

Letter from China

(In 1935 a young Chinese student visited Europe to complete his studies, and act as delegate from the Chinese Anarchist movement. He particularly wanted new literature, as there had been little produced of an original nature in Chinese, on Anarchism, in the previous 25 years. A special study group, organised by our late comrade Harry J. Jones, produced a Summary of Anarchist Principles, which was later published in Shanghai. Since then little has been heard of the Chinese comrades: we received a letter in 1938 and a short note in 1946 merely expressing greetings and giving no news. The Anarchist movement in China has, of course, been illegal since its inception except for a brief period in Shanghai under the old international settlement. The following letter was received recently, and is translated from French. Reference to English affairs is inaccurate but it will be borne in mind that our comrades have read this in the official press, A.M.)

★

I AM SORRY that over the years we have not been able to keep in better contact. You will readily understand that, in China, not only was the Anarchist movement illegal at first, under the Empire (when beheading was the rule for all who dared challenge the State) but it has never enjoyed a brief moment of legality. The Communist Party, like the Dictatorship, like the Japanese, and like the Empire, are determined to see that all rebels against State authority will be crushed. It is said that those who have, in the working-class abroad, rejected the authoritarianism of the Russian so-called Communist, look favourably upon the Chinese brand. You should know that there is no atom of difference between them, and that our comrades fill the cells of Mao Tse Tung's prisons just as the Russian comrades filled Stalin's jails. I recall that it was possible to send relief parcels into Russian prisons, but this is not the case here. We who fight for liberty are treated as criminals and, in fact, Anarchists are classified as 'bandits' in the penal code. The real bandits are those who suppress the people.

THE ANARCHIST GROUPS

At this time the Anarchist movement may be classified in two divisions. On the one hand, the 'Black Flag' Anarchists, grouped around the 'Black Flag' (newspaper?), carry out an unceasing propaganda for the Anarchist idea. Many students who have rejected Marxist Communism take our ideas to the peasants, just as the Russian revolutionaries used to do. It should, however, be explained that today, one beneficial consequence of the Mao

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regime has been that such students come from all parts and classes and are not merely sons of the rich. Hence, our student activity is of prime importance in reaching all parts of China. Many University professors have, over the past ten years, been accused of Anarchist leanings and influencing the students, but the truth is, such an orientation is inevitable to the degree to which knowledge is to be free and not State-controlled. As a result of the 'Black Flag' propaganda, Anarchist groups may now be found in many parts of China, and they constitute a major menace to State-controlled Communism because they are not an opposition asking for foreign invasion or the return of capitalism, their demands being modest enough in a Communist society (so-called)—i.e. true Communism.

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Salute to the US Armed Forces

IF GOD WERE on Our Side, He'd Puke, suggested one of the signs greeting the May 15 Armed Forces Day Parade down New York City's famous Fifth Avenue. It was one of the few times in my life I've felt constrained to raise my eyes Heavenward and say, 'I'm with you, Baby'.

The slogan of this year's parade was 'Power for Peace' but somehow the peace movement was singularly unconvicted—so much so that they decided to sit down and block the line of march. Prior to the actual civil disobedience we leafletted up and down the parade route with a rather effective flier. Asking if the parade was for peace or for war, it led off with a quote from Johnson: 'I do not find power impressive. The guns and the bombs, the rockets and the warships are all symbols of human failure...' (The guy is such a consummate phoney that you can always find him saying something worth quoting. In fact he's almost as bad as Kennedy, the peace movement's previous mentor.) On the back of our leaflet was the Declaration of Conscience against the war in Vietnam. Signing this makes one liable for 5 years in prison and a \$5,000 fine, which is a splendid example of the 'freedom' being defended by incinerating women and children with napalm.

We were leafletting in pairs because it was assumed that we wouldn't be awarded any popularity prizes by the jingoistic spectators. Yet oddly enough none of us was roughed up, so far as I know, and many of the reactions were surprisingly sympathetic. One woman refused the leaflet with a snarl only to return five minutes later with an apology: she had originally thought I was supporting the parade instead of condemning it. At one point I was embroiled in an argument with a cop who seemed to think he could stop me from leafletting, and even more idiotic, that he could issue me a summons for littering if a passerby threw one on the ground. Simultaneously I had two additional arguments going with bystanders. The commotion really operated in my favour because it kept attracting people who requested leaflets to see what was going on. It was a switch. But after a while the cop sneaked away without acknowledging defeat, and I left my opponents to argue among themselves. Without their drawing power I had to take the initiative once again. One of them had been advancing the unique position that even though the government was admittedly wrong in Vietnam, I shouldn't leaflet against the parade because it might confuse young people. After he drifted

THE VIETNAMESE WAR has not decreased in intensity, but it is gradually losing the interest of the national press. The six day respite by the US in its bombing of N. Vietnam was followed by a six-wave bomber attack involving 140 US planes 85 miles south of Hanoi.

The idea of the respite was to give the North Vietnamese government time to come up with some ideas for negotiations for a cease fire. The 140 bomber raid was to remind them that the Yanks do not like to be kept waiting. The situation in Vietnam has all the possibilities of a war of attrition. The demands from both sides are irreconcilable. North Vietnam want Viet Cong represented at the conference table and the US say they are rebels and don't exist as a negotiating force.

Everyone is quite content for the war to continue. President Johnson spell-binds Congress and gets their support for his policy and the cash to carry it out. The South Vietnamese administration is more than happy to keep the pot boiling, they have their coups every couple of months or so. Saigon the capital is quite content encouraging tourists, prospering from the American forces, the war could be a 1,000 miles away. China is quite happy to load the guns for North Vietnam to fire, and means to justify the struggle in power politics.

This is a grand game, it keeps the arms manufacturers happy and their subsidiaries, this is the type of conflict they like, a long way away, the opposition not too well armed so that American losses are at a minimum, which keeps public opinion apathetic. Plus the fact it's all in the name of 'defence of the western way

American Escapades

of life'. The people who suffer—never heard of them, just peasants who can't understand what is being done for them. One thing they do understand—the fact that they are being starved, burned and killed—For What!

