gratitude to reach these also.



The economist, E. Lipinski (left) and the writer Jerzy Andrzejewski, both prominent members of KOR.

We consider that the latest decisions of the authorities constitute a step towards the creation of vital conditions for pursuing a dialogue within society. We express the hope that following the act of amnesty, further steps will be taken guaranteeing that actions by the organs of law and order will remain within legal bounds, and making unlawful administrative repression impossible.

It is necessary to do everything to ensure that the anti-worker terror, or the attempt to strangle the opposition movement through the application of physical force can never be repeated.

Employees must have guaranteed possibilities for expressing their professional interests and for organising for the purpose of defending these interests. We express the hope that all obstacles to open and public discussion, whether administrative or in the form of censorship, will be removed.

The direction and forms of further independent social action will be dependent on the realisation of these principles by the authorities in the near future.

Signed by all 23 members of the Workers' Defence Committee.

(Document made available by the Polish political quarterly, **Aneks**. Translation by **Pawel Jankowski**.)

2. Silesian Miners under Pressure

[Labour Focus has received the following document which was written by a Polish worker with first hand experience of working down in the mines in Silesia.

In the early 1970s Poland borrowed heavily from the capitalist world to invest in new machinery. The government hoped that the resulting modern industry would be able to pay back debts to the West through an export boom. But the export boom did not materialise so increased pressure was placed on Poland's staple exporting industries, above all coal. During the last three years great efforts have been made to increase coal production, but with mechanisation virtually complete and new mines around Lublin not operational till the end of the decade the result has been an effort to intensify the productive effort of the miners in Silesia. (For more details on the difficulties of the Polish economy see Peter Green: "Poland the Third Round" in New Left Review, Number 101.)

The Silesian miners are highly paid by the standards of the Polish working class and they enjoy other economic privileges not available to other sections of workers, particularly in relation to housing. The traditional base of Party leader, Edward Gierek, Silesia, was relatively quiet in the working class upsurge of 1970-71 and again during the strike movement of June 1976: some miners refused to go down the pits but there were no reports of mass protests.

But, as the article below indicates, there is growing strain beneath the surface in Gierek's Silesian show-case.

Translation is by Pawel Jankowski of Labour Focus.]

An almost permanent feature of the information provided by the daily press are reports from the work-places of the mines of Silesia and Zagłębie about their latest achievements in increasing output and improving mining technology. To some extent, this comes as no surprise. The propaganda organs, complying with recommendations from the Party authorities about the popularisation of the latest achievements of the Polish economy, have

seized on that firm support of the country's economy, Polish mining. Today mining is portrayed as a safe, enjoyable occupation, functioning in perfect harmony and "understanding of the situation". A lot is said about the solidarity between the miners and the technico-engineering cadres. Numerous television programmes are devoted to mining and the Silesian press often portrays miners' families - their wealth and state of well-being, all achieved through solid hard work. These portrayals of the splendours of Polish mining are rarely clouded by such matters as the violation of miners' rights by directors, poor safety beneath the ground, the overburdening of people with work on their days off, and on Sundays and public holidays, or the continual mobilisation of Party cells and overseers in the mines in attempts to intensify human endeavour, and the increasing number of accidents at work which is connected with this. Even though such "shadows" over the mining industry require wider statistical attention, we should not delude ourselves that they will ever receive the public discussion which might open the way for a solution.

How do the "successes of the miners" look from below? The first matter is the question of work on days off. Mining is almost the only occupation in the country in which the government ruling about one work-free Saturday per month is not applied. In return the miners are entitled to one day off in the current month provided that there have been no unjustified absences from work during the previous month. The only acceptable absence is one sanctioned by the miner's doctor. Strong economic incentives are offered to encourage the miners to work on Sundays and public holidays - double pay plus 150-200 zlotys. Because, however, it was discovered that the chance to earn the extra income was not greeted with any great enthusiasm by most manual workers, the management started to "insist" that Sundays should be worked, work discipline was tightened up, no rests were permitted in the presence of foremen or underground engineers, brigades consisting only of Party members were formed to boost output norms, and provide examples to be followed, and the tasks of the plan were continually raised.



Cherek (centre) demonstrating his links with the miners in Katowice.

The second question concerns the safety of underground workers. It is a fact that the enormous increase in mining output can largely be attributed to increased mechanisation of the work carried out underground. Another aim of technological innovation is to lessen the number of accidents suffered by miners. It is difficult, through lack of statistical data, to establish whether the accident rate is actually slowing down. However, according to miners and members of management who are well informed on these matters, the number of accidents is actually rising at a frightening rate. The most important problem, though, is the continued concealment of the facts about accidents suffered by underground manual workers, by foremen and the management of the mines. This practice grew on the basis of the new regulations in the Code of Work dating from 26 June 1974 and the instructions from the Council of Ministers of 5 December 1974 concerning the establishment of the circumstances and causes of accidents at work. It dealt primarily with light and medium accidents, and is probably the primary cause of the falsity of official statistics.

The above-mentioned disposition of the Council of Ministers defines the principles and mode of investigation into the circumstances and reasons for workplace accidents. In the event of an accident, "every worker who witnesses the accident or learns about it" (in the words of the order) "in particular the worker's overseer is obliged ... to inform the workplace management immediately". A further responsibility rests with the management to establish the place where the accident occurred and to carry out an investigation into the circumstances of the accident. The investigation is to be carried out by the Departmental Manager, the Inspector of Works, and a Safety Inspector. This body draws up a "post-accident protocol" which forms the basis for an entry into the register of accidents at work which the disposition obliges this body to keep.

In practice things turn out quite differently. Immediately after the accident the injured worker receives first aid in the Dispensary where he is examined by a Safety Inspector. From there he is directed first to the hospital where he receives a thorough check-up and has his wounds seen to, and then to the work-place doctor. On the basis of a statement received from the hospital he is entitled to take sick leave. The doctor, however, does not grant the leave without the worker first agreeing with the foreman as to the kind of release he wants. In practice there are two types of sick leave: the legal, doctor's sick leave and the illegal foreman's sick leave. The difference between them is that in the event of a worker receiving legal sick leave, the consequences are as foreseen in the directive of the Council of Ministers. If, on the other hand, the worker takes the foreman's sick leave, then formally (ie. legally) the accident never took place. The foreman, with the knowledge of the Departmental Manager, gives the worker sick leave, which could be as long as a couple of months, and then conceals the absence by entering the worker's name every day on the list of those present for work. He also enters his daily pay and marks his number on a list indicating that the worker was present at work. Formally, despite his physical absence from work, the worker is at work and no accident has taken place.

Those interested may wonder at the motives guiding the doctor who will not hand out the certificate prior to the discussion taking place between the worker and his foreman; guiding the Safety Inspector, who, knowing of the accident, refuses to inform the factory or mine manager; guiding the foreman, who craftily hands out the leave; guiding the Departmental Director, who happily accepts this state of affairs, and finally the injured party, who, when faced with the choice, in the overwhelming number of cases chooses the foreman's leave.

The answer is as follows: if the mine records a small number of accidents during the year and these are checked against the register of accidents, then the Mine Manager, the Departmental Manager, the Safety Inspector, and the doctor all receive extra bonuses. It is in the economic interests of almost the entire management, the safety cell and the plant doctor to keep the number of reported accidents to a minimum. A large number of accidents means a lowering of bonuses to all of them. Being on the mine's payroll makes the income of the plant doctor dependent on the number of accidents, an arrangement which completely distorts the role of the doctor. The injured party himself is often left without any real alternative when faced with the choice between "doctor's" and "foreman's" leave. According to the rules, if he decides to take advantage of "doctor's" leave he will receive 60% of his rate, at most 170 zlotys, whereas the worker's wages are based on piece rates, amounting to 250-300 and more zlotys per day. The material situation of the injured miner's family is often not good, because of the rise of the cost of living and the fact that few miners' wives are able to work. Large families are the rule and the burden of child-minding falls on the mother. Therefore by taking official sick leave the miner could lose thousands of zlotys.

It might be thought that this solution to the problem is to the advantage of both the plant and the injured party. This is not the case, however. The concealment of accidents nationally, over the entire mining industry, and the social consequences of this, indicate a continuing under-investment in safety, together with an increase in the number of people crippled or suffering minor injuries. Furthermore, in the case of the injured miner suffering a recurrence of his illness requiring medical attention at a later date, the fact that he took "foreman's" leave means that there exist no official medical records on the basis of which to claim compensation. In this situation the injured miner is left to fend for himself, and has to rely on loans from his neighbours. It seems that the number of people whose wounds re-open after a few years is growing, while the practice of taking "foreman's" leave is almost universal. The courts have been handing out unambiguous decisions rejecting the pleas of the injured parties in such cases.

At the moment there is a complete lack of action on the part of the authorities. How large must the number of cripples grow before they form a topic worthy of the authorities' attention? The miners say "you can spit blood, but the coal must come out" - the authorities agree. Coal has its price.

