

THE RAPE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE

EVERY SUNDAY AFTERNOON in spring and summer sees something of a minor exodus of people travelling by car into the countryside in an attempt to escape from the impersonal and ugly environment of the town and city. But every season the trip takes a little longer as more cars compete for road space and suburbia expands farther into the country; and when one gets there one expects the countryside to be countryside, and not a semi-rural landscape dotted with garages, power stations, hoardings, hill-top rubbish dumps, pylons, junk-yard farms, disused army camps and badly-designed houses. Deprived of beauty in one's immediate environment at home and work, one makes the weekend pilgrimage only to be confronted with an eyesore.

Where good landscapes still remain, they tend to be part of large estates, whether owned by private individuals or the state. Even so, private landlords are often willing, when they need the money, to sell land for development which mars the landscape. Most of the eighteenth-century parks, remnants of an age when landscape mattered, are generally in the last stages of decay with no new tree-planting. Individual smallholders tend to be even less concerned, piling up junk such as old cars and tractors in their yards; while the successful modern farmer-businessman in his factory farm knows that farms don't sell on appearance and, backed by a Government policy that consciously encourages larger agricultural units and 'rationalisation' of layouts within farm boundaries, merrily sends his bulldozers through the hedges; hedges that are being removed at a minimum rate of 7,000 miles each year. Provided this rate remains the same, the last hedge in England will be torn up by the roots in the winter of AD 2049, all of which totally ignores the value of hedgerows for the protection of wild life, soil conservation and the beauty of the landscape.

NO CONCERN FOR LANDSCAPE

Also, little or no concern is shown for the landscape in the development of expanding villages. Abandoned allotments and decayed orchards are left in the centre of compact villages, while clutches of council houses are tacked onto the end. Although they may be well-designed individually, and in isolation from the environment, different coloured bricks and tiles and the planting of trees and hawthorn hedges should be considered instead of the usual concrete posts and chain-link fencing, so that they fit into the existing village.

But the results of private housing are even worse, especially bungalows, which are alien to the village scene and waste a lot of land. The kind of private housing that is being built is an attempt to solve the problems of the society we live in, within that society, and the result is the creation of greater problems. The detached and semi-detached house express the desire for isolation in an overcrowded society; the desire for one-upmanship in a competitive society (the poor man's version of the mansion); the desire for the rural (the garden) in an urban society; all done on an individual basis in a society that is lacking in community. The result is neither splendid isolation nor community, neither town nor country, but something that has the disadvantages of both and the advantages of neither—suburbia. 'Ten million private dreams become a public nightmare.' Essentially there is no difference between a town and a village (apart from size); they are both urban. The need is for the building of urban (terrace-type) houses in-filling vil-

lages and for the creation of new villages and genuine new towns, for community planning rather than private speculation.

The needs of an increasing population provide other threats to the landscape; primarily the need for water supply and an improved road system.

The Government has recently approved the building of a 54-acre reservoir (part of the land to be flooded is common land) at Meldon, in the Dartmoor National Park. An alternative site suggested by the planning assessor and the Dartmoor Preservation Association was only pretended to be considered by the authorities. According to John Barr in *New Society* (28.11.68), the recommendations of public enquiry inspectors were overridden; there was an outright resistance by the Government to consider alternative sites, and a notable reluctance in official quarters to let all interested parties have their say. Considerations of capitalist economics ruled the day and the value of the environment was not considered. Barr concludes: 'There is a real risk that in time Dartmoor will be transformed into a kind of sterile Lake District, the lakes ringed by barbed wire, and the public restricted to peering over the barriers.'

In Westmorland is one of the loveliest deer parks in England. It is 600 years old; has the only herd of Norwegian black fallow deer in Britain, the finest avenue of oaks in Britain (250 years old); it is one of the earliest examples of British landscaping art predating Capability Brown by 50 years; and as well as all this it has the remains of the tenth-century monastery of Hefresham which was abandoned during Viking raids. Its name is Levens Park and it is threatened by the advance of the M6 motorway.

An alternative route would involve cutting through a smallholding, building the road next to houses and cutting the grounds of a convent in half. This alternative route is estimated to cost £170,000 less, but the figure is disputed by the Ministry of Transport. Objections can only be considered by the authorities when the final plans are published and a compulsory purchase order has been made. Not the waste of effort, time and money you might think, for the authorities seem to consider the hearing of objections as a mere formality. The Chief Inspector of Monuments has said, 'We are prepared to schedule the whole park as an ancient monument after the motorway has gone through.'

LIP SERVICE

The Government pays lip service to a programme of National Parks, green belts, etc., and a new countryside act reiterates the importance of 'the enhancement of natural beauty', yet it, and the speculators it allows to run wild, are the main culprits engaging in the destruction of the countryside. Where it is not bent on creating desolation itself, it seems content, in the realm of planning, to put a fence round a village, with little concern about how far and at what rate the fence expands and what goes on inside it.

Without considering the multiple use of rural areas for caravan sites, power stations, etc., there is so little that is really rural in our environment that it needs preserving. The state is supposed to be an efficient planner, but in this sphere it has shown itself incapable of planning for the needs of the people, considering both material needs and the value of the environment.

And yet the gap between capacity in architecture and planning and the usual practice is enormous. The failure is a result of false communications, communi-

Nationalism and Freedom

One of the most interesting phases of the great revolt is the agitation of the Keltic populations, if not for a free land, at least for land less heavily burdened for the maintenance of their Teutonic masters. Foreign competition has reduced the value of agricultural produce by something like half. But the non-producing classes, i.e. proprietors and clergy, and farmers in localities where these have been bitten by the idea of degrading themselves from workers into gentlemen—are struggling to wring the same unearned benefit from the toil of the labourers as before. Amongst the Keltic peoples this attempt to extort the uttermost farthing is aggravated by antagonism of race, by the tradition of conqueror and conquered, by the imposition of an alien law. The tithe war in Wales is a current example. These tithes are an arbitrary charge upon the rent of the land, varying from 6d. to 10s. 4d. an acre. They are reckoned by the average price of corn, whereas Welsh land is mostly pasture, and stock has been depreciated 30% during the last two years. Grievance number one. They are paid to support the Welsh clergy of the alien Church of England, to which religious body only 300,000 out of a population of 1,500,000 belong. Grievance number two. In view of the bad times the landlords have accepted a reduction of rent, but the majority of the clergy have refused to follow suit. Grievance number three. The farmers, 400 or 500 of them, have resolved to be sold up rather than pay, and on the 7th September at Ruthin fair they formed a North Wales Anti-Tithe League. They have the people with them, miners and farm labourers alike. Indignant crowds have attended the forced cattle sales, and only been prevented beating and ducking the bailiffs and auctioneer by bodies of 80 or 90 policemen. One obnoxious parson has to be guarded to church by a policeman on each side, and many others have been frightened into offering a reduction. The agitation, partial and narrow as are its present objects, is a valuable practical lesson to the Welsh people in the art of ridding themselves of land leeches.

—From *The Coming Revolution*,
FREEDOM, Vol. 1, No. 1,
October, 1886.

