

# Freedom

## Anarchist Weekly

SEPTEMBER 23 1967 Vol 28 No 29

## THE PLUNGE INTO DARKNESS

**T**RUST THE PRESENT Government, after having created an unemployment boom which can't be halted, to announce a rise in electricity consumer prices as from October 1—we now have the alternative of freezing, or, if we can't manage like B.P.'s model Boy Scout 'to smile and whistle under all difficulties', even Wilson-made difficulties, then if we want something we must pay for it, though everybody is paying through the nose for an industry which has never attempted to pay its own way, has wasted countless man-hours, multiplied its errors and finally, like all industries created and run on Government lines, passed the buck to the consumer. Electricity, being pretty old as inventions go, should be distributed as of right—at least that's the anarchist principle.

This take-what-you-want idea in an other-directed society could hardly be any worse than the distribution of power for profit of the capitalist kind. In fact I often wonder, when I fall to thinking about the unstable political figures we're surrounded by, if these men aren't somehow picked for their masterful calculations in brainless illogicality, forever passing with high marks on the test paper marked 'stupidity' because all the various things that go to make up what people

## STUART CHRISTIE RELEASED

His mother flew to Spain to meet him. A letter informing Mrs. Christie of her son's release was sent to her by the Spanish Ambassador in London.

It is good to know that this torture by hope for Stuart is finally to end and whilst we cannot congratulate Franco who still has thousands of political prisoners (including Caballo who was arrested with Christie), we would like to thank all those, especially Mr. Benedict Birnberg, who worked so hard to secure Stuart's release.

We know that Stuart still holds to his anarchist opinions and three years in prison did not sway his belief in the necessity of a Libertarian Social Revolution!

EDITORS.

## ANARCHY 79

ON SALE NOW

DISCUSSES

## ANARCHISM IN LATIN AMERICA

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**A**NYONE who has ever lived in the demoralising slums—whether it be Glasgow Gorbals, London's Notting Hill, New York's Bowery or Naples' hovel districts—soon realises that life is no bed of roses. While the numerous offspring bastards of the layabout rich sun their arses in the Bahamas or St. Tropez, ride to the hounds or play polo, eat at the Dorchester's or Hylton's, become pansified at Eton or Gordonstoun, the urchins of the slums and back-street tenements battle for survival against that degrading triad, Poverty, Filth and Squalor. No silver spoon for them. They have to be tough. The jungle law of the hovels will squash them if they are weak. This is life at its rawest and bitterest, the concrete hell on earth.

It was no surprise, therefore, to read the recent report issued by 'Shelter', the organization which campaigns for the homeless, dealing with conditions today in the human cesspools of Birmingham and London. According to this startling report, a bitter indictment against the Welfare State and every government that has ever held office at Westminster, we learn that an eight-year-old London girl has to have six tranquilisers every 24 hours because of the cramped accommodation in which she lives. She is thin and pale and walks around in a dream.

We read about a four-year-old girl in Birmingham who was admitted to a local nursery school unable to walk. She had been kept in a cot because her mother feared she would be burned like a neighbour's child living in similar conditions who knocked over an oil heater. After two years the girl can now walk—but she is more like a four-year-old than a child aged six.

The report is made up almost entirely of comments from teachers and social workers in the slums of London and Birmingham and is absolutely heart-breaking.

The report, called 'Back to School from the Slums', has been sent to the Minister of Housing and Local Government, Mr. Anthony Greenwood, and the Minister of Education, Mr. Patrick Gordon Walker, both so-called socialists.

Says 'Shelter'—'Hundreds of thousands of children in Britain are going to school each day from housing conditions so oppressive that their capacity for education is severely restricted.'

'The children from slum districts are so handicapped that in our competitive society they are inevitably destined to be losers. For them childhood is a time of lost opportunity.'

'How does a schoolgirl feel when no one in the class will sit next to her because the only washing facilities at home are a cold tap on the landing?'

And there is the case of the pupil who goes to sleep regularly at his desk. 'I haven't the heart to wake him up,' says his teacher. 'I know he gets no rest at home, it's so overcrowded.'

Continued on page 3

## COMPREHENDING SCHOOLS

**W**ITH the Cabinet's overriding of the court's decision regarding the 'comprehensivisation' of schools in Enfield, the battle over secondary education takes yet another turn in its already rather wayward path.

It seems rather strange to me that the matter of comprehensive schools should inflame passions to such an extent; after all, nobody pretends, or ever has done, that the word 'comprehensive' in this context really means what it says.

Under any government, comprehensive education will always be the 'hot-potch' that we have been hearing so much about recently. Either the blatant hot-potch of two schools half a mile apart being 'married' via coaches, telephones and long range 'togetherness', or the disguised hot-potch of a specially-designed, all mod-con. comprehensive, WITH 12 STREAMS TO A YEAR AND 2,000 PUPILS, who endure this mass-produced training (one dare not venture the word 'education') on a mind-

bending conveyor belt.

One could suggest with a fair degree of certainty that Johnny, in 1L, knows he should be in a secondary modern, even if you further the subterfuge by giving the class some suitable alternative designation (a rose by any other name stinks just as much), and Fred in 1A knows he should be in a grammar school.

Comprehensive education could work, given:—

- (1) unstreamed classes of average size approx. 12.
- (2) as much money spent on education as we now spend on the war machine.

What government would give you that? I have exaggerated only a little. Even a three stream per year comprehensive will 'work', for the same reasons as I have noted above.

What, then, is any kind of answer to this problem? The answer, I am afraid, lies with that old, rather unfashionable expedient—REVOLUTION. Revolution,

# A Cry from the Slums

This terrible state of affairs may shock some of our better-off citizens, and even some of our somnambulist MPs, but it is by no means rare in the Social Security utopia the Labour morons claim to have achieved.

Today, in Glasgow, despite a pathetic slum clearance programme, districts like the Townhead, Maryhill, Cowcaddens, South Side and Partick contain some of the most appalling hovels in Europe. They are rat- and vermin-infested, insalubrious, uninhabitable and disgusting. Not one of them has an inside toilet—it being on the landing shared by as many as five families—or a bath. Few have hot water facilities, some are still gas-lit. Yet, and don't forget this city has been ruled for many, many years by an alleged Socialist corporation, children have to play amongst crumbling wash-houses and broken, lethal-spiked

making money. Capitalism moves with horse-power, but when it comes to rehousing the poor Capitalism moves with mouse-power.

While Harold Wilson's pragmatic Socialism offers its panaceas for our major problems, while the wealthy purchase their luxurious bungalows and houses, while the jet-set fritter away their time with orgies in the sun, the poor continue to struggle against malnutrition, squalor, filth, vermin, disease, despair and despondency. Their unfortunate children, the spawn of the concrete mausoleums, will spend their young lives playing in the shithouses that to them is home. And their children will do likewise. For as long as capitalism's system of evil, with its all for the rich and to hell with the poor attitude, remains, the slums will never be cleared. There is no profit in rehousing the scum.

JONATHAN TELFER.



railings, filth, squalor and dirt. (It was not so long ago a TV documentary caused an uproar when it showed children playing in the back courts with dead rats.) In these conditions of poverty and degradation people reach the animal level. Is it any surprise that Glasgow has a high record of violence?

