

THE AFRICANS HAVE NOT SPOKEN—YET!

WITH AN ERA of improved communications upon us it becomes more and more difficult to communicate. The technological complexity with which scientific utterances and soporific banalities can be bounced off outer space is only matched by the technological complexity with which events (or non-events) are communicated. An example of the complexity to conceal thought or veil the real nature of a problem is the use of the bomb. The question as to whether killing men is likely to lead to peace is obscured by a dance of the veils in reverse (as it were), till we are left with the woolly problem: does the proliferation of nuclear deterrence or does the provision of preventive strike capability inhibit the massive potential of an aggressor? Something similar is taking place with regard to Rhodesia. We are being asked to consider the effect of sanctions upon Rhodesia's economic position; to consider the effects of oil shortage upon Rhodesia; to consider the political relations between South Africa, Rhodesia and our own country; magic formulae are incanted: 'multilateral mandatory sanctions'; 'working documents'; 'statements of principles'; 'constitutional issues of legality'; all of them very admirable talking points no doubt, but all calculated, if not designed, to obscure the real issue about Rhodesia. Dr. Johnson, that old reactionary, who sometimes (by the laws of average?) spoke commonsense, once said, 'A man is seldom so innocently employed as when making money.' This is not true in every respect but in the case of the communicators it is invariably so. The journals which 'innocently employ' their time in showing us how to make money (i.e. *The Wall Street Journal* in the US and the *Financial Times* over here) are innocent to the point naivete when it comes to communicating the news. Not for them the bleeding heart of the liberals, the purple prose of the left or the orotund sentimentalities of the right. The strip-tease of the Seven Veils is down to the bare facts of 'what is there in it for anyone—me, in particular?' On November 9 Ronald Butt, the political editor boiled down the issue in Rhodesia into two sentences: 'After a year in which the sanctions

designed to bring the Rhodesians to heel within a few months had failed to take effect, the Prime Minister talked to Mr. Smith face-to-face on the "Tiger" and offered terms that were never likely to be acceptable to the Rhodesian Front. Then, having failed to secure acceptance of the "working document" in Salisbury, the Prime Minister castigated the Rhodesian regime for its wickedness and Mr. Smith for weakness. Promptly, Mr. Wilson announced that Britain would go on with sanctions—and thereupon sent Mr. Brown to New York with the express purpose of seeing that these sanctions should not be so strong as to cause trouble in southern Africa—even if this meant making it impossible for them to bring the Rhodesian regime down, as designed.'

Can anyone put it more briefly than that? As a matter of fact somebody did—but quite unwittingly. Our own dear Harold Wilson orating in the House of Commons on December 5 said, 'It was clear that "power for its own sake" and the insistence on retaining that power in the hands of a small unrepresentative minority' had dictated the outcome. He was speaking, of course, of Ian Smith but surely he has summed up for us, who believe in the dangers of political power, the whole situation.

Is not Mr. Wilson interested in power for its own sake? What is this struggle between Smith and Wilson, between Heath and Wilson, except a struggle for power? One voice has not been heard in this clamour. The voice of the African, not only one would imagine, because their political leaders have been silenced—and what are their political leaders but seekers for power?—but also because this struggle, above their heads, has no reality for them.

They have not spoken—Yet!

JACK ROBINSON.

BLACK & PAGET

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, it seems, have a regular habit of making fools of themselves, their shouts of protest and vilification acting as a prod to the dying embers of the obsolete parliamentary system. These MPs (all 630 of them one imagines) know on which side their bread is buttered. But in a job which too often degenerates into a farcical waste of time, some members no doubt get carried away at the delicious prospect of making the front page. In their attempt (very worthy, in itself) to avoid a flood of banal clichés, which is the Wilson trademark, they develop a purple patch, say the wrong things, play to the gallery, so that those headmasterly whips have to be on hand to see that the transgressors return swiftly to the oblivion of the back-benches.

