

**THE DEATH of C N D**

**as performed  
by the**

**GROSVENOR SQUARE  
DEMONSTRATORS**

**under the direction of  
THEMSELVES ALONE**

# RITUAL OR CHALLENGE?

This is the 11th year of the Aldermaston March. It started as a gesture of rebellion against the horror of nuclear war, and against the society which had produced these monstrous weapons. It is now time to take a look at what the march has become.

The early marches were subjected to a sustained campaign of abuse and slander. The marchers were denounced as traitors and Communists (while the Communist Party said that the first march was Trotskyist-inspired). Everyone recognized the march's radical potentialities.

Today, the press treats the march rather differently. For the past few years it has stressed the responsibility and social awareness of the participants and contrasted these favourably with the general apathy. The march has become one of our Great British Institutions, not as important as the Changing of the Guard, but definitely ranking higher than the Saturday parade in the Kings Road. Demonstrators against the Vietnam war are chided by the Times for not following the example of CND.

The British Establishment has demonstrated, once again, its ability to incorporate and absorb protest. Something which started as a denial of an oppressive system is now produced as proof of the tolerance and moderation of that system. Many of the early leaders of the campaign have now moved into positions of power, where they help to run the whole set-up. Protest has become a recognized, almost inevitable, stage in a political career.

Shouldn't we ask ourselves whether there was anything which we could have done, or could still do, to prevent this development? We should recognize that one reason for CND's failure was its refusal to link its humanitarian aspirations with the day to day struggles of ordinary people.

In the campaign's early years most supporters thought that moral exhortation and continuous propaganda would bring about the changes they desired. It is no longer possible to believe this. But CND still keeps on marching. This is a self-indulgence which borders on dishonesty.

Some justify the march as an annual folk-festival where the stage army of the good can get together, meet old friends, and renew its faith. They recognize that the march doesn't achieve anything, but argue that its value is symbolic. It is a kind of political poetry.

We are not opposed to symbols or ritual. They can be useful or at least harmless. But there are genuine and false symbols. The spectacle of the leaders of the Labour Government singing the Red Flag is an example of an absurd and misleading symbolism. Here, people are not making an imaginative demonstration of the connection between their daily activities and their socialist aspirations. They are paying lip-service to aspirations which their daily activity negates. This is dead poetry: political doggerel. CND isn't yet as bad, but this is the direction in which it is moving. It is well on the way to becoming one more of the institutions which have survived the revolt which created them: another monument to our own defeat.

CND's failure to analyze the circumstances which gave rise to the threat of nuclear war has meant that its originally progressive, if naive, direction has now become reactionary. The threat of nuclear war has receded for reasons which have nothing to do with its activities. The two great powers have drawn closer together, and have moderated their conflicts. CND's pacifism is now a serious obstacle, preventing its supporters from any real understanding of the struggles in the contemporary world. Where it should stand forthrightly with the victims against the oppressors, it aloofly condemns the violence of both. The movement in support of the Vietnamese people's struggle has had to find new channels because of CND's failure to rally support.

Continued adherence to the mystique of non-violence serves only to disarm and confuse the movement for a free and humane society. Non-violence has been tried and has demonstrably failed. The Vietnamese people are faced with the choice of fighting or surrendering. The pacifist advice (stripped of its jargon) is to surrender.

What should the march do? As a start it should not quietly disperse after politely applauding pacifist speakers. This year's march should be transformed into a militant demonstration of opposition to American aggression in Vietnam. But this is not enough. Only when we combine our opposition to the war with resistance to 'our own' government's attack on working people here and now, will we be able to move from protest to resistance.

# SOLIDARITY

(a paper for rank and file militants)

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# Two Demos Reviewed

by T. Alleys

The two recent 'Vietnam' demonstrations in London (on March 17 and March 24, 1968) were politically significant events. They reflect rapidly developing changes in the thinking of many thousands of young people. If libertarian revolutionary socialists ignore these events, it will be to their cost.\*

Let us look systematically at who supported and who opposed each of these demonstrations. A clear pattern emerges. The first demonstration reflected a militant and radical new mood. The second was the last run of an already decapitated chicken. The March 17 demonstrators, although wrong (in our opinion) as to the nature of the NLF and of the Hanoi regime, were temperamentally revolutionary. The March 24 demonstrators lacked both militancy and fervour and most of them didn't even make up for these by a more acceptable political line.