BURNT FINGERS

The Americans burst into the Dominican Republic in traditional fashion and, true to form, backing the reactionary elements. They had to save the Dominican Republic from communism. They are now in a situation where their stooges having been saved from overthrow by American intervention want to rule with the iron fist. This is an embarrassing situation for America. Their copy book is already stained by the fact of their intervention, now the Loyalist junta has refused to extend the cease fire, which in turn blows sky high American hopes of the formation of a broad-based Government.

The OAS first inter-American peace force met on 22.5.65. Brazil has been asked to provide a Commander-in-Chief. American troops will stay until the Brazilian

troops arrive. The idea is that the American forces are acting as a buffer between the feuding factions, or is it to prevent the right wing military from being kicked out of the Dominican Republic altogether?

BOLIVIA—ANOTHER AMERICAN ESCAPE?

Bolivia is the world's second largest producer of tin, and two-thirds of its output is paralyzed by the tin miners' strike. Armed miners have taken over the mines in protest against the banishment of their leader Juan Lechin Oquando.

The ruling military junta under General Barrientos has ordered the suspension of all trade union leaders and new union election within 40 days. Barrientos has also postponed elections until later in the year. They were due this month.

Originally Lechin and the tin miners backed Barrientos, it now seems they believe they have struck a bad bet.

Tin production has been precarious for some time, due to over-production. The Korean war helped out, keeping the international tin price high. After the war it dropped off and is now regaining, probably due to the war in Vietnam and the skirmish in Malaya.

In 1952 the greater part of the Bolivia tin industry was nationalized, and state owned 'Comibol' was formed. All was not well with Comibol, so the US, West Germany, and the Inter-American Development Bank decided to get in on this good thing and re-equip, they then had second thoughts and decided to wait until profits improved. It's possible that the habits of the miners occasionally taking over the mines has something to do with it.

Tin production is affected, which means profits and prices affected, but the main worry outside Bolivia is that the general strike will ferment wider trouble and overthrow the present junta. American property would have to be protected, and 'Here we go again'. Until Joe Soap wakes up, this pattern of events will continue.

BILL CHRISTOPHER.

PORTON WHITSUN FAST PLANNED

The London Committee of 100 is holding a 48-hour fast this Whitsun, to draw attention to the dangers of germ and chemical warfare, and to demand that the research establishments at Porton be put to peaceful use. The fast will take place simultaneously at the A30 entrance to the Porton establishment, and on the Guildhall steps in Salisbury. It will begin at 12 noon on Whit-Saturday, June 5, and the fasters will remain on site for the 48 hours. Letters have been written to the Director of the Microbiological Research Establishment and the Director of the Chemical Defence Experimental Establishment, inviting them to meet the fasters to discuss how the establishments could be used to fight hunger and disease, rather than the converse. One suggestion is that Porton be placed under the control of an international body, such as the World Health Organisation.

Other activity is being planned for the coming months in Salisbury and in London, and a major direct-action demonstration is being planned for September 11.

B. SAMOILA, Secretary, London Committee of 100.

off, his erstwhile opponent came over and explained to me that 'that fellow didn't seem to realize Churchill was a Tory' and that 'anti-Communism was the same argument they used in the 1937 war in Spain'. I let these intriguing tit-bits stand unquestioned in favour of successfully inducing him to help leaflet.

My own nonviolence is not overly deep. For example on this type of occasion the plain-clothes cops all wear a lapel pin which purportedly identifies them only to one another. I can never resist asking them, 'Would New York's "finest" like a leaflet?' One of them answered sarcastically that he couldn't read. 'Good,' I told him, 'they'll promote you.' Also there was a rather strange document being given out, entitled: 'A Salute to Your Flag is a Salute to Your Country'. It had been 'prepared by Lieut.-Col. John Rice, New York Chapter, The Military Order of the World Wars in co-operation with The Seamen's Bank for Savings' and was being 'distributed as a public patriotic service by the Girl Scouts of America'. There's a wealth of social commentary there. I went over to one of the charming older Girl Scouts (as a public patriotic service) and leered, 'I'll show you mine if you show me yours'. So we swapped leaflets. She got the better of the bargain.

NONVIOLENCE AND THE COPS

The civil disobedience had been arranged to occur between 71st and 72nd Streets, so we all convened there beforehand. When the police came out to take their places they were greeted by loud boos from our side of the street. Apparently the group's non-violence level was comparable to my own. However the chauvinists across the street gave the cops a big hand as did one of the waiting civil disobedients standing near me. In a sense he was the only one of us doing the right thing.

When the vanguard of the parade approached, the disobedients all tried to get into the middle of the street to sit down. Some were unsuccessful. The

'I tell you that there is something splendid in man that will not always mind. Why, if we had done as the kings told us five hundred years ago, we would all have been slaves. If we had done as the priests told us, we would all have been idiots. If we had done as the doctors told us, we would have been dead. We have been saved by disobedience.'

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

R.S.C.

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Debate, not words

Dear Friends,

Comrade Truman is perfectly right. It is time to get rid of millenarianism in the Anarchist Movement. The working-class will not rise, or sit down in the case of the Social General Strike, against the capitalists and overthrow them in one mighty battle as Comrade P.S. on the back page would have us believe. They will not rise, because they believe that there is no need to, and to believe that they will is, definitely, to suffer from a Marxist hangover. The working-class, or if you prefer it, the lower income group, has got the idea that things can be changed through parliamentary reform, and Anarchists cannot change this view by words alone; they must make more use of the propaganda of the deed.

I read that someone is planning to build a town that will be run on a co-operative basis. Meanwhile the Anarchists can do nothing better than go marching about with the CND, whose leaders they don't agree with anyway. Admittedly, I am as against the bomb as the next Anarchist, but I agree with

WHO WINS IN VIETNAM?