What will 'Shelter's' sociological report achieve? Will its spotlight on so-called affluent Britain's uglier side create a revolution in slum clearance programmes, redevelopment and house-building techniques? You can bet your bloody life it won't.

Prior to every election, national or local, would-be MPs and councillors pledge themselves, like the topline con-men they are, that houses WILL be built and slums torn down. How many times is this Bottomley-type flannel carried out? Do the massive housing waiting lists ever reduce? Do the slums disappear? Kidology unsurpassed. When it comes to

## WHO SHELTERS WHOM?

**W**HAT DOES 'SHELTER' really do about the homeless? They raise money through advertisements and pass this money on to voluntary housing associations who in turn purchase large dwelling houses and convert them into flats. 'Shelter' has no waiting list of homeless people and does not require a guarantee from the voluntary bodies that they shall house the homeless first. Neither is there an assurance that rents will be low although 'Shelter' asserts that voluntary bodies who receive gift money are not burdened with the repayment of a mortgage (the more they borrow the higher the rents).

Who are the members of these 'highly efficient voluntary housing associations'? I was told at their office (which they share with the National Association of Housing Societies) that are all charitable people connected with the churches. I wanted to know if people like the King Hill Hostellers would be re-housed automatically. Here I received an evasive reply that 'this was mainly a psychological problem. Some families are noisier than others'. This may suggest that a subtle 'means-cum-delicacy' test is in operation.

Although the sponsors include Audrey Harvey, Lord Soper and Jeremy Sandford, they are names good for publicity. The trustees are all drawn from the churches.

Some unpleasant thoughts occur to one in connection with the co-operation in 'Shelter' of the British Churches Housing Trust and the Catholic Housing Aid Society. Don't they already own a large proportion of the slums? Is this a face-saving operation on their part to divert attention from their bad landlordship? And aren't the churches in the sellers' market, at the moment trying to sell large dwelling houses? It would be interesting to know how many of the buildings purchased by voluntary housing associations are bought from church property.

You may say if only one family is rehoused in this way 'Shelter' is already doing a good job. But those that sent £100,000 in recently, sent it to help the homeless and not a P.R. firm for the churches.

JOHN RETY.

not with guns and bombs, but inside hearts and minds. Revolution in order to create a society where one kind of human ability is not placed at a premium over others that may be equally creative and useful, even vital, to society.

Revolution then, plus money—to create an unstreamed comprehensive educational system with a teacher/pupil ratio of 1:12. Until that time we may as well put up with what we have got; comprehensive education is no better and often a great deal worse for the child—believe it or not it is just possible to get worse.

Society must get its priorities right first.

PADDY FIELDS.

## Harlow Anarchists

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TO THOSE of us who don't think the present disjointed, disorganised state of the movement is the highest possible expression of anarchism in Britain, the forthcoming Conference of the AFB could be critical. Somehow, we've got to arrive at a practical policy, applicable to the society in which we live. As a prerequisite to this, it is essential that we:—

(a) accept some modifications in our organisational structure, designed to extend our influence among the general public and place anarchists in a position to give social leadership in industry and society;

(b) adopt a policy programme which can be practically carried out in the next twelve months by members and groups in our towns and cities.

On the question of organisation I will not dwell, save to say that, where possible, we should extend the groups into regional federations. A national organisation is near impossible until a network of reliable regions is created. The region is vital to anarchism, for it, rather than the nation, is the point at which a future anarchist administration would function and it is there where we should now make our feelings felt. Apart from everything else, an effective anarchist organisation will only develop when the movement is severed from the superficial ideology and theoretical fine points, which have retarded our public influence for so long.

The same applies to our policies; sectarian ideology has crippled us! Let it be enough, comrades, that our statement is anti-state and our organisation free, not authoritarian! For not only are the theories of the past inadequate in present conditions, but in every area of human affairs practice precedes science. Just as the apprentice who's not been on the tools doesn't make much of a tradesman, so the anarchist who hasn't learnt to use the socially progressive organisms in society won't be much cop either. Our policies must be adopted on the assumption that we will work with the tools available; that the peace movement, the trade unions and unofficial shop-floor organisations, will provide the means, not only to further anarchism by working with and within them, but—more important—that it will give us the chance to contribute our bit to the advancement of society and the cause in question. Therefore any policy, to be worth the conference's consideration, must be reasonably within reach of our implementation, through the machinery already mentioned.

There is much to be said for acting from experience and making decisions, free from ill-digested theoretical ideas! In the British movement however, such is not the case, and many, if not most comrades, think they must adopt a theoretical analysis before acquiring any experience of social struggle in society. Rubbish, these green comrades render themselves less than useless and totally unfitted for the job of tackling the practical problems which face our movement in its struggle with the State. This might not matter if these same comrades—unable to make much impact on their workmates and society in general—didn't devote their energies to influencing our movement. This is little short of disastrous, for it often results in inadequate, inexperienced, inward-looking people gaining ascendancy over the less-known, more socially active members in the movement.

# THOUGHTS FOR THE CONFERENCE

All this is not to diminish the importance of the groups and regions, or interfere with their local projects and policies. But some groups, like individuals, are essentially inward-looking and introvert; most of them don't realise it, others can't help it. Assistance and education is needed to help these groups overcome their difficulties and become socially responsible. The old Manchester AG was one such group obsessed with meetings which exaggerated our differences; it diminished itself to a circle of personalities, and found difficulty in accommodating strangers or new recruits. This kind of group would live longer and do more, if it kept to social activities, instead of meetings and lectures. Harlow AG, on the other hand, seems to present the new departure of a group gaining popular influence by developing their anarchism to give it local appeal. Yet, for general policy purposes, the political effectiveness of the groups themselves is bound to be limited! Whether we like it or not, if anarchism is to become at least a threat to the State's

power, we must apply and project our policies by way of the trade unions and peace movement, etc.

### SYNDICALIST SLACKERS

True, many libertarians are doing all that could be done in CND, C of 100, etc., but what's being done in the factories? How many jeopardise their jobs to help their workmates? Can it be that anarchists, for ever poking their noses into the affairs of Greece and Vietnam, are utterly helpless when it comes to helping their neighbours? Can it be that anarchists, for ever shouting the odds over foreign events over which they have little or no control, are speechless when it comes to speaking up for their workmates?

Be this as it may, the strength of syndicalism in industry is much less than those fraudulently describing themselves as 'revolutionary syndicalists' would have us believe. Given good management, we could do better! Amongst the teachers, and probably in other fields, we should be able to advance our influence. The problem is, we don't have

enough information about our members and their work-places to be of proper assistance in the industrial field.

Many comrades must cease to be mere syndicalists in spirit! Anarchists must invade the labour movement by giving priority to industrial affairs in their programme. The measures already taken by the 'Labour' Government against the workers could and should produce an anarchist industrial heyday, if we handle it right!

'Politics makes for disunity, action for unity,' so says R. M. Debray. We syndicalists are spending too much time politicising around with meetings, discussions, even conferences; the time has come to take action and give leadership. Out of our actions the anarchist idea will grow, not the other way round! Until comrades realise this, it is difficult to see, not just how they qualify as syndicalists, but how in effect they differ from the individualists. An active industrial anti-state movement must come out of the autumn conferences of the libertarians. T&G WORKER.