All that counts down below is speed, discipline and sweat, sweat which pours out of the miners' boots at the end of a shift. You can earn a lot, but you can also lose your health or even your life. Following a blast at the coal face, the regulation half-hour wait in gas free corridors is rarely observed; five minutes is sufficient. The corridors are never whitewashed. Materials are lowered onto unsecured inclines and miners have to work with tools in a cramped space. The concentration of carbon dioxide is not checked. Corridors filled with water, but not required for transport are not drained, even though men may work there. The regulation about 6 hours work in temperatures below 28 degrees centigrade is not observed and rules relating to the carrying of heavy objects are ignored.

The plan must be implemented, coal has to be mined, but this coal has its price.

SOCIALISTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The Meaning of the Struggle for Civil and Human Rights —By the 'Praxis' Group

[Few questions are more important for the working people of Europe than the task of defending and enlarging human rights. Yet historically, the labour movement has been sharply divided even on how to judge the existing state of affairs as regards basic social and political rights. Some have presented the Western capitalist states as the perfect models for political freedom, while others have equally uncritically championed the social and political system in Eastern Europe. Discussion on the subject has generally lacked any common framework of ideas and any agreed historical perspective.]

The document that we print here is a major contribution towards clarifying and placing into proper historical perspective this vast field of problems that go under the general heading of human rights. Few people are more qualified to speak authoritatively on the subject than the authors of this document, generally known in the West as the "Praxis" group of Yugoslav philosophers.

*The name "Praxis" is in fact shorthand for an entire school of Marxist philosophy which achieved ascendancy in Yugoslavia during the 1960s and won considerable influence among Marxists and philosophers throughout the world. Their work became widely known through the annual summer school held on the Island of Korcula from 1963 and attended by many prominent Marxist theorists from all over the world, and also through the journal Praxis which began publication in the Croatian capital, Zagreb, in 1964. In 1967 a second journal, *Filosofija*, produced in Belgrade, acquired an editorial board which steered it along the same path as its Zagreb counterpart. The name "Praxis Group" thus refers to a wider circle of Marxist theorists than the editorial board of the journal Praxis itself.*

The name "Praxis" is appropriate for a group of philosophers very different from the conventional image of the contemplative academic: many of the leaders of the group fought as revolutionary militants in the Yugoslav partisan forces during the War and their work since has been marked by a readiness to confront many of the most basic problems of socialism in the contemporary world. As Mihailo Markovic, one of the most well known Praxis philosophers, put it in his account of the development of the Praxis Group, "Once it became clear [to us] that the role of a revolutionary philosophy cannot be reduced simply to a rational explanation of the existing reality, socialist as well as capitalist, that its essential

Since the democratic revolutions of the Eighteenth Century, the modern world has lived with a gap between proclaimed ideals of human rights and a limited social reality in which those rights have been systematically ignored and suppressed. The novelty of the present situation is, firstly, that after a series of social upheavals in the first half of our century the range of human rights has been so extended as to embrace socio-economic rights in addition to political ones. Another essential novelty is the universal acceptance of certain basic human rights. In spite of all differences in social orders, political cultures and basic values it was possible for the governments of the East and West to agree, first, on the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights, then on the 1975 Helsinki Accords which spell out civil and human rights in considerable detail. The relative ease with which those accords were reached does not, unfortunately, so much indicate the birth of a new universal spirit of justice as it illustrates the pragmatism and hypocrisy of most present day professional politics. The habit of ideologically mystifying reality and of hiding an oppressive political praxis behind a veil of appealing legal declarations is deeply rooted in the behaviour of every

task is the discovery of the essential limitations of the existing world and of the historical possibilities abolishing these limitations - it became necessary to transcend the initial abstract, critical theory by a concrete, practically oriented, social criticism." (M. Markovic, "Marxist Philosophy in Yugoslavia: the Praxis Group" in Yugoslavia, the Rise and Fall of Socialist Humanism, Spokesman Books, 1975 p.23). *It is exactly in this spirit that seven of the Praxis philosophers: Mihailo Markovic, Ljubomir Tadic, Dragoljub Micunovic, Svetozar Stojanovic, Zagorka Golubovic, Miladin Zivotic, and Nebojsa Popov, have tackled the issue of human rights in the text below.*

*Since at least 1972 the Praxis Group has been engaged in a bitter struggle against official harassment in Yugoslavia. In February 1975 8 Belgrade philosophers from the group were suspended from their teaching posts after the Serbian Parliament had passed a special law allowing it to override the self-management regulations which enabled the Belgrade Philosophy Faculty members to defend the threatened Professors. At the same time publication of Praxis in Zagreb was stopped by the expedient of issuing orders through the trade union organisations not to print it. On 5 June 1975 the summer school in Korcula was cancelled and later that year the Belgrade journal *Filosofija* was stopped on the grounds that its editor was not acceptable to the authorities.*

Since that time the Praxis philosophers have not been arrested and they have been able to continue drawing a university salary. But they have been prevented from engaging in normal lecturing, research and publishing activities.

We hope that the present article will both stimulate a serious discussion amongst socialists in Britain on the question of human rights and encourage those not acquainted with the work of the Praxis group to study the ideas of the Yugoslav Marxists. An international campaign continues to persuade the Yugoslav authorities to end its harassment of the Praxis Group. More information on the campaign can be obtained from Robert S. Cohen, Dept of Physics, Boston University, Boston, Mass. 02215, USA.

Apart from minor linguistic changes the text below is printed in the form in which we received it. Illustrations are reproduced from official Czechoslovak publications of the 1960s.]

bureaucracy. From the reluctance of many governments to bring to life or even to ratify certain "baskets" of signed accords, from the anger with which they react even to the most justified criticism concerning their implementation one may only conclude that the Helsinki Accords were considered by them as one more useful but essentially harmless, non-binding document. Harmless - because it seemed unlikely that they would have any important internal implications; non-binding, because in a world which is still organised according to the principle of sovereignty of governments and not sovereignty of people, the possibility of an efficient control of the implementation of international legal obligations is close to zero.

The expected routine skirmishes among official politicians concerning the implementation of the Helsinki Accords grew into a conflict of considerable historical importance only when the whole issue of human rights was raised to a universal ethical level, regardless of the political sovereignty of particular states, and when it was raised by the victims of injustice and oppression themselves.

1

Basic civil rights and liberties are great achievements of the past democratic revolutions. They are necessary - although not sufficient - conditions of a free human life in any society. A critique of these rights which rejects or disparages them as merely "formal", "abstract", "bourgeois" is not only devoid of historical sense but expresses an aggressive obscurantism when it comes from societies which have not only not overcome this "bourgeois" level but have not yet even approached it.

These rights are certainly limited, and in the conditions of a very unequal distribution of wealth, in the conditions of material and spiritual misery in which great parts of the population are still condemned to live, these rights indeed partly express only abstract possibilities which, for economic reasons, cannot be brought to life. But it is equally true that changes in the economic systems in themselves without an essential political democratisation do not lead to really new and more just forms of society. They tend to keep in life authoritarian institutions analogous to those in feudal society, in the same way as one-sided political democratisation without an economic one made the survival of slavery possible during a whole century from Washington to Lincoln. Socialist revolutions in our century rejected imperial and royal autocracies because they were **imperial** and **royal** and not because any autocracy is incompatible with the principle of the sovereignty of people. Power remained completely concentrated: it was possible to command from one single centre not only executives but also legislators and judges. The individual was called a citizen and a comrade, but the level of civil rights and of political consciousness which had historically already been reached in the Eighteenth Century, remained a distant, almost unattainable goal of political development. Instead of being a civil **servant** responsible to the citizen, the state functionary keeps demanding from him proofs of political loyalty. The power fully controls the people instead of being controlled by it. Instead of reaching the maximum of personal security when they behave in accordance with the constitution of their country, citizens end up in jail when they literally interpret those articles of the constitution which guarantee the freedom of speech, freedom of public assembly and demonstration, freedom of political organisation.

It is true, bourgeois representative democracy can no longer be considered the optimal form of the political organisation of society. It is, however, the necessary initial level of each democracy. The presupposition of democracy is the recognition that **demos**, the people, are mature, able to take basic decisions, and able, among other things, also to elect their representatives. With the development of political parties in the Nineteenth Century, powerful mediators between citizens and their representatives appeared on the historical stage. As a consequence of this mediation the influence of the voters on the elected representatives was diminished, the power of political parties and **their** fractions in the parliament increased and became alienated. This alienation reaches its maximum when one single monolithic, authoritarian party monopolises all political power. Under such conditions elections no longer express the people's will but its loyalty; they are no longer a right but an obligation. The purpose of the principle of limitation of re-election was to prevent a permanent alienation of the elected representatives from the electorate, and in some bourgeois societies it was strictly respected for the last two centuries. The institution of ruling cadres who can be changed only by the force of biological laws or as a consequence of disloyalty to the sovereign leader - is much closer to feudal than to a new socialist society.

2

A consistent criticism of oligarchic lawlessness is possible only from the point of view of democratic socialism. It does not

provide any ground for conservative ideologues' division of the world into a "free" and an "unfree" one.

In the first place, some of the traditionally recognized civil rights have not yet been fully implemented even in the countries of great democratic revolutions; in the countries of their political allies they have sometimes been drastically suppressed. Furthermore, some of the essential socio-economic rights announced by the socialist movement are in principle out of reach of any capitalist society.