Over the last few months the full horrors of the Vietnam war have been brought into the consciousness of hundreds of thousands of people. The fact that the technologically most advanced military apparatus of the world is failing to smash the struggle of an Asian and predominantly peasant people is being rammed like a red hot poker into the minds of millions of people. Simultaneously thousands are beginning to understand that dissociation of the British government from the Pentagon strategy will not be achieved by any amount of constitutional endeavour. (Majorities in favour of such 'dissociation' were secured at recent Labour and Liberal conferences and at the TUC, but have been treated with the utmost contempt by Harold Wilson's political machine.)

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that many young people should have sought to break out of the constitutional, pass-a-resolution, send-a-letter-to-your-MP type of straight-jacket. The March 17 demonstrators were prepared physically to challenge the assumption, carefully fostered by the mass media, that the British people are behind their rulers on the issue of the Vietnam war. But their challenge was not only in the realm of ideas. It was also to the whole apparatus of the state which, by keeping demonstrators 'orderly', 'disciplined' (and ineffective), is designed to diminish their political impact.

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\* For us, industry remains the main area of conflict. We are not for a minute suggesting that the industrial struggle can or should be replaced or supplanted by a campaign, however militant, against a specific war. Almost by definition such a struggle can only be waged on a limited front, by limited social forces and for a limited period. All we wish to point out is that mass movements in areas other than industry shouldn't be ignored. They challenge the same enemy.

# THE POLITICAL LINE-UP

The political line-up in relation to this demonstration was most revealing. Statements were made and stances adopted which will incriminate those who made them for months, possibly years to come. This clarification of where people stand in the arena of real events, can do nothing but good. It is worth documenting certain political attitudes to prevent them being 'swept under the carpet', or denied, in years to come. We have done this repeatedly in relation to industrial struggles and for once would like to do the same in another area. The lessons are important.

Before it took place the March 17 demonstration was attacked by the Communist Party, by the Socialist Labour League and by Peace News. It was given the cold shoulder treatment in the columns of Freedom. Despite this some 15,000 young people by-passed both the traditional organizations of the Left and the decomposing remnants of the pacifist movement and came out on to the streets in a demonstration 'bigger and bloodier than any related demonstration in England so far'.\*

In its issue of February 17, 1968, Comment (the Communist Party weekly) carried a long and vicious attack (by Betty Reid) on the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign, one of the main bodies organizing the March 17 demonstration. The 'attitudes and activities' (our emphasis) of the VSC were 'obstacles to the building of a movement' to end US aggression. The call of the VSC 'for transforming Peace in Vietnam groups into Solidarity Committees' was 'not a call for unity but for disruption'. The 'shouting of revolutionary sounding slogans' tended to 'limit the movement and divide what already exists'. The policies of the VSC were 'adventurist'. Those of us with long political memories will remember the famous pronouncements by John Gollan\*\* to the effect that the call for unilateral disarmament 'tended to divide and slow up the activities of the forces of Peace'. It was only when CND had clearly shown that it was attracting thousands of young people - while the British Peace Committee was stagnating - that the Stalinists changed their tune and jumped on to the CND bandwagon. We believe that Betty Reid's most recent utterances will prove to be a similar monumental miscalculation.

The Socialist Labour League, in its splendid sectarianism, denounced the proposed demonstration as organized by pacifists. We doubt anyone batted an eyelid in Clapham High Street when the Home Secretary declared in Parliament (on Monday March 18) that '45 demonstrators received medical treatment and 117 policemen were injured'. Some pacifists!

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\* The Times, 19.3.68.

\*\* At the 26th Congress (March 27-30, 1959). See Marxism Today (issue for May 1959).

Some Maoists, seeking to show that they were not to be outflanked in the sectarian stakes, published a leaflet (copies obtainable from Britain-Vietnam Solidarity Front, 58 Lisburne Rd, London NW3) in which they denounced the VSC for 'merely paying lip-service to the political stand of the Vietnamese people'.

Writing in Peace News (March 9, 1968) Bob Overy (one of the co-editors of the paper) asked whether 'a huge, slogan-shouting, unruly march to Grosvenor Square' would 'make American withdrawal more likely?'. 'We don't think so', he answered. 'Not only, we fear, will the March 17 demonstration show contempt, by its lack of dignity and commitment, for the Vietnamese who are fighting for their independence'. It would also show 'by expressions of frustration, ill-directed violence and anger, the self-contempt in which many of the demonstrators hold themselves'. So much for the psychological interpretation of politics'. In the same issue Alistair Bucknell, Chairman of YCND, 'found it amazing that so many people in the peace movement were supporting the proposed demonstration on March 17'. 'Violent themes and violent actions ... (would) undo years of hard work by CND, the Committee of 100 and others in breaking down barriers of fear, hatred and prejudice'.