## MORE ON VIETNAM

Dear Editors,

Because there may have been some hysterical outcry against American atrocities in Vietnam does not negate the fact of these atrocities. They cannot be cancelled out by equating them with 'the liberation tactics of the Vietcong which entail the self-same atrocities'.

Whether we are intent upon attacking the causes of war and exploitation (as apparently you are), or whether we support the American case for this particular war, or the NLF and North Vietnamese case, let us get the facts right and in perspective.

We can begin by inspecting the word 'atrocities'. Not all words are empty, but we make them so when we use them out of context. We, the writers, who should be responsible for keeping the stuff of reality in words, we are the ones who help to empty them, by equating two different things and making them look alike. We can call the acts of the Nazis against the Jews atrocities, and we can likewise call the acts of the Jews in their uprising against the Nazis in the Warsaw ghetto, also atrocities—yet the two episodes are entirely different, are they not? Even if one takes the extreme pacifist line and claims that the Jews were different in resorting to force, or the purely pragmatic line that the Jews achieved nothing by force since they died in the end anyway—I think that it must be clear that the motives underlying these two kinds of killings were different, and therefore the two acts were different; and that it would be illogical to dismiss them both as equally contemptible.

You will know that the NLF was formed in the South against the repressive regime of Diem. You will know too that in 1965, when the Americans decided to send another 50,000 troops to South Vietnam, the NLF issued an appeal for assistance not only to the North, but also to the South Vietnamese who had regrouped in the North after

the Geneva Agreements. You will know that some 140,000 South Vietnamese 'mainly members of the-Vietminh army were withdrawn from South Vietnam, as a temporary measure pending the re-unification of the country by general elections as provided by the Geneva Agreements'. You will know that these elections did not take place; and that the 're-groupees' stayed in the North chafing at their inaction during the great repression against former resistance members by the Diem regime, which inevitably hit first and foremost at the families of the re-groupees'.

You will know that the Americans have brought into this war and are using white phosphorus, napalm, fragmentation bombs, toxic chemicals and gases, defoliants and every device of the most modern methods of warfare.

Perhaps you will have heard of the Buddhist monk, Thich Nhat Hanh, who has been drawn into politics by experiencing the war first-hand, having witnessed the bombing and burning of villages by US forces. As it happens he is strongly anti-Communist nor can he bring himself to support the Ky regime as he has seen it working and experienced its corruption. However, he has written: 'The objective facts are that indiscriminate terror, while sometimes used by the Vietcong, is not their usual practice. Nor can it possibly be described as being the source of the support that the Vietcong has from the peasant population. Often, indeed the victims of these executions were men who were hated by the villagers, and whose execution was in fact applauded by them. When this fact is added to the relatively small numbers involved—far fewer than some official figures have indicated, and hardly more than a thousand in all—and this is compared with the tens of thousands who die indiscriminately as a result of American and South Vietnamese bombing and ground fighting, it is not difficult to understand from which side the peasants

## LETTER

see the greatest danger.'

He has also written in the same book: 'North Vietnamese troops are in South Vietnam, and I wish to see them out, but the principal reason for their presence there is the prior and growing American intervention.'

You can oppose all wars as atrocities, and all governments as evil, or superfluous or corrupt or what you will, and that is your view which I will respect. But you cannot claim with any justification or truth, merely because you have contempt for all wars and all governments, that there is no difference in the action of the Americans in Vietnam, and the NLF and the North Vietnamese, or in their underlying motives. I think you do yourself an injustice when you do claim this; your article, until this point, is logical and intelligent; but by this claim it then becomes illogical and unintelligent.

Yours sincerely,  
London, W.11 Jo JEMET.

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## Anarchist Federation of Britain

(As there is no national secretariat for enquiries, speakers, etc., please contact local groups.)

1967 AFB CONFERENCE. Oct. 6, 7, 8. For details of London venue and proposals for agenda apply to LFA.

LONDON FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS. Temporary address c/o Wooden Shoe, 42 New Compton Street, London, W.C.2.

Sunday evening meetings 8 p.m. Lamb & Flag, Rose Street, off Garrick Street, London, W.C.2 (Leicester Square tube).

LEWISHAM. Locations of meetings temporarily altered to 83 Gregory Crescent, London, S.E.9.

EALING ANARCHIST GROUP. Get into touch with Ken King, 54 Norwood Road, Southall.

OFF-CENTRE LONDON DISCUSSION MEETINGS

3rd Wednesday of each month at Jack Robinson and Mary Canipa's, 21 Rumbold Road, S.W.6 (off King's Road), 8 p.m.

3rd Friday of each month at 8 p.m. at Donald and Irene Rooum's, now at 13 Saverne Road, London, N.W.3.

REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND GROUPS

ALTRINCHAM ANARCHIST YOUTH GROUP. Get in touch with Stephen Richards, 25 North Vale Road, Timperley, Cheshire.

ABERDEEN ANARCHISTS meet 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of month at M. Dey's, 142 Walker Road, 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at Liz Smith's, 3 Sinclair Road. Correspondence to either address.

BEXLEY ANARCHIST GROUP. Correspondence to Paul Wildish, 2 Cumbrian Avenue, Barnhurst, Kent.

BELFAST: Contact Tony Adams, 11 Winetavern Street, Smithfield Square, Belfast.

BIRMINGHAM LIBERTARIAN GROUP. All anarchists, syndicalists, individualists, etc., please contact Geoff and Caroline Charlton, top flat, 8 Lightwoods Hill, Smethwick, Warley, Wores. 25 mins. from Birmingham City Centre. No. 9 bus.

RESISTANCE GROUP. C/o Birmingham Peace Action Centre (formerly CND office), Factory Road, Birmingham, 19.

BOLTON. Get in touch with Les Smith, 74 Arnold Street, Bolton, Lancs.

BRIGHTON. Get in touch with 79 Coleman Street, Brighton, 7. Poetry readings every Sunday from 4 to 5 p.m. at the Fishmarket. All poets welcome.

BRISTOL. Contact: Dave Thorne, 49 Cotham Brow, Bristol, 6.

DUNDEE GROUP. Contact Bob and Una Turnbull, 39 Stratheden Park, Stratheden Hospital, by Cupar, Fife.

EXETER ANARCHIST GROUP. Get in touch with Anthony Webb, 39 Cowick Lane, St. Thomas, Exeter, Devon.

GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP ONE. Correspondence to Robert Lynn, 2b Saracen Head Lane, Glasgow, C.I.

HARLOW ANARCHIST GROUP. Enquiries to Keith Nathan, 138 Pennymead, Harlow or John Barrick, 14 Centre Avenue, Epping.

HERTS. Contact either Stuart Mitchell at South View, Potters Heath Lane, Potters Heath, Welwyn, Herts or Jeff Cloves, 46 Hughendon Road, Marshalswick, St. Albans, Herts. Friday, September 22 Johnny Funnell on 'Anarchy and Science Fiction', 8 p.m., 48 Lonsdale Road, Stevenage.

HULL ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact J. Tempest, 89 Fountain Road, Hull. Telephone: 212526.

HULL INDIVIDUALIST ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact 34 Outram Street, Holderness Road, Hull, Yorks.