The rights of a citizen to freely express his opinion, to criticise existing policy, to politically organise and act have always been limited by an unequal and unjust distribution of wealth, economic power and leisure time. In recent times, they have also been jeopardized by an uncontrolled hypertrophy of the state and its apparatus of force, by ideological discrimination, by a mystifying affirmation of the national interest. Nowadays it is common practice in the "free" world that citizens lose or cannot get jobs because of their political convictions. The right of citizens to act in order to change the social order has been denied. An alarming growth of intelligence services and techniques of data collection effectively denies the individual right to privacy. Abuses of mass media greatly increase opportunities to manipulate a citizen's thinking and reduce the real autonomy of his or her decision making. Traditional institutions of representative democracy have become a barrier for the development of new historically possible forms of direct, participatory democracy.

Contemporary bourgeois society can neither abandon its basic values nor live in harmony with them. This is most obvious in international relations. The bourgeoisie has never been ready to grant the rights proclaimed in its own country to all other countries. Hence the tendency of Western big powers to tolerate and support most repressive dictatorships in Latin America and Asia. Narrowly conceived interests of confrontation with other superpowers gave rise to a paradoxical practice: suppression of freedom in the name of the struggle for a "free world", glorification of tyrants as "defenders of democracy".

On the other hand, certain immanent characteristics of capitalism, from its very beginning within the framework of feudal society, have always been essential boundaries of every striving toward human emancipation. Capitalism will retain its place in human history as a system which made possible the fastest possible material growth, the most efficient exploitation of natural surroundings - at the price of utterly inconsiderate pollution and depletion of resources. Capitalism will also be remembered as a society which secured the fastest possible growth of individual needs - at the price of a drastic privatization of the individual, atrophy of most dimensions of his social being, reduction of all his senses to a sense of ownership, replacement of his essential needs for creativity, love, play and meaningful communication - by artificial needs for unlimited consumption of material goods. Capitalism was able to realise this historical possibility of unlimited exponential expansion and affirmation of the human individual: by liberating the individual from all social constraints in their feudal form; by sharply demarcating the political sphere (in which a minimum of sociability is indispensable) from the economic sphere (fostering extreme individualism); by encouraging all forms of entrepreneurship and competition, by endorsing full economic egoism, by affirming the principle of survival of the fittest, by justifying colonial conquests and unlimited exploitation of subjugated peoples.

A modified, present day capitalism has given up some of its most inhuman early aspects. Once it has built the foundations of industrial society it survives without colonies. The demarcation line between the political and economic sphere is no longer so sharp; as the global coordinator and mediator in the struggle between capital and organised labour the state has somewhat

limited economic egoism and undertaken the role of the protector of a minimum of public welfare.

Nevertheless, those limitations which constitute the very nature of capitalism remained essentially intact. Some of the basic human needs cannot be satisfied in capitalism; some of the basic social and economic rights cannot be brought to fulfillment. No matter how much his wage may have gone up, the producer has remained only a seller of his labour, without any right to determine or to control the destiny of his product. He has remained devoid of any true sociality in all spheres of public life. He is excluded from economic social life because he has no real rights in the process of decision-making; the levers of economic power remain in the hands of the big stockholder, manager state bureaucrat and functionary of a mammoth organisation. In political life he is hardly present because all his rights have been reduced to occasional voting and ineffective private criticism of the state power. And for real cultural life he has no time since all his time and life energies, in spite of an enormous increase in the productivity of labour, still go to procuring the material means of life.

In order to survive, capitalism is condemned to incessant expansion and over-consumption, to irrational waste of natural and human energy, to maintaining a repressive discipline, to a denial of full social security of the individual, to permanent partial unemployment, to permanent suppression of demands for universal participation in social life.

3

Socialist revolutions removed the class of capitalists, abolished the private ownership of the means of production and the private character of social institutions, limited the regulative role of the market in the process of production, guaranteed the right to work, turned education, health, social security into a general concern, undertook massive efforts to raise the cultural standards of the broad masses of people. However, in the same way in which political liberties of bourgeois society have not become much more than abstract rights of the egoistic individual in conditions of economic reification, so the economic freedom and social justice proclaimed by socialist revolutions have not become much more than an abstract authoritarian collectivism in the conditions of political reification of the transition period.

The power of capitalists was replaced by a state and party bureaucracy. Private property was turned into state property with many elements of private arbitrariness and autocracy. The market, a blind, irrational heteronomous force, was replaced by the state plan, an apparently more rational but equally external and heteronomous force. The worker, the seller of his labour, was transformed into a hireling of the state. The right to work of the worker brought with itself as a result a bureaucracy to dispose of him and his place of work. Education became free of cost but without freedom to choose the kind and content of education. It is true, due to considerable investments into culture and science the general cultural standard of the people has been greatly improved, a real breakthrough has been achieved in natural sciences and technology. However, social and humanistic sciences experienced a catastrophic stagnation in most socialist countries. The flower of human spirit obviously does not grow in the conditions of censorship, ideological indoctrination and blacklisting. The great efforts in transferring classical, traditional culture, in creating needs for true culture went together with a denial of modern culture, with a suppression of modern sensibility, of a spirit of free search and experimentation, which is indispensable for any real development. Therefore a new socialist culture has not yet been created; the question is how without socialism can be built at all.

From the standpoint of a universal human emancipation the existing forms of socialism have not yet gone beyond the framework of bourgeois society. Abstract egoistic individualism

has been denied from the standpoint of an abstract authoritarian collectivism. A society in which conditions will be created for the individual to fulfill himself as both a unique person and a universal communal being - is still a matter of uncertain future.

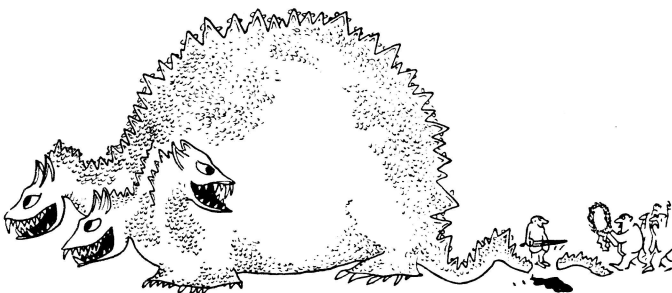
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The issue of human rights emerges in history in its practical, political form at the moment of an open conflict between the revolutionary bourgeoisie and state absolutism. Only then does the contradiction between the law and the state become manifest: law emerges as a guarantee of human freedom against the arbitrariness of the state power, as an expression of the citizen's resistance to oppression. Thus in the 1793 French Constitution it was stated explicitly that the need to proclaim the rights of free expression of thought, of free assembly and religious festivities involves "a presence or a memory of autocracy". According to the constitution "the law must protect public personal freedom against oppression by the rulers". Freedom has been recognised as a "natural, non-alienable right". Laws cease being mere instruments for subordinating people, cease being tools of usurpation and tyranny, they become now means of citizens' protection from the abuses of the rulers. Political emancipation means that the state as the **public** power may not be used for the **private** goals of its functionaries. Since 1789 the concepts of constitutionality, of "legal rule" and "legal state" have involved the **legitimacy** only of that state which can be controlled by its citizen, only of that power which excludes autocracy and absolutism. In accordance with the concept of constitutionality and legal guarantees of freedom, criminal law does no longer protect "the interests of the state" nor the imperative of "state reason" but the interests, liberties and rights of the citizen. A necessary condition of his protection is a judiciary power independent of executive power. The laws and state acts which violate these principles of justice can no longer be considered legitimate. This affirmation of justice over the state and positive law, stated explicitly for the first time in the **American Declaration of Independence** and the **French Declaration of Men and Citizens**, completes the great revolutionary democratic process which started with the Enlightenment and the idea of rational natural law. The focus of legality has now been shifted from force and sanction to civil freedom.

It is hardly controversial since Marx that the whole idea of **civil** liberty, of **political** emancipation has its class limitations. The human individual is split into an immoral economic egoist and abstract citizen who is supposed to be a moral person. What is controversial and what makes the debate about human rights so important nowadays is the stubborn rejection of political emancipation **in toto** by official Marxism in socialist countries. Clearly, what tries to remain hidden behind the dogmatic theory about the incompatibility of bourgeois and socialist democracy is a long praxis of drastic suppression of human rights, of the revival of state absolutism. It is true that bourgeois law presupposes the slavery of men to things, that private property is an obstacle to, rather than a guarantee of freedom, that bourgeois democracy involves a very limited amount of the citizen's political power. But how can an absolutist state, even when it calls itself socialist, be a better, historically superior form with respect to a liberal, representative democracy? What follows from Marx's dialectical critique of bourgeois law is that political emancipation is a great progressive achievement. Even though it is not "the ultimate form of human emancipation" it is the highest form of human emancipation "within the existing world order". But if political emancipation is a phase of universal human emancipation socialism cannot ignore or reject it without jeopardizing the very reason for its own existence and the legitimacy of its ultimate goals. The great emancipatory tradition is one of the grounds of socialist revolution: it went beyond the

narrow horizon of the bourgeois law and carried in itself the goals of universal human liberation. It can be transcended but not repudiated.