THE COMING INVESTITURE

of Prince Charles as Prince of Wales has led to a revival of interest in Welsh nationalism, and to the arrest of members of the Free Wales Army, no doubt to discourage nationalist demonstrations. Because it has happened so long ago it is easy to forget that Wales is in fact a conquered country. Although English and Welsh have become so much assimilated to each other, resentment still exists. The position of individual Welshmen is not really comparable to that of, say, the American Negroes or the Catholics in Ulster. They do, either in Wales or in England (the latter country they can enter freely without passports or permits), have complete social equality (for what it's worth) with Englishmen. No one is persecuted for being small and dark and speaking with a sing-song accent! Nevertheless a sort of colonialism does exist. The piece quoted above shows how the Welsh farming community was exploited to the profit of the Church of England.

cations having taken place between planners and bureaucrats, instead of planners and people. The need is for a new structure—the village assembly or commune. The commune, in co-operation with planners, architects and representatives of building workers' associations, could decide how the village should grow, how its buildings, trees and the spaces between should be related; what materials should be used; what its detailed and general form should be. The area could be planned as a whole by the representatives of the workers' organisations, the village assemblies, and the towns that have surplus population.

The bureaucracy is incapable of planning our environment; we must do it ourselves. The immediate need is for organised resistance to bureaucratic vandalism based on direct action by village communities. There have already been isolated instances of housewives tying themselves to trees that enhance the landscape, preventing workers from cutting them down, destroying decades of growth in a matter of minutes. This, however, would only be a stop-gap. Village communities must make their own plans (there must be some planners and architects who care, and are willing to render their services voluntarily) to counter those of the bureaucracy. Every day bulldozers in fields and pens in offices are turning our countryside into a desolation. Time is short.

B.B.

tion, begin to put up candidates for elections or even to form armies. (Anarchists are not necessarily pacifists, but an anarchist army is difficult to visualise, although I believe something of the kind was tried in Spain.) Or become, as they sometimes do, racist. To make a religion out of the Welsh or Irish languages, or of having a black skin, is no more sense than making a religion out of the tongue of Shakespeare, or out of Norman or Saxon blood. Anarchists have many bitter experiences of the results of supporting, temporarily of course, the less evil government against the more evil (or what they at the time imagined to be the less or more). A Welsh republic would in all probability jail strikers and squatters, or those who demonstrated on their behalf, just as the English monarchy does.

Even the People's Democracy movement, which is closest to us in its attitudes, participated in the recent election in Ulster. All we can do is to point out the dangers of this kind of proceeding, while at the same time supporting all forms of non-governmental, spontaneous and libertarian popular action.

The original programme of Plaid Cymru, the Welsh independence party, put out after the Second World War, was near-anarchist. It advocated workers' control of industry. The demand for a Welsh parliament was, as it were, tacked on at the end, as a sort of afterthought. Welsh nationalists were also often ardent pacifists. But, as so often happens, the movement becomes more power-conscious as time goes on. The 'practical' men take over. 'Idealistic' or 'utopian' demands are put off to some indefinite future.

Perhaps this tendency is inherent in the very nature of all organisations. At all events it usually makes its appearance. We have to be on our guard against it always.

ARTHUR W. ULOTH.

SQUATTERS' HOTEL

MEMBERS of the Arts Lab, in Drury Lane have been attempting to obtain the use of an hotel which has stood empty for two years. Various attempts to get the premises on a monthly licence have failed; so ten days ago a working party entered the building and began to clear the debris of two years' neglect. Then on Friday, March 7, the police noticed and investigated and left. The situation at this stage was that an immediate occupation was necessary. About 50 people entered the hundred-roomed building and began to clear it. During the day the media man came and looked, the GLC sent its officials to ask if we knew that we were trespassing. 'Yes, we did.' 'Who is your leader?' 'Our who?' was the reply, 'we haven't one.' The spontaneity was beautiful. During Saturday the following notice was displayed on the street door.

HUMAN RIGHTS SQUATTERS
178 Drury Lane,
London, W.C.2.

This building has stood empty for two years. It is owned by the GLC but has now been taken over by those who need somewhere to live. There are still some unclaimed rooms—so if you've nowhere to live, come and take one—it's yours. The smell is due to milk which has been there for two years, but we are at present cleaning, disinfecting and painting the building.

IF YOU AGREE WITH OUR ACTION PLEASE SIGN BELOW
(17 signatures)

There are still some rooms to spare, so, if you haven't anywhere to live just go to 178 Drury Lane and claim one. It's yours provided that you clean it out. Since the Occupation it has become clear that the squatters need desperately a hard core of militants who are prepared to hold the place and fight if necessary. Also they need bedding, heating and various household goods. Help them to help themselves.

PETE POLISH.

books?

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The Call of the Wild	Jack London	3/-
Mr. Love and Justice	Colin MacInnes	4/-
Martin Eden	Jack London (imperfect)	3/-
A Truce to Obedience	Charles Jacobs	6/-

Freedom Bookshop

Write or Come!

Editorial office open Friday, March 14, 6-8 p.m. and Monday, March 17, 2-8 p.m. Telephone: BISHOPSGATE 3015.

New temporary address: 84a WHITECHAPEL HIGH STREET, c/o Express Printers, (entrance Angel Alley), WHITECHAPEL, E.1. (Underground: Aldgate East. Exit: Whitechapel Art Gallery. Turn right on emerging from station.)

Temporary opening times: Tuesday-Friday, 2-6 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

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are the publishers of the monthly magazine ANARCHY and the weekly journal FREEDOM specimen copies will be gladly sent on request.

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PUBLICATIONS include

- Berkman's ABC of ANARCHISM 2/6 (+5d.)
- Rocker's NATIONALISM AND CULTURE 21/- (+4/6)
- Richards' MALATESTA: His Life and Ideas Cloth bound 21/- (+1/3); paper 10/6 (+1/-)
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MONICA FOOT'S GLOOM about 'If...' distribution (FREEDOM, 21.12.68) was unfounded. The Chains found that even Lindsay Anderson can be box-office, and so we six-bob plebs at Oxford have now seen the film. Doves of beblazered private school pupils were converging on the cinema each time I went near, and I have eagerly scanned the local rag since for details of cataclysms in sedate fee-paying character-chipping blocks.

The only upset likely, though, is to those who have stroked the public-school ethos through its classy days and now see in this picture not the bemaddled police dog but the rogue Alsatian biting the whistle that trains it.

The three 'rebels' in the film are not really against the Pavlovian system that has reared them: quite the contrary, they demonstrate most plausibly exactly what that system can do to normal people when it really tries.

Travers can 'take it': he has a stiffer upper lip than those who beat him; the endless aggression and psychological domineering practised by all in the school on whoever is weaker is accepted by him as the law of the world—his wall is covered with magazine photos of brutality and BAMM!!

His milder mate, Knightly, knows that suffering is not just a matter of twisting an arm till it can't be stood: he mentions wars, starvation, and his mother's cancer. But Knightly is loyal—another public school value. His loyalty leads him to follow the dominant Travers: at the same time he is aware that he is resisting injustice in the system.

The third mate is Wallis, preoccupied with his bad breath and his Gaius appeal for the fags (called here 'scum': a term whose gratuitous violence exactly typifies what the system breeds).

'IF' ON TOUR

When the three of them, after a crude and unjustifiable caning from the prefects ('whips'), pledge themselves in their own blood, to action, Travers' slogan is just 'War to the Death', Knightly's is 'Resistance', Wallis' 'Freedom'. So the character of each is carefully reflected, and freedom is specifically equated with the sensual Wallis and his love affair with young Philip—direct affection on both sides, rather than the devious sexiness which the whips slyly betray.

For there are real qualities behind public-school clichés. In the courage and coolness of Travers, the good-humour and loyalty of Knightly, the athleticism and Greek sensuality of Wallis are the bases of splendid people—perverted, even ruined, by the public school in which they have been doomed to grow.

The finding of the arms and the erupting of the three on the roof (with the girl) to machine-gun massacre the silly guests at Speech Day is not Anderson's hymn to violent direct action. It is, in the film's context, an immensely sad scene: the logical result of boarding up the young. This, Anderson is saying, is why violence exists—because we take the best of qualities in the best of our youth and contort them at authoritarian 'schools' as misconceived as this.