At the height of the Rhodesia fiasco, Reginald Paget was presumptuous enough to challenge King Harold himself, saying (amongst other things) that Wilson could not be trusted. (We know that, but you mustn't say it to his face, though Paget did try to soft-soap Harold by saying he was also 'a very great man' with similarities to Napoleon!) It was perhaps unfortunate (or was it their slanted sense of humour?) that made one daily right-wing paper state: Labour MP says: 'I will rebel', which would make any anarchist inclined to retort, 'Go on and "rebel" till you're blue in the face—the

THE PROOF of the validity of anarchist thinking and the apparent effectiveness of our propaganda is contained in a short sentence in this week's 'Out of this World' column. The sentence refers to a shipment of steel from China to the United States and from there to Saigon. No need usually to enlarge on such a matter, to fulminate against the wicked Chinese traitors who sell steel to their enemies; we now all know that this is commonplace, that trade between warring nation-states continues merrily, that should the Americans run out of steel to bomb Vietnam the polite Chinese would be only too glad to oblige.

So when the story came into this office the other day that one of the largest firms in this country is also trading merrily with the South-Vietnamese and the US military we were not at all surprised. Neither were we astounded that here was a factory where Communists have always been prominent. The wry

joke that goes around in the factory: 'Don't worry mate, we are all doing our bit for the war effort' leaves us unamused.

After all, we are informed by the Board of Trade, that our trade with South Vietnam is about £2 million a year and our greatest export is Scotch whisky for the American troops. Better than napalm? But it must make a lot of Scottish distillers happy that they also help in the war effort.

But in the same way that nobody in his right mind would lead a protest march to the United Glass Bottle Manufacturers door—because they make the bottle which contains the whisky that the GI drinks whilst he burns a Vietnam village with napalm manufactured by the Dow Chemical Co.—a protest march last Sunday to the London offices of the Dow Chemical Co. was just as ineffective.

The organisers of the communist YPC march forgot to check the address. But even if they found the Dow Chemical Co.'s building in 105

Wigmore Street (WEL 4441), did they consider that the English section of the Dow Chemical Co. manufactures not napalm but antibiotics and also a material called Lurex which women find very useful as the cold wind blows up their mini-skirts?

We live in a world where international trade reflects the organised violence of the nation-states. Our traders will sell and ship bibles, contraceptives, guns, bandages, rockets, engines and napalm in one cargo. When an American senator asks for the 'bombing of British ships' which supply Hanoi he is merely reflecting a genuine bewilderment that many people share. Who is a friend? Who is an enemy? Who knows?

Not until there is an anarchist revolution in the world will such 'contradictions' be resolved. Our analysis is correct and the people of the world must take note or continue to live in something more than a fool's paradise.

Travellers' Rights

THIS time of year is always a critical one for gypsies and travellers, trying to establish themselves for the winter in tolerable surroundings in some place where they can also make a living.

The campaign in the London Borough of Bromley last year showed the possibilities of concerted action by gypsies and their friends in the settled community. This year organised activity is spreading, as indicated in the recent press reports of successful resistance to eviction from sites at Newham and Romford.

Of course, these struggles take place in many other countries. On the Continent this has led to the setting up of an International Gypsy Committee based in Paris and representing a large part of the 12 million gypsies organised into 25 associations scattered throughout the world.

As Britain was not represented, and to discuss the formation of the necessary national association a meeting of gypsies and travellers was held at the 'Bull's

Head', St. Paul's Cray in the London Borough of Bromley.

Gratton Puxon, secretary of the Gypsy Liaison Committee operating from c/o Greenways, Knockholt, near Sevenoaks, Kent, has received news from many gypsies, some of whom attended the meeting and others sent messages of support from Monmouthshire, Hertfordshire, Gloucestershire, Lancashire, Staffordshire, Co. Amagh, Lincolnshire, Cork, Worcestershire, Kent, Middlesex and Glasgow.

It was hoped that the meeting would generate a more hopeful spirit among these oppressed people, leading to more vigorous action to establish their neglected human rights.

The meeting was very successful in spite of a 'No Gypsies' sign, at the 'Bull's Head' on Sunday, December 11.

There is now in existence a Gypsy Council to look after the interests of the Travellers' Community in Britain and Ireland.

embarrassment in his squalid mind.

There is something almost frightening about Black's obsessive quest to destroy copies of *Last Exit*; on December 12 he made his intentions known by saying that he would report anybody selling the book, and would draw on police help, and wouldn't hesitate to prosecute with hope of conducting a trial at the Old Bailey.