The Constitution of the Russian Federal Socialist Republic of 1918 in its **Declaration of rights of exploited working people** lays down as its basic task the abolition of the exploitation of man by man and states as its general principles: "true freedom of conscience", "true freedom of thought", "true freedom of choice", "true freedom of association" and "true freedom of education" of working people. There is an obvious intention in the first Soviet Constitution to remove the contradiction between the form and the content of democracy. On the other hand, by proclaiming "the dictatorship of the urban and rural proletariat and the poorest peasants" the first Soviet constitution deprives earlier ruling classes of many rights. The Soviet legal theory of that time defines the dictatorship of the proletariat as a power "which exercises coercion over the bourgeoisie and in doing so is not constrained by any law". Such a view was interpreted at that time as a revolution in law. The Soviet legal theory justifies the complete subordination of law to politics in the transition period by "revolutionary expediency". The danger of bureaucratisation was completely overlooked: according to the official Soviet ideology it was a "ridiculous absurdity and nonsense" to oppose the dictatorship of the masses to the dictatorship of leaders; it was "an elementary truth" that the relation between the leaders, the party and the class was "ordinary, normal and simple". But as a matter of fact, and in a rather simple way the dictatorship of the class was indeed reduced to that of the party, which in its turn degenerated into a dictatorship of one single party leader. After the critical year 1921 the view prevailed in the Bolshevik Party leadership that the party mechanism in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat could be secured only under conditions of monolithic unity. That meant the complete elimination not only of other, even socialist parties but also of any organised groups and fractions within the Bolshevik Party itself. The dictatorship of the proletariat turned out to be incompatible with political democracy. Bourgeois fetishism of law was replaced by a bureaucratic fetishism of politics. The vague idea of "revolutionary expediency" was later transformed into the cynicism of "reasons of state".



"De-Stalinization" (*Literarni noviny* 20 August 1966)

In the new system there was no place for the associations of citizens and producers that Marx spoke about. There was indeed no place for any organisation resting on the self-determination and self-initiative of liberated individuals. Duties prevailed over rights, prohibitions and sanctions over liberties - the ideal of any authoritarian power. The legitimacy for an utterly arbitrary state praxis was sought in reified, suprahistorical, suprahuman "objective laws" of socialism acting independently of the consciousness of actual living people. The "Masses" were construed as a purely mechanical passive material modelled according to the twists and turns of this non-human necessity. What started as a Marxist critique of bourgeois law ended up as a conservative justification of political caesarism.

Only caricatural forms remained of the proclaimed **real** liberties of conscience, thought, education, and organisation. A citizen is free to think but is suspect until he proves that his thinking is "constructive". He is free to elect as his own representatives only those which had previously been chosen by the Party. He is also free to join all those organisations and societies which undergo strict and permanent Party control. "Real" education has been subordinated to the pragmatism of daily politics and the imperatives of a thoroughgoing pseudo-revolutionary indoctrination. The citizen is not even aware of his right to know what the state does in his name and how it spends the surplus product of his labour. Even the most naive citizen hardly believes that all those articles of the Constitution which guarantee his freedom of conscience, thought, speech, publication and organisation were really written for him. He knows he could be responsible for a crime "against the people and the state" or end up in a madhouse if he took the Constitution of his country seriously and behaved according to it. One of the most oppressed strata of this pseudo-socialist society is precisely its "ruling class". The workers do not even have the traditional rights which they exercised before they were "liberated", in capitalist society: the right to organise into trade unions, the right to strike.

It is true, one can have "emancipated slavery" even with these rights: enslavement of workers in the modern capitalist process of production presupposes their liberation from any authoritarian political bonds. However, compulsory work based on political dependence of the producers cannot be a historical alternative to the politically free labour on which capitalism rests. Any critique of capitalism from the standpoint of a precapitalist socio-political arrangement can only be a pseudo-revolutionary act.

However, the horizon of bourgeois society cannot be transcended by an eclectic combination of economic liberalism and an authoritarian state. Socialist emancipation cannot be born out of free competition on the market, out of the blind mechanism of economic laws. When production takes place in atomized enterprises without democratic integration and coordination, the whole public sphere remains outside of the reach of the collectives of producers and communities of citizens - it remains the private property of uncontrollable bureaucratic power.

A really new, more free and just society presupposes both political and economic emancipation. What lies beyond both the authoritarian coercive state and the reified market regulation of production is a democratic socialism in which all the public power that is necessary for the regulation of socially necessary processes remains in the hands of self-governing councils and associations of the citizens and producers themselves.

5

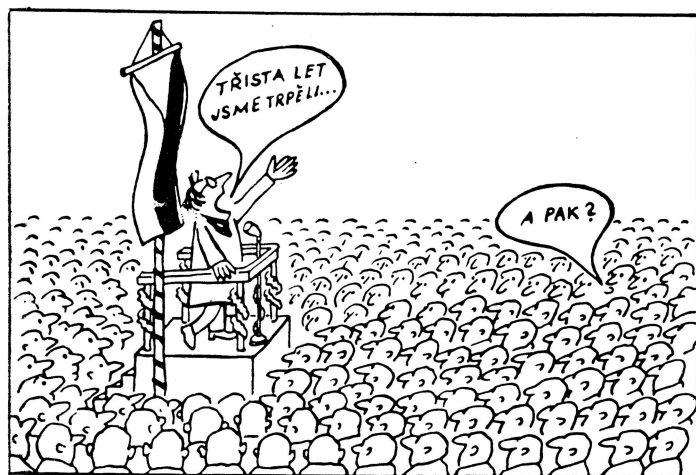
The ultimate foundation of human rights is constituted by those essential needs of each individual, the fulfillment of which is under given historical conditions a necessary condition of social survival and development. Law is just, humane and universally valid only if particular bills and legal acts express such universal needs; if they don't - law is the expression of naked force. If law is reduced to positive law, to what is written in the laws of the state, it is nothing but a justification of particular interests of the ruling elite. In such a case laws are a system of norms resting on the greatest force, or, as Trasimah in Plato's *State* put it, "what benefits the most powerful".

Obviously laws can be profoundly unjust. Law cannot rest on the authority of the state but only on a superior principle which makes the state itself possible and meaningful. That higher principle has been interpreted in various ways in the philosophical critique of positive law: "natural law", "rational law", "reason", "freedom", "eternal, unchangeable justice", "absolute moral values", "logos of history". Such interpretations

make sense as a challenge to legal positivism, as the expression of a critical thought which cannot reconcile itself to a legal apology for the existing tyrannical and inhuman order. However, their essential limitation is the fact that they are ahistorical or even antihistorical. The principle on which all law rests must allegedly be valid transcendentally, for each conceivable society, *sub specie aeternitatis*. What follows, then, is that human rights are determined by the very fact that an individual belongs to the human species, that those rights have already found their ultimate formulation in the great bourgeois revolutions of the Eighteenth Century, and that the whole historical process after that should only provide the economic and political conditions for their implementation.

The static, ahistorical nature of this approach makes it acceptable to the conservative forces of bourgeois society. However, the fact is that the human species is not merely given - it undergoes a process of permanent self-determination and self-development. Actually existing human rights and liberties constitute only a phase in this historical process of increasing emancipation.

How to criticise positive law and yet avoid idealistic transcendentalism? How is it possible to hold that law is historically conditioned and open to development, and yet to avoid an eclectic relativism?



"300 years we suffered" "And then?" (Dikobraz 22 Oct. 1968)

In order to build up a point of view which is historical but not relativistic, critical but not sceptical, objective but not transcendental, we must ascertain those specific features of human activity which make the whole difference between the simple flow of time and human history. Then we must ask which are the specifically human needs that make this activity possible and that permanently evolve in the course of human history. Do they not constitute the very basic source of human rights?

What makes human history essentially different from all other natural processes is not a comprehensible rational structure (mechanical systems also have it), nor a direction (closed thermodynamic systems have it too), nor its purposefulness and increasing complexity (evolution is present in the whole biological world). The specific characteristic of history is *praxis* - free creative activity, an essentially new life form of the human species. It involves all basic features of life: genetic invariability, self-regulation, "teleonomy" - as Monod called the unique primary life project of survival and multiplication of the species. However, historical *praxis* vastly surpasses its biological basis. The plastic genetic material is moulded in many different ways in the process of social interaction; self-regulation becomes increasingly more conscious and autonomous; the conservative *telos* of species survival and multiplication is replaced by an essentially new project: creation of a new, manifold, cultivated natural surrounding, and at the same time, creation of human beings whose capacities are increasingly more articulated and

needs increasingly complex and rich. Even the most elementary biological needs: for food, shelter, play and sex are transformed, diversified, sublimated, become an expression of feeling and taste, involve more and more social, cultural components. On that ground entirely new, specifically human needs emerge: to communicate thoughts and feelings in symbolic forms, to objectify ideas by work, to belong to a stable community and be recognised in it, to participate in social decision-making, in rituals, games and festivities, to learn for the sake of pure knowledge and not of immediate practical benefit, to maintain personal identity and integrity, to spontaneously shape beauty for its own sake.