Violence, indeed, touches everything in the film: even when Travers meets

his girl in a caff for the first time they snarl instead of kissing.

Where Monica Foot found Nostalgia in it all I am at a loss to know. The ironic shots of the Cathedral-like school (ideal Prospectus stuff) at the beginning of each section? The harsh jealousies and cliqueness (attractive?) that govern the whips? Perhaps there is nostalgia in the choice of Travers' favourite tune—the innocence of a 'Sanctus' underlaid with the savage drum-beats that mark the 'Missa Luba'—but it is Anderson's nostalgia for the human beings lost in the cruelties of the system.

'If...' is a film you can keep going back to, in your mind or in the cinema: it bridges the unbridgeable gap between film and the tradition of English novels: the careful building of each detail to support the final moral; the use of sections and repeated themes; the irony (the very title refers to Kipling); the love for persons in all their colourfulness, the delight in 'characters'. It is less philosophical than 'Young Torless', where the prefect class is, horrifyingly, more conscious of where it is going, and more perfectly cruel. Anderson does not test the Nietzschean proposition that power may ennoble (which Torless finds to be a romantic myth). He shows that a Power structure, even without clearly knowing it, even under a Sunday Times-liberal Head, will educate a faith

in brute force and not in Sunday Times-liberalism, or whatever is the wallpaper doctrine around the battlements. In the end, when the tools of Force are turned back on the Head and he dies of them, we are conscious of the perfect poetic justice of this. 'Trust me,' he is shouting, with the same mouth as Macmillan and Wilson, or as Mao, or as General Westmoreland-B.J. At the back of his façade of democratic consultation, communist society, equal opportunities, is the facts of the arms dump and the Law.

When the people, or pupils, have learnt this, they only need the key to the armoury or a club for the lock. But their violence comes just as much from the ethic they have lived under, and will not build a true society any more than the old Authority would. So Anderson is more concerned to show us the prefects excitedly digging in to do battle with the rebels, than to laud the revolutionaries. The Common-market Head tries to stop it all, but by now the Major Buntings of his side are in control, gleefully justified in their flog-'em-hang-'em views by the disorder.

In the end the system has triumphantly brought the worst out of everyone.

All the beblazered may not see this, but they will recognise the pointed realism of the school scenes (helped by the totally real characterization), the weakness of the staff, the NCO-ness of the prefects, the injustice of the rules and punishments. To see all that taken to its harsh logical conclusion will give them something to think about, anyway.

And IF, now, someone makes a film about a libertarian school, they can pick up the story on the other side of 'Zéro de Conduite'.

*Jean Vigo, 1933. JOHN ROE.

Action for Homes in Belfast

LAST WEEK THE PD launched the first of their post-election attacks with a token occupation and squat in Fanum House, a virtually untenanted prestige block of offices in the heart of Belfast as a protest against the deplorable housing conditions here. The government claim to be building 12,000 houses per annum, but at least 29,000 are needed each year. There is a chronic shortage of skilled building labour here and most of it is being squandered on office blocks which are intended to stand empty and appreciate in 'value'. During the two hour 'occupation' the squatters distributed leaflets demanding (1) The declaration of a housing emergency; (2) That

all property vacant for more than 12 months be requisitioned; (3) That skilled labour be directed towards homes not offices; and (4) That the housing trust debt to the central banks be cancelled. The occupation was the main news item on both TV channels and the lead story in all the local newspapers.

This action has resulted in the government's unseemly haste in pushing through the oppressive Public Order Amendment Act which will enable them to jail anyone who squats or sits down in a protest. This repressive measure allied with the infamous Special Powers Act will, they believe, succeed in stamping out the civil rights agitation and effect the continua-

tion of totalitarian rule here. But again they have miscalculated. PD will be holding a march in Belfast against the repressive legislation and at Easter a massive demo/march from Belfast to Dublin to demonstrate against the injustices of the north and the south, where the scandalous Criminal Justice Bill is about to come into effect and the reactionary Fianna Fail apes the unionists in the north. HELP IS NEEDED AND ALL COMRADES ARE STRONGLY URGED TO BE IN IRELAND FOR EASTER. Further information and travel arrangements from the Malatesta Group (in address list).

REG BROAD.

Anarchist Federation of Britain

LONDON FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS. All correspondence to LFA, c/o Freedom Press, Sunday evening meetings at the 'Metropolitan' (corner of Clerkenwell Road and Farringdon Road), 7.30 p.m. Next meeting Sunday, March 16. EALING ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Lindsay Wither, 19 Aymer Road, Shepherds Bush, W.12. HARINGEY. 'Siege of Sidney Street Appreciation Society'. Meet Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at A. Barlow's, 2a Fairfield Gardens, Crouch End, N.8. LEWISHAM. Contact Mike Malet, 61B Granville Park, Lewisham, London, S.E.13. Phone: 01-852 8879.

LAVERHAM MOB. Contact C. Broad, 116 Tynesham Road, S.W.11 (228 4086).

MALATESTA GROUP. Contact Reg Broad, 5 Welbeck Court, Addison Bridge Place, W.14. 603 0550.

PORTOBELLO ROAD ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Andrew Dewar, 16 Kilburn House, Malvern Place, N.W.6. Meetings 8 p.m. every Tuesday.

WEST HAM ANARCHISTS. Regular meetings and activities contact Mr. T. Plant, 10 Thackeray Road, East Ham, E.6. Tel. 552 4162.

FORWARD WITH FINCH'S ANARCHISTS. Regular meetings. Contact P.P., 246 Portobello Road, W.11.

OFF-CENTRE LONDON DISCUSSION MEETINGS

Every Wednesday at Jack Robinson's and Mary Caripa's, 21 Rumbold Road, S.W.6 (off King's Road), 8 p.m. March 12: Why we want anarchy. Every Monday at A. Barlow's, 2a Fairfield Gardens, Hornsey, N.8. (Siege of Sidney Street Appreciation Society).

REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND GROUPS

BEXLEY ANARCHIST MOVEMENT. Steve Leman, 28 New Road, Abbey Wood, S.E.2. Tel: ET 3377. Meetings every Friday, 8 p.m., Lord Bexley, Bexleyheath Broadway.

BIRMINGHAM ANARCHIST GROUP. Secretary, Peter Le Mare, 22 Hallowell Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, 16. Libertarian discussion groups held 8 p.m. on each Tuesday at 'The Crown', Corporation Street (Opp. Law Courts), Birmingham City. S.a.e. to Secretary for details.

BOURNEMOUTH AREA. Local anarchists can be contacted through Nigel Holt, Rosmore, Harvey Road, Canford, Wimborne, Dorset. (Wimborne 2991).

CORNWALL ANARCHISTS. Contact Arthur Jacobs, 13 Ledrah Road, St. Austell, Cornwall. Discussion meetings on the second Friday of each month at Brian and Hazel McGee's, 42 Pendarves Street, Beacon, Camborne. 7.30 p.m. Visiting comrades very welcome.

CROYDON LIBERTARIANS. Meetings every 2nd Friday of each month. Laurens and Celia Otter, 35 Natal Road, Thornton Heath (LIV 7546).

EDGWARE PEACE ACTION GROUP. Contact Melvyn Estrin, 84 Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middx.

Geoffrey Barfoot, 71 St. Thomas Street, Wells. NOTTING HILL. Meetings at John Bennett's, Flat 4, 38 Clarendon Road, W.11. Every Monday evening, 8 p.m.

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

REDDITCH ANARCHISTS AND LIBERTARIANS. Contact Dave Lloyd, 37 Feckenham Road, Headless Cross, Redditch, Worcs.

