

Spectacular Times

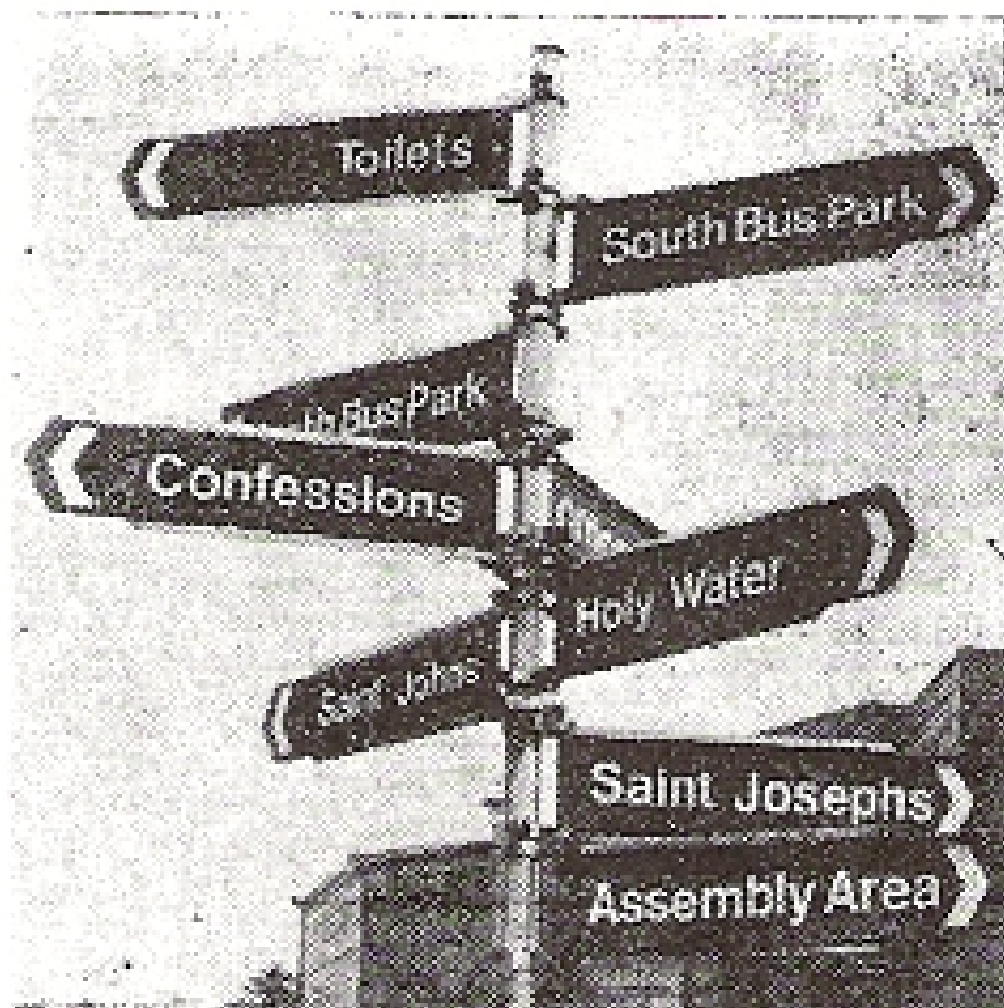
THE BAD DAYS
WILL END

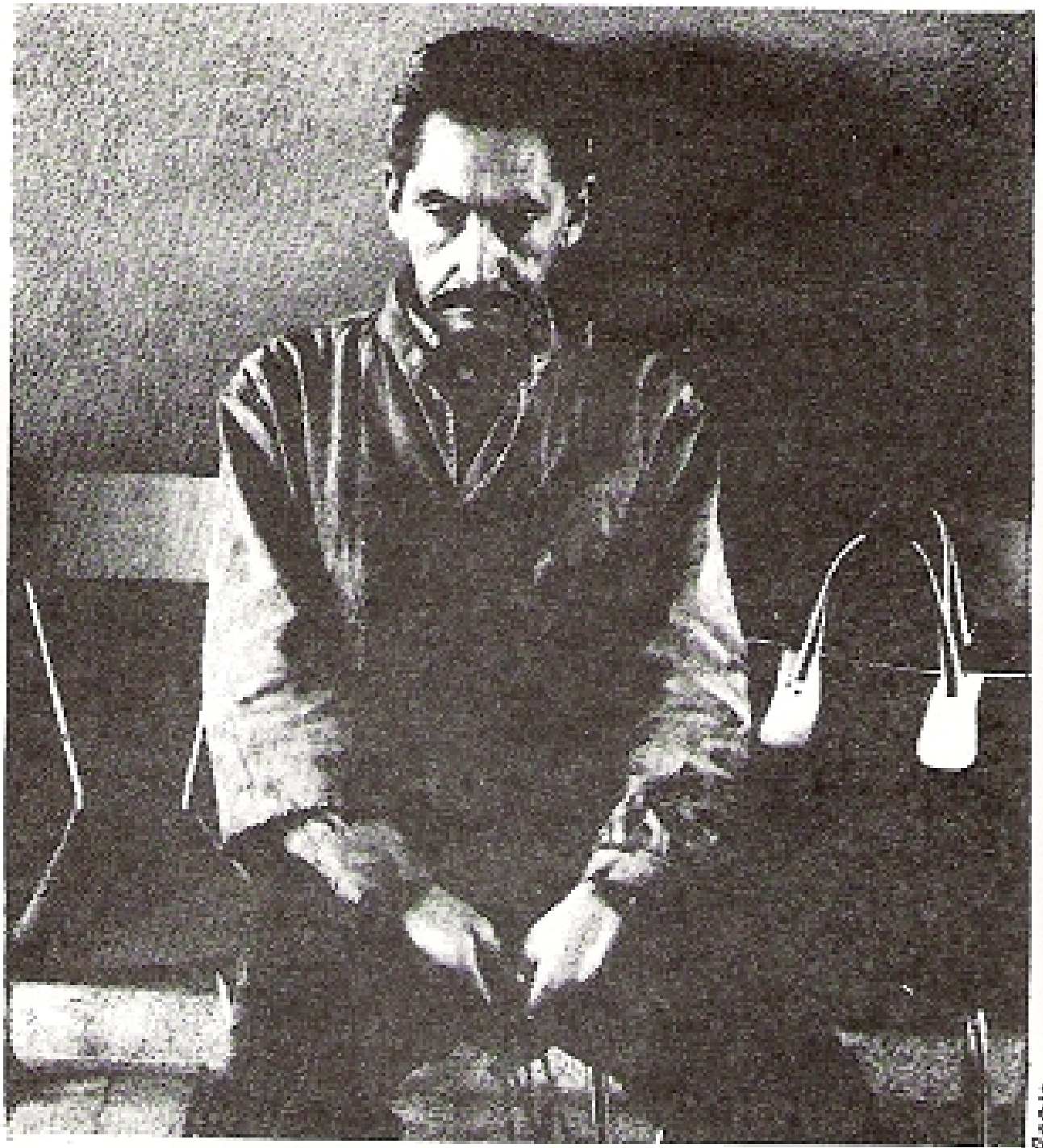
Pocketbook Series

If it seems absurd to talk about revolution, this is because organized revolutionary movements have long since disappeared from the countries where the possibilities of a decisive transformation of society are concentrated.

But everything else is even more absurd, since it is limited to what exists and to the various ways of putting up with it.

I.S.No.6





The real state secret has nothing to do with 'defence' or economics.

2 The real state secret is the secret misery of daily life.

Imagine your life being performed on a stage.

- * Is it a comedy, a farce, a saga, a soap opera, a melodrama, a tragedy, or what?
- * Be the audience watching your play. Do you applaud, cry, boo, laugh, go to sleep, want your money back, or what?