IT IS AN ACCUSATION, often justly made, against the anarchists that they have no constructive solution to international problems of power politics. This is quite true. Anarchists cannot wholeheartedly join in agitations for 'Hands off Dominica', 'Ban the Bomb: Britain must give a Lead' and currently, 'End the War in Vietnam: Recall the Geneva Conference'.

If anarchists join in marches, pickets, sit-downs and meetings called to advance solutions that they feel to be short of perfection, it is because they feel that the protest itself is of some use, and the aim of the agitation is, at best, a lesser evil.

This does not imply that co-operation is absolute and permanent. As individuals, anarchists reserve the right to withdraw their support, or indeed transfer to opposition, if they feel that the campaign conflicts with libertarian principles.

Support for ending the war in Vietnam is something that no anarchist can withhold, although he may not be a pacifist. Support for recalling the Geneva Conference is not a matter upon which an anarchist can give expression. By his abstention from the political game, he has also signified his abstention from the chicanery and horse-trading which passes for international peace-keeping. It may be possible by such a means to end the war in Vietnam, by some hugger-mugger face-saving compromise (for both sides) which gives the Vietnamese people a chance to try and live their own lives and, indeed, a hope of keeping alive (although at the moment their average expectation of peace-time life is only 35 years).

But the war in Vietnam gives the impression, like the war in Spain and the war in Korea, as 'a war looking for somewhere to happen'. If the present conflict, like the Korean war, grinds to a jerky halt we have only postponed the conflict but this indeed would be something. The accidental explosion last week of several bombs on an American airbase underlines the possibility of an accidental stepping-up of the conflict. It was said by Aldous Huxley that had the European war of 1914-18 been postponed for two years, it would have never happened in the way it did, for the death of Franz-Joseph, the Emperor of Austria, would

London Anarchist Group

"Lamb and Flag", Rose Street, Covent Garden, W.C.2 (near Garrick and King Streets; Leicester Square tube), 7.45 p.m. All welcome

SUNDAYS

MAY 30 Ira Klein
CARD (Campaign Against Racial Discrimination).

JUNE 6 Sam Fanaroff
Subject to be announced.

JUNE 13 Alan Albon
Humbuggery.

HYDE PARK MEETINGS

As from April 25 (Sunday), 3 p.m.

NOTTING HILL ANARCHIST GROUP. Secretary N.H.A.G., Flat 3, 5 Colville House, London, W.11. Meetings 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month at above address.

OFF-CENTRE LONDON DISCUSSION MEETINGS

3rd Wednesday of each month at Jack Robinson and Mary Canipa's, 21 Rumbold Rd., S.W.6 (off King's Rd.), 8 p.m.
Last Thursday in month: At George Hayes', 174 McLeod Road, S.E.2.
2nd Friday at Brian Leslie's, 242 Ames-

★ LETTERS ★

Cmd. Truman in saying that we live in the present, and I think that one co-operative settlement run on libertarian lines will do more for peace than a hundred Aldermaston marches.

Among the people things can be done that will make them realise their own potential. One idea would be to organ-

LAG 2 for Anarchy in our Time

The Editor,

At an open meeting of the LAG this Sunday, May 23, Digger Walsh gave his report on 'that march'. During the discussion that followed, an intense dissatisfaction was voiced at the apparent lack of any anarchist activity in London. After a debate the meeting decided to form itself into a group called LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP NUMBER TWO. It was decided by the thirty people there present, with one dissension, to hold regular meetings in Hyde Park on Sundays from 3 o'clock onwards and

have led to a break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the existence of which ostensibly led to the Sarajevo incident.

It could be that we are in the position of a bystander watching, with horrified fascination and impotence, two motor-cars hurtling straight for each other. There is a short while when he is a mere spectator and can hazard on the chances of avoidance of disaster but the time comes (and it may be later than we think), that we realize the inevitability of disaster. Oddly enough we are not only spectators but passengers too.

JACK ROBINSON.

ize a Debating Society to get them to air their views and exercise their freedom of speech.

One point I disagree on is the name. There is nothing wrong with Anarchism as the name of a creed. Indeed, I object violently to 'Co-operative Movement' because there exists a Co-operative Party with rather close relations with the Labour Party. I have no wish to get mixed up with these.
Lincoln
28.4.65

JOHN WALKER.

sell FREEDOM at the gate. Amongst other projects undertaken by the group have been considered direct propaganda activity; obtaining permanent premises with library and other facilities in London; the planning and execution of anarchist activities; regular public meetings of an anarchist content. Those present pledged money to be given weekly for the activities of the group and the setting up of a permanent place which will be open to all anarchists. LAG No. 2 wants to make it plain that the group has been founded for one purpose only: ACTION. It is open to everybody who wants to work constructively towards the establishment of an anarchist society in our lifetime.

MARGARET NICHOLLS, COLIN HUNT, BILL GAPE, FOSTEIN RASMUSSEN, MICHAEL WOOLLISCROFT, MARTIN SPILLMAN, ANTHONY FREWIN, MELVYN ESTRIN, DAVE SWAFFER, MICHAEL ORME, IAN KALISZEWSKI, MARTIN GILBERT, KEN WELLER, DAVID BELL, GWYN OWEN, MICHAEL WALSH, JOHN RETY, CHRIS BROAD, MIKE HALL, BARBARA KIRKE, JOHN CLARKE, ANGELA PUGH, L. ROTSBRA, DAVID MCLELLAN, RICHARD STRUCK, AND FOUR OTHERS.

London, 23.5.65

ROUND THE GALLERIES

THE COLOURED SUPPLEMENTS of our national press possess a voracious appetite for garish space-filling and, by the very nature of its readership, art, morality and politics must be reduced to the lowest common denominator of time-killing trivia. Fourth century genius and the newest pattern in shirts may share adjoining pages for philosophy can be reduced to a captioned photograph and death in battle to a pleasant pattern of green and red. Our age becomes a coloured strip, comic or tragic, according to the mood or sensitivity of the sub-editor, and the painting clown of the month is no longer the prerequisite of a pseudo-intellectual clique but the mannered gossip of the provincial outsiders.