The following week Peace News reiterated its forebodings. 'There is bound to be violence either sporadic or more probably widespread'. The organizers were 'planning to include on their platform speakers who preach violent revolution and insurrection for its own sake as part of a theory of general world breakdown'. People would come along 'quite deliberately to cause as much disruption and disorder as possible by swapping punches with the police, vandalising property (sic!) and so forth'. 'He that lives by the sword shall perish by the sword'. Peace News' own prescription? '15 minutes of silent mourning-vigil in Trafalgar Square'.

On March 16, Freedom came out with banner headlines 'Neither Washington nor Hanoi - but peace and freedom'. The article did not mention that 'peace' could only come about through an armed social revolution in Vietnam or that the real essential precondition for such a revolution was the military defeat of American imperialism. Some anarchists, to be fair, marched to Grosvenor Square.

## THE MARCH 17 DEMONSTRATION

The March 17 demonstration itself was an undoubted success. Those who claim it 'achieved nothing' have a limited political horizon. The demonstrators reached Grosvenor Square. They marched there occupying the full breath of every street they passed through, linking arms where necessary and unequivocally asserting, against various provocations, that on that Sunday at least the streets were theirs. This gave the crowd a tremendous consciousness of its own power. As they advanced down Oxford Street, one couldn't help hoping that gone were the days when the police could diminish the impact of a demonstration by splitting

it up in <sup>to</sup> little fragments. The demonstrators had learned the importance of marching very slowly, of keeping together, and of reaching their objective as a single solid mass.

The impact of the demonstration was not due to numbers alone. What was new was an awareness that this was not a rehearsed show, its every detail jointly planned by the Superintendent of Police and sundry 'marshalls' acting as agents of the authorities within the ranks of the demonstrators. It was not an institutionalised event like so many of the marches of the last few years. And because it was uncontrolled it had an elemental vigour and joy. It was like breaking out of a prison, en masse, and counting oneself in thousands in the process.

The violence that erupted in the square was brought - via television - into the homes of millions. It hit the headlines in every daily paper in the country. It established in dramatic, clear-cut terms the identity of interests between American imperialism (symbolised by its Embassy) and the repressive forces of the British State (symbolised by mounted policemen riding into the crowd). Thousands will have asked themselves some simple questions. Why can a policeman hit you on the head with a truncheon - or ride at you on a horse - while you are liable to charges of 'assault' if you so much as lift a finger against him? Doesn't the relationship epitomise the violence that permeates every aspect of bourgeois rule and every institution of the bourgeois state?

Finally the demonstration hit world headlines. Its echoes certainly reached Vietnam. It gave confidence to those throughout the world who were struggling to destroy American imperialism. Who knows, but that it was one of the many straws that together broke Johnson's back?

We feel that these positive aspects of the demonstration far outweigh its negative ones, such as its faulty appreciation of the class nature of the NLF - and its hopelessly wrong ideas as to the nature of the 'socialism' that would follow an NLF victory. The demonstrators waved portraits of Ho-Chi-Minh, of Guevara, of Castro, of Mao. But there was discussion, argument, controversy and tolerance of even the most hostile criticism - provided one was marching with the demonstrators and against the American Embassy. Many copies of our pamphlet (The Rape of Vietnam) were sold, although our sellers made it clear that we stood for the social revolution in both North and South Vietnam.

Politically the really important thing was that the most effective 'left' demonstration seen in London for several years had taken place despite the Establishment, despite the police, despite the Communist Party and the SLL, and despite the pacifists. There is no doubt in our mind as to where revolutionaries should stand. We cannot insist that others share our conceptions before we cooperate with them. Provided we retain an unlimited right to say what we think, we should be with the mass movement, a movement which at the moment is in a state

of extraordinary ideological flux. For 2 years we cooperated with the Committee of 100, despite disagreements with certain aspects of its philosophy and long term aims. We did so because it was breaking new ground, encouraging people to think and act for themselves and engaged in a direct confrontation with the State. Why should we not be able to cooperate with the new movement symbolised by the March 17 events - despite disagreement with its political outlook? The new movement is again leading to a confrontation, and what is important for us is the struggle here and now. The enemy is in our own country. A whole new layer of people is coming into politics and learning this lesson and it would be suicidally sectarian for us to ignore them.