The activity that gives rise to such needs and is, then, constituted by them, is *praxis*. It defines human history, it made possible a gigantic step from the relatively simple, repetitive, deterministic natural world to the infinitely more complex, more dynamic, self-determining historical world. To be sure there is in history also the fall, degradation, destruction of whole civilizations - but these are not defining characteristics of history. Had history only been a series of wars, epidemics, crimes and destructions - human kind would have long ago been back in the caves. Had human activity been primarily instrumental - a mere means of survival and growth - it would not have gone beyond the limits of the biological world. History was possible because man was capable of an activity which is an end in itself, which is an expression of the most creative individual powers, and which involves the production of ever new objects and new social forms. *Praxis* is both *self-affirmation* of the individual and the expression of concern for the needs for fulfillment of other individuals. Consequently the subject of *praxis*, the creator of history, is a human being who is both a unique person and an individual who belongs to a community and cares about other members of the community.

The idea of freedom follows from the analysis of *praxis*. On the other hand, all law is grounded in the idea of freedom: law should secure freedom of thought, of conscience, of organisation of movement, of work, of education. The idea of freedom that follows from an analysis of human historical *praxis* is much deeper and more comprehensive than the concept of liberty on which traditional bourgeois law rests.

An individual or collective subject may be regarded as really free with respect to a social process only when his self-determination is a decisive condition of that process. It is presupposed here, **first** that the objective situation allows at least two alternatives relevant to the intention of the subject, **second** that the subject makes a conscious and autonomous choice among those alternatives, **third** that he acts according to his choice, and **fourth** that the result of his action remains within the framework of his expectations.

This idea of freedom presupposes unity of thought and action. Traditional liberalism, on the other hand, separated freedom of thought (and conscience and will) from freedom of action. However, since Epictetus it is clear that even a slave may be free if he excludes all those desires which cannot be realised, if he refrains from all those things over which he has no power. The more an individual retreats from the world, the more he restrains his needs and his practical activity, the poorer his existence - the less are there barriers to such a narrow and passive thinking. On the contrary a really free person must be able to act in accordance with his thought and this action must be one of the determinants of the process. The ultimate limit of bourgeois law is recognition of the right to public expression of thought, of the right to organise in order to form a collective political will, of the right to elect political representatives. For the time in which we live these are very important rights and struggle for their implementation makes full sense because those rights are still largely denied and suppressed. But this in itself shows how little freedom there is in the present world. Because those traditional rights are indeed very limited.

Critical thoughts and critical words are tolerated but not the deeds that follow from such a critical consciousness. Citizens have the right to politically organise but not the right to use those organisations in order to challenge the existing social order. There was a time when leading theoreticians of liberalism, Locke, Rousseau and Jefferson, acknowledged the right of the people to revolution. That right followed from the fundamental principle of any legal order - the sovereignty of the people; it was involved in the initial act of the state creation - "the social contract". People have the right to overthrow a government which violates the social contract and which pursues its own egoistic interests contrary to the will of the people.

Jefferson realised that it was better to tolerate rebels - even when they are wrong - than cruelly suppress any rebellious action and thus turn free citizens into resigned, apathetic subjects. However, once the revolutionary bourgeoisie was transformed into a ruling class the right to revolutionary activity disappeared from bourgeois law. The same happened one and a half centuries later, when the revolutionary Bolshevik Party was transformed into a ruling party. Only this time even freedom of speech and organisation was abolished, and not only in the society at large but also in the Party itself. This cannot but be a symptom of instability and the alienation of the ruling elite.

In comparison with such drastic suppression of freedom some Western bourgeois societies look liberal. However, in comparison with historical possibilities, their freedom is very limited. In political life the individual is not yet free to directly participate in social decision making, in policy formation, even in the control of his representatives once they are elected. In economic life there is a freedom of action but action which is privatised, poorly coordinated, characterised by competition and conflict, therefore quite often abortive and giving birth to unintended, undesired results. In the sphere of culture bourgeois law rests on so-called negative freedom - freedom from compulsion, from legal barriers to produce and sell cultural goods. It entirely neglects "positive" freedom, the right to cultural self-activity, the right to education, the right to leisure time, without which any right to culture is indeed abstract and illusory.

Once we overcome the narrow and static bourgeois conception of freedom and interpret freedom as a historical process of increasing practical self-determination, we become aware of certain human rights which have not yet been affirmed, let alone realised in either capitalism or bureaucratic socialism.

If true positive emancipation of an individual presupposes bringing needs to fulfillment, then in a really free and just society a person has not only the right to some kind of education but to a personalised education which will permit the exploration and development of his specific powers and talents. Then the mere right to work turns into the right to choose the work which best fits one's capacities and aspirations, involving also the right to change place in the social division of work. The right to leisure time is no longer a mere reduction of the number of working hours but also a preparation of the individual for creative leisure, social investment into material facilities for a growing variety of free communal activities.

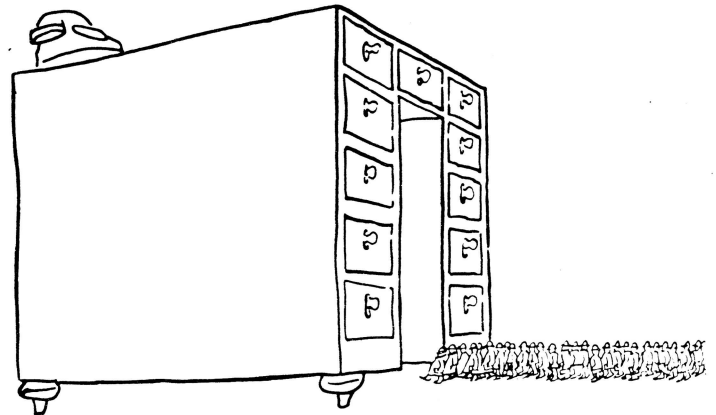
In past history only exceptional individuals have managed to reach the level of full emancipation and to realise themselves as beings of praxis. This becomes an objective possibility for each human individual at the present high level of control of blind natural and social forces, in the conditions of a democratic, self-governing socialism.

This is the indispensable historical perspective in order to establish both: what are the limits of civil and human rights in presentday bourgeois and pseudo-socialist societies, and what are the historical possibilities of the further evolution of those rights.

Conclusion

The presentday struggle for the practical realisation of civil and human rights is a new dimension of contemporary emancipatory aspirations. To the extent to which it will stop being a mere battle cry in confrontations between governments and ideological camps, and gets the character of a mass movement - it will contribute fundamentally to the abolition of the presentday barriers to human freedom and social justice. To be sure, in different societies it will assume different forms and priorities.

In the countries of developed capitalism it is possible to use the already achieved level of political liberties in order to abolish presentday forms of economic exploitation and social oppression.



Arc de Triomphe (Literarni noviny, 19 March 1966)

In the countries of state socialism an obvious prior need is the overcoming of state absolutism and a thoroughgoing political democratisation. In the countries of the Third World it is essential to create basic material and cultural preconditions for the implementation of human rights, to avoid growth of oppressive institutions and mechanisms adopted from modern industrial society, and to try and preserve still existing pre-industrial forms of human solidarity and autonomy.

In none of these different specific cases will a higher level of human rights and liberties emerge spontaneously nor will it be granted to a society by its government: it will be achieved only through the resolute struggle of various emancipatory movements.

Even in the most difficult conditions, even without any political organisation, strong, fearless individuals and groups may keep alive the great emancipatory ideas of the past and by their own example may contribute to awakening an elementary civil consciousness.

Many partial improvements can be achieved by new, unconventional forms of social engagement, such as the women's liberation movement, the youth movement from the sixties, "citizens' initiatives" against the pollution of natural surroundings, actions by underprivileged ethnic minorities.

However, great, radical emancipatory breakthroughs can be primarily expected from democratic socialist movements. An event of epochal importance is the revival of emancipatory revolutionary traditions in the Labour movement in some developed capitalist countries. New historical perspectives have been opened due to the realisation that socialism is incompatible with state absolutism, that a new just society cannot be built by dictatorship and terror, without full respect for the inalienable rights of each individual.

ALBANIA

The Albanian Attack on Chinese Foreign Policy

On 9 July the Western press reported an attack printed in the daily of the Albanian Party of Labour, *Zeri I Popullit*, on Chinese foreign policy. Although China was never mentioned by name, the assault on the Chinese theory of "my enemy's enemy is my friend", by which the Chinese leadership justifies its rapprochement with Western capitalist powers, seeing Moscow as the "main enemy", can only demonstrate a deep dissatisfaction among the Albanian Party leaders with the current foreign policy orientation of their Chinese ally. The Western press has tended to present this development purely in terms of ideological disputes, an approach which only makes the whole affair seem hopelessly mysterious. A look at recent Albanian history, however, can help to illuminate the political sense behind the polemics.

The first question that has to be answered is: what were the reasons for Albania linking up with distant China at the time of the Sino-Soviet split? The basic answer lies not in Peking, but in Moscow and Belgrade. At the end of the Second World War, there were definite plans to integrate Albania into the Yugoslav state - 'as Molotov suggested, to "swallow it" - and even if an actual integration was not on the cards, nonetheless Yugoslavia played a dominant role in Albanian affairs. When the Tito-Stalin split occurred in 1948, the Albanian leadership, then as now, dominated by Enver Hoxha, threw himself behind the ferocious anti-Titoist campaign launched by Moscow, in this way finding an ally in Moscow to guarantee its own independence with regard to Belgrade. At this time, as purge trials were in progress throughout Eastern Europe, in Albania Hoxha purged a group around Koci Xoxe, perhaps the only genuine Titoist victims of the great anti-Titoist wave.