The latest clown to join the circus of the inconsequential is Victor Vasarely, whose exhibition of Op Art is now bemusing the staff at the Hanover Gallery at 32a St. George Street, W.1. The 'art' form itself is that game beloved of the pre-war children's comics in which a rhythmical pattern is given a slight internal jar so that for a few seconds the eyes refuse to focus on the whole in its swift search for the internal irritant. In the sphere of academic art this can be done by deliberately creating a real and a false perspective point, and highlighting the false and subduing the real, but all in all it is still a game for intelligent children.

Vasarely's five paintings in last year's major exhibition of ten years of artistic

masturbation held at the Tate, was accepted without any screams of high pitched reverence by the critics, but the American demand for a new artistic gimmick has spawned Victor as the acknowledged daddy of a school of art. After the quick death of pop art, it followed that the dealers on both sides of the water needed a new commercial giggle for their floating crap game, and here for a few brief weeks (and the run will be no longer than that for this sad rubbish is too gutless to stay the course), is Op Art and its living breathing Master at anything up to £5,000 a throw, and you can buy it by the square foot.

Tess Jaray at the Hamilton, at 8 St. George Street, W.1, has succeeded however in giving a semblance of life to a lifeless art form by floating her flat patterns of colour within a vacuum of a single tone. The eye follows these plain yet pretty arrangements to a point of rest where like coloured cracks within a white ceiling they end without protest, reason or regret.

It is left to Patrick Procktor to offer a synthesis of most of the painted banality of the last ten years for here, upon twenty-four canvases at the Redfern (at 20 Cork Street, W.1), is the visual nadir of pop art—smear abstractionism, Hockney erotic child scribbles and Bacon's essay in abstract fear.

It is a belief long held by those who produce the pap of our daily entertainment that if you take the leading figures

Precious Life Blood.

Continued from page 4

This ham-fisted approach to the union negotiators was topped by a gift of £5 to all the staff who did not strike. It is said that at least one fiver found its way into the strike funds, and the Bookseller reports that union membership rose from 70 to 130 out of a staff of 350 on the first day of the strike. Whether this gross betrayal of the purity of the disinterested promotion of culture proved too much a shock to her system, or that negotiating with the *sans-culotte* peasantry was more than she could stand, Marie Antoinette Foyle handed over negotiations to the happily-named Mr. Thomas Joy and retired with what was probably 'the vapours'.

Miss Foyle also said (she seems to have opened her mouth far too much—it wasn't a Literary Luncheon). 'We have about eight applications every day from young people begging to come to us.' This is probably quite true and the glamour of the literary life, even at the remove of merely selling books, is responsible for a great deal of exploitation that takes place in the book trade. Foyle's boast of the commission they pay, but it is pointed out that to get £2 a week commission an assistant must sell £480 worth of books. The lice upon the locks of literature are many, and whilst it is true, as Milton said, 'a good book is the precious life blood of a master spirit', the precious life blood of commerce is gained by transfusions for very little cash. Let us hope that Foyle's is in for a good blood-letting (metaphorically speaking of course).

JACK ROBINSON.

P.S. At the time of going to press we hear that the strike has been settled but the terms have not been disclosed.

of the world of entertainment and place them all on one stage, within one film or between the covers of one magazine one will have created a major work of art by the sheer weight of this association, yet it never happens and we are left with the same old rhubarb wherein each public clown is forced to subdue his own particular talent to fill a role that lesser men would fill with dignity, for their very anonymity gives roundness to their puppet's mask. For a painter to work in the style of Rubens or a Vermeiren may be a statement of intellectual poverty yet we may, of our charity, admire the dexterity in the making of the pastiche, but if a painter marries the style of Rembrandt, Winslow Homer, Memlinc and Disney within a single canvas one would not only question his personal lack of vision but also his taste. Procktor is too good a minor painter to waste his time on this permutation of rubbish, for he has offered work that is unworthy of Francis Bacon (who after all can paint his own paintings), and too good to be wasted upon the rest of the drab platoon of gallery hacks, for even their dealers can produce their posset of charmless pap. And for those who live at Boreham Wood, in Herts., there is an exhibition of work from the Grabowski Gallery in aid of the Freedom from Hunger Campaign, at Elliott's Sports Club, Rowley Lane, Boreham Wood, Herts., on Saturday, and Sunday, May 22 and 23, 10 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., an occasion when reason and emotion must make a brief yet honest truce.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP.

Correspondence: Joe Embleton, top Left, 11 Baliol Street, Glasgow.
Meetings at Horsehoe Bar, Drury Street, Tuesdays at 8 p.m.

MANCHESTER GROUP. Fortnightly meetings held. For information contact Alan Barlow, 25a Duffield Road, Irlam o' the Heights, Salford, 6.

OFF-CENTRE DISCUSSION GROUP. Every Wednesday at Jack Geraghty's, 8 York Road, Manchester, 21.

MERSEYSIDE FEDERATION. Enquiries: Barbara Renshaw, 4 Clarence Road, Devonshire Park, Birkenhead, Cheshire.

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

OXFORD ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact H. G. Mellor, Merton College, Oxford.

SOUTH WALES. Irregular meetings held. Enquire Peter H. Morgan, 15 Pursfield Place, Roath, Cardiff.

SURREY ANARCHISTS are invited to meetings on the first Thursday of every month at Chris Torrance's (63 North Street, Carshalton, Surrey—please ring three times) and on the 3rd Thursday of every month at M. Dykes, 8 Court Drive, Sutton, Surrey. Both meetings 7.30 p.m.

PROPOSED GROUPS

EDGWARE-ELSTREE and District. Planning discussion meetings and activities. Contact Colin Seal, 8 Oakwood Drive, Edgware or Anthony Frewin, 31 Burghley Avenue, Boreham Wood.

NOTTINGHAM. Anyone interested contact Peter Bowden, Flat 2, 11 Rectory Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham.