## REACTIONS

The press reactions to the demonstration were to be anticipated. The papers of the 'right' clearly saw the threat. (They are often more percipient in these matters than liberals, social-democrats or even some 'revolutionaries'.) 'Few who witnessed last Sunday's performance, whether in the streets or on the television screen, can have failed to discern in it a new and menacing feature'.\* 'Grosvenor Square was a victory for its instigators. Their objective was not to seize the American Embassy (a "romantic illusion", scoffed one of the organizers of the demonstration: "If I thought we had the strength to take the Embassy, I wouldn't bother - I would start the revolution proper.")'. It was to provoke a confrontation with the police which would alter the political consciousness of the radical forces in this country. ... They have scored an impressive success.'\*\* An editorial spoke of 'incidents which, magnified by television, make an impact on the public mind of wholly different order from anything ever experienced in the past.'\*\*\* The Sunday Times (24.3.68) spoke of 'this undeniably popular movement' and emphasised that 'the institutionalised peace groups - the Committee of 100 and CND - were appalled by the VSC's policy and refused to associate with the ad hoc Committee organizing the demonstration.'

Venetia Murray, in the columns of the Evening Standard (18.3.68) could not avoid a sneaking sympathy with the demonstrators. She spoke of the police as 'officials in uniform, mounted on horses and prepared to charge: officials who of course were successful in their charge against those armed with mud and tulips from a London square ... The difference between this march and others was that this time people didn't bring the baby.'

One of the best analyses came from New Society (21.3.68). The demonstration was 'something new, something that indicates the pattern of major protests we shall have in the future... things cannot be the same again after Sunday. The time of the orderly peace-platform marchers are gone'. The departure from orthodox CND type marches could be seen in the demonstration's 'method of moving down streets, in its

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\* Daily Telegraph 18.3.68.

\*\* Sunday Telegraph 24.3.68

\*\*\* Sunday Telegraph 24.3.68.

reaction to the police, in its speakers and in its platform'... 'CND marches were highly organized, efficient and much staffed. Marchers were kept in blocks, each with its own colour and number ... Orders would be given: Magenta seven, turn right - Blue three, keep on ... Stewards would patrol the march, wearing armbands, and keep the demonstrators to one lane so as not to interfere with the traffic. The marches were very easy for the police to control - and if necessary to break up'... The March 17 demo. had become street occupation ... the idea was to seize the area, not march on the side of the road ... the aim was maximum disruption'. The main lesson to be learned from the demonstration was that 'the British tradition of polite politics is past'.

The Morning Star (22.3.68) achieved the impossible. It gave almost a full front page to the demonstration without mentioning the VSC which had been the main group to organize it. Tribune (22.3.68) bemoaned 'the failure of the organizers of the march to keep it under any kind of control', failing to perceive that this was deliberate and the main element in the demonstration's success.

As for the Newsletter (30.3.68) it denounced the organizers of the demonstration as 'a bunch of disorientated opportunists, who reflect nothing more than their middle class instability'. The 'Vietnam Solidarity men' were in full support of the 'peaceful road to socialism'. 'Grosvenor Square was an adventure'. (Gerry Healy and Betty Reid should really get together someday!)

Peace News (22.3.68) published a disgraceful editorial 'Back to Square One'. This should destroy the pacifists for good as an influence in the anti-war movement (but it probably won't). Peace News moaned that the battle in front of the American Embassy in Grosvenor Square was 'ugly, scaring and sad'. The 'vast majority of the enormous crowd of demonstrators were ... rather frightened and confused spectators'. How reactionary and how out of touch can pacifism get?

## THE MARCH 24 DEMONSTRATION

Let us now turn to the second demonstration, that of March 24. It was in every sense an anti-climax. Its alleged purpose was to press 'Britain' to dissociate herself from American policy in Vietnam. In practice it appeared to many of us as a dissociation, not from American policy... but from the events of the previous Sunday.

The demonstration was given front page preliminary publicity in the Morning Star (22.3.68) and in Freedom (23.3.68). The Committee of 100 produced a leaflet - of 1961 or earlier vintage - which warned that 'shouting and running make for panic, mindlessness and defeat'. 'If there is trouble or a threatened punch-up', the leaflet warned, '... find some way of separating those concerned. If possible interpose

yourself non-violently between the police and those they are trying to arrest'. A dog returns to its vomit, but some kinds of vomit should make even a dog sick.