John Calder and Marion Boyars struck a blow for commonsense when, soon after hearing this bigot's threats, they stated their refusal to be intimidated. The banning of the book only applies of course in the area in which Sir Cyril's court action was successful, which means increased sales elsewhere, and Messrs. Calder and Boyars can surely do with the publicity, since if the Old Bailey is resorted to, Sir Cyril will have made such an utter fool of himself, that defence counsel should have a quite easy time if they stick to strict reason and logic.

The very term 'liable to deprave and corrupt' is too much of a generalization anyway to hold much water, since magistrates have yet to find a conclusive case whereby a book corrupted its owner or reader, though the pro-Blacks will always point to Ian Brady as a case in question. But Brady was surely already an embittered erotic dreamer before he chanced upon de Sade's writings and, besides, he was more interested in de Sade's theory of murder, which in turn led to his acting out his sexual dreams and his subsequent disowning of any responsibility.

Last Exit is written in a rough-hewn colloquialism which wouldn't endear it

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The landlord had accepted the booking for a meeting 'to promote human rights', since it was in a week dedicated to human rights activity. When he discovered—from newspaper enquiries trying to locate the meeting—that the humans were in fact only gypsies, he immediately visited me to cancel the booking. He explained that neither his regular customers nor the brewery would tolerate gypsies using the premises, because of previous 'trouble'.

However, newspaper attention on Whitbread's and, I hope, our conciliatory but firm attitude persuaded him to reverse his decision.

The meeting was in fact orderly and constructive—even the first-class all-white citizens at the 'Lamb & Flag' couldn't have behaved better if they tried.

After an address from the Secretary-General of the International Gypsy Committee, Vanko Rouda, names flowed in freely for membership of the Council. Membership cards of the Travellers' Community were distributed, bearing the telephone number of the National Council for Civil Liberties for immediate notification of crisis situations involving police or local authorities.

The meeting retired to a more friendly (church) hall for a social gathering. There was also a discussion of the local crisis situation in the London Borough of Bromley. In the district, there must be 50 or more trailers on the main road verges while the council's temporary site won from last year's campaign, stands locked and empty apart from the three families who stayed through the summer, breaking their traditional pattern of going down to Kent for fruit and hops.

One courageous gypsy has taken direct action and re-entered the site. It will be interesting to see how the new impulse towards group organisation will be expressed in the confrontation to come.

BRIAN RICHARDSON.

Post-script:

The Council has settled down to work at once.

An encouraging sign is the behaviour of council workmen who refused to evict two gypsy families from a site at St. Mary's Cray. Gratton Puxon told the press: 'This is the first victory for the newly formed Council.'

The libertarian behaviour of the council workman, Mr. Aloysius O'Boyle, cannot be stressed too strongly. He did not just refuse to evict the families but he also told them that if they wanted to leave he would tow them away. 'But I refuse to do the work of a bailiff', he added.

Police stood by 'in case of trouble'. Many complaints have been made by gypsies of the unsympathetic attitude of the police who 'roughly handle our wives and kids'. With such new and old watchdogs standing by as the Gypsy Council and the NCCL the police will have to show more caution.

But the direct action aspect of the struggle must continue to back up the work of the reformists.

M.H.

ANARCHY 70

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Restrictive Practices

IN ANY DISCUSSION on industrial affairs, the question of restrictive practices is bound to arise. It is seen by the employers and the so-called economists as the biggest stumbling-block to progress. Strangely enough everyone is very busy denying that such a state of affairs exists. The unions charge the employers with restrictive practices which is vigorously denied, and vice versa.

Restrictive practices are part and parcel of everyday industrial life, and will continue so long as we work and live under the present system. Far from denying the existence of such practices, they will have to be increased if we, as organised workers are going to at least hold our own against the attacks on our wages and conditions.

Every action taken by workers in defence of their working conditions is classified as 'restrictive', opposition to mobility of labour, control of output, manning scales, you name it and it is classified as 'restrictive'. The reason for such action is perfectly simple, if employers had a free rein wages and conditions would be impossible. Take the building industry as an example, job speed-up means not only a 'boded effort' but the sack in a couple of weeks, therefore building workers use 'their loaf'. The

building trade is a 'bloody jungle' in which all means of attack or defence are fair. Or take an example of controlled output. Mass production of pressed parts under piece-work conditions, the more parts turned out by the workers, so the time allowed is cut by the time and motion vultures, therefore the output is controlled by the workers themselves, which in anyone's language is pure 'self defence'.