IPSWICH ANARCHISTS. Contact Neil Dean, 74 Cemetery Road, Ipswich, Suffolk.

KILBURN, LONDON. Contact Andrew Dewar, 16 Kilburn House, Malvern Place, London, N.W.6. Meetings 8 p.m. every Tuesday.

LEE, LONDON, S.E.12. Anarchist-Radical Group. Contact 'Paul', c/o Lewisham Group (above).

NORTH SOMERSET ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Roy Emery, 3 Abbey Street, Bath, or Geoffrey Barfoot, 71 St. Thomas Street, Wells.

ORPINGTON ANARCHIST GROUP. Knockholt, Nr. Sevenoaks, Kent. Every six weeks at Greenways, Knockholt. Phone: Knockholt 2316. Brian and Maureen Richardson.

PLYMOUTH ANARCHIST FEDERATION. Contact J. Hill, 79 Underlane, Plymstock, Plymouth, Devon.

READING ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Alan Ross, 116 Belmont Road, Reading, Berks. ROCHDALE. Please contact Richard Crawford,

4 Hargreaves Street, Sudden, Rochdale. ROCHESTER ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Eryl Davies, 22 St. Margaret's Street, Rochester. Fortnightly meetings.

SLUGH ANARCHIST GROUP AND 'HIPPI' GROUP. Contact B. P. Norcott, 116 Lower Cippenharn Lane, Slough, Bucks. Meetings every other Friday.

SOUTH EAST ESSEX ANARCHIST GROUP. We would love to hear from fellow-sympathisers in area. All enquiries to M. Powell, 7 Lingercroft, Basildon, Essex.

SOUTH WEST MIDDLESEX ANARCHIST GROUP meets alternate Thursdays and Saturdays, on Eel Pie Island. Contact P. J. Goody, 36 Norman Avenue, Hanworth, Middlesex.

TROWBRIDGE PEACE ACTION GROUP. Contact P. Weston, Chivele, Butts Lane, Keevil, Trowbridge, Wiltshire. Meetings every Tuesday 7.30 p.m. Friends' Meeting House (opp. Bus Station).

WEST HAM ANARCHISTS. Contact Stephen Higgs, Westbury Road, Forest Gate, E.7.

NORTH-WEST FEDERATION

Regional Secretary: Alistair Rattray, 35a Devonshire Road, Chorley.

NORTH WEST ANARCHIST FEDERATION. BUXTON ANARCHIST GROUP. Secretary: F. A. Gresty, Punchbowl, Manchester Road, Buxton.

CHORLEY ANARCHIST GROUP. Secretary: Alistair T. Rattray, 35a Devonshire Road, Chorley.

LIVERPOOL ANARCHIST PROPAGANDA GROUP AND 'HIPPI' MOVEMENT. Gerry Bree, 16 Faulkner Square, Liverpool, 8. Meetings weekly. 'Freedom' Sales—Pier Head, Saturdays, Sundays, Evenings.

MANCHESTER ANARCHIST GROUP. Secretary: Dave Poulson, 9 Boland Street, Fallowfield, Manchester, 14.

SOUTH WALES ANARCHIST FEDERATION

CARDIFF ANARCHIST GROUP, SWANSEA ANARCHIST GROUP. All correspondence to: Julian Ross, 11 Wellfield Close, Bishopston, Swansea.

LIBERTARIAN TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION. Meetings—discussions—activities. Contact Peter Ford, 82 North Road, Highgate, N.6. (Tel.: MQU 5702.)

## PROPOSED GROUPS

BIKKENHEAD. Please get in touch with G. Woodhouse, 59 Cambridge Road, Woodchurch, Birkenhead.

MUCH HADHAM, HERTS. Get in touch with Leslie Riordan, High Street, Much Hadham, Herts.

SHEFFIELD RADICAL GROUP. Contact S.R.G., 31 Harcourt Road, Sheffield, 10.

NOTTING HILL. Please get in touch with John Bennett and Marilyn Faddy, Flat 4, 88 Clarendon Road, London, W.11 Tel.: 727 9745.

TORONTO, CANADA. Any Torontonians interested in Anarchism please contact Leonard Tarka, 108 Silverhill Drive, Islington, Ontario, Canada.

S.W. LONDON. Syndicalists, Anarchists, Pacifists and Libertarian-Socialists wanted to form S.W. London Libertarians. Correspondence to: Martin Page, 10 Thornton Avenue, London, S.W.2.

ABROAD

AUSTRALIA. Federation of Australian Anarchists, P.O. Box A 389, Sydney, South. Public meetings every Sunday in the Domain, 2 p.m. and Mondays, 72 Oxford Street, Paddington, Sydney, 8 p.m.

DANISH ANARCHIST FEDERATION. Gøthersgade, 27, Viborg, Denmark.

VANCOUVER, B.C., CANADA. Anyone interested in forming anarchist and/or direct action group contact Derek A. James, 1844 Grand Boulevard, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada. Tel.: 987-2693.

USA: VERMONT. New Hampshire Anarchist Group. Meets weekly—discussion, individual action. Contact Ed. Strauss at RFD 2, Woodstock, Vermont 05091, USA.

SWEDEN. Stockholm Anarchist Federation. Contact Nadir, Box 19104, Stockholm 19, Sweden.

CANADA: Winnipeg. Anybody interested in Direct action/anarchy contact G. J. Nasir, 606 Matheson Avenue, Winnipeg, 17, Manitoba.

BELGIUM: LIEGE. Provos, c/o Jacques Charlier, 11 Avenue de la Laiterie, Sclayn-Liege, Belgium.

EAST AFRICA. George Matthews would like to make contact. Secondary school teacher from UK. PO Box 90, Kakamega, Kenya.

USA: NORTH-EASTERN MINNESOTA. Contact James W. Cain, 323 Fourth Street, Coquet, Minn. 55720, USA.

GROUP-(T)REASON. Australian Anarchist, c/o Melbourne University Union or A.R. Giles Peters, c/o same.



# TWO OF A KIND

THE Rev. HillBilly Graham is on the holy warpath again. This time, during his Winnipeg crusade, God's own gladiator turned his sizzling, red-hot Bible on the world's humanists and liberals. 'America, Canada and Britain,' said this high-powered, highly-paid celestial tout, 'are becoming more humanistic, while Russia is calling for more belief in God' (could this be a feeler to the Kremlin for a Moscow rally?). Within a week of the Graham circus, American television was carrying his programme for an hour during peak viewing periods. I'll bet this burst a few cathode tubes!

While the 'saved' Billy battled with the forces of evil in an attempt to prevent the natives of Canada from taking a headlong dive into hell, or whatever name the modern theologians give to the heavenly concentration camp, Britain was being honoured by a visit from a flower-loving Himalayan prophet and baloney merchant called Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, the greatest thing since French letters according to the Beatles.

The strange thing about these two twentieth-century John the Baptists, and many other bible-thumpers and navel contemplators, is their interest in money—Graham for his soap operas and the 'Master' for his temple of transcendental meditation. In their respective styles they are both well-dressed, have fully satisfied bread baskets, kip down in the

best and most expensive hotels. No caves, slums or stables for them! Not while there are plenty of mugs and suckers around to supply the dough!