. On March 24 some 3000 demonstrators turned up in response to the appeals of the Stalinists, the anarchists and the pacifists. The banner of the London District Committee of the Communist Party was well in evidence as were many other stalinist banners. Communist Party posters urged Wilson to accept the policies of the Labour Party Conference and of the TUC. There were also many anarchist banners on this demo, certainly many more than on the previous week. Together they fluttered in the breeze. It was utterly nauseating and would have made Durrutti turn in his grave. Long speeches were made from the platform. Folk songs were sung. Everyone intoned 'We Shall Overcome'. Marshalls flitted about and a well disciplined procession proceeded down Whitehall. Groups of 6 at a time were allowed by the police to enter Downing Street and present letters at No.10. Six hotheads were arrested. The events might have been happening a decade ago.

The Times (25.3.68) called the march and rally 'models of orderly good humour and disciplined behaviour'. The Guardian of the same date was more explicit. 'The expectations of both the organizers (YCND) and the police were fulfilled. There was no repetition of last weekend's Grosvenor Square demonstration ... The rally organizers last night commented that the presence of 50 of their marshalls had helped in keeping the affair under control'.

Amen.



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# DEMONSTRATION STRATEGY

by Hermann Can

The bloody demonstration of March 17 marked a milestone in the escalation of the struggle against American - and British - involvement in the Vietnam war. This article discusses the strategy necessary for a further development of the campaign. It was written by a participant in the Grosvenor Square riot, but who had little inside knowledge of its prior organization.

There is an enormous confusion in the minds of leftists on the function of demonstrations. To many the joyous push through a police cordon is an exhilarating end in itself, a foretaste of the seizure of power. Others demonstrate to bear witness to their own ideological purity. Clarity as to the object and function of demonstrations is necessary before a meaningful discussion on a specific campaign can begin.

In my view there are three main reasons for demonstrating in non-revolutionary situations. Firstly, to gain the maximum publicity. Radical demonstrations are about the only way that radicals can hit the mass media and disturb the thick syrup of silence insulating virtually all issues of major importance. The second function of a demonstration is to get across a message. The unmistakable impact of March 17 was that the chips were down. Thousands were prepared to confront police violence (and return it!), to face arrest and imprisonment on the issue of Vietnam. The third purpose of a demonstration is to raise the consciousness of those participating. For thousands who participated in the Grosvenor Square riot things will never be the same again.

March 17 was a success. Even across the Atlantic its impact was enormous. The immediate response of one American correspondent was 'the great Genocide Square riot of March 17 has shaken many liberals here and given us radicals hearty morale'. The results of the demonstration should be assessed not only in respect of their marginal effect on the British and American governments, but also in regard to their impact on the movements struggling on the Vietnam issue in America and throughout the world. It is likely that the radical turn in Britain will be followed in the US. This is yet another reason why the example of March 17 must be followed up.

The best way to discuss demonstration strategy is by a specific analysis of March 17. The organizers (the 'ad hoc' Committee) must be given full credit for the demonstration's impact. But they must also accept responsibility for its shortcomings, some of which reduced its impact, and were due to a lack of experience of planning large scale radical demonstrations.

## ORGANIZATION

The morale of the crowd in Trafalgar Square was very good. But much of this head of steam was dissipated by petty mismanagement. The meeting itself was adequate. It certainly did no harm. The march was pointed in the right direction. But once it got under way there was virtually no communication between the various sections of the crowd. In fact it was only through the 'spontaneous' initiative of individuals that the head of the march was repeatedly slowed down, thus ensuring that the crowd behind was sufficiently compact to occupy the whole width of every street used on the way to Grosvenor Square. The demonstrators reached their target as a solid body. But because of the 'spontaneous' nature of these necessary interventions the march progressed towards its objective in a series of fits and starts. This meant that a lot of time was lost and with it a considerable amount of the demonstration's elan.

It is easy to guess the reason for this confusion. Far too often in the past the police have been able to pick on identifiable organizers and saddle them with special charges. In their efforts to avoid this the organizers did away with marshalls altogether. In my opinion this was a mistake. In a worthwhile campaign of this sort, some risks have to be accepted for the sake of effectiveness. A small number of identifiable marshalls (and they have to be identifiable to be listened to by the marchers) might be linked to one another by a few cheap and expendable walkie-talkies. These marshalls should ensure a smooth approach to the target area. But their existence would also allow a much more flexible response to changing situations. They could even suggest a change of target at the last moment. Once the objective was reached the marshalls/stewards could make themselves scarce, so that they could not be picked on for anything which happened there. There would be an added risk to those involved, but in my view an acceptable one.