SEE WHAT I MEAN

Wilson may bleat about tearing up rule books and the pundits may call for increased production but the people who do the work are the people who count, so until such time as they manage their own affairs restrictive practices are in order. Employers practise the art, by pushing the sale of one article and holding back on another, it is all part of the struggle—surely this is what present-day industrial life is all about.

Nine employees have been suspended without pay until further notice for refusing to co-operate with a works study scheme. According to

a T&GWU spokesman the employers Steel Nut and Joseph Hampton, are attempting to wreck the union set-up in the factory. Included in the suspension are the works convenor, shop stewards and members of the committee. Only members connected with union organisation have been hit. Such opposition is probably termed 'restrictive' by Gunter and his crowd, to us it's plain commonsense, in defence of conditions.

RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES NEEDED

The Government is expected to refer two wages councils' awards to the Prices and Incomes Board. One from the Agricultural Board and the other from the Drapery Wages Council. The awards made by the wages councils are truly fabulous. A 7% award by the Drapery Council brings the men's minimum up to £10 19s, rising to £11 7s. The agricultural award brings farmworkers up to £10 16s, for a 44-hour week, the average wage of a farmworker is about £14 10s.

Wages Council awards are a lengthy process normally, and if referred to PIB would take longer still. The awards by anyone's standards are 'piddling'. In fact they will be well 'washed out' by the time the workers receive them. The retail price index for November is up, with a further expected rise in January. These are the workers which a wages policy was supposed to help, whereas, in fact, they have been hoodwinked by the finest confidence tricksters in the game.

BILL CHRISTOPHER.



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WHO IS LISTENING?

SMASH THE WAGE FREEZE pamphlet priced 2d, written by Bill Christopher, published by Direct Action.

ALMOST EVERY WEEK on this page you can read an article by B.C. on the latest phase of shop-floor struggle, articles which contain accurate summaries or forecasts of governmental, trade union- or employer-originated chicanery. All that happens to the 'Cinderellas' or the boiler-makers, print and agricultural workers, postmen, busmen, all the 'Joe Soaps', is of vital interest to Bill. Every week he warns against the latest plot on the part of employers, trade union bosses, 'big nobs' of FBI, CBI, TGTWU, XYZ, who are about to take the last scrap of food out of our mouths.

Now here in this pamphlet, which I urge you all to read, Bill Christopher has summarised brilliantly what the Government's Wages and Incomes Bill means, how its separate parts supposed

to work and how, in many instances, threaten our livelihoods and civil liberties. How also the crafty politicians managed to make this frightening apparatus into Law, with hardly a snore to contradict these moves from a sleeping public.

No doubt all the paragraphs of this pernicious Law have been assiduously debated at every bingo-hall, betting shop or television studio in the country. No doubt you who read these notes have fought it all the way (only giving up when the *Morning Star* or *Newsletter* told you so).

But consider this: a million men this winter will play out their historical role as the 'Reserve Army of the Unemployed'. That also means at least another million dependants, women, children and old folk in the shadows of worry, want and misery.

The season for charity is soon upon us. Social Security and an incomparable National Health Service will ensure that the progress from begging bowl to the grave will be speedy and decorous. Let the failed writers and sociologists maintain that now we are all classless (except for the 'workers'—that unspeakable authoritarian lot). Bill's concern, however, is with the 'Cinderellas' and the boiler-makers. What they make of his good sense and accurate analysis is yet a mystery to us.

Or are our footsteps dogged by the police and by private 'dicks' of employers for nothing? Let us hope that this pamphlet will be read by many people who will discuss its implications and act upon it. As Bill says: 'If the (Government's) challenge is not taken up seriously, the future for the working people of this country is very bleak indeed.'

How to smash the wage freeze? Bill Christopher's advice is to use guerrilla tactics 'strike here and away, strike there and so on'.

He warns that rank and file committees must resist Communist and Trotskyist politicians who would want to take over the leadership of the struggle, when, in fact, they instructed the workers to *vote Labour*, knowing full well that the 'freeze' would come.

The Labour Government can also afford to tolerate left-wing parliamentary opposition in view of its majority in the House.