ESSEX & EAST HERTS FEDERATION

Three-monthly meetings. Groups and individuals invited to associate: c/o Peter Newell (see N.E. Essex Group).

Group Addresses:— NORTH EAST ESSEX. Peter Newell, 91 Brook Road, Tolleshunt Knights, Tiptree, Essex. Regular meetings.

BISHOPS STORTFORD. Vic Mount, 'Eastview', Castle Street, Bishops Stortford, Herts. CHELMSFORD. (Mrs.) Eva Archer, Mill House, Purleigh, Chelmsford, Essex.

EPHING. John Barrick, 14 Centre Avenue, Epping, Essex. HARLOW. Ian Dallas, 18 Brookline Field, Harlow and Annette Gunning, 37 Longbarks, Harlow.

LOUGHTON. Group c/o Students' Union, Loughton College of Further Education, Borders Lane, Loughton, Essex.

NORTH-WEST FEDERATION

Secretary: Rob Wilkinson, 73 Trafford Street, Preston. Next federation meeting March 29/30. BLACKPOOL. Contact Christine Seddon, 111 Harcourt Road, Blackpool.

BOLTON. Contact John Hayes, 51 Rydal Road, Bolton.

CHORLEY. Contact Kevin Lynch, 6 Garfield Terrace, Chorley.

LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE. Contact Les Smith, 192 Euston Road, Morecambe, Lancs. Meetings Mondays at 8 p.m., Phil Woodhead's, 30 Dundek Street, Lancaster. Regular literature sales.

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. 'The Secretary', Felix Phillips, 6 Draycott Street, Manchester, 10. Regular weekly meetings. Contact Secretary for venue.

MERSEYSIDE ANARCHISTS. Meetings every Tuesday at 8 p.m. at 118 High Park Street, Liverpool 8. Contact: Chris Kneath, Basement, 52 Broomfield Road, Liverpool, L8 3TQ. PRESTON ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact J. B. Cowburn, 140 Watling Street Road, Fulwood, Preston. Meetings: 'The Wellington Hotel', Grovers Court, Preston, Wednesdays, 8 p.m.

Brighton, BN1 3HN. Regular fortnightly meetings. Contact Secretary.

CRAWLEY ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Richard Ashwell, 87 Buckswood Drive, Gossops Green, Crawley, Sussex.

SUSSEX UNIVERSITY ANARCHIST GROUP (see details under Student Groups).

YORKSHIRE FEDERATION

Meetings every 8 weeks. Next meeting February 2. Secretary: Colin Beadle, c/o Oakwood Farm, Cliffe-cum-Lund, Selby, Yorkshire. Look out for 'Liberty'!

HALIFAX. David Stringer, c/o Paul Simon, 91 Essex Street, Parkinson Lane, Halifax.

HULL. Jim Young, 3 Fredericks Crescent, Hawthorn Avenue, Hull.

KEIGHLEY. Steve Wood, 26B Cavendish Street, Keighley.

LEEDS. Direct Action Society. Contact John Boutwood, 142 Brudenell Road, Leeds, 6.

SHEFFIELD. Dave Jeffries, c/o Students Union, Western Bank, Sheffield, 10.

YORK. C/o Students' Representative Council, Goodricke College, University of York, Heslington, York.

WELSH FEDERATION

CARDIFF ANARCHIST GROUP. All correspondence to—Pete Raymond, 18 Marion Street, Splott, Cardiff.

SWANSEA ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Ian Bone, 22 Glamour Road, Uplands, Swansea. Weekly meetings, 'Freedom' sales and action projects.

LLANELLI. Contact Dai Walker, 6 Llwynnendy Road, Llanelli, Carm. Tel: Llanelli 2548.

EAST LONDON LIBERTARIAN FEDERATION

Support wanted for numerous activities in area. Secretary: Anthony Matthews, 35 Mayville Road, London, E.11. Meetings fortnightly on Sundays at Ron Bailey's, 128 Hainault Road, E.11 (LEY 8059). Ten minutes from Leytonstone Underground.

Active groups in: LEYTONSTONE, STEPNEY, NEWHAM, ILFORD, DAGENHAM, WOODFORD and LIMEHOUSE.

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SCOTTISH EDITION Out on May 31

Comrades wanted for selling and distribution. Contact Freedom Press.

Bookstall lunchtimes on Tuesday and Friday. ISE ANARCHIST GROUP. C/o Students' Union, LSE, Houghton Street, W.C.2. Read and sell 'Beaver'. KINGSTON COLLEGE of Technology, Penhryn Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey. Contact G. Wright.

MANCHESTER COLLEGE of Commerce. Contact Kevin Hill, c/o Students' Union, College of Commerce, Aytoun Street, Manchester, 1.

SCOTTISH FEDERATION

All correspondence to Bobby Lynn, Secretary, 12 Ross Street, Glasgow, S.E.

ABERDEEN ANARCHIST GROUP. Bob Comrie, 288 Hargate or Ian Mitchell, 3 Sinclair Road.

GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP. Robert Lynn, 12 Ross Street, S.E. or Joe Embleton, 26 Kirkland Road, N.W.

EDINBURGH. Tony Hughes, Top Flat, 40 Angle Park Terrace, Edinburgh 11.

HAMILTON AND DISTRICT ANARCHIST GROUP. Robert Linton, 7a Station Road, New Stevenston, Motherwell.

FIFE. Bob and Una Turnbull, 39 Stratheden Park, Stratheden Hospital, By Cupar.

MONTROSE. Dave Coull, 3 Eskview Terrace, Ferryden, Montrrose, Angus.

NORTHERN IRELAND

BELFAST ANARCHIST GROUP. Meetings every Saturday, 2 p.m., 44a Upper Arthur Street (top floor). 'Freedom' sales.

SOUTHERN IRELAND

ALLIANCE OF LIBERTARIAN AND ANARCHIST GROUPS IN IRELAND. Please send all communications with stamped envelope to The Secretary, c/o Freedom Press.

ABROAD

AUSTRALIA. Federation of Australian Anarchists, P.O. Box A 389, Sydney South, NSW 2000. Phone No. 69-8095. Open discussion and literature sale in the Domain—Sunday, 2 p.m. Call at 59 Eveleigh Street, Redfern, NSW 2015 for personal discourse, tea and overnight accommodation.

BELGIUM. Groupe du journal Le Libertaire, 220 rue Vivignis, Liège. USA. James W. Cain, secretary, The Anarchist Committee of Correspondence, 323 Fourth Street, Cloquet, Minnesota 55720, USA. VANCOUVER, B.C., CANADA. Anyone interested in forming anarchist and/or direct action peace group contact Derek A. James, c/o 24-160 East 20th, N. Vancouver, B.C., Canada. Tel: 985 7509 or 987 2693. TORONTO LIBERTARIAN-ANARCHIST GROUP. 217 TorYork Drive, Weston, Ontario, Canada. Weekly meetings. Read the 'Libertarian'. Third issue now out and it was well worth waiting for!

PROPOSED GROUPS

ABERYSTWYTH ANARCHISTS. Contact Steve Mills, 4 St. Michael's Place, Aberystwyth, Cardiganshire, Wales.

CHELLENHAM. Please contact Bernie Cherry, 16 Clarence Square, Cheltenham, Glos.

LONDON, S.W.17. Tooting, Wandsworth, Streatham. Phone BRIAN 672 8494.

NEWCASTLE/WHITLEY BAY. Anyone willing please contact Peter D. Ridley, 4 Rockcliffe Gardens, Whitley Bay, Northumberland. Tel: Whitley Bay 25759.