## CONCENTRATION & FLEXIBILITY

Another of the demonstration's weaknesses was the dispersal of militants. Except in a few groups, the activists were in general isolated amongst the larger crowd, like currants in a rather poor bun. This had two bad effects. Firstly it was impossible for any real concerted efforts to be made. Secondly it was much easier for the police to pick out, beat up and arrest isolated individuals. The majority of those arrested were precisely those who became isolated from people able and willing physically to defend them.

In future demonstrations it would be sensible for militants to group themselves together. Such groups, as well as being much more effective, would be able to respond much more flexibly to a rapidly changing situation.

Anyone with any experience of demonstrations knew well that violence was probable. There have been many earlier marches on embassies and the police have always taken extreme measures to protect them. The American Embassy was unlikely to be an exception. A basic fact must be faced. On March 17 there was no likelihood (nor will there be in any future demonstration) of demonstrators defeating the police or forcibly penetrating the marine-guarded fortress. For if, in a straight battle, a demonstration like this could defeat the whole previously-warned might of the police, it might as well seize power while it was at it!

The main advantages held by the police are their discipline and organization. But at the same time they tend to be too rigid and inflexible in response to rapidly changing circumstances.\* Therefore future demonstrations should be planned to provide the maximum number of alternative targets. There are a number of such possible targets within a quarter of a mile of the U.S. Embassy. It would not seem impossible to take over one of these. The threat of possible alternative options would force the police to spread their umbrella wider. This in turn would increase the number of possible alternatives.

The Committee of 100 was committed to various techniques of direct action and many of its experiences should be valuable to the developing campaign. The Committee had more experience of illegal demonstrations than anyone else. (I use the past tense because no one should confuse the Committee of 1960-62 with the small band of prophets going by that title today.) Its experience of having its leaders picked out and sent to prison for long periods is a warning to remember. An often forgotten aspect of the experience of the Committee of 100 was that several of its demonstrations were declared banned, under the Commissioner's Regulations, before they actually took place. It is on the cards that future demonstrations of the March 17 type will be similarly treated. In my view the time to prepare for this is NOW. At its height, the Committee of 100 not only had a parallel 'shadow' organization of convenors (which would have allowed it to continue if its organizers had been arrested) but it also duplicated its records so that the work would not be paralyzed if the records were seized. There was even a parallel office, complete with staff, ready to go into operation if the police had taken action.

The way to increase the effectiveness of future militant activities at minimum human cost is to make an intelligent analysis of the choices now available. This article is an attempt to initiate such a discussion. Unfortunately one of the worst features of discussions on this question by r.r.r. revolutionaries\*\* is their basic irrationality. One often gets the impression that they see violence as something which will prove their personal or political virility rather than as being one of several tactical options to be accepted or not, as the situation warrants.

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\* For their methods of demonstration control and for their quick response to changes of plans, the police rely heavily on vulnerable radio communications.

\*\* for whom revolution flows out of a barrel of Watneys!

# DACHAU: A FAILURE IN COMMUNICATION

For the benefit of those outraged by the senseless violence in Grosvenor Square on March 17, we are reprinting this famous classic from the Archives of Pacifism. It was first published 25 years ago (April 1st, 1943). We don't seem to have got much further but are convinced its dignified message is as valid today as it was then.

Recent events at Dachau should be accepted as a setback to pacifist ideas. We must take our share of the blame for this. We have failed lamentably in propagating our principles and teaching the non-violent philosophy. The inevitable result has been that violent (and consequently self-defeating) psychological attitudes have become apparent. It is a depressing experience to talk to either the Jews or the Germans at Dachau. Mutual feelings of hatred and contempt abound. It is a classic example of what Freud calls the 'fear of the other'.

Readers will probably be aware of the background to recent events. The Germans have become convinced that the Jews are responsible for Germany's troubles. By projecting their own fears and anxieties onto the Jews, the Germans are able to avoid facing some of the frightening aspects of their own nature. Anyone familiar with the German educational system (or any reader of W. Reich or E. Fromm) will hardly be surprised at this. With some Germans, psychological insecurity takes the pseudo-marxist form of projecting their frustration onto other groups, such as the 'capitalists'. The present German elite (the so-called 'Nazis') prefer to make scapegoats of the Jews.