Bill is right. Opposition to the wage freeze must come from the rank and file. But being right and to be known to be right are two different matters. What are the chances of this pamphlet (or this paper) getting the ear of the working people? JOHN RETY.

LETTER

DIFFERING OPINION

Dear Editors,
Once again on the back page of *FREEDOM* we have the demands of yet another group of already well-paid workers played up as a struggle of the poor against their oppressors. Having been brought up in a printing town I have no time whatever for the printworkers and their unions. Needless to say I have even less for Mr. King.

The printworkers are already paid appreciably more than the average. OK, we live in a capitalist society in which everybody is out to grab what he or she can get and this is the function of trade unions. I am a member of a trade union. Don't let us pretend, however, that this evil necessity has anything to do with social justice—quite the reverse.

In the case of the printing unions the situation is worse. Entry to printing unions, unskilled as well as skilled, is artificially restricted and print union cards (which lapse if someone leaves the in-

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Attacked from Both Sides

THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC measures have produced an ideal situation in which employers can make attacks on the union organisation. They have, of course, not been slow in grasping this opportunity as has been shown in the two disputes taking place at the moment in the construction industry in London. The first is at the Mytons site at the Barbican and the other on the Sunleys multi-million-pound contract for the Ministry of Public Works and Buildings in Horseferry Road.

Both these disputes were a result of provocation on the part of the management. Mytons sacked three steel fixers for alleged 'unsatisfactory production'. Yet, at the time, no one on the site was working bonus targets and so the charges are ridiculous.

Two Incentive Advisory Panels found in favour of the men and advised against sacking, but the company ignored their recommendations. As I wrote in *FREEDOM* (12.11.66) the Transport and General Workers Union made the dispute official after Mytons had locked out the men and closed down the site for an 'indefinite period'.

Another union, the Amalgamated Union of Building Trades Workers, also recognised the dispute, but so far the largest building union, the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, has not given it official sanction. It must be pointed out that at district level the secretaries and organisers are giving their full backing. It is the top leadership which so far is not budging.

I did point out before (12.11.66) that the union executive might try to do a deal whereby a bonus scheme would be agreed to by them, but which could not be altered at site level and that a site industrial dispute procedure would be drawn up to by-pass the shop stewards. So far no deal has been done, but this is mainly because of the T&GWU's support for the men. It seems that this has been something of an embarrassment to the ASW and to the National Federation of Building Trades Operatives. These two were apparently quite willing to negotiate a new bonus and site agreement, possibly in return for 100% trade unionism, and not to fight the sacking of the three steel fixers and the subsequent lock-out.

SUNLEYS SITE

Following this, it appears that affiliated unions to the Federation have agreed that in future they will meet under the auspices of the NFBTO before making any strike official. In fact the unions have agreed to this and abide by their decision, it will mean less autonomy for the individual unions and subsequently a

more centralised control by the reactionary and bureaucratic Federation. It will also add another stage in the procedural machinery.

On the Sunleys site, the management provoked a strike by introducing a gang system of bonus payment. This would have meant that as many as 50 gangs would have been getting different bonuses, each competing with the other. The stewards had negotiated a collective scheme whereby every man got the same amount, with a guaranteed minimum bonus of 4/- per hour if targets were not reached.

CREDENTIALS WITHDRAWN

Sunleys site management also wanted the men to clock in for work already wearing their working clothes, a thing unheard of on building sites. A stand obviously had to be made and the men took strike action. The management called upon the works committee to get the men back, but at a mass meeting it was decided not to return and so Sunleys sacked the entire works committee for 'industrial misconduct'. The T&GWU were quick to make the strike official, most other unions, including the ASW, are only getting district level backing.

These two disputes highlight the attempts of the employers to smash union organisation in London. Two well-organised sites have been chosen, deliberately it seems. A similar method is in operation at ENV (*FREEDOM*, 17.12.66) and if the employers succeed, then other factories or sites in the area have no chance.

However, militant trade unionists on building sites have not only the attacks of the employers to contend with. Militants supporting the London Joint Sites Committee have also been attacked by the NFBTO. When the LJSC was organising the November 7 token strike in protest against the freezing of the industry's pay award, the NFBTO issued a warning that 'disciplinary action' would be taken against those taking part. This week they took that action and have taken away the credentials of three Federation stewards whom they say took part and whose jobs supported the token strike.