This cannot be said, of course, for the inhabitants of their lands of origin. In so-called affluent, dollar-happy America, unemployment and degradation is still rife (take a stroll down Harlem or the Bowery). While in India, need one remind you, poverty, squalor, filth, disease, starvation and malnutrition has reached the abominable state.

Why haven't the Grahams and Yogis of this world condemned the capitalist system which creates all the vices and evils they so vehemently deplore? Why hasn't Graham attacked the Pentagon assassins who openly admit that it costs 100,000 dollars for each man, woman and child murdered in Vietnam? (It would be more humane to give them all £10,000 and let them booze themselves to death.) Why do they not flay the ruling classes and the wealthy layabouts who snatch the produce of the workers for their own benefits? They won't because they are part and parcel of that set-up. Like all the religious fiends and con-men, they go hand in hand with the money system, glibly excusing all its wars, perversions, atrocities, famines, evils, intolerance and inequalities. Their message is nil.

J. TELFER.

## The Price of Freedom is . . .

LAST SUNDAY newspaper sellers of minority groups made a stand at Speakers' Corner, Hyde Park, and reasserted their traditional right to sell papers there. The police had instructions to leave them well alone. This is a victory for the small band of comrades who have initiated a campaign in FREEDOM. They received valuable support from the National Council for Civil Liberties and their letters protesting against the police harassment were printed in the *Guardian*, in *Peace News*, *New Statesman*, *Socialist Leader* and *Tribune*. There was also a detailed account in the Henry Fielding column

of the *Sun* newspaper, which alone must have brought the authorities to their senses.

On the day FREEDOM literature sellers were joined by vendors of *Solidarity*, *Direct Action*, *Socialist Current*, *RSG* and *International Times*.

Tony Smythe of the NOCL was also there and declared that an observer will be present from his organisation on future Sundays until he is satisfied that the harassment has ceased permanently.

A leaflet was specially produced for the occasion and was received well by the public.

JOHN RETY.

## Black & White Power—1

Dear Comrades,  
Some weeks ago I wrote a piece for FREEDOM after having heard Stokeley Carmichael speak at the Round House. This was not published, possibly because, in the opinion of the Editors, it was badly written. Certainly it was written in rather strong language, and even went so far as to refer to that leader of men, so admired in some quarters, as a 'big-mouthed twit'.

The purpose of this letter (which I hope will be published) is to make the point that there has been considerable one-sidedness in FREEDOM in the tenor of references to Carmichael. Perhaps the journal has been too timid to publish anything which might give serious offence to this politician and his followers because he is a Negro and, just at present, Negroes in America are alleged to be in insurrection.

It seems to me that FREEDOM has never been backward in publishing criticisms of politicians from an anarchist point of view when these politicians have been European or Asian; does it really make any difference that Carmichael is an American Negro? Here is a politician preaching racial strife and hatred on the basis of colour, and seeking to further his political cause on the basis of such racial hatred.

It is useless for apologist liberals like Colin McInnes to try to pretend that Negro racialists do not really mean what they say. I have heard Carmichael let himself go on the subject. Such politicians as Carmichael and his associates are the enemies of the American people, black, white and of any other shade of skin colour. They are simply playing the

age-old game of politicians—divide and rule.

I read in FREEDOM a doggy adulation by Dave Stringer who demands, 'Who would be willing to stick his neck out like Stokeley Carmichael with the risk of death by assassination?' I will tell him—George Lincoln Rockwell. This unpleasant beast, the American 'Nazi' leader, was prepared to stick his neck out and was duly assassinated quite recently. Rockwell's creed had strong similarities with that of Carmichael's, with black and white skins reversed; he also enjoyed the climate of violence and the occupational risks of a politician.

I suggest that anyone who seriously wishes to understand the nature of Black Power should study the history of Haiti and the nature of the present regime there, or indeed the recently constituted Negro states in Africa. I think that he will find that Black Power is, in practice, very like White Power.

TONY GIBSON.

## -2

Dear Comrades,

I agree with most of Dave Stringer's letter and think Anarchists should be active in the Negro communities in Britain and try to convert them to Anarchism as our US comrades are trying to do in the ghettos. I have sold several copies of FREEDOM to Negroes at CARD meetings, including the last issue, and have received some favourable comments from them.

A Negro from Kenya attended a Kilburn AG meeting the other week and agreed with most of our ideas. I have never noticed any Negroes at the 'Lamb and Flag' but one or two Indians drop in from time to time.

However, I disagree with Dave's point about money. Money can buy freedom in both housing and employment (e.g., they can start their own business) but it cannot stop discrimination in shops, pubs, police stations, insurance companies, etc.

Negroes should be able to live and work where they want to and not have these things forced on them by the white majority. That is what I understand Black Power to mean.

Yours fraternally,  
London ROBERT HALSTEAD.

## 'Atheism for Agenda of Vatican Synod'

—Irish Independent

GENERAL FRANCO got 44 votes in the Gibraltar referendum, 525 of those qualified did not vote. A Spaniard in Valencia who put up a 'Gibraltar is English' poster was sent to a lunatic asylum.

AFTER MR. HEATH had lost his temper with the *Express* for saying there had been a row in the Conservative Party, Mr. Anthony Barber replaced Mr. Edward du Cann as chairman.

FORMER ANARCHIST and PPU Forward Movement member, Mr. David Spreckley, Liberal candidate for Cambridge, said, 'To hell with politicians' and later 'I think life as an MP would be absolute hell'. He put the matter of his candidature as one of duty rather than inclination. Mr. Spreckley congratulated John Boyd, chairman of the Labour Party, for a speech to the Institution of Production Engineers. Mr. Boyd had said that democracy in the office or the factory is being forgotten. He was presenting a paper entitled 'Is industrial democracy compatible with efficiency?' in which he said, 'It is noteworthy that in very few cases do the employees look upon their work in a really new light [under nationalization]. The general experience is that though the distant "they" may have changed its name, it is still essentially the remote and arbitrary employer from whom the workers have always suffered. In fact, in this country, for the most striking examples of real occupational democracy in action, one must turn away from nationalised industry and examine some private firms or small workers' co-operatives.'

THE YOUNG SOCIALISTS (affiliated to the SL) appear to have had trouble at their International Assembly. A writer to their letter pages says, 'One delegation, that from the students of West Berlin, obviously had not understood the nature of the Assembly and the task it had undertaken. After the first day of discussion it announced its intention to leave declaring that it was doing so because of the "totalitarian" discipline of the camp. Instead of weakening the Assembly however, this event showed its real strength.' Another writer says, 'Those who disagreed with discipline on the camp showed themselves incapable of leadership or taking on the task of

smashing capitalism. To do this you must have a highly-organized and well-disciplined party. Those who did complain at petty things such as having to get up at six o'clock in the morning must surely see that they have absolutely no argument when you consider that comrades coming from Nigeria and Greece may have risked their lives to get to the Assembly.' Furthermore, another writer adds, 'Such policies of pacifist betrayal were most evident at the camp in the form of West Berlin comrades, who, incapable of revolutionary struggle, believed the student movement the only organised body capable of fighting the State (destroying the whole concept of working-class emancipation).' Nevertheless the final letter in *Keep Left's* section is a report from West Berlin on the activities of West Berlin students following the Benno Ohnesorg murder stating that 'The radical movement amongst the Berlin students, figured in the SDS has grown up meanwhile to 5,000; we are just organizing an "anti-university" for students and workers, and an edition of an anti-Springer mass-paper.' The *Guardian* reports that 200 left-wing students forced their way into the lobby of West Berlin's City Parliament to demonstrate against the civic administration. They were pushed out of the building by fifty policemen. In Tokyo, 284 students, thought by *The Times* to be 'under the influence of anarchists', were arrested in a University demo.