But then the line changed in Moscow. The death of Stalin and the post-Stalin "New Course" had as one of its major components to heal the split between Moscow and Belgrade. Thus Albania had lost its anti-Titoist ally. The Hoxha leadership also came under uncomfortable pressure from the new Soviet leaders to engage in the programme of rehabilitations and self-criticism of past actions - a process which, while threatening nothing to the Soviet leaders who could blame everything on Stalin and Beria, presented problems to those leaders who had themselves been associated with the dead Soviet dictator. Nonetheless, Albania joined the Warsaw Pact which was founded in May 1955, since it provided a formal guarantee against absorption into Yugoslavia. After the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956,



Albanian view of Soviet-Bulgarian relations after a Soviet-Bulgarian declaration on co-operation had been announced.

relations between Moscow and Belgrade again deteriorated, and Hoxha took the opportunity to purge yet another group of "Titoists". Pressure continued to come from Khrushchev to force the Albanian leadership to improve relations with Belgrade. It was as a reaction to this continual pressure that the Albanians began to more and more systematically take the side of the Chinese in the developing Sino-Soviet split. Indeed the Soviet-Albania split was irrevocable before the final collapse of Sino-Soviet relations. Albania went with China because of the independent political conceptions of the Hoxha leadership about the place of Albania in the world.

The relationship between Peking and Tirana was cemented by massive economic aid, which from 1961 replaced Soviet aid to the extremely backward Albanian economy. From the point of view of the Chinese, Albania provided a useful staging post for operations throughout Eastern Europe. During this period, the Chinese essentially saw their struggle as a faction fight within the international community of workers' states. This also involved attempts to split the non-ruling Communist Parties, found a new movement around Peking, and pursue various intrigues within Eastern Europe. Hence Albania's usefulness as a staging post. For instance in 1966 a Maoist faction from the Polish Communist Party was able to take up residence in Tirana.

In 1972, however, with the visit of Nixon to Peking and the opening of the era of "ping-pong diplomacy", the original rationale for the Chinese support for Albania began to disappear. China was no longer interested in the small circle of friends from the international communist movement - including Albania - that it had won. From now on deals could be made with the much

more powerful capitalist states in the West. The theory of "my enemy's enemy is my friend" provides the ideological justification for this turn.

The growing indifference of the Chinese towards Albania has been expressed both in economic terms - according to a report on Radio Budapest, Chinese economic aid was halved in 1976 - and politically through the absence of Chinese delegations from official functions. Then came a further blow on 26 June this year, when it was announced in the Western press that President Tito of Yugoslavia would be making his first official visit to Peking in August. Betrayal! It was only a couple of weeks later that the attack on Chinese foreign policy was launched.

There are, however, some further complexities to the situation. Albania's now almost complete isolation stimulates the formation of new factions in the Albanian Party. The two basic possibilities for opposition to Hoxha are either a rapprochement with the Soviet Union - who would indeed be interested in having the support of Albania during the period of expected political instability following the death of President Tito, or the old enemy Belgrade. At the last Party Congress in November of last year, Hoxha specifically directed his fire against those who might be looking towards Moscow: Hoxha had prepared for the Congress by heavily purging the Party and by denouncing those "...who wanted to disrupt our friendship with our sister nation China, with the Party of Mao-Tse-tung and who wanted to bind our country to the Soviet revisionists."

At the Congress Hoxha made it clear that the Albanians would fight alongside the Yugoslavs in the event of any military intervention there by the Soviet Union. But on the other hand he made it clear that there were to be no ideological concessions to the Yugoslavs.

Thus it seems fairly certain that the Hoxha leadership faction is on a hard course of taking its distance from Peking, Belgrade and Moscow. The economic and political problems which such isolation brings, however, may continue to inspire anti-Hoxha factions inside the Party. A further element in the situation is the possibility of upheavals in Yugoslavia after Tito's death. Such upheavals may have profound repercussions on Albania, particularly on the workers and peasants whose authentic voice has yet to be heard.

By Mark Jackson

Labour Movement Defence Activity Grows in the West

by Helen Jamieson

During the last year, Western socialist and labour movement defence activity for victims of repression in the USSR and Eastern Europe has grown considerably. In addition to the many initiatives by the leaderships of Communist Parties, Socialist Parties, trade unions and various Marxist revolutionary groups there has also been an expansion of the number of permanent labour movement defence committees in various countries. I will try here to survey the various committees now in existence, although I cannot lay claims to completeness.

SWITZERLAND

In both Belgium and Switzerland broadly based committees have been formed to cover the whole of Eastern Europe and the USSR. In Geneva on 13 March 1977 a **Committee in Solidarity with the Opposition in Eastern Europe** was created on the initiative of the following forces: members of the Socialist Party, the Labour Party the Revolutionary Marxist League and independent left-wing militants. About 200 socialist intellectuals and trade unionists signed a statement and appeal supporting the Committee, which held its first public meeting attended by over 200 people on 20 April.

The Swiss committee has also started publishing a bulletin with the following statement of aims: "1. To provide information which is indispensable in order to understand the struggle in Eastern Europe, and to obtain the largest solidarity possible; 2. To print documents and appeals by the opposition; 3. To open its pages to all militants in the labour movement who wish to write and debate on this question; 4. To aid the solidarity campaigns of the committee." The Committee's statement of principles explains: "We stand for the struggle for a socialist society and we consider that a basic characteristic of such a society and a condition for its survival is not only collective property in the means of production, but also the possibility for the working class to effectively contro. political and economic institutions. There cannot be socialism without democracy nor real democracy without socialism. We must keep in mind that democratic liberties are a gain of the labour movement and that their defence has always been part of its better traditions..." The Appeal issued by the Committee adds: "In response to various appeals from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, in accordance with the above statement of principles, we the undersigned solidarise with the opposition and with victims of repression in Eastern Europe, regardless of our agreement or disagree-

ment with each one of them."

BELGIUM

On 1 June 1977, a body called **The 1st May Committee in Defence of Democratic Liberties and Working Class Rights in Eastern Europe** was formed in Belgium. The first list of 150 signatures for its statement of aims included members of the following organisations: the Belgian Socialist Party, the FGFB (Belgium's TUC), the Union of Public Employees, the Technical Specialists Union, The Christian Trade Union Federation, a left socialist paper called **Links**, the Belgian War Resisters' organisation, the Revolutionary Workers' League, a group of former members of the Communist Party and other groups. The committee's statement of aims declares: "We, the undersigned, women and men of the Belgian Left, call for the formation of a Belgian Committee for democratic rights and for the implementation of the Helsinki Accords regarding human rights..." It adds: "Our Committee will defend the rights of all victims of repression and injustice irrespective of their political opinions and without identifying with them. It will work in order that the Belgian labour and trade union movement become aware of the question and vigorously condemn all these repressive measures."

WEST GERMANY

The longest established socialist defence committee in the West that covers all of Eastern Europe and the USSR is the West German **Sozialistisches Osteuropakomitee** (Socialist East European Committee) which was formed at the beginning of 1973. Its main branches are in Hamburg and West Berlin, but it has active groups also in Giessen, Bokum and Kassel. The committee's activists are drawn from some local branches of Jusos (the youth organisation of the German Socialist Party), the Socialist Bureau, the German International Marxist Group and a group of Czech socialist exiles around the bulletin **Informacni Materialy**. Besides holding public meetings and organising defence campaigns the Committee has been publishing a substantial bulletin for several years, carrying articles about repression, interviews with oppositionists and documents.

FRANCE

The country where defence activity has been most vigorous and diversified has been France. One of these, the **International Committee Against Repression**, formed on 23 April 1976, played an important role in the international campaign for the release of a number of Czechoslovak socialists last year. As well as various individual socialists, members of the Inter-

national Communist Organisation, of the Unified Socialist Party and of the Revolutionary Communist League have taken part in its activities. It is the only committee which takes up simultaneously the cases of political prisoners in Eastern Europe and in Latin America. Amongst its publications are the French edition of **Listy**, the journal of the Czechoslovak Socialist Opposition; a compilation of documents from Poland and a recent pamphlet on repression in Yugoslavia.

There is also a newly formed **Co-ordinating Committee of Support for the Struggles of the Peoples of Eastern Europe and the USSR** in Paris. This is not a specifically labour movement body, but it co-ordinates activities on the part of a large number of defence committees that exist in Paris - the main centre of East European exiles in the West. Some of the bodies involved in the Co-ordinating Committee are specifically labour movement committees while others are formed on a human rights basis. The January 5th Movement for a Free and Socialist Czechoslovakia (a body formed as early as January 1970), the Soviet Political Prisoners' Defence Committee, the Romanian Human Rights Committee, the Committee in Solidarity with the Polish Workers, and committees against repression in Bulgaria, Armenia and Georgia are all involved in the Co-ordinating Committee. The latter has already held a demonstration in support of Soviet political prisoners at the time of Leonid Brezhnev's recent visit to Paris, as well as a large public meeting at the Mutualite. The bulletins of the Committee in Solidarity with the Polish Workers and of the January 5th Committee for Czechoslovakia are useful sources of information for the labour movement.