Among the Jews the atmosphere of hatred and mistrust is just as depressing. One has only to talk to them for a few minutes to be appalled at the anti-German, and even anti-Christian, sentiments which abound. They have constructed a stereotype of the Germans which is the projection of their own fears and anxieties. One is struck by the fact that they need the Germans, as a kind of Freudian 'father-figure'.

It is difficult to talk calmly to the young Jews. They see everything in crude black and white terms. The 'enemy' appears, not as a fellow human being but as evil incarnate. They mouth vulgar-marxist phrases about 'imperialism' and 'genocide'. My attempts to reason with them was not a pleasant experience. It was ugly, scary and sad.

There are however some bright spots in this generally gloomy picture. The older Jews retain, in many cases, their religious faith. One is impressed by their resigned and calm acceptance of their unfortunate situation. Most of the regrettable incidents which occurred

last week at the entrance to the gas chambers only involved the younger Jews, some of whom had broken with their religious faith.

There are rays of hope on the 'other side' too (to use the Communist jargon). Father Ulbricht, the chaplain, is a devoted man who has been able to initiate many acts of comradeship to bridge the apparently unbridgeable gap between the two faiths and two different types of ethos. Joint religious services have been held. Sociologists and historians have given talks to both groups to help them understand each other's culture. It was discovered that misunderstanding and lack of communication accounted for most of the bad feeling. The Germans, practical down-to earth Nordics, hadn't understood the emotional trauma they had inflicted on the sensitive, emotional Jews in confiscating gold teeth from some of the corpses (to which the Jews apparently attached religious significance).

Father Ulbricht told me many stories of individual acts of cooperation and compassion. Many of these concerned the so-called 'kapos' (who in England would be called 'trustys'). These are the main intermediaries between Germans and Jews. These men are in a distressing position, and are hated by the extremists among the Jewish population. Despite cases of intimidation (I was told one kapo had been murdered by a group of communists), they have refused to accept the over-simplifications and half-truths which are the prevailing moods in the Jewish population.

I also spoke to Herr Luebke, the commander of Dachau. I found him a tolerant and conscientious man, who was doing his best in a difficult situation. He deserves much of the credit for the neatness and order at Dachau, on which even hostile critics have commented. The flower beds outside the gas chambers were particularly admired and had obviously been the object of much loving care. Herr Luebke has given help and encouragement to the soap-manufacturing cooperative which some of our co-thinkers have set up. He has also donated a library containing works by Tolstoy, Bart de Light and Gandhi.

The overall situation at Dachau remains however profoundly depressing. There have been some attempts at non-violent resistance, and although these were conducted in a self-disciplined and compassionate manner, they regrettably had little impact on the running of the community. It is hoped the demonstrators will learn from their experience, but unfortunately it is in the nature of the situation that a person can only participate once.

There have been attempts to organize children's protests on the lines suggested by Jayaprakash Narayan, but the children were unable to maintain the necessary discipline. This would seem to indicate the importance of really early training in techniques of non-violence. I think that here the research now being carried out at the Peace Research Centre at Lancaster should prove invaluable. Others

have suggested that the Jews wear badges saying 'I like Eich', to show they bore no personal hatred towards those who were antagonistic towards them.

But let us make no mistake. Time is running out. If anyone thinks that I exaggerate, let him talk to some of the left-inclined young Jews of Dachau. The climate of violence is intensifying. Unless we succeed in building a real non-violent movement, Dachau could erupt in an unpredictable and ugly manner, which would destroy all the good work done over many years by the PPU and the Fellowship for Reconciliation.

C.S. Tabun.

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## VIETNAM AND YOUR WAGES

The opposition to the Vietnam war has been primarily a moral one. The dominant forces in the campaign of solidarity with the Vietnamese people have been students and other young people, or members of socialist groups who are already committed to socialist internationalism.

The weakness of the campaign has been that it has had little effect on the mass of the working class. Thus we get the situation where many workers are hostile to demonstrators, at a time when the working class is beginning to fight back against the government's assault on its living standards. The struggle at home is seen as something separate from the struggle in Vietnam.

Revolutionary socialists would of course support the Vietnam struggle whether it had any direct effect on their own standard of living or not. But it would be utopian in the extreme to imagine that the great mass of workers have reached such a level of consciousness. If they are to be rallied in support of the Vietnamese struggle, we must show the connection between the war in Vietnam and the struggle to maintain living standards here. Only by doing so can we overcome the sterile moralism which has been the curse of CND and similar movements.