READING. Libertarian and Anarchist group would like to contact fellow anarchists in the district and in the university. C/o 37 Kln Ride, Wokingham, Berkshire.

ROCHDALE, BURY & OLDHAM areas. Those interested in libertarian activity contact David Purdy, c/o 35 Balmoral Drive, Darn Hill Estate, Heywood, Lancs.

Life in a Sieve

FOR 71-YEAR-OLD Jimmy White, a veteran of the 1st World War, life in 34 Kintore Place, Aberdeen, is tough. The roof above his semi-derelict two-roomed flat is leaking like a sieve. I came across Jimmy during the delightful experience of living in the same building a couple of years ago. For the past year I have been battling with the landlord, the local Sanitary Department, the City Engineer's Department, two local councillors, and a local MP. The end result? Practically back to square one again.

It all began in February 1968, when I noticed, during one of my visits to Jimmy, that the flat was damp. I wrote to the landlord, asking for repairs within seven days. No reply. So off I went to Mr. Cummings, the district Sanitary Inspector for Aberdeen Town Council. 'Fear not,' said he, 'we will fix it.' There will now be an interval for a loud horse laugh.

Cummings went to the flat, sniffed about, remarked sweetly on the weather and scuttled back to his nest. A fortnight passed, nothing was done, so I took the chance to speak to J. Lamont, ex-left winger, who recently managed the brilliant Socialist victory of being Labour City Treasurer—in a Tory Council! He promised to speak to the sanitary people, and Cummings arrived back at the flat the same day. This time, he agreed, the place was damp and something would be done. All together now for a second guffaw.

The Council now applied 'pressure' to the landlord. The imagination runs riot at the thought of what kind of pressure. After one long bitter year, I reckon the pressure must have gone like this:

Inspector (kneeling, holding out a bunch of flowers): 'Please, kind sir, repair Jimmy White's roof?'

Landlord: 'Begone, wretch.'

Exit official, on knees, backwards.

However, at a meeting of the Health and Welfare Committee, the order was given to force the landlord to repair leaks, renew the sink and fix the windows. But nothing was said about the real source of the trouble, missing slates on the roof. Guess what? The Sanitary couldn't force the landlord to replace slates (which was how damp got in in the first place). That was the job of the City Engineer, who doubles up as 'dangerous buildings officer'. His view was that the building wasn't dangerous. Of course as any good bureaucrat worth his salt knows, old men of 71 make a habit of climbing onto roofs and throwing slates 50 feet to the ground, where they lie for months, just so nasty meddling anarchists can force landlords to repair them.

And the repairs that were done? Well, everything wasn't finished till October, the landlord waiting to the last minute. The new sink was a mess, the wood badly cut, and the nails, we can only assume, driven in by a three-year-old gone berserk with a steam hammer. Back to the Sanitary. Weeks later, some new wood was put on and the nails put in properly. And grand it was until the pipe underneath began to leak. Back to the Sanitary. Finally, the pipe was fixed. It was at this

point that Bob Hughes, prospective Labour candidate for North Aberdeen, who had been asked to help, gracefully bowed out of the case with an off-putting 'phone call. Perhaps Aberdeen's Sanitary Department was starting to assume a most insanitary odour.

We also approached Donald Dewar, Labour MP for South Aberdeen. To be fair, out of the whole bloody lot he was the only one who really tried. And finally, after his intervention, it was all over. Mind you, my threat, conveyed to the Chief Sanitary Inspector, by Dewar, to the effect that unless something was done in a week, I would arrange press coverage and organise a sit-in at their office, might have had something to do with it.

Alas, never, never, never, trust bureaucrats. Flushed with success, believing the flat to be at last wind and watertight, I called off the story I had lodged with the editors of FREEDOM and set to try and

arrange for someone to redecorate the flat. Finally, the Aberdeen University Task Force, a voluntary group, offered to do the work. Two weekends they worked, and did up the bedroom. And at Xmas, their work was rewarded. The wallpaper was stained with damp. Back to the Sanitary.

Worse than that, with the high winds, slates were falling off the roof like water off a duck's back (or promises off a Sanitary Inspector's tongue). I went to see a Mr. Mann. He couldn't help. Or to be more accurate, he didn't want to help. If the place was damp, that was the Sanitary's pigeon. IF slates were falling, too bad, he'd already inspected the place. Perfectly safe. I tried telling this to the bloody great Peterhead slate that was sliding off the roof, but it wouldn't listen.

Cummings turned up and declared the place dry as a bone. When I pointed out the damp marks on the new wallpaper, he didn't want to know. Blindness will no doubt be advertised as a necessary future qualification for employment as a Sanitary Inspector! I showed him the bedroom window, where there is an eighth of an inch gap between the glass and the wood. 'Oh aye,' replied this worthy. 'Put a bit of sticky tape over it,

many a tenant does that.' Maybe they do, but Jimmy White bloody well won't. His advice on how to deal with a rotten window, which even I find difficult to open or close, was to grease it with soap. Perhaps what is referred to in polite circles as a po face, and in less genteel company as a bloody brass neck, will also get you a job as an Aberdeen Town Council bullshit merchant. He even had the gall to say he admired me when I told him this was the end of the road and he was going to get a dose of publicity.

I kept my word. A phone call to the local press and up came a reporter, Cap Fowles, the first man to show he really cared. Within days he had compiled a beautiful hatched job and the officials fell over to pull the finger out. Cummings arrived and witnessed a flood in the flat, the City Engineer sent out legal notices to fix the roof. At last it really looks as if we'll get somewhere. From the pages of FREEDOM, may I offer my heartfelt thanks, and those of Jimmy White to Cap Fowles.

So here we are, March '69, and round one is about to start again. This time Jimmy White is going to live like a person again.

IAN S. SUTHERLAND.

The Naked and the Dead

I WANT TO TELL you about two books which you might enjoy reading, if you haven't already done so. Neither is brand new—*The Inheritors*, by William Golding, was first published in MCMLV,* whatever that is; *The Naked Ape*, by Desmond Morris, dates from October 1967. The first is a novel, based upon a scientific hypothesis, so I suppose it could be called science fiction. The second is 'a zoologist's study of the human animal'. Both are about evolution.

The Inheritors is brilliant stuff. Mr. Golding shows us a group of humans in a strange and savage situation. As in his famous *Lord of the Flies*, he suggests that the strangest thing of all is human nature. He condemns sin, and offers no hope of salvation. To prove his thesis, he goes all the way back to the Garden of Eden—inhabited, not by people like us, but by a tribe of Neanderthal men. Like the apes, they are by instinct gentle vegetarians, sometimes insectivores; hunger has forced them to add scavenged meat to their diet, but they have not yet taken the crucial step towards red-blooded carnivory. Into this placid scene comes the most efficient of all killer species.

Golding's title is, I assume, sardonic comment on a biblical text, 'The meek shall inherit the earth'. For most of the book we see our ancestors through Neanderthal eyes. 'He looked down at them, and saw that Tuami was not only lying with the fat woman, but eating her as well, for there was black blood running from the lobe of her ear.' A Neanderthal child goes into the cooking pot, the rest are bumped off more or less casually. A sour book this, but skilfully written.

By contrast, *The Naked Ape* is positively hilarious. Desmond Morris points out that if you had one each of the 193 living species of ape, and stood them in a row, Homo Sapiens would stand out no matter where you placed him—not because he is sapiens, but due to his shortage of hair.

Why are we naked? Morris examines several theories, but comes to the conclusion that we are nude because it is sexier. He goes on to show that this is only one of the evolutionary steps which turned us into the sexiest animals on earth. Man developed the biggest penis of all primates. His mate's big round breasts are less efficient than the chimpanzee's for feeding, but marvellous for fondling and kissing. We grew ear lobes, something no other ape has, for the sole purpose of having them bitten. We developed well-defined lips. And Woman, unique amongst primate females, became able

*1955—Eds.