SWEDEN

A long-standing Scandinavian socialist organisation is the **Action Group for Solidarity with the Socialist Opposition in Eastern Europe**, formed in the spring of 1973 in Uppsala, Sweden, which is linked to a similar group formed earlier in the south Swedish city of Lund. They are supported by socialist exiles from Eastern Europe and by the militants of various Swedish socialist groups including the Communist League and the Communist Workers' League. The Lund committee organised a 300 strong demonstration in solidarity with victims of repression in Eastern Europe last spring involving both the local Socialist Party organisation and the local branch of the Communist Party as well as other forces.

[In the next issue, Part II of this article will deal with activities in North America, as well as provide a complete address list of the committees.]

REVIEWS

Anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe

Paul Lendvai
(MacDonald & Co., 1971, pp.393.)

The ostensible theme of Lendvai's book is the relationship between the Communist movement, in and out of power, and the Jewish question in Eastern Europe. But he inevitably raises a much wider set of problems including the tangle of European national struggles, the dominance of the Soviet Union over national Communist Parties, the difficulties encountered by weak Communist Parties taking power in countries devastated by war and fascism and the nature of the political power exercised by these parties.

A brief opening survey of Soviet history since the rise of Stalin indicates a fairly deep and continuous vein of hostility, both popular and official, towards the Jews in the USSR. Lendvai then concentrates upon the in many ways puzzling pattern of anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe: the outbursts of anti-Semitism in Czechoslovakia where such currents had not been significant before the war; its resurgence in Poland, the country where memories of Nazi genocide were strongest; and the paradox of Hungary and Romania: countries with virulent anti-Semitic traditions before the War which have nevertheless avoided renewed persecution of the Jews in the post-war period.

Lendvai's thesis is that, since 1948, the Kremlin has been engaged in the export of covert or overt anti-Semitism, in the guise of the struggle against Zionism, in order to exploit factional struggles in national Parties to its own advantage and to divert hatred of its own domination onto a traditional scapegoat. Documentation of the use of anti-semitism by the Kremlin bureaucracy for similar purposes inside its own borders is plentiful (See the article in *Labour Focus* No.3). What was new was the transplanting of this tactic to other countries and the new form that was given to the old "struggle against rootless cosmopolitanism and national nihilism". The same country which under the Czars saw the manufacture of the notorious "Protocols of the Elders of Zion", in the late 1940s saw the concoction of the equally fabulous "World Zionist Conspiracy". This latter allegedly sought to use Jews in the socialist countries, wittingly or unwittingly, as a fifth column with which to enslave these countries to U.S. imperialism.

For all the differences in vocabulary, when Soviet propagandists refer to the Zionists they are speaking to the population in a familiar language. The Zionist is the old, mythical Jew, the faceless enemy. The Polish and Czech propagandists were hardly more careful to make distinctions. When Solecki, editor-in-chief of *Interpress* in Warsaw, after delivering an attack on Zionism in 1968, was questioned as to exactly what he meant by the term he replied that a Zionist is a person whose father and mother are Jews.

Lendvai deals with the case of Poland in most detail, in fact it was in the country of Auschwitz and Majdanek that the "anti-Zionist" campaign took on its most grotesque dimensions. A unique combination of historical conditions allowed various factions within the Polish leadership to use anti-Semitism as a political weapon during the crises of 1956 and 1968. There was also a strong tradition of anti-Semitism in Poland and the disastrous Soviet policy towards Poland in the interwar period had often made the Polish Communist Party seem nothing more than an instrument of old style Russian imperialism, while the preponderance of Jews in the upper and middle ranks of the Party was used by the Polish right to spread the mythical equation: Jew = Communism = Russia. Thus in the immediate post-war period the Jews were seen by many sections of the population as aliens imposing an alien system in the service of an alien power. Another influential factor in the situation was the growth of a new social layer which had come into being by appropriating Jewish property. This layer feared expropriation either by the returning Jews or by the Communists. The result was renewed pogroms. By April 1946 800 Jews had already been murdered and the subsequent attack in Kielce alone took 41 victims.

However by the 1950s and, completely so by the middle 60s, anti-Semitism had become a weapon in the hands of the Party leadership. Its attempted use in '56 was a fiasco: it was widely recognized as a factional tactic, and a pro-Soviet one at that. Again in '68 there was no threat of a pogrom from below. Rather the persecution was an integral part of the bid for power by the Moczarite wing of the Party as events show, such as the arrests according to plans prepared well in advance, the insinuations in the press and so on.

The past did not escape the ravages of the 1968 factional struggle. For example, Moczar's wing had taken over the Main

Commission for the Investigation of Hitlerite Crimes. Its new director, Pilichowski, published a 3-part series in *Trybuna Ludu* stating that "only" 3 million Jews had been killed by the Nazis and the figure of 6 million was "a basic Zionist lie". Pilichowski, a pre-war member of the fascist O.N.R. went on to glorify Polish help to Jews while blame for collaboration was placed exclusively on Jews themselves whether in the form of Zionists or the Judenraete. The Polish Great General Encyclopaedia became the target for a similar correction. These latter incidents reveal the particular hypocrisy of those who, while persecuting the Jews in the present, demand praise as their historical defenders. Perhaps the last comment on these events in Poland should go to Franz Marek, a leading theorist in the Austrian Communist Party at the time, who stated at the 1969 Party Congress that "Rosa Luxemburg, were she still alive, probably could not occupy today any leading position in the workers' movement because of her Jewish origin."

The situation in Czechoslovakia at the end of the second World War provides a striking contrast to that of Poland. Here there was a strong Communist Party, no tradition of anti-Semitism, and pre-war conditions had not produced a disproportionate number of Jews in the Party. Yet the Slansky trial was distinguished by its openly anti-Semitic character, as well as its scope and violence. Of the 14 defendants, 11 were Jews. While Clementis and 2 others were described as "Slovak" or "Czech", the indictment added the words "of Jewish origin" to each Jewish defendant. These life-long communists, whose only link with Judaism was their Jewish birth, were denounced as Zionists and agents of a world wide Zionist conspiracy hatched in Washington. Where the defendants' names were not obviously Jewish, the original name was added in the indictment: Slansky (alias Salzmann), Andre Simone (alias Otto Katz).

Both at this time and in 1968, anti-Semitism seems to have been almost entirely a Soviet import. The scenario for the 1951-53 purges was prepared from the very beginning by Soviet "advisors", the extent to which they were responsible for the anti-Jewish thrust however, was only revealed 17 years later, during the Prague Spring. But neither the memoirs of 2 survivors, Deputy Ministers London and Loebel, nor the study by the Czech historian Kaplan provides an adequate explanation of the anti-Semitic angle. Kaplan hints at what must be the most likely explanation, that the origins of Czech

anti-Semitism can be found in the internal tensions of the USSR.

The Slansky affair was accompanied by the wholesale dismissal, if not imprisonment, of Jewish officials, journalists and administrators in all walks of life. But it must be remembered that the seeming Jewish preponderance in the Slansky trial was deliberately manipulated by the Soviet advisors. In fact there were only two Jews in the 22 member Praesidium of the Czech Communist Party and the same two represented the Jewish element among the 7 members of the Central Secretariat. When the Soviet government again wished to play the Jewish card, in 1968, they were confronted with the awkward fact of a country which had a Jewish population of only 14-18,000, and a Party in which not a single Jew had occupied an executive position since 1951. This produced the innovation of manufacturing Jews. Deputy Premier Otto Sik was singled out as a

"Zionist", even though the Nazis had overlooked his alleged Jewish ancestry and passed him as "Aryan".

The anti-Zionist drive was, here as always, a means to an end, in this case the fall of Dubcek and his associates. Furthermore it was widely recognised as such in the country. The tactic had been spotted earlier in the year in Poland. For example the weekly *Student* candidly stated that the entire anti-Zionist campaign was merely a trump card in the power struggle within the Polish leadership. Anti-Semitism was a complete irrelevance in the Czech context and the Soviet archives which remain closed to us must contain the key to the riddle of its introduction.

Lendvai is weakest when dealing with the prevailing situation in Hungary and Romania. No analysis of the historical evolution of these countries is given which could explain, for example, the absence of

anti-Semitism in Hungary, where it had deep roots and where the Communist Party was not only almost entirely Jewish but also Moscow trained. However these chapters do contain interesting material on the present state of the Jewish communities, Yiddish theatre, literature and so on.

Finally the question must be asked: what was the popular reaction to the "anti-Zionist" purges which rocked the bureaucracies of Poland and Czechoslovakia? Apart from a limited amount of upward mobility afforded to some Party members due to the purge or exile of Jews, it seems that the majority of the population remained unmoved and the most widespread response was deep indifference and cynicism. The story is told of those people who inquire periodically "whether it is now permitted or whether it is now mandatory to abuse the Jews".

By Julie Feder

The Rise of Erich Honecker by Günter Minnerup

HONECKER AND THE NEW POLITICS OF EUROPE

Heinz Lippmann

(Angus & Robertson, London, 1973.)