VANGUARD, organ of the Committee to Defeat Revisionism, for Communist Unity, known to its friends as CDRCU, is attempting (and we believe has succeeded) to form a party of Marxist-Leninist unity and includes an article by 'a Marxist-Leninist who genuinely desires Marxist-Leninist unity as a basis for a Party, although his views may or may not have changed since he wrote the article for *Vanguard*'.

THE MORNING STAR continues a controversy about Soviet writers. D. Cuckson of Harold Hill writes, 'The action is as brutal and stupid as the imprisonment of these writers themselves. Of course, the Party can tell writers what they must or must not write. It can also ensure by "administrative measures" to do what they are told. But they are not

objects to be "moulded" or "guided" by Party bureaucrats, however well-intentioned these may be, and if the boiler is lit and the temperature is rising it is necessary to open the valves!' Bob Selkirk of Cowdenbeath writes reproaching the plea for freedom for Soviet writers. 'After all, the Soviet leaders have had fifty years of experience in defending Socialism. . . . They are in a much better position . . . problems peculiar to a Socialist country. It is true it is 50 years . . . in a position to know just how rotten . . . conditions produced by a system based on the legal right to rob other citizens.' Mr. Selkirk is sending a letter of congratulation to the Soviet Embassy thanking Soviet leaders 'for their vigilance, foresight and realism, and I am doing so because maulin sentiment only plays into the hands of the potential racials and supporters of "gangster imperialism" to use a phrase employed by John Gollan in his book *The Case for Socialism in the Sixties*.' On a clear day you can see Karl Marx—in the British Museum.

MEANWHILE 79-YEAR-OLD Arnold Zweig denies having written a letter critical of the German Democratic Republic. Czechoslovakia denies the authenticity of a Manifesto issued by Czech intellectuals appealing for freedom of expression, the Soviet authorities have issued a report (from themselves) denying that Yuri Daniel was being mistreated, 'working and living conditions in the camp' in Mordovia 'were strictly according to the regulations'. The Soviet Embassy denies that Vladimir Kachenko, who was taken off a plane at Heathrow airport, was being abducted against his will.

AN AMERICAN MISSILE (minus warhead) strayed from its target in Utah and landed 'somewhere in Mexico'.

A SPEAKER AT THE Pharmaceutical Conference at Blackpool said that within twenty or thirty years Britain and America would have the capacity to replace every part of the human body and be able to create 'artificial men', but he warned that they might be robots with 'undesirable' consequences.

JON QUIXOTE.

## LETTERS

### An Over-Statement

Dear Comrades,

Jeff Robinson, writing in FREEDOM (16.9.67), states he has attained inner freedom from hatred, malice, etc., and goes on to make a personal attack upon me, asserting that 'my name is becoming a by-word for issue-dodging, especially in *Anarchy*'. In fairness I think you should point out that of the only two articles I have ever written in *Anarchy*, one replied to 'Martin Wardon', who also made a personal attack in reply to a criticism of ideas. 'Jeff Robinson' coming chivalrously to the defence of himself as 'Martin Wardon' proves merely that his inner tranquility is showing through his pseudonymous ego. His 'statements' have become over-statements.

The mere mentioning of Gerald Brenan's name does not prove that Robinson, or Wardon, or whatever he calls himself, knows all about Spain, any more than the mere citing of names of individualist-anarchists of the past proves that they have anything in common with his ideas. Brenan would never suggest that 'France sent arms to Spain' in the way that Germany and Italy (i.e. their governments) sent arms to Franco's Spain; at the most, the democratic governments, in the period when they did not actively impose non-intervention, permitted arms to be sold. (Britain is not 'sending arms to North Vietnam' though British firms may indirectly sell war material.) Russian arms were not only sold but used to support the Communist Party attack upon the anti-fascists from within.

The central issue to Robinson-Wardon's mind seems to be that nobody answers how 'militant revolutionary anarchism' can 'win'; if he understood what anarchism means, he would know that anarchism cannot possibly 'win' (in the way that fascism or communism can), since it is not a question of imposing power or enabling an ideology to domi-

nate, but of getting a free society. If as oratorical rhetoric one spoke of the 'victory of anarchism' it would be an inaccurate description, except perhaps as a metaphor, of a free society. However, perhaps he thinks this is 'dodging the issue' as, of course, the State could pick a showdown with a free society while the former is still able to do; but if one thinks that a free society can never be established, or that even if it could it would be undesirable (public opinion would be as bad as oppressive institutions, hence we must have oppressive institutions' runs the argument) then one is not an 'individualist-anarchist', one is just not an anarchist at all. The Robinson-Wardon school of 'individualism' is simply not anarchism, neither in the individualist-anarchist American tradition nor the European tradition; since the only logical definition of anar-

chist can be one who believes in and works for a non-governmental society. To think it an attractive philosophy, but unworkable, is the attitude of most non-anarchists.

A free society can be achieved by the abolition of all oppressive institutions; some of them have been abolished in one country or another for all practical purposes (the Church, the Monarchy, etc.); others persist everywhere (the Army, the Police). If somebody says that abolition of all these oppressive organs that make up the State is impossible, let them state which they want to keep, or feel can never be abolished, or think would mitigate 'public opinion', or are inviolable or unalterable or immortal. By the ones they cite, we can fit names to that person's philosophy. But it is not anarchism.

London A. MELTZER.

### PLUNGE INTO DARKNESS

Continued from page 1

Wilson before he had a chance to settle into the job. One wonders if such people, who've never been lied to so flagrantly before, would be prepared to listen to the anarchist argument in 1970. 'Socialism' or cack-handed Toryism won't encourage people towards striving, self-supporting communities—that would frighten your 'elected representative' too much. As Jack Robinson wrote in a recent article in this paper (and which thought struck me too), state chaos is mounting almost day by day, as those who rule over us show an inability to master the fundamentals of a technological age.

One of Wilson's most repeated gambits is to juggle his Cabinet around every few months, which has as about as much use as painting a different trademark on to everything and calling it 'new', but this practice has the slight value of keeping MPs slightly more alert than they'd otherwise be. Peter Shore has been picked out by Wilson as economics minister, though he says his head isn't very clear in that direction, but he's young and ardent and willing to learn as a club might say of a colt picked to play amongst men many years his senior at cricket. He's a starry-eyed young man who will dutifully follow in the footsteps of his master; he just hasn't been thrown in at the deep end of politics yet.

The bleak record to date of the Wilson era is worrying the *Daily Mail* editor stiff. He considers Wilson has given the serious citizens of this country permanent bellyache. But who are, and what does constitute, a 'serious citizen'? Anarchists, hippies and many shades of liberals, presumably don't come into this make-believe category. Still, three more years of Wilson to go is some penance! The plunge into darkness is well and truly in operation. For anarchists there cannot be much to look forward to, even when each successive government sows the seeds of its own downfall. Come 1970 and the bulk of the electorate will 'answer' the call of Toryism instead of forging a chain of true brotherhood which will start to get the country on its feet again.