James & Jongeward

Every real feeling or desire we possess has been bought, sold or hijacked, debased or alternatively hyped into unreality, repressed or recuperated.

Almost everything we care about has been turned into a commodity.

HI FOLKS!

IT'S A PLEASURE....
GOING TO DISCOS
IT'S A PLEASURE...
WEARING JEANS
IT'S A PLEASURE...
LISTENING TO ROCK MUSIC
WATCHING THE VIDEO
CHEWING BUBBLE GUM
SPEEDING ON MOBIKE

But under our mountain of new gadgets and consumer items, in the midst of the "new leisured society" and its cultural spectacles,

we find ourselves cut off from real communication, frustrated and unhappy.

ONE IN THREE patients seen by GPs are suffering from anxiety

Our isolation causes us to imagine that other people are happy and we wonder why such happiness eludes us.

Maybe you're looking for something really out of the ordinary? Then take a look at the tempting showcase of Special Range Telephones. Between the colourful fun of Mickey Mouse and the period elegance of the Classic, you're sure to find something that reflects your personality and lifestyle.

Finding no satisfaction in consuming the products of spectacular production (it's not so much the products themselves but the use to which they are put that prevents us from enjoying them) we are offered spectacular therapies and ideologies.

In this way we are each encouraged to organize our own passivity. Oppression is no longer centralized — it no longer has to be — because oppression is everywhere.

IT DOES SEEM LIKE MODERN LIFE MEANS NOTHING BUT ANXIETY!
SOME IGNORE IT...



What I have really come for is some more of the tablets you gave me last time. I am more depressed than I was last time. I seem to be on edge all the time and I'm getting pretty scared about everything, especially going out. I don't seem to be able to face the world.

Dora Bryan, currently touring with a show Let's Carry on Camping—which is clearly nothing to do with peace camps—said she had seen some horrible documentaries about nuclear war on television.

"I don't like to think too much about it. Let's go on singing Land of Hope and Glory. It does not seem to matter as much then."

"The feeling of humiliation is nothing but the feeling of being an object. Even the simple pleasures of a ride in the country are generally measured up in terms of miles on the clock, speeds reached and petrol consumption. With the rate at which economic 'imperatives' are buying up feelings, desires and needs and falsifying them, human beings will soon be left with nothing but the memory of having once been alive.....How can even spontaneous laughter last in a space time that is measured and measurable, let alone real joy? At best the dull contentment of the man or woman who-have-got-their-money's-worth, and who exist by that standard. Only objects can be measured, which is why exchange always reifies."

Raoul Vaneigem

Capitalism has made all relationships commodity relationships. Where only commodity relationships exist we start to run our life like a business, we operate a social and emotional balance sheet..... and there is no time to play.

"If people censor the question of their own everyday life, it is both because they are aware of its unbearable misery and because sooner or later they sense - whether they admit it or not - that all the real possibilities, all the desires that have been frustrated by the functioning of social life, were focused there, and not at all in the specialized activities or distractions."

Guy Debord

Suicide has become a major problem in the industrialized nations of the Free World. But some Eastern European countries fare no better. Hungary has the dubious honor of having the highest suicide rate in the world with East Germany an immediate second. Fourteen other nations make the list before the United States. Those highest on the list are some of the technologically and industrially most advanced nations of the world. They are the socialized nations where the people should have the least to worry about in life and future.

Why do people in free and prosperous countries hate themselves and their lives so much that they seek and all too often find in suicide the final solution?

Confronted with daily life in the Society of the Spectacle, and mistaking that cruel parody for authentic life, it is hardly surprising that some people choose to leave early.

It is a measure of the poverty of daily life that the smallest input of energy or authenticity can have staggering effects.

You should have heard Prof. Peter Millard, a witty geriatrician specialising in why people choose to die. Choose? Yes, says he; they die more after bereavement, retirement or a birthday they've been struggling towards. When doctors wondered how many more old people had died when they'd had to be moved during the Liverpool riots, they found they'd actually died *less*, because something exciting had (for once) been going on.