SOUTH BEDS., NORTH HERTS., HITCHIN, LETCHWORTH, BIGGLESWADE, BEDFORD. Anyone interested forming a group contact Peter and Maureen Ford, 102 Stotfold Road, Arlesey, Beds.

NORTH-WEST ESSEX. Close to W. Suffolk, S.E. Cambs. and N.E. Herts. Contact Robert Barltrop, The Old Vicarage, Radwinter, near Saffron Walden.

HULL & YORKSHIRE (East Riding). Anyone interested in forming anarchist group contact R. A. Baker, 6 The Oval, Chestnut Avenue, Witherby, E. Yorks. Phone: Hull 58543.

SUNDERLAND (Co. Durham). Proposed Anarchist Discussion Group. (Syndicalists welcome) at Geoff. Edwards, 'Side House', St. George's Terrace, Roker, Sunderland, Co. Durham.

Faslane Come All Ye

FOR THE LAST three months, the Scottish Committee of 100 and anti-war militants in Glasgow have been preparing for an international direct action at Faslane British Polaris Base.

The 'Factory' for peace, subject of much criticism from a section of the anarchist movement, is playing a valuable part in the Faslane action. We hope that this will satisfy some of the more negative critics of the 'Factory', who would well to come to Glasgow, and see in terms of action the size of the task being undertaken.

Faslane British Polaris Base is located 30 miles from Glasgow. It is in the intermediate stages of construction, estimated cost of which is £45,000,000. Faslane ostensibly came into being as a result of the Kennedy-Macmillan 'Nassau Agreement'. Construction had in fact already begun some years previous to this. The Polaris Base is situated in the Gare Loch, and is primarily a shore base training establishment for the firing and maintaining of nuclear missiles. Within walking distance of the Base, at Glen Douglas, Glen Fruin, Rosneath, may be found the rest of the Faslane complex.

At Coullport and Glen Douglas extensive and heavy construction is taking place. Glen Douglas is perhaps most interesting of all, where 140 nuclear blast-proof shelters are being built into the mountain side. To shelter what of course is the question. We have been told that the lucky occupants are to be tins of corned beef. Bully for them.

Four main objectives are the backbone of the Faslane plan of action:—

1. We are going to offer in technically feasible terms a peaceful alternative to which the present set-up can be put. An economist and other specialists are drafting a plan for the conversion of Faslane into an International Oil Terminal. This plan, apart from trying to overcome the technical difficulties involved, will try to negate the pyramid of organisational leeching in its final draft. When completed it will be presented to the Government and Trade Union Bodies for examination and adoption as an alternative to the war effort and a positive contribution to International Co-operation Year.

2. Alternative employment will be offered to one Faslane worker at the 'Factory For Peace', Glasgow. This will be offered at a Film Show and Open Meeting, where the form of 'Industrial Democracy' which the 'Factory' practices will be depicted by a film showing it in action. Meeting will follow where men previously employed on 'War Work' will give their reasons for ceasing it and the need for others to do likewise.

3. Constructive action will be tied in to the end demonstration. Part of the beach from Helensburgh to Faslane is a rubbish littered eyesore. Surrounding scenery makes this stand out in harsh comparison. While the mess at Faslane is being symbolically cleaned up, teams of people will be 'On the Beach' literally doing it.

4. The final objective will be a direct action, which will be an attempt to prevent work from taking place on the complex for a whole day. If Saturday work is discontinued we will formally

inspect the site to see how suitable the setup is for conversion. We hope that a maximum of individual initiative and tactical thinking will be used 'On The Day' and that Non-Violent Direct Action will go on the 'Offensive'.

The fact of international war resistance will be strongly reaffirmed at Faslane. Organisations and individuals of like-minded thinking abroad have been contacted, and contingents are coming to the demonstration.

For this demonstration to have impact we need support and cash. Please send donations and further enquiries to:

Scottish Committee of 100,
c/o Munro,
89 Elderslie Street,
Glasgow, C.3,
or
National Committee of 100,
13 Goodwin Street,
London, N.4.

MARK NEWNS,
Field Secretary.

Lilac Time of Cheers—Evening News

BY 493 VOTES to 466 drug-crazed Oxford Union decided that they would fight for Queen and country and we breathed again. The last country we fought gave hospitality to our Queen, who annoyed our late allies (the French) by a fulsome reference to the Prussian Bluecher's assistance against the French at Waterloo. The Duke of Wellington (by Goya) turned up at New Street Station. The *Sunday Telegraph* had a theory that the name 'Bloxxham' on the Duke's cloakroom ticket derives from a character in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, in which a baby is deposited in the cloakroom at Victoria. If, as the Duke said, they'll believe that, they'll believe anything.

IF YOU HAVE tears to shed, prepare to shed them for the police force, for the Home Secretary has announced that tear-gas will be allowed for police use throughout Britain. The Metropolitan police have had it since 1957. *The Daily Sketch*, a reactionary newspaper as a

rule, is moved by its hatred of the present government to talk sense. 'Sir Frank Soskice's assurance that the gas will be used only on lunatics and armed criminals is just not good enough. For, with governments, one thing always leads to another. Doubtless gas will eventually be used to put down riots and political demonstrations. From there it is only a step to the arming of the police.' No tears have been shed at the resignation of Mr. Michael Murphy, the New York police commissioner, whose resignation, he says, is entirely unconnected with New York City Council's recommendation last week that a committee independent of the police should be set up to deal with complaints of police brutality. Mr. Murphy has strongly opposed the creation of such a committee, arguing that it would undermine public confidence in the police, and would create situations where the police would be hesitant to act.