PRESS FUND

Canada: M. 15/6; Newcastle, N.S.W.: B.C. 18/-; Taunton: D.P. 19/9; Wolverhampton: B.L. £2; Wolverhampton: J.K.W.* 2/-; J.L.* 3/-; Liverpool: J.L. 2/8; Richmond: J.M. 5/-

TOTAL: £5 5 11
Previously Acknowledged: £173 6 11

1969 Total to Date: £178 12 10
Deficit B/F: £162 0 0

TOTAL SURPLUS: £16 12 10

*Denotes Regular Contributor.
Gift of Book—London: M.W.K.

to experience orgasm. Most animals can rise and stroll away immediately after mating; where we are concerned, both partners lie gasping, absolutely shattered.

Why so much sex? To encourage love, of course. But other apes get along without deep feelings for each other. Why love? Well, it all sprang from our decision to compete with the lions and tigers. Unlike Golding, Morris appears to think it was a good idea. But enough. If you are interested in a book about your own species, which is both scientific and highly readable, this is it.

DAVE COULL.

LETTERS

Red & Black Film Makers

Dear Friends,

A newsreel service covering New Left activity is now set up in Rome and London. The London address is 68 Charlwood Street, S.W.1. Tel.: 834 5525.

Any active group can send 16mm negatives, and will receive in return a copy of each edition of the newsreel. These copies will be shown on a half-half basis, so that both the group costs and the newsreel expenses can be covered.

Red and Black newsreels will be edited

Heroic Gestures not Enough

MANY A GOOD AGNOSTIC trembled as he entered the sacred portals of the Banbridge orange hall to face the regal majesty of the forces of law and disorder. The 14 People's Democracy members emerged later that day £300 poorer and with one of their comrades due to spend two months at the expense of her gracious majesty. The peaceful and token occupation of the Newry post office was obviously not to be tolerated by the fascist regime under which we so securely rest.

The morning started with the ugly little blood sacrifice of Paul Campbell, in which the court was aided by his lovable so-called lawyer to a quite terrifying degree who at the last moment persuaded the inexperienced Campbell to plead guilty to disorderly behaviour and intemperate language in order to have an incitement charge dropped—if you don't you'll get six months, son'. As a result he got two months when the prosecutor arose to say that Paul had said, 'Kill the black bastards and burn the town to the ground' while inciting the crowd at the barricades—it is interesting that the gallant RUC took this as a reference to their good selves—however it is also completely untrue, as a host of witnesses could have sworn had they been allowed a chance to testify, for he merely called for a non-violent attempt to be made to walk through the barricades. His 'defence', leading on 'his behalf' said he had 'let down the movement to which he belongs' and claimed that the PD 'don't realise the dangers to themselves or to society which their brinkmanship leads them into'. The final masterly stroke of defence was to say 'the rule of law is

in Rome, every two months. First edition in about April, eight showprints being made at Clodio Laboratories. Distribution will include, Rome, Berlin, Munich, Paris, Amsterdam, New York, etc., in fact anywhere there is a CO-OP (unfortunately not Pekin or Hollywood).

These newsreels are designed as successors to the student, cinegiornale, the May cinétracts, in co-operation with 'NEWS-REEL' of New York and CINEMA PARALLELE of Paris.

Vive l'Internationale,
CINEGIORNALE ROSSO E NERO
COMITATO DI REDAZIONE.

Horny Handed Worker

Dear Comrades,

The editorial tailpiece to my last article speculates as to what I would realize IF I underwent a certain educative process. You write, 'If Tony Gibson ever went to work in a factory or on a building site he would soon recognize this'. 'This' being the truth of the editorial view of the nature of class struggle. Such a speculation is rather out of order since I used to earn my living with horny hands in four or five manual jobs, including the building industry.

These were my universities in the years I contributed to *War Commentary* and the early post-war FREEDOM. It is because I have had this educative experience, as well as the education of the anarchist movement, not to mention more formal university study, that I know that much of what is written about class struggle in FREEDOM is outmoded bunk.

TONY GIBSON.

FIFTH COLUMN

MORE ON PRIVACY

THE NCCL'S CURRENT campaign for 'privacy' discussed by Arthur Uloth last week emphasises that people are deprived of their personal freedom. Until I read the NCCL's pamphlet *Privacy under attack* (1968), 3s. 6d., I was not aware that it was still illegal for three or more homosexuals to engage in sexual activity together. The maximum number of consenting adults the State is prepared to tolerate is two.

The emphasis on personal freedom is more likely to appeal to liberals than anarchists: liberals accept authority at work but like to be free to indulge themselves after dinner. Anarchists demand not only personal freedom but a libertarian revolution in society.

But though we cannot settle for 'privacy' we also cannot avoid supporting the NCCL campaign for it. First, as I have said, we want personal freedom—to write letters, have sex, read books—for ourselves and for others. Secondly, there is no clear distinction between 'personal' and 'social' freedom: the State uses the police to interfere with people's private lives and to protect the social and economic system; frequently the invasion of privacy is an obviously political act.

Thirdly—and perhaps this is the most important point—we are not the Socialist Party of Great Britain. Neither we nor they get very far by lecturing 'the people' on the virtues of our abstract political theory. For a start very few come to the lectures—ours or theirs. Anarchists are more successful when they involve themselves in a struggle for objectives that ordinary people can understand and identify with in a way that makes sense to them.

There are two current examples: the students and the squatters. Very few students want to be pushed around; nobody wants to be homeless. Direct action by students and the homeless makes sense; it works.

To return to 'privacy': we are interested in it because other people are. By opposing the State's invasion of privacy we bring ourselves and our ideas to the people we are trying to reach.

ANARCHISTS are accused of being trouble-makers. We are. But we are not likely to increase other people's militancy if we ourselves are not involved directly in the situation. The cynical manipulator who plans strikes from outside the factory obviously exists in the minds of politicians and newspaper editors; he may exist in the Communist Party. But he can hardly be an effective anarchist.

Here the three reasons I have given for supporting the 'privacy' campaign join together. We want personal freedom; so do many other people. A struggle to achieve it involves us and them in a conflict with the police, the law and the state. If you want personal freedom you have to overthrow the state: they will never give up the power to intervene in our private lives.

The 'privacy' campaign has received a certain amount of publicity: *The Times* for example ran a long story on the legal right of thousands of government officials to enter your home without permission. But when the NCCL gave evidence to the Arrest and Search Subcommittee of the Home Office Advisory Committee on Drug Dependence there was little press interest.

Possibly the NCCL was too rude about the police. They were described as pursuing drugs 'with an almost fanatical zeal'.

On the planting of drugs and physical force or threats the NCCL said: 'The volume of such complaints and the outcome of certain cases has convinced us that severe abuse of police powers does occur.'

On the right to search without a warrant: 'There is clear evidence that these provisions have been interpreted by the police to mean that they have the right to make random searches.'

To take just one more quote: 'Relations between police and the young were never worse.'

Whether you take drugs or not, you do not want to be searched or have drugs planted on you; you do not want to be abused or beaten up in the police station. So we support the 'privacy' campaign. But the NCCL is of its nature a political pressure group which makes recommendations to the government. It works openly by informing people of what is happening but it is in no sense an organisation for direct action. If we want to be practical what do we do?

REV. AUGUSTUS BURKE.

WYNFORD HICKS.