The present moment has been so diminished in importance that it has become little more than a rehearsal for the future. Present joy eludes us as the present moment is invaded and overwhelmed by hopes and fears for the future.
At every turn death invades life.

Many thoughtful people choose their family monument — as well as their cemetery lot — *before the need arises*. Ask your dealer or write Rock of Ages, Barre, Vermont, for "How To Choose a Family Monument" — a large illustrated book available without charge or obligation.

ROCK *of* AGES

BARRE GRANITE FAMILY MONUMENTS

Before you choose, compare — ask your Authorized Dealer to show you proof of permanence in any cemetery.

"Despair is the infantile disorder of the revolutionaries of everyday life."

Vaneigem

Our clearest motivations are to seek pleasure and avoid pain. However, daily life in the Society of the Spectacle offers many more opportunities to experience pain than it does to experience pleasure. Consequently, most people have ceased to expect much pleasure in their daily lives and are content to support a social system which simply offers less pain.

We have to resist allowing the Spectacle to define our hopes. We have to learn to play with our desires.



LOOK... I ALWAYS SWIM WITH THE TIDE... ON THE CREST OF THE WAVES. I MIGHT GET A JOB AS A CLERK...

Whatever your dreams - of beautiful houses, exotic cars and long sun-filled holidays overseas, perhaps - a big Littlewoods win could make them a reality.

It could so easily happen. This week, next week, the week after that. So long as you send in your coupons it could happen at literally any time at all.

Keep dreaming, and keep on posting those coupons.

More people than ever before are now engaged in a desperate search for true love.

The possibilities are as limitless as your imagination and you can add a full range of matching accessories as your skill grows.

HUNDREDS of local people are seeking expert help to turn their dreams into reality.

"The actual realization of real desires - that is to say, the abolition of all the pseudo needs and pseudo desires that the system manufactures daily in order to perpetuate its own power - cannot take place without the suppression and positive supersession of the commodity spectacle."

Strasbourg Situationists

A society whose members have ceased to censor their daydreams can only function if its members meet on terms of honesty and serious playfulness. But just as there is no obligation upon such a society to compromise with the forces of reaction that will move against it, so there is no obligation upon it to submit to the mutilated desires of the bully, the racist or the rapist — to do so would be simply to exchange one form of oppression for another. It will be necessary to find ways of organizing for our mutual protection.



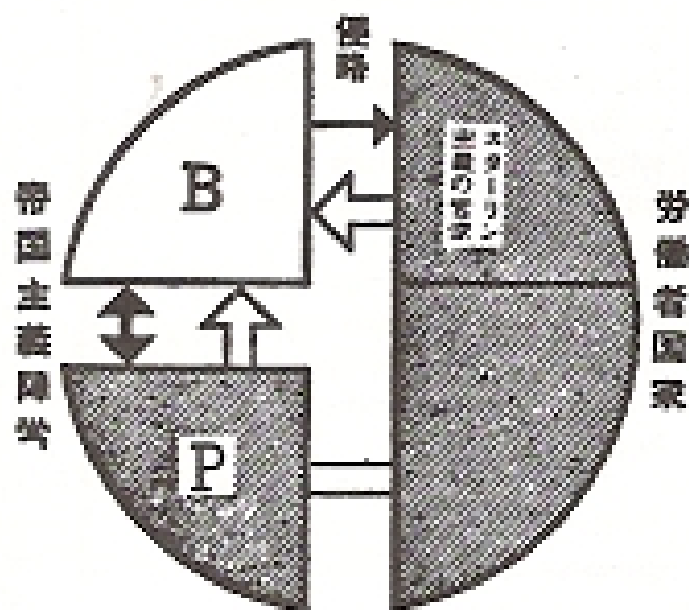
In our opposition to the Spectacle we have to avoid fragmentation. When fighting a particular oppression we must never lose sight of the fact that it is part of the total oppression.