This should not be as difficult as it sounds. For the Vietnam war is a contributory factor to the 'freeze' and 'squeeze' which the government has imposed.

There are several reasons for this :

1. - In order to finance the Vietnam war the US government has to borrow money. To attract this money, interest rates rise. High US interest rates attract foreign capital. The flight of capital from London (partly because of the attraction of higher US interest

rates) was a contributory reason for the recent devaluation of the pound.

The British government in an effort to attract foreign capital must offer a high rate of profit. Therefore there must be a redistribution of resources from wages to profits. This why the British Government introduced its Prices and Incomes policy combined with the freeze, the squeeze and deliberately induced unemployment. All this was done in the name of 'socialist' planning. The reality has been that real wages have fallen for the first time since World War II.

2. - The immediate cause of Britain's economic difficulties is the balance of payments problem. We are told that we are living beyond our means and that we must, therefore, export more and/or import less.

But Britain exports more than she imports. How can we have a balance of payments crisis?

Britain's export surplus is not enough to make up for  
a) investment abroad, b) government spending abroad (mainly military).

British capitalism has enormous investments in the Middle and Far East. The British Government knows that a victory for the NLF would be an enormous encouragement to the people in these countries to overthrow British Imperialism and their own corrupt ruling classes. (Direct colonial rule has usually been ended in these countries but the power of British capitalism has not.) This fear of revolution is one of the reasons why the Wilson Government is Johnson's most reliable ally.

Socialists must show that internationalism is not merely an empty abstraction. The money which is spent on maintaining military bases means that the Health Service suffers. The old and the sick get less.

We must constantly try to show the connection between the war in Vietnam and the industrial struggle here. That means we must try to get support in industry. It also means that we must support all industrial struggles here. A successful wage struggle, or a rent strike, even if waged with no knowledge of the economic implications of the Vietnam war, does more for the Vietnamese people than several tons of petitions.

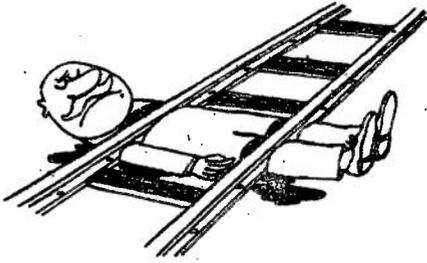
J. S.

### FOREBODINGS FULFILLED

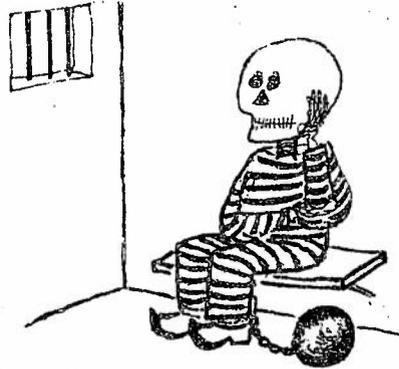
'The whole theory of modern education is radically unsound. Fortunately in England, at any rate, education produces no effect whatsoever. If it did, it would provoke a serious danger to the upper classes, and probably lead to acts of violence in Grosvenor Square.'

Lady Bracknell, Act I of Oscar Wilde's  
'The Importance of Being Ernest'.

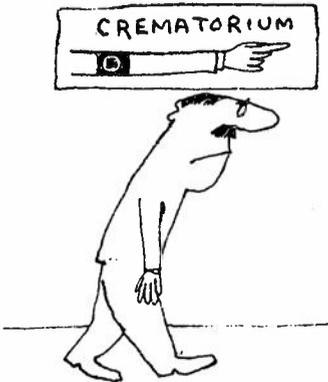
# THOUGHTS ON NON-VIOLENCE BY SINÉ



My grandfather believed in non-violence. He laid down on a railway line...



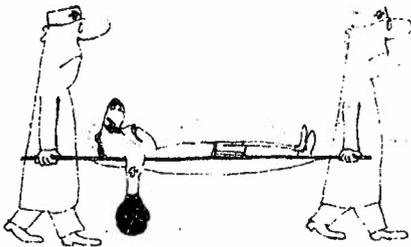
My father was also non-violent. While in prison, he went on a long hunger strike...



My cousin was a member of a non-violent Resistance group...



My godfather was a missionary. He was non-violent, of course...



My brother the boxer became famous for his non-violence...

... As for me :