RON PEARL.

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FREEDOM & ANARCHY (per year)  
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## AFB Conference

will be held on  
Saturday, October 7,  
9.30 a.m.—10 p.m.  
Sunday, October 8,  
10 a.m.—6 p.m.

at ASQUITH ROOM,  
ACTT,  
2 SOHO SQUARE, W.1  
Provincial comrades requiring accommodation, write to London Federation of Anarchists



# Roberts-Arundel —is this Victory?

**BEFORE WE START** clapping our hands with glee over the 'complete capitulation' of the management of Roberts-Arundel, we should examine closely the terms of the so-called 'peace agreement'. First, of the 90 men who are still out, 30 will begin work on October 2 and 15 more will go back within 10 working days and will earn the same wages for comparable work as before the strike began. Full stop. The rest will be decided by negotiation.

Talks will begin on when the rest of the strikers will be able to return to work, though the management have promised re-training for those men who have lost their old jobs. Tough luck if you end up with a job

## Contact Column

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

**Literary Contributions.** Poetry, extracts of prose and short polemical articles on current literary themes required for an expanding (but still primarily duplicated) SOMETHINGS MAGAZINE. All MSS and correspondence (with s.a.e. for return) to the editor, Geoff Charlton, 8 Lightwoods Hill, Smethwick, Warley, Worcs. Original, previously unpublished work only, please.

**Accommodation: East Coast.** Teacher (m. single) seeks unfurnished apartment/accommodation Hull. Any leads welcomed. Box 65.

**North London Situationist Group.** If you are interested in creating the situation and direct action in all spheres, please contact Jean-Paul Bouchenoire, 285a Alexandra Park Road, London, N.22.

**Freeman Syndicate** holding a weekend at the Clarion Youth Hostel in Hadlow, Kent. Discussion on the possibilities of setting up a secular Kibbutz. Saturday, September 30 — social evening (Jug Band and Jazz Band). Transport being arranged from London Friday night, September 29. Phone 01-574 7461 for details.

**Community.** Men and women with radical socialist orientation, introverted, with reasonable IQ, pagan sentiments and interest in the group family. SAE to Selene Community, Rhydymmerau, Llandeilo, Carmis, Wales.

**For Sale.** 7 doz. Roneo 750 stencils, 6/6d. doz., for benefit Press Fund, Freedom Press.

**Same Person** required to organize YCND. Some typing required, also imagination and sense of humour. Hard work, but rewarding. Apply to YCND, 5 Caledonian Road, London, N.1 (phone 01-837 9254).

**Free University: Manchester.** Any interest in forming one? If so, write to me with any questions or ideas. Box 66.

**Broadmoor patient** soon to be released needs job. Replies to A.R. Reading Group.

**Former Junkie.** Wants job and accommodation in London. Box 54.

**Just off the Press.** Anthology of protest-poetry by Flemish, Dutch and English poets, with many drawings and photo-collages. 125 pages, only 10/-. To be had from Freedom Bookshop or direct from Gerda Ides, Post Box 772, Haarlem, Holland (send Int. M.O. in latter case). A Dutch anarchist publication.

**Books Hand-bound and Engraved to Order.** De-luxe Leather Bindings—Mosaics—Full-leather Parchment—Half-leather Bindings. All books hand-sewn and repaired. Designs for Parchments, Mosaics, are original. For further information contact Mr. J. B. Wagner, c/o American Consulate, Calle Serrano 75, Madrid 6, Spain.

**Accommodation.** Wanted two comrades to share flat (three rooms and kitchen). Allan Harrison, 285 Alexandra Park Road, N.22, or phone ARC 1239 leaving address.

If you wish to make contact let us know.

that you dislike more than the previous one. Also negotiations will start on a wages and conditions agreement, and the company and the unions will enter into a procedure agreement.

And what have the unions surrendered in order to let negotiations begin? They have agreed to no victimisation of non-union workers, which means that the scabs and the women will continue to work there. In order to gain the right to talk with the bosses, the unions have agreed to an open shop which will weaken their bargaining power in determining any future agreement. The whole strike started after a breach of agreement by the management when five women (who are paid less wages) were employed after several men were sacked. The workers need a stronger bargaining power to make sure the management do not break future agreements. This is not a marginal issue; the management is viciously anti-trade union; the dispute was over basic trade union recognition.

The fact that this was recognised to some extent is shown by the activities of other workers in support of the people at Roberts-Arundel.

Manchester Airport porters blacked Roberts-Arundel cargoes. In February there was a half-day sympathy strike at Craven Bros., Shell Chemicals and local construction sites. As a result of these activities the firm was forced to sack 112 workers in April. In May, Manchester dockers refused to move the firm's machinery and NUR men in Stockport agreed to black the firm's goods. In September there was a half-day general strike in Stockport. Workers were now threatening to close the firm down altogether by strike action or incendiarism (FREEDOM, 9.9.67).

The firm had made fantastic losses due to the blacking of machinery (exports 80% of production) and the management had admitted to losing one million

dollars, yet the firm employs only 1,600 people internationally. The *Labour Worker* (July issue) assembled these facts and asked the question, 'Who was backing the company?'

The answer came in the *Sunday Times*. The interesting thing is that the man who stands out as chief 'peace-maker', John Boyd, a council member of the AEU who is standing for the presidency in the forthcoming elections, has MRA connections. The *Sunday Times* spilled the beans and this should be enough to increase the vote of his rival, Hugh Scanlon. What happened was that an unknown British MRA trade union member contacted a certain former US congressman and MRA activist named Dean, who discussed the matter with Pomeranz (chairman of Roberts-Arundel) who agreed that contact should be made with Boyd. The 'peace proposals' were evidently put forward in toto by Boyd and accepted by Pomeranz. Why should he disagree when the workers have so much to lose by this deal?

If Boyd's MRA label is not sufficient to lose him the presidency, the fact that he has sold the workers down the river should see to that.

And what has the Labour Government done about this dispute? Nothing worthwhile. It would not even instruct the local Ministry of Labour office to stop sending unemployed workers to Roberts-Arundel.

This has been a classic case of an unholy alliance between the state, Christian front organisations, private capitalists and TU bureaucrats to smash the workers' organisation. Why do we bother with these people?

This fight has been long, determined, and costly to the men who came out in the defence of the rights of all workers. We are all in their debt. But for the bureaucrats it is enough to talk to the bosses, and not to beat them. Is this victory?

BOB BLAKEMAN.

## Opening Up the Canals?

**LAST YEAR** the Government published their White Paper on Transport Policy, in which it was stated that the canals and navigable rivers of Britain are no longer of any value as far as commercial carrying is concerned. The recent White Paper on canals, 'British Waterways: Recreation and Amenity' reaffirms this view by advocating the retention of the canals purely on an amenity basis. The Paper is probably the most important statement of policy since the canals were nationalised in 1948. Since that year the British Transport Commission and the British Waterways Board (since 1963) have administered the system, and have done their level best to destroy as many canals as possible. They would have been successful but for the efforts of an enlightened few led by the Inland Waterways Association, who fought a seemingly hopeless battle with Whitehall to realise the commercial and amenity potentials of the canals.