To fight on single issues in isolation is to fall into a carefully prepared trap - we cannot even win the argument.

Whenever one problem is separated from all the other problems a solution really is impossible.

There are plenty of specialists on hand to take up these separated problems, mystify them and convince us that we don't really understand the difficulties.

III トロツキー教条主義の戦略





Dr. Cooley was Chairman of the team which developed the well-known Lucas Alternative Corporate Plan. Drawn up by workers from all trade unions at Lucas factories in their own spare time, the detailed plan listed over 150 socially useful products, the manufacture of which could alleviate the Company's heavy dependence on military production.

The object of the plan was both "to protect the right to work" and to develop products "useful to the community at large".

It was rejected wholesale by the Lucas Management as an unwarranted interference

Tony Beserekumo is the dustman who first thought of the idea. Born in Toxteth, of Nigerian and Yorkshire parents, he believes that jobs as hard and unrewarding as bin collection and street cleaning could be transformed for the workforce, if they themselves owned the company they were working for.

The reasons given by the Conservative leader, Reg Flude, for voting against the co-operative were more perplexing: "We are in favour of the idea of a co-operative," he says. "But the co-operative did not meet the criteria specified. They could not give us the information we needed by the date we wanted it." No date was ever set for receipt of applications, however, and the tender documents have still not been sent out. The matter is still open, or could be. Would he be prepared to reconsider? "The decision has been made," he said firmly. He added, "Who is behind all this? Don't tell me ordinary dustmen could write letters like the ones received from these men."

"The world is being transformed in the direction prescribed by the existence of forced labour; which is why it is being transformed so badly."

Vaneigen

SOVIET shoppers, drivers, drinkers and pedestrians face a new hazard in their daily lives. Reinforcing his crackdown on shirkers, absentees and work-evaders, the new leader Yuri Andropov has instituted a system of spot checks. Any citizen may be called on to explain just why he is not at his desk or his factory bench.

The Prime Minister last night expanded on her theme of Victorian values by urging striking water workers to respect a "puritan work ethic," instead of attempting to deprive the community of one of life's essentials.

Mrs Thatcher, speaking in Glasgow, said that honesty, thrift, reliability, and hard work and a sense of responsibility for fellow men were not simply Victorian values, but part of the enduring principles of the Western world.

Seen from the outside, the Confederation of British Industry and the Transport and General Workers Union would seem to be very different bodies.

Seen from the inside, as we have seen them, they are very similar.

In the Society of the Spectacle ideologies have become commodities. They are packaged and offered to us for consumption.

We wander along the shelves of an ideological supermarket inviting someone to sell us their product. We look for pre-packaged ideas that we can adopt

He told police that he was not a psychopath and had received no messages from God. He had felt oppressed at home and dissatisfied with the main political parties. He had contacted the Workers' Revolutionary Party, the Socialist Workers' Party, the Communist Party, and the Revolutionary Communist Party.

After reading their literature he had decided that the Communist Party was not revolutionary enough and he later came to the same conclusion about the WRP and the SWP.

and live by — convenience 'foods' that cut out the necessity for deciding what we really want and developing a theory to get it. "I'll buy that!" — says the convinced shopper in the ideological supermarket. How revealing that phrase is — the highest compliment of the true consumer.

"People rely on Causes because they haven't been able to make their own life a Cause sufficient unto itself."

THEORY

When you have ideas.

Thesis
Antithesis
Synthesis

PARALYSIS

IDEOLOGY

When ideas have you.

Relax in the safety of your own home
with a subscription to Marxism Today.

Revolutionary ideology is a mausoleum. We need to develop a living revolutionary theory. We start with our dreams and desires and try to put them into practice. We learn from our practice and so develop our theory, which in turn instructs our practice and so we progress. There can be no waiting around for someone to hand us the perfect analysis — we have to act on what we know now.

"The revolutionary movement is its own laboratory and provides its own data... what we must aim at is to fail clearly each time, over and over."