The German Democratic Republic is the only East European state in Moscow's orbit which has had no radical upheavals in leadership personnel and policy since the 1940s. Walter Ulbricht and his regime survived Stalin's death, the workers' uprising of 17 June 1953, the 20th Congress of the CPSU, the 1956 events in Poland and Hungary, the fall of Khrushchev, and the "Prague Spring" seemingly unscathed. Of course there were challenges to Ulbricht's leadership, both from the East German working class and from certain factions within the SED Party leadership, but even where anti-Ulbricht manoeuvres within the leadership seemed to have the support of Moscow, the "old goatee" always won. In 1953, ironically, it was the June uprising that convinced Moscow that stability and continuity with Ulbricht was, for the time being at least, preferable to a "New Course" with Zaisser, Herrstadt, Ackermann and Jendretzky, and the opposition group that had counted on Soviet support for a new policy towards West Germany was purged from all leading positions in Party and state. Again, in 1956, an even more powerful opposition in the central leadership seemed to have Khrushchev's agreement in trying to oust Ulbricht and extend the new "De-Stalinisation" policy of the 20th Party Congress beyond the narrow limits that the leader had set: it comprised, among others, Ulbricht's No.2 Karl Schirdewan (in charge of Party organisation and the Central Committee's cadre division), Ernst Wollweber (Minister for State Security), Gerhard Ziller, (Secretary for Economic Affairs), leading ideo-



Nazi police photo of Honecker after his arrest in Germany in December 1935.

logist Fred Oelssner, and Deputy Premier Fritz Selbmann. It was only after the Hungarian uprising and the increasing pressure Khrushchev found himself under to slow down "de-Stalinisation", that Ulbricht managed to isolate this faction from Russian support and finally, in 1957, defeat it.

Throughout these years, Erich Honecker, Ulbricht's successor in 1971, was his chairman's most loyal protege and ally, so that when he finally took over, no one could interpret this leadership change as in any way signifying a break in continuity. As founder and leader of the "Free German Youth" (FDJ) from 1946 until 1955, and therefore entrusted with respon-

sibility for what was perhaps the most important of all the mass organisations of the Soviet Zone/GDR from the point of view of re-educating German youth, winning loyalty or at least neutrality towards the regime from the young generation of workers and providing cadres for the numerous administrative positions to be filled in the new state and later the "National People's Army" (NVA), Honecker always unquestioningly carried out Ulbricht's instructions and soon enjoyed a special relationship with him, long before he himself belonged to the real power centre, the Politbureau. After spending a year at the CPSU training college in Moscow in 1955/56, Honecker was put in charge of state security, including responsibility for the NVA, and made a full member of the Politbureau. From now on Ulbricht submitted him to test after test as the increasingly obvious successor to the leadership of the Party: crushing the oppositional Schirdewan group, planning and executing the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961, and masterminding the GDR contribution to the invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968. It is only towards the end of Ulbricht's leadership that signs of differences between him and Honecker can be detected: in their respective attitudes to West Germany's "New Ostpolitik" and Moscow's detente policy, when Ulbricht tended to resist what he saw as Soviet attempts to subordinate the SED's interests to East-West detente and became increasingly arrogant in his dealings with the other East European Parties. Honecker, however, without openly breaking with Ulbricht, never allowed himself any hint of disagreement with Brezhnev, and was rewarded when Brezhnev himself played an

active part in engineering the power transfer.

While Ulbricht liked to boast that he was one of the very few survivors of the communist generation that had "fought with Lenin" (he first became a member of the KPD's central leadership in 1923), Honecker belongs to a different generation of Party leaders. Born 1912 in Neunkirchen on the Saar, son of a miner, he joined the Community Youth League (KJVD) in 1926, worked as an apprentice roofer, and joined the KPD in 1929, long after the stalinization of the German Communist Party was complete. From his appointment as regional KJVD Secretary in 1931 until today he has spent his entire life as a full-time functionary of the Party apparatus. Involved in underground work against the fascist regime, he was arrested in 1935 and sentenced to ten years in Brandenburg-Görden prison. Little is known about his years there: other communist prisoners accused him of remaining aloof and even collaborating with the prison authorities, and he was censured for escaping a few days before the arrival of the Red Army in 1945 since his escape could have exposed his fellow prisoners to reprisals. But soon after the liberation he was in contact with the "Gruppe Ulbricht" (the nucleus of communist emigres from Moscow that the Red Army brought with it to reconstruct a German civilian administration) and almost immediately put in charge of youth work. His main assets in his meteoric rise to power were, apart from his complete subservience to Ulbricht and Stalin, his lack of any original ideas and theoretical independence, but also his quick and easy grasp of the essentials of the SED's line of securing the cooperation of bourgeois-democratic and church forces for as long as possible in the construction of the FDJ (he often clashed in this with more radical KPD and even SPD members who demanded a proletarian orientation for the FDJ), his considerable personal charm and affability hiding his practical ruthlessness

(he succeeded in gaining trust, respect and in some cases even friendship from many bourgeois politicians in the GDR), and his genuine ability to communicate with lower Party ranks and youth in plain, comparatively jargon-free language (his working-class background and KJVD experience giving him an advantage over many other functionaries who were either of non-proletarian origins or had become ossified bureaucrats during their exile in Soviet Party schools). Honecker represents a generation of SED leaders which was beyond the suspicion Moscow showed for many of the "Old Bolsheviks" of Ulbricht's generation who tended to show the



Ulbricht (left) with Honecker at Free German Youth conference in 1950.

occasional sign of independence or "ultra-leftism", and yet has sufficient roots in the pre-1945 traditions of German communism to be able to claim more "revolutionary credibility" than the following generation of 1950s bureaucrats with their technocratic careerism. In this sense Honecker is a most typical representative of the GDR state: with real roots in the tradition of the German labour movement and its resistance against fascism - albeit misguided and misled by the Stalinist stranglehold on the KPD - yet an apparatchik with the most slavish loyalty to Moscow from Stalin to Khrushchev to Brezhnev.

Heinz Lippmann's very readable and objective biography (he was, for many years, a close colleague of Honecker's in the FDJ) ends with the transfer of power from Ulbricht to Honecker. The question, of course, remains of whether Honecker will be able to secure the same continuity in the regime that Ulbricht maintained for two and a half decades. The last few years have seen many signs of crisis within the GDR: the hundreds of thousands of applications for exit visas, economic difficulties (including debts to the West of over 10 billion DM and stagnating exports), and the Biermann affair, while the emergence of Eurocommunism and the powerful centrifugal pressures within the Soviet bloc represent external dangers to Honecker's regime. From the biography one does not get the impression that Erich Honecker is necessarily the man most suited to guide the SED through these troubled times - without Ulbricht's firm leadership and with Moscow's authority increasingly challenged. There have been reports of a revolt within the SED's leadership and Soviet troop movements immediately after Biermann's expulsion, and Honecker's name and photo were not to be found in the GDR press for several days. He survived, but his position may not be all that secure. The very special position of the GDR in the Eastern bloc, its growing self-confidence as a result of its economic, political and diplomatic stabilisation, but also its vulnerability, being surrounded by Poland and worker-intellectual opposition, Czechoslovakia and its Charter 77, West Germany and the many communication channels linking it with the GDR, and being confronted with an increasingly vociferous dissent, would make it seem very unlikely indeed that it will remain unaffected by all the turmoil around it. The kind of flexibility Honecker has shown in his career, which is dependent on subordination to some other authority, and devoid of any originality in itself, will hardly be enough to meet the coming tests.

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itself with "Euro-communism" seeks to move into a more independent, middle position between Moscow and the Western Communist Parties, linked to a continued drive for Western credits and trade. This grouping would also encourage further steps towards political liberalisation, or at least, the creation of additional political safety valves within the existing system. The chief spokesman of this current is thought to be Central Committee Secretary and Politburo member Stefan Olszowski the 45 year old former Foreign Minister who master-minded Poland's turn to the West after Gierak came to power in 1971. The "Euro-communists" draw their sup-

port from younger, technocratic functionaries as well as former liberals of the Gomulka period. They reputedly hope that Poland will be able to follow the international initiatives of the Hungarian Party leadership. In recent months the latter has appeared to be trying to play a role in the Moscow - Euro-communist split similar to the role played by the Romanian Party leadership in the early phase of the Sino-Soviet dispute: the role of "honest-broker", gaining diplomatic leverage for itself vis-a-vis Moscow through a refusal to allow ex-communication of Moscow's opponents. The long Polish silence after Moscow's *New Times* attack on Spanish Party leader Santiago Carrillo, indicated the strength of the Euro-communist trend in the Polish leadership.

But the development of the political struggle within the Polish Party leadership will itself be crucially affected by broader social and political forces in Poland and outside. To the south, in Czechoslovakia, to the West in the German Democratic Republic and to the East in the Soviet Union the leading groups are strongly opposed to any sign of what they consider to be suicidal experiments with liberalisation. While domestically the impulses towards democratisation from the workers and students and intellectuals are certain to grow in the coming period. As the KOR declaration in this issue indicates, those struggling for democratization in Poland regard support from the Labour movement in the West as being of the greatest importance in aiding their activity.