'SYNDICALISTS, ANARCHISTS AND SOLIDARISTS'

The Federation and, almost without exception, the affiliated union executives are out to break up the LJSC. They know that its strength is growing and that other committees have been formed, and are forming, in other parts of the country. These committees are linking up with similar organisations in other industries. The top union bureaucrats had to make this attack and it was ex-

pected of them. However, it does show how effective the LJSC has become.

The LJSC is usually described as 'Communist backed' or 'led', but an article in the *Financial Times* has gone even further. It said that these committees also have other factions 'such as the Trotskyists'. . . 'More "intellectual" elements like the Syndicalists, Anarchists and Solidarists sometimes become involved as well.' The article ends up with a very illuminating paragraph: 'Although employers and unions are equally anxious that these unofficial elements should be eliminated, both stress that the damage they do is not large when considered in relation to the whole construction industry. The general feeling is that to a considerable extent a company gets what it deserves, and that by careful watch on who is engaged, coupled with an experienced labour officer who has authority in the company and does not merely head a service department, and good relations with the official unions, most unofficial actions can be contained'.

It would not surprise me if a joint union-employers 'blacklist' of militants is set up, if it is not already in existence. Already a number of ex-trade union officials have become labour officers and in fact Sunleys employ one.

It must be stressed that while most union executive councils are all out to curb the militants and the LJSC, the officials at district level do give considerable support. They are doing this with the three Federation stewards and have so far refused to withdraw their credentials as stewards for their sections or trade. The officials are of course tied by procedure and so finally support for the militants must come from the lads on the sites.

This disciplinary action obviously will encourage the employers to make further attacks on union organisation, where high wages and good conditions are won and enjoyed by the men. If a union-employer deal is negotiated at Mytons, whereby stewards are by-passed, other companies will seek similar deals and perhaps provoke strikes to get them.

Rank-and-file organisation can defeat these moves by both the union executive and the employers. Some militants suggest changing the executives, but not only is there insufficient time, but the new ones usually end up with the same attitude as the ones they replace. It needs committees like the LJSC throughout industry, linked with one another, which do not call on union executives and the Government, but organise and act for themselves.

P.T.

Contact Column

This column exists for mutual aid. Donations towards cost of typesetting will be welcome.

Furnished Accommodation. Available £2-£3 per week in semi-community house near Crystal Palace. Box 46.

Accommodation. Accommodation wanted anywhere for unmarried mother and baby girl victimised by Birmingham City Council in their divide and rule policy while acting as militant spokesman in Birmingham Homeless Hostels Struggle. At present on NAB. Hopes to return to trade as paint sprayer as soon as day nursery found. Prefers own door key for change. Contact through Peter Neville, 12 South Grove, Erdington, Birmingham, 23. Urgently.

Accommodation Wanted. Girl wants flat in London sharing with 2/3 others. Lesley Owen, 24 Crawshaw Drive, Emmer Green, Reading.

Work. Urgent; young couple, both graduates, seek any work in which they can be together (for personal reasons this is more important than the money). John Tittensor, 103a Camden Road, London, N.W.1.

Accommodation. Young couple (with two small sons) urgently need 3-room s.c. flat at reasonable rent. Willing to decorate, baby mind, help in house, garden, etc. Box 42.

Accommodation. Martin and Sue Gilbert seek unfurnished accommodation in Greater London area — consider sharing — phone PARK 4701.

Accommodation wanted. Tourist accommodation wanted. Australian woman, travelling in Europe needs CHEAP accommodation in London for approximately four weeks in February, 1967. Prefer relatively central location. Would also like companion for travels in March. Box 43.

Accommodation: Bristol anarchist sympathiser, studios, responsible, teatotaler, needs bedsitter in Bristol. Clifton, Redlands, Hotwell area preferred. Large house. Box No. 44.

Accommodation. Fair bedsitter and separate kitchen, basement, own entrance. Camden Town. £5. Suit quiet couple, married or not. John Tittensor, 103a Camden Road, N.W.1. Any time.

Work Wanted in France. Long shot. Can anyone help married couple (30's) find permanent work—France/Switz. Box 47.

If you wish to make contact let us know.