Ken Knabb

THREE people were nailed to wooden crosses yesterday in Manila to mark the Crucifixion. Mario Castro, aged 31, and Bob Velez, aged 41, stayed on their crosses for five minutes after nails were hammered through their palms.

Luciana Reyes, aged 24, the third penitent (above) was nailed to a cross before a crowd of 10,000 pilgrims and tourists in Bulacan province, the Philippine News Agency said, but did not say how long she remained suspended. Her previous seven crucifixions lasted from three to five seconds.

"The revolution ends the moment it becomes necessary to sacrifice yourself to it. To lose yourself, and fetishise it. Revolutionary moments are festivals in which individual life celebrates its union with regenerated society. The call for sacrifice tolls like a funeral bell."

Vaneigem



People who talk about

Revolution

and

CLASS STRUGGLE

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Everyday Life,

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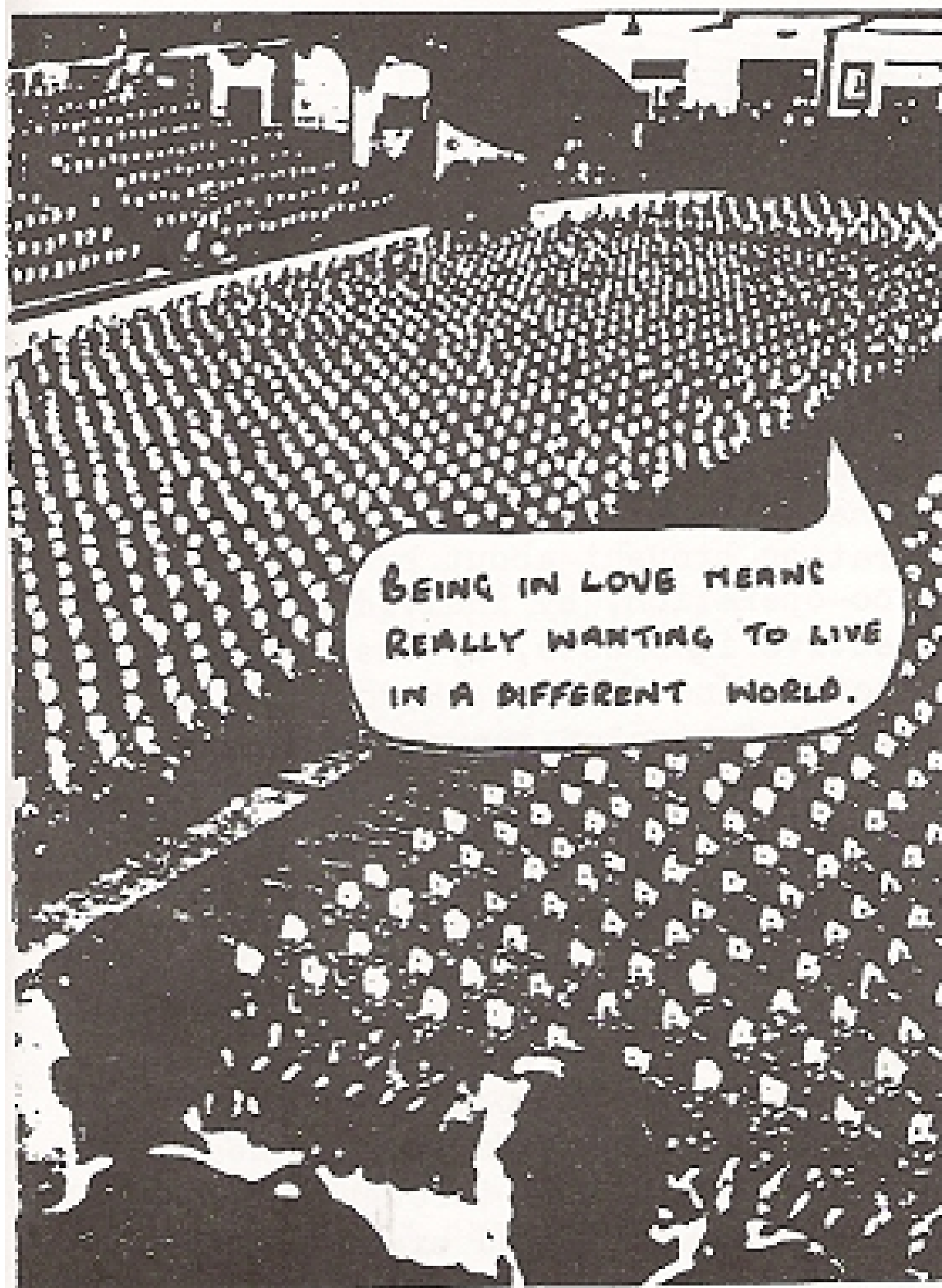
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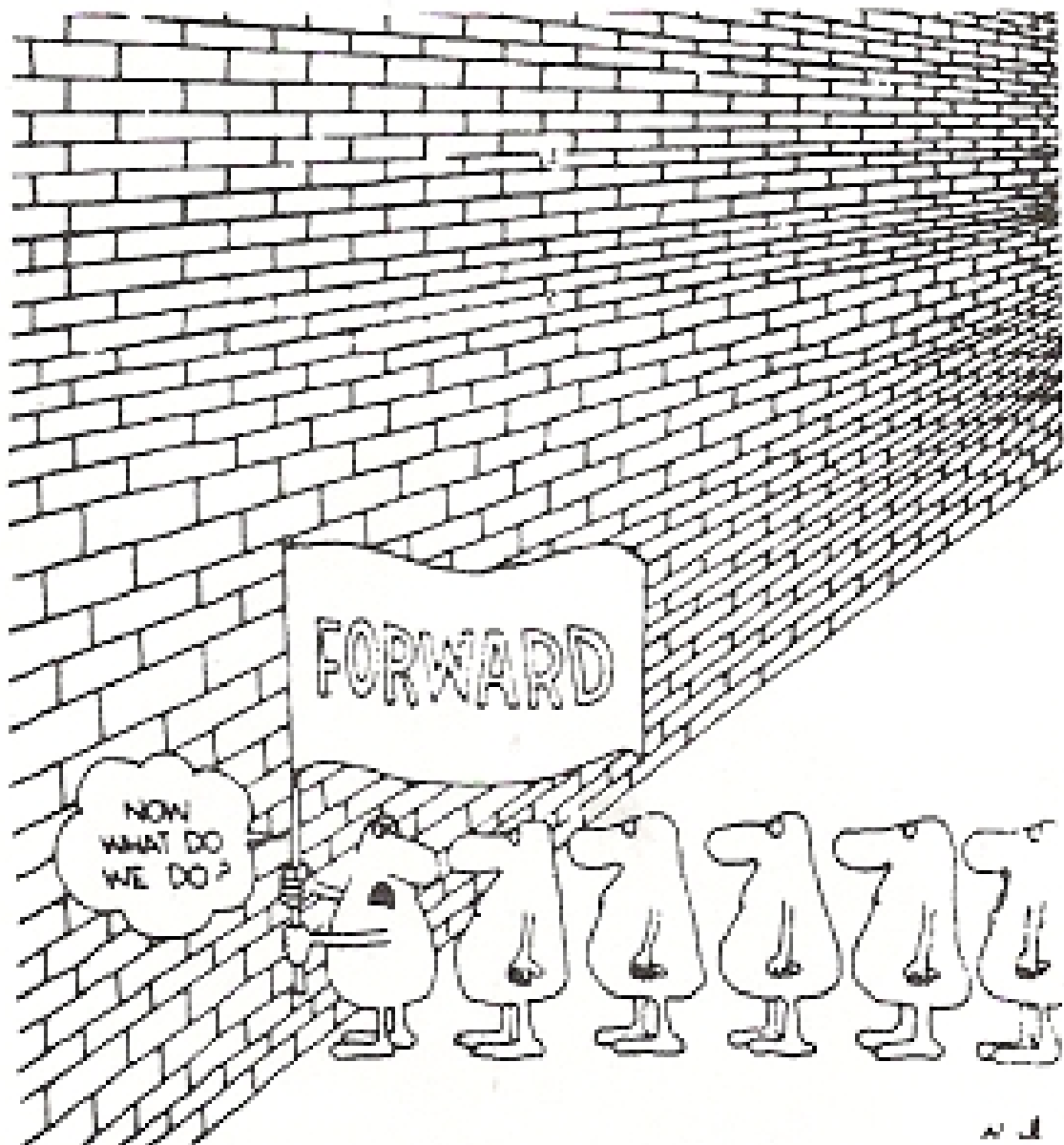