TWO CAMBRIDGE COUNCILLORS are asking for independent inquiries by the Home Office and the Ministry of Health into the death of Victor Woolf, aged 46, who died in a Cambridge hospital some hours after being taken by police from his home in Charles Street, Cambridge. When the police called with a Mental Health warrant, there was a struggle in which a police inspector received a head wound with an axe. The Chief Constable of the Mid-Anglia police force said, 'There was an inquest and the Coroner said that everything that could have been done was done.' An enquiry held in Armley Gaol, Leeds, has decided that there was no truth whatever in the allegation that Len Gibson, a pacifist and a member of the Brotherhood Church, was beaten up by warders in Armley Gaol. Len Gibson was serving a two month sentence for refusing to pay National Health contributions on conscientious grounds. A mother of a drug addict (aged 30), accused prison hospital officers at a Southwark inquest of letting her son lie in bed and die at Brixton Jail hospital wing. His drugs had been withdrawn and he had died by inhaling vomit. A drugs expert said that the method of withdrawal was the best he knew. The gradual tailing-off of drugs was used in some hospitals but it tended to prolong the agony of withdrawal. The jury returned a verdict of 'Misadventure'.

take so many chances to get hold of their drugs; a heroic police can make spectacular arrests; lawyers can do a brisk business; judges can make speeches; the big pedlars can make a fortune; the tabloids can sell millions of copies; John Citizen can sit back feeling exonerated and watch evil get its deserts. Everyone gets something out of it except the junkie. If he's lucky he can creep round the corner and get a fix. But it wasn't the junk that made him creep.' (This passage is, in fact, a quote from a character in *Cain's Book*). Later Trocchi says of drugtaking, 'It is all the sensationalism surrounding it which attracts the silly youth to make it part of his personal revolt.' At West London magistrate's court a youth of 17 was conditionally discharged for a year when he pleaded guilty to being in the unauthorized possession of five tablets containing a substance specified under the schedule of the Drugs (Prevention of Misuse) Act. The magistrate (Mr. E. R. Guest) said he had no doubt read a lot about 'all this drugtaking. Unfortunately it gets more publicity than the overwhelming numbers of people of the courage to live like people, have lived since time immemorial. I hope you will copy the second lot. The others get too much publicity and are just a miserable collection of pestilential weaklings. If you could see, and smell, the people who think it grand to get their names all over the shop, taking drugs it would frighten you off far more than anything could say.' Giving him a conditional discharge the magistrate concluded, 'I am convinced you are a hard-working young man and will stand up to life without chemicals. You simply can't be any good in life to your parents, or to your wife (when you have one), if you are awash with chemicals. If people offer them to you at a party, I should be inclined to give them one in the eye, because they are trying to hook you on to something filthy.'

QUANTITIES of man-made fibre, anchored to the sea-bed off Southbourne, near Bournemouth, two weeks ago to stem erosion of the beaches by means of absorbing some of the wave energy, were found washed ashore, just like natural seaweed. The process was called 'Operation Canute'. **JON QUIXOTE.**

Letter from China

Continued from page 1

The other group is the 'Towards Free Communes' which actually works within the State-controlled apparatus, and many of whose members have come from the Young Communists and not yet broken away. To us older Anarchists, we would never work within the Party machinery, but many of those who have grown up in it, find it almost impossible to break away without becoming the object of suspicion; hence the growth of an Anarchist opposition under the noses of the bureaucracy. We have no ideological differences with this group which agitates that the produce of the peasant should remain his own and which reminds the peasant that Marxism is the enemy of his existence, a fact which is taught to Marxists in Europe but kept well concealed in Asia. It is impossible to assess the strength of the 'Towards Free Communes' organisation, because we find so many denunciations of its so-called 'deviationism' and 'provocation' in the Government press that we imagine it to spread.

OTHER OPPOSITION MOVEMENTS

There is very little organised working class opposition in China. The Social Democrats only pretend to exist. They are fatally marked by their support of the Western Powers, though differing from the admittedly right-wing opposition that depends on Formosa. The Trotskyists were at one time strong, but the very logic of their position has made them into a brand of police-agent. We understand that in Britain, the Anarchists and Trotskyists work closely together.* One can only assume that the English Trotskyists are of vastly different opinions from those here. By accepting the theory of the workers' state both in Russia and China, they can never really seriously oppose the State in either country. Consequently, their opposition can only go so far and no farther and when they judge the State to be in danger, they will defend it. This is an interesting intellectual proposition, no doubt, in a country like England which calls itself capitalist, but disastrous here in China, when so-called opposition Socialists get the support of independent workers and

* A *Daily Worker* type story!—A.M.

peasants and then, when the movement becomes 'dangerous' to the workers' State, are obliged to betray it lest the State collapse.

In every serious demonstration against Party control—and the strikes which swept the country four years ago were an obvious case in point—the Trotskyists had to align themselves with the Party leadership and acted against the workers.

CONTACTS ABROAD

Reading for the first time for several years of the activities of the English Anarchists, we were impressed with photographs of the large demonstrations held in London against the nuclear bomb and noted the banners displayed of the Anarchists and Syndicalists. These appeared in the Chinese press, possibly due to a mistake of the censorship. Dear comrades, there is one act of solidarity which you can render to us in China, who are carrying on the same battle as yourselves against nuclear war and State dictatorship. It would be a great asset to our movement if we could once again establish a publishing house but this would have to be outside Chinese jurisdiction. If this could be started in Hong Kong, we could provide the finance and also arrange to bring our literature in, but you must know that the British authorities do not permit our presence in Hong Kong. We are accused of being terrorists. It is not us, but those who plan nuclear warfare, who are the terrorists. For years, it was boasted that British democracy would admit the refugee from political tyranny. The present British Government claims to be Socialist. And while it backs American Imperialism against Mao's Government, it is prepared to deport any political opponent of Mao's. Can this be justified? Would it not be possible that the British Government be forced to lift the ban on political activities in Hong Kong?—for how can they defend their hostility to Mao Tse Tung with their support for him by deporting his opponents back to the mainland? We think there would be a great scandal in England if the working class who voted for the Labour Government knew of it.