HOUSE WARMING SOCIAL

WORK IS NOW almost completed in our new building. Next week we hope to give the date for our 'house warming' social. We have been too busy to send out reminders for pledges due, so please help to reach the targets below. —J.R.

MOVING FUND

Target is £500.
Donations to date: £441 14s. 3d.

PREMISES FUND

Target is £1,000 per year.
1969 Pledges honoured and donations to date: £126 19s. 0d.

Slipping!

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Estimated Expenses:
10 weeks at £90: £900
Income: Sales and Subs.: £738
DEFICIT: £162

What Next at Fords?

THE FORD STRIKE against the 'ball and chain' agreement is now in its third week and, as this is being written, 40,000 workers are out and all Ford production is at a standstill. The company's attempt to get the agreement enforced by law has failed. The judges, after three days of expensive deliberations, have solemnly declared that the agreement is not 'legally binding'. Unless they were to appear as complete idiots, no other decision was really open to their legal lordships.

Contact Column

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

FREEDOM PRESS

NEED volunteers to make racks and other carpentry work in new premises.

NEED comrades to clear dump in Angel Alley (with remuneration)—bring pickaxes and shovels if possible.

Get in touch with Graham Moss c/o Freedom Press.

Homeless Animals Shelter urgently needs cash to carry on, 288 High Road, London, N.22 (889 1192).

Leicester Libertarian Education Group. 1 The Crescent, King Street, Leicester. Meetings every Wednesday 8 p.m.

S. London Free School Campaign. Regular activities, projects, Mike Rowley or Roger Sadiev, 81 Ermine Road, S.E.13. 01-690 1572 (6-7 p.m. preferably.)

'Liberty' No. 3 out now, 16 pages include 'Vietnam', 'Demos', 'Squatters' and more. Much improved, 10d. post free from C. Beadle, c/o Oakwood Farm, Lund, Selby, Yorks.

Young anarchist writer (male) needs work. Anything, anywhere considered.

Easter Rising '69. See you on the Ulster-Dublin March. Ulysses.

Bit Information Service (24 hour). 229 8219, 141 Westbourne Park Road, W.11.

Anarchist Black Cross No. 3 now ready. 6d. plus postage. New address: 735 Fulham Road, S.W.6

Let May Day be resistance day! Meeting Tower Hill, 11.30 a.m., May 1. Then march to Victoria Park (Bethnal Green) and join in the May Day Festival. Music, dancing, games, plays, refreshments.

Kirkdale School wants to take small groups of children camping during term-time. A farm would be ideal, with wood and water nearby. Reasonable travelling distance from 186 Kirkdale, S.E.26. Tel.: 778 0149.

N.W. Federation Whitsun Camp, Llangollen. Anyone interested? Contact Ron Marsden, 9 Boland Street, Fallowfield, Manchester, 19.

International Summer Camp. £1 booking fees to Ann Lindsay, 39 Upper Tulse Hill, London, S.W.2. Next committee meeting 8 p.m., March 18, at 25 North Villas, N.W.1.

North London Free Schools Campaign, contact T. Swash, 49 Popham Road, London, N.1.

Anarchist May 2 Ball at Shoreditch Town Hall. Groups include 'The Deviants', 'Blonde on Blonde' and 'Dr. K's Blues Band'. Tickets now available. £1 double, 12/6 single. Licensed bar (extension applied for). Please get your tickets early from Philip Carver, c/o Freedom Press.

Help Increase 'Freedom's' Circulation. Are you willing to take 'Freedom' and 'Anarchy' regularly to local newsagents and collect returns and cash? If so we'd like to hear from you. — CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT.

Badges and Banners. Rectangular metal black/red badges 2/6 each post free or bulk rate (10 or more) 1/- each—resell at 2/- or 2/6. Also flags and banners to order, from 7/6. McGee, 42 Pendarves Street, Beacon, Camberne, Cornwall.

If you wish to make contact let us know.

How can an agreement cooked up in secret between a handful of trade union officials and a bunch of Ford businessmen be binding—legally or otherwise—on 45,000 workers most of whom (according to Jack Jones of the T&G) 'have never even SEEN the agreement let alone read it'? He went on to say that the agreement 'ties the hands of Ford workers behind their backs'. Well, he should know for, after all, he is the new chief of the biggest union in Fords. Yet Mr. Jones didn't recommend any action against the agreement and only made the existing strike official AFTER the men themselves had taken action.

LIFTING THE LID

This initiative of Ford workers is now beginning to shatter the old way of life of the trade union leaders—literally in the case of Les Kealy of the T&G who was sacked from the Joint Negotiating Committee and later resigned as an official of the union because of his support for the 'ball and chain' agreement. In fact, union leaders are now quarrelling like Kilkenny cats and in the process they are lifting the lid off that dustbin known as the 'official trade union movement'.

Mr. Cannon of the ETU (a gunner's man if ever there was one) has accused the AEF and T&G leaders of erecting sham principles. He has said on television that both these unions have signed agreements in shipbuilding and other industries which contain penalty clauses similar to the one in dispute at Fords. No doubt this is true, but all it means is that what they got away with on Clydeside they couldn't get away with at Halewood and Dagenham. Such an explanation is too simple for Cannon who went on to make the breath-taking suggestion that the present 'militant' stand of people like Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones is motivated by their desire to 'take on the Government!' Alas, it's not true.

Quickly Jack Jones rebutted this charge. 'Talk of a fight against the Government in the Ford dispute,' he said, 'is absolute nonsense.' As for Mr. Scanlon's desire to fight the Government, that, too, is 'absolute nonsense'. At a meeting of Trade Union MPs last Monday, Mr. Scanlon, the Chairman, introduced the guest of honour (!) Mrs. Barbara Castle, Minister of the Wage Freeze, with these historic words: 'Lovely to have you with us, Barbara darling.' ('Daily Telegraph' report.)

But if a fight against the Government by the trade union leaders is absolute nonsense, and if these same leaders are in control of the fight for a decent agreement with Fords, how are Ford workers going to win?

BACK TO THE RANK AND FILE

Certainly, if Ford workers remain solid and determined they can force the Ford Motor Company to give higher wages and drop the slavery clauses. But, says Les Cannon, in that case the Government will

step in and veto the agreement. He is probably right, so what then? Cannon's solution is simple: shut up and accept the agreement, penalty clauses and all! As for Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones, well, it is hard to imagine them waging a fight to a finish against 'Barbara darling', isn't it?

That Ford workers, after years of suffering the 'leadership' of men like Bill Carroon of the AEU, are now ready to put their faith in new men like Scanlon and Jones is readily understandable. After all, they have left wing reputations and did actually make the strike official.

Yet the fact remains that it was not these union leaders whose actions stood the Ford Motor Company sharply to attention—it was the actions of those ordinary Ford workers who downed tools rather than be reduced to industrial slaves in return for a holiday bonus tossed to them if they are at all times obedient work machines.

This strike can be won if (a) the workers themselves control it through their own elected strike committees—which is not necessarily the same thing as a shop stewards' committee; (b) they explain the situation clearly to the rest of the working class and solicit their aid; and (c) they call on us all to stop work should Mrs. Castle intervene.

That way the Ford Motor Company can be beaten and the Government can be faced either with intervening and facing a possible general strike or backing down from its present attacks on working class living standards.

LOOKING AHEAD

And it may not even end there. The Government might actually resign. Certainly they are in difficulties and the detestation of them among working people was never higher than it is right now. But then what? A general election and the return of another Tory Government? That would merely be jumping out of the frying pan into the fire. Sooner or later, the idea of controlling society ourselves, of ending profit-making for ever, of establishing a system of workers' control of all industry, must be taken up seriously as the only real alternative.