"All forms of contempt of authority, such as stubbornness, disobedience or rebellion are sinful."

Catholic Enquiry Centre

"Revolution is the creation of new living institutions, new groupings, new social relationships..... Revolution is the organization of all public services by those who work in them in their own interest as well as the public's. Revolution is the destruction of all coercive ties; it is the autonomy of groups, of communes, of regions; Revolution is the free federation brought about by a desire for co-operation, by individual and collective interests, by the needs of production and defence; Revolution is the constitution of innumerable free groupings based on ideas, wishes and tastes of all kinds that exist among the people; Revolution is the forming and disbanding of thousands of representative, district, communal, regional, national bodies which, without having any legislative power, serve to make known and to co-ordinate the desires and interests of people near and far and which act through information, advice and example."

Errico Malatesta



"An efficiently hierarchised army can win a war, but not a revolution; an undisciplined mob can win neither. The problem is how to organize without creating a hierarchy;..... the only safeguard against authority and rigidity setting in is a playful attitude."

Vaneigem

The Spectacle has effectively suppressed all genuine play. The desire to play has been recuperated and is returned to us as sport, toys, gambling and competitions.



PLEASE DO NOT WALK OR PLAY ON THE GRASS

This area has been laid out as an amenity to be enjoyed by all the tenants on the estate. Will you please help to preserve its appearance by preventing damage to the area.

Housing Manager.

Play [not seriously competitive, mutually supportive, bond-forming and imaginative] has been replaced by sports, games and competitions which are fiercely competitive, hierarchical, socially divisive and regulated.

Even these recuperated games are only permitted in designated places and during 'free' time.

Genuine play is presented as something only children do, but now even children are being given more and more technological toys. The object is not to play with these toys but to watch them perform i.e. be a passive spectator. Toys such as computers teach children new consuming skills - in order to be able to consume the new technology you have to learn how to consume it. Learning to press the right button - learning to choose what you want from a pre-selected range of alternatives.

Even when children can play games with these new toys, such play is 'excused' as 'play with a purpose' — as if play is not a good enough reason in itself. The effect of these recuperated games is to emphasize skill and equipment [both saleable commodities] and to numb the imagination. The need for imagination in play has been removed and replaced by a need for objects and technique. Play, in the Society of the Spectacle, has become a struggle for goals [both literally and metaphorically] and no longer a pleasure in itself.

We need to remind people of what they already know about play — from their childhood, from the seductive playfulness of animals, from the tentative games of mutual discovery that lovers play.....

"To federate moments, to bring out the pleasure in them, to release their promise of life is already to be learning how to construct a 'situation'"

Vaneigem

The playful pursuit of pleasure has nothing to do with parasitic hedonism, which is the counterpart of sacrifice [and implies sacrifice in others]. It is about the pursuit of social and personal happiness, not just within defined areas but throughout the whole breadth of everyday life.

"The game we are about to play is the game of our creativity. Its rules are radically opposed to the rules and laws controlling our society. It is a game of loser wins; what you are is more important than what is said, what is lived is more important than what is represented on the level of appearances. This game must be played right through to its conclusion."

Vaneigem



"The desire to play has returned to destroy the hierarchical society which banished it."

Vaneigem