Had we the opportunity of an office in Hong Kong, we could keep in better touch with our comrades abroad. But it is pointless to go to great risk to smuggle publications from Chinese mainland when probably few if any of our friends abroad can read them, and which are starved of information other than purely local interest. With the Korean Anarchist movement we keep in close touch. The Korean Anarchist Federation was once very strong and, today, the only oppositional Labour movements to the Communist Party are Populist and Anarchist; but the Korean Anarchists are now broken up. One finds them in our movement in many cities. We lost contact with our (Chinese-speaking) comrades in San Francisco many years ago. The Japanese Anarchists are now legally permitted to exist but contact has been rare. We would welcome contact if only to obtain new textbooks, and those comrades who participated in the production of our Summary will be interested to know that the Chinese text is still used. I personally have the photographs taken with comrades of the old Freedom Group, throughout many changes of circumstances, after all these years. We particularly express our solidarity with the comrades recently arrested in England* and Spain. C.S. * Stuart Christie?—A.M.

WRITING in *New Society*, T. C. N. Gibbins, Reader in Forensic Psychiatry, London University, on the drug problem says that the spread of the drug habit among Puerto Ricans is due to 'the danger that if drugs have to be obtained on the black market, it becomes too expensive to supply oneself except as a "rake off" from supplying half-a-dozen others, so that active proselytising is carried on to obtain more contacts, and young people are possibly easier to convince'. In the same issue Dr. R. D. Laing is quoted as saying, 'I would be far happier if my own teenage children would, without breaking the law, smoke marijuana when they wished, rather than start on the road of so many of their elders to nicotine and ethyl alcohol addiction.' Alexander Trocchi in another article writing of the drug problem says, 'It's a nice tangible cause for juvenile delinquency. And it lets most people out because they're alcoholics. There's an available pool of wasted-looking bastards to stand trial as the corrupters of their children. It provides the police with something to do and, as junkies and potheads, are relatively easy to apprehend because they have to

Contact Column

Tour of libertarian groups planned by Thanet anarchist is now cancelled.
Friends of Resistance. Meeting at 2.30, May 30 at 6 Endsleigh Street, N.W.1
Spontaneous University. Will anyone interested in starting a spontaneous university of the type suggested by Trocchi in 'Anarchy 31' or in an academic secession as suggested by Paul Goodman please contact Chris Holmes at 39 Hannon Road, Birmingham 14.
Will anyone interested in getting the present repressive legislation against marijuana and hashish repealed please contact Chris Holmes, above address.

New Progressive School. A new co-educational day school, setting out to provide a liberal education in a permissive atmosphere invites enrolments now for children 3½-8 for May and 3½-13 for September. Write 186 Kirkdale, S.E.26.

To American Readers. Anarchist-Pacifist Youth Rally June 11-14. At Maryland Line, Md. Near US Routes 83 and 30. For details write to: Mutual Aid Fellowship, Box 3760, Harbour Sta., E. Chicago, Indiana.

Writers. Poets and Playwrights: send us your work. Outlet for to-day's talent. No axes to grind. Send with s.a.e. (or international reply coupon) to The Idiot, 1283 Bush Street, San Francisco 94109, USA.

Libertarian Kibbutz. Student looking for one of these to work at in the Summer. If anyone can recommend one, either agricultural or industrial, please tell George Matthews, c/o University Union, Park Place, Edinburgh 8.

Accommodation—London. Anarchist 18, seeks cheap accommodation with others. West London preferred. Contact A.M., 28 Sun Street, Haworth, Keighley, Yorks.

London Accommodation. Couple and son (two years) seek 2/3 unfurnished rooms, North London. Box 8.

Bronia, Mac and Cat (N.H.A.G.). Want a furnished (unfurnished) or semi-furnished flat near Fulham or Paddington. Any offers or suggestions. Phone: McDonald, BAY 7306. Evenings.

If you wish to make contact let us know.

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Linwood 'Mass of Discontent'

THE PRESSED STEEL'S factory at Linwood is now back at work, but although production has restarted, nothing has really been settled, and the causes of both the disputes remain. The dispute in the die-setting department, where the men came out on strike in support of two workmates who refused to do a job belonging to another trade, came to an end with the men deciding to go back to work and do the job their workmates refused, but 'under protest'.

The 27 trim shop workers who staged a sit-in, and were arrested and charged with a breach of the peace, did not appear in court after all. They each received a letter from the Chief Constable of Renfrewshire in which they were told that the circumstances leading to their arrest were under consideration by the Procurator Fiscal at Paisley and that his decision would be communicated to them in due course.

The dispute over the production schedules on the 'Imp' assembly line is an issue on which the men have won a certain amount of control, for the time being at least, over the

speed at which they will have to work. At first the management wanted an assurance that the go-slow tactics would not be re-introduced and arrangements would be made for the carrying out of a work-study. Now they have given in, with no conditions attached.

BACK, ON THEIR OWN TERMS

Charles White, the shop stewards' convenor of the National Union of Vehicle Builders, told a meeting 'The work study has been withdrawn as an issue. It will not be used as it was used on Friday (when the company stopped production and laid off men), and it will not be part and parcel of a return to work. Work study will now be discussed in the normal manner.' He also spoke of earlier talks between union representatives and the company's works manager who had been told that they could not give him any assurances on production. The men were producing what appeared to them to be a normal day's work for a normal day's pay. In order to decide what should be termed as a normal day's production, the men themselves would have to put their views before any decision was made, but Mr. White added that although he told the management this, they offered no guarantees.

It appears that the dissatisfaction over

the bonus being paid under the 'Scanlon Plan' led the workers on the 'Imp' assembly line to work out exactly what should be produced for their basic wage of £17 17s. per week and they have stuck to this, ignoring the bonus rates of the Plan.

No wonder the management is hopping mad, not only over the go-slow, but also over the 27 men. They put the blame on weak union leadership, whom they say, have lost control of their members. In the eyes of the management, this is their job and, let's face it, on the whole the unions do a good job of keeping the rank and file in order, but sometimes it does not come off.

One union organiser said the factory is a 'seething mass of discontent', which is centred round the bonus scheme and it appears that this was not the first time that 'John Law' had been called in at Linwood. Union officials have said that the men can work very hard all week and still find there is no bonus.