To be sure, the vast majority of Ford workers haven't even thought about these possibilities. They just want a decent wage, good conditions of work, and the right to exercise their right to strike should they think it necessary. But to get these simple things they may well have to go further—much, much further—than even the most left wing trade union leader is prepared to go.

That is how things look to anyone who knows that the class struggle can't for ever be contained within the confines of capitalism. It all depends on whether the workers themselves can seize and keep the initiative. They probably won't be able to do so at Fords. The combination of official trade unionism and political skulduggery will probably prove to be too big a burden. But sooner or later the dykes will burst . . . if not at Fords then somewhere else. There are good reasons to feel optimistic.

J.L.

Dunlop Picket

ALTHOUGH THE PICKET outside the Dunlop factory at Rochdale was supported only by a stout few, the contact between us, those coming off the night shift and those starting the morning shift was good and worthwhile. The article in last week's FREEDOM was well received and a number of copies had already been sold the night before.

The local press, *The Rochdale Observer*, sent along a reporter and cameraman. The reporter was able to speak to some of the men in the inspection department, from which Brian Bamford was sacked. The men still supported Bamford, but felt that it was up to the union, the General and Municipal Workers' Union, to fight for their steward's case. They said they would come out if the union

called them. One brother, however, was all for unofficial action, if need be. These interviews showed that Brian Bamford is by no means isolated and that the men will put pressure on the union to fight his case.

Before resuming work, the men made us a welcome 'brew-up' and shortly after this the security man put in an appearance. However, we were told later that he only looked round and then went off. After having some breakfast, we went to the local offices of the GMWU to see how far Bamford's case had got in procedure. Stanley Brown, the local Branch Secretary and full-time organiser, told us that it was now going to national level and so we left.

Our thanks are due to the Manchester Anarchists for their campaign of support. P.T.

Freedom For Workers' Control

MARCH 15 1969 Vol 30 No 8

MURDER RIDES THE BUSES

THEY BURIED HIM to the lamentation of a single piper while his fellow-workers lined the traffic-emptied streets, and all the ancient jokes soured in the mouths of those who love or deny the existence of violence as a requisite for a weekly wage for the knifed corpse of the Glasgow bus conductor became that point of no return for the men and women who have to operate the late night weekend buses in physical fear of the slob and the fighting drunks. The shrill-voiced middle-class slut, the rambling neurotic, the vicious psychopath, the weekend alcoholic and the dreary teenage yob have always regarded their bus ticket as a legal permit to bait the isolated man or woman bus conductor.

To smash shop windows and telephone boxes or to rip out lavatory seats is an accepted illegal act and men and women have stood in the criminal dock for no greater offence than that of handing out a protest leaflet on the public highway, but to punch or kick some unfortunate bus conductor on a crowded weekend bus has always been accepted as a passing pleasantry for, as the governor always says, 'A little tact or understanding on our part and these things would not happen' and an eighteen-year-old Glasgow bus conductor was hacked to death and five men are now preparing to explain to the Law the connection between his savage killing and someone's lack of tact.

I write these words with anger. For too many years of my labouring life I have been a committed witness to these acts. I know that among my fellow busworkers there is a percentage of fools, clowns and social deviants, but we are what we are: a section of the labouring class held in contempt, indifference or hatred by the mass of the travelling public. Regarded as expendable by an employer we cannot trust or respect, and forced, for a take-home pay of £14 a week, to operate an inefficient, skeleton bus service, we are the literal whipping boys for the frustrated traveller and the absentees from the hospitals and the dangerously insane for the bus, like the public lavatory and the Hilton Hotel, provides an open doorway for anyone who can pay the cost.

While Glasgow's busmen forged their own protest strike, pressure from the London rank and file began to make itself felt and a succession of acts of violence on men from the Riverside Garage at Hammersmith finally flared into open revolt against the passive policy of London Transport and the TGWU.

From that small London Garage: Hawkins was beaten about the face with a knuckleduster, Smith had to have thirteen stitches in his arm as a result of being thrust through a bus window, and Foster was mob-handled at Fulham Broadway within screaming distance of Freedom Bookshop's old stamping ground. This act was the final breaking point for the busworkers and at a packed meeting this hitherto conservative garage stated that they were refusing to work their buses after ten o'clock on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays until London Transport managed to protect them from the individual or the mob.

On the first day of March at ten in the evening every bus crew from Riverside Garage ran their buses back into the garage with the knowledge that the LT would claim and enforce its right to stop any bonuses for the week and rigidly enforce the LT's right to pay the crews literally for time worked on the bus and no more for the whole week; this was no empty gesture on the busworkers' part for they were paying for this protest out of their wages.

A meeting by the LT was hastily convened on the neutral territory of Wandsworth Bus Garage and 'Ted' Hill, the Riverside union representative, met the seven representatives of the LT and the LAW. The discussion floated around the Hibernian Club as the main source of

violence in this particular case for these beer-stupid Irish had become an identifiable target through their predictable weekly brawls on and off the buses.

Driver 'Ted' Hill of the LTGW asked Inspector Brunt, 'What was the position of a member of the staff who defended himself or herself from an assault by a passenger or a group of passengers?' and Chief Inspector Brunt, touched no doubt by the magic phrases of countless CND demonstrations, stated that 'Anyone was entitled to use the amount of force necessary to defend themselves but no more than was reasonable, the use of any weapon in such circumstances would lead to difficulties.'

The talk wandered on and on with promises of police protection for the bus crews from the fighting Irish but the black humour of it all lay in the fact that London Transport is the landlord of the Hibernian Club bash. But every bus worker knows that these comic Irishmen are not the problem for every pub spews them out at chucking out time and any police wagon can and does wheel them off to the station in the mass.

The problem is the moral one of forcing men and women to carry on working when they are in fear of physical violence and this very issue makes a dirty joke of Barbara Castle's 28-day cooling off period for how can you discuss with a mouth full of broken teeth?

At the time of writing one specific garage manager informed a man and woman bus crew who had asked for police protection for their lone night bus journey over the Hibernian route that he would try and get them police protection but whatever the result he would report them for disciplinary action if they refused to take their bus out on that late night service. They refused and now we await the outcome of their action in this non-striking garage for this is what Barbara Castle's bill means, that the mindless and totalitarian discipline of the armed forces shall now be introduced into industry.

At the moment we stand firm and the buses are being run into the committed garages at nine on the weekend evenings. Riverside as the pioneer garage has only produced three scabs but two were overtime kings whose action was predictable so one can ignore them. It was a major effort for Riverside to force this strike action and part of the credit must go to 'Ted' Hill, the local union representative, for his swift action. Ten garages are now involved with 353 buses out of service but action has now been taken and it should and must be followed through by the TGWU slumbering top brass.

The demand, long overdue, for shorter and not longer duties on weekends must finally be settled in the busworkers' favour and more buses must be on the road for the genuine late travellers and physical protection for the staff must be guaranteed. If this is not possible then the London Transport Executive must be prepared to work the late night punch-up buses themselves, and I mean personally, for one can no longer dismiss this violence as a romantic fabrication of some Byronic busworker suffering from a touch of gothic horrors, not when he is sitting in the West London casualty ward with thirteen stitches in his arm.

When these things happen Barbara Castle's stupid bill, the boardroom-signed union agreement, and all those tracts on the moral blessings of non-violence, become material for the nearest bog. Action has been taken on the shop floor for we are the union and whether we win or lose the day's battle we must always fight for we shall conquer, we shall conquer.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

WE GO TO PRESS ON MONDAY. LATEST DATE FOR RECEIPT OF MSS., LETTERS, MEETING NOTICES IS THE MONDAY IN EACH WEEK OF PUBLICATION.