In many ways the new White Paper breaks new ground. It has never been official policy to listen to anything that the public may wish to say, but for the first time Mrs. Castle invited suggestions from anybody interested, and it is clear that these bodies and individuals have been given a good hearing.

The first oddity of the new proposals is that the canals should be listed in two categories, amenity and commercial waterways. It is said that pleasure craft will be able to use the commercial waterways, but also that the amenity canals 'can no longer usefully form part of a commercial transport system'. This is clearly not true, as the amenity canals include such important waterways as the Grand Union, the Leeds and Liverpool and the Birmingham Canal Network.

All these connect important industrial centres, the business is there, but has to be attracted. The two categories would suggest a different standard of maintenance, and of course, this is already practised. Some channels are in such a poor state that it is impossible to navigate a fully laden boat, to operate boats only half full doubles costs. For the past 20 years the amenity value of the canals has been ignored, now it is the commercial side that is to be forgotten. What is needed is a proper study of the commercial possibilities; after all, the government should want the system to earn its keep, and to keep as much bulk traffic as possible off the roads.

Perhaps the most interesting statement in the Paper comes under the headings 'The Future Security of the System' and 'Consultative Machinery'. In last year's Paper it was proposed that the system should be subjected to a five yearly review—with the possibility of closure by Statutory Order. This was a deterrent to investment, both public and private, as no businessman would invest capital in an industry which may vanish overnight. This absurd suggestion has been dropped, a victory for commonsense. However, in view of the grants-in-aid the extent to which the canals are used will be under constant review. This puts the ball in the public's court. Provision is to be made for the closure of canals, but again it is a new departure in fairness. In the old days a canal would be neglected, then closed for repairs and suddenly would be found to be beyond restoration and closed. The Kennet & Avon Canal is a prime example. A new body called the Inland Waterways Advisory Council is to be set up to consider closures and remarkably, the re-

opening restored canals. The Chairman of the Council will be a member of the BWB. It seems rather odd that the Chairman of the Council should accept complaints against a Board of which he is also a member. Before a waterway can be closed the Council must report to the Minister, and even if the proposal is accepted it may be over-ruled by the House of Commons. The Minister of Transport may order a public enquiry, at which interested parties may, for the first time, be able to influence waterways policy. This is said to be to prevent 'arbitrary closures', a telling phrase, apparently repudiating the manner in which the British Waterways Board have acted in the past.

The Inland Waterways Advisory Council will consider complaints about the maintenance standards and again, for the first time, attempt to co-ordinate the BWB and volunteer organisations in schemes to restore and develop the system. In the past the Board has allowed volunteers to work on canals rather as a matter of privilege, co-operation has never been the pass-word. In future Local Authorities will be asked to co-operate and there is even a hint of financial aid for restoration schemes. In the past volunteers have worked spontaneously and without help, any attempt by the new Council to direct such groups should be resisted. It may be that it will turn out to be as negative and as anti-canal as the BWB.

As yet the White Paper only suggests, and it is up to the public as never before to make sure that the waterways are not sabotaged. The Parliamentary Bill that will be based on the Paper must ensure the continuance of the whole system. This is not only a good opportunity for the public to show their enthusiasm, it is the last opportunity, and if it is not taken then the waterways will cease to exist.

R. C. CONQUEST.

# Freedom For Workers' Control

SEPTEMBER 23 1967 Vol 28 No 29

## IRISHMAN'S RISE

**THE IDEA** is catching on fast that now, when workers make a claim for an increase in wages or less hours, they have to pay for it themselves. An Irishman's rise in fact.

This is exactly what British Railways are demanding from railwaymen. They will agree to pay guards an extra 40 minutes per day, provided they turn in 90 minutes work in exchange. Any man in his right senses could not agree to this proposal. Railwaymen's pay is pitifully low as it is, without having to do two men's work to get it.

I think it's fair to say that the morale of railwaymen is very near to its lowest ebb. The Government's policy is to contract the labour force of British Railways without any concern for railwaymen or passengers. Cash is the criteria. No matter how much money is wasted by the Government in other spheres, railway losses must be cut at all costs.

Since the day that Wilson treacherously betrayed the railwaymen to buy off a national dispute, railway workers have been struggling to catch up against the rising cost of living. The wage freeze hit them worse than most, because between the time they make a claim for a wage increase and the time they receive it the value is swallowed up, apart from the fact it is always less than demanded.

The present dispute on behalf of the railway guards has been grim to say the least. Pressure from below has forced the NUR executive to take half-hearted action. The dispute has been allowed to 'piddle' along. Demands for a national stoppage of all grades has been resisted by the NUR executive. Mr. Greene, the NUR General Secretary, stated: 'The only people who should be involved in this dispute are the guards and shunters'. Obviously this is the best way of isolating the dispute. A com-

promise can then be reached on the basis that 'thousands of railwaymen's jobs cannot be put in jeopardy for a few guards and shunters'. We have heard this line so many times throughout industry.

The policy of British Railways is to get rid of guards altogether. London Transport drivers on the experimental guardless trains on the loop of the Central Line receive £21 13s. 0d. per week. Main-line drivers without guards £17 per week. Even so, London Transport drivers on the experimental project are under-paid, because the joint packets of a guard and driver are far more than £21 13s. 0d.

The Railways Board and the Government are deliberately provoking the railwaymen, they realise that because they are public transport, public sympathy is not forthcoming in any dispute, so they can kick them around. How long railwaymen will stand being kicked is anyone's guess, but when they do decide the time is right for all-out fight, they are going to need the assistance of the rest of public transport. Now is the time to start talking and organising in these terms, one lot out and another in ensures a first-class failure.

BILL CHRISTOPHER.

## Vauxhall's Feel the Pinch

**THE EFFECTS** of the overtime ban and work-to-rule are beginning to be felt by Vauxhall Motors. The ban is in operation at all three plants—Luton, Dunstable and Ellesmere Port.

The Vauxhall management have offered a wage increase with 'strings attached'. As usual—pay out with one hand and take twice as much back with the other. The management made their offer last July and car workers at Luton made their reply in no uncertain terms. The point was also made by the management that this was their final offer, which therefore leaves very little to talk about, or so one would have thought.

The National Union of Vehicle Builders have decided to ask its members to work normal, whilst discussions are reopened with the management. Evidently there is some disagreement between Alf Roberts, General Secretary of the NUVB, and its East Midlands organiser, A. Leary, on the question of whether the members' actions are official or otherwise. Leary makes a valid point: if the workers do not wish to work overtime it's up to them.

The main point that is made by Vauxhall workers is that they want parity in wages with the Midland car workers. They are fed up with producing on the cheap.

## Good for a Laugh

**REG PRENTICE**, Minister of Overseas Development, when addressing Labour Party members at South Shields, posed an interesting question: 'Why does a disc jockey earn more than a nursing sister?' He could have posed the question a different way, 'Why does a comedian at Back Gammon-on-Sea get less than all the comedians in the House of Commons?' After all, they are all good for a laugh, except that those in the Commons work out to be so terribly expensive, and the results of their jokes cost Joe Soap much of his hard earned wages.

B.C.