SCRAP THE 'SCANLON PLAN'

It is obvious that the 'Scanlon Plan' was worked out so that it was the men who took the knocks when car sales dropped. Talks will probably be held to revise it, but surely it should be scrapped altogether. High basic wage rates, with the speed of the job controlled by the men themselves, are far better than any bonus scheme. It is time that the 'monster', as it has been called, of assembly line car production was geared down to a speed that is comfortable for everyone. It is control over this sort of thing that can bring real improvements for the car worker.

P.T.

Freedom For Workers' Control

MAY 29 1965 Vol. 26 No. 17

For Better or for Worse

READING REPORTS of the ETU National Rules Conference it does seem that delegates had to be, and were, on their toes. The executive council, on many occasions, scraped by with the barest of majorities. The one EC recommendation which stood no chance was the changing of the Union's name; it needed only one speaker from the floor to have the proposal completely rejected.

One important EC amendment which did scrape through, the replacement of 11 part-time EC members elected every two years by 11 full-time members elected every five years. Delegates fought hard against this amendment, their argument for opposing is blatantly obvious, the more full-time national officers there are, the more divorced the EC will become from rank and file aspirations.

Conference was in no mood to stand for 'full-time officials on reaching the age of 55 years and having been in office for ten years, should continue until 65 without seeking re-election'. They rejected the proposal without ceremony.

Les Cannon, president of the ETU, saved the EC proposal to 'eliminate area committees and substitute area conferences of shop stewards, in an endeavour to reorganise on an industry to industry basis'. Conference were up in arms on this proposal, and only the speech by Cannon turned conference round.

This was obviously a lively conference. The ETU is a stamping ground for varying political factions, CP, militant anti-CP, Trots, all having the answers from their varying party lines, and the party line always comes first, second and third, and then round again. If the party line coincides with the general membership's wishes they are lucky, if not the 'in fighting' begins.

DRINK UP I'M IN THE PRINT

'Get your boy in the print and he's made' used to be a popular saying, but these days the popularity has dropped off. Sons of printers coming into the trade is declining. Why? To earn a

reasonable standard of living, one has to graft, and graft long hours, this is the lot of workers in the general print and provinces, where in many cases the minimum rate is the maximum.

The print unions are prepared to cooperate with the 'Wage Freeze Board' but if the membership endorse the recent negotiated wages agreement it stays binding whatever the 'board's opinions'.

In a press statement the print unions state that they do not accept that a settlement on the basis of the employers' offer would be against the national interest and are fully prepared to substantiate their conviction to the Board.

We can rest assured the Board will have its eyes opened to the myth that commercial and provincial print-workers are the 'Aristocrats of industry'.

COST OF EXISTING INDEX

Many employers would like to see the policy of 'wages geared to the index' scrubbed out. George Brown certainly would, because all the time it rises, it exposes the failure of his policy to control prices. It is a known fact that the 'weighting of the index' is biased against the consumer, fares are not included in the index but refrigerators are, and naturally one buys the latter every week.

The government is hoping to convince the unions to suspend the 'points increases'. 'Play the game for your country's sake'. Saucy buggers!—Hold the index steady, and at this stage nothing can be done about it. Interfere with the index arrangements and there will be more trouble than enough.

B.C.

SPAIN AND THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

RECENTLY IN A *Guardian* supplement, Spain's economy was described as 'a dry sponge'. Since the end of the 'civil war', through until the early 1950s, the country's economy was almost dormant. American aid had already been going to Spain, but from this time on, came capitalist investment from Fords, US Steel, Libbys, Dow and Chrysler. Other capital was withdrawn from areas where political change was taking place and Spain was seen as a safe investment.

This was followed by more large American and European companies staking out their claim in a country which, by our standards, is relatively undeveloped. Not only are there big profits to be made from investments in Spain, but from this vantage point, they are close to the African countries, which, once they have achieved a high enough purchasing power, will become another market to exploit.

As Spain becomes more industrialised, her agriculture will suffer. In recent years there has not only been the drift of people away from the land to the factories, but also abroad to find work in the labour-starved countries, such as West Germany. In these countries, the Spaniard has met and been influenced by European trade unionism.

'RESISTANCE TAKES SHAPE'

In Spain the Government unions or 'vertical syndicates' have, within them, workers and employers. These in turn are each divided into two, the 'economic and social' sections. Whereas this is the only legal and official organisation for workers, their employers can and are organised in their own federations and councils. Nevertheless the workers' struggle has, to some degree, taken place within the Government-controlled union. As an article in *Espana Libre*, which was reprinted from the AFL-CIO paper *Free Trade Unions News*, points out, 'It is inside the factories that the workers' resistance takes shape, and it is there that the conflict is joined. The only "trade union" representation, elected directly by the workers, are the delegates from the shops and the shop committees. Though these have very few rights (not even the right to meet with their electors), nevertheless they do carry the responsibility of representing the workers viz a viz the employers.'

Those representatives who have become increasingly conscious of their responsibilities have pressed forward workers' day-to-day demands and, on occasions, have even organised strikes. Those who thus courageously defended the interests of the workers in the face of great peril (often at the price of

their freedom), have won the respect and trust of their fellow workers.'

Now collective agreements are drawn up between the Government, the employers and the top officials of the unions, but, centred around these agreements, other struggles have taken place. Demands for free unions have come from the Asturian miners in their strike last year. The Workers Trade Union Alliance (ASO) which includes the Anarcho-Syndicalist CNT and Socialist UGT, is campaigning for and demanding 170-200 pesetas for 8 hours work. The majority now only earn 70-80 pesetas.

RECENT STRIKES AND DEMONSTRATIONS

With these pay demands, which have been backed by action, comes the call for free trade unions and the right to strike. In Bilbao, on May 1, over 4,000 metal workers withdrew their labour and demonstrated for the release of an ASO comrade from prison. Workers in Saragossa demonstrated in front of the union building, the Casa Sindical in the Paseo de Marina Mareno, against the vertical syndicates and demanded their own organisation. The police in Madrid broke up an ASO demonstration, but groups re-formed and made their way to the Casot de Campo where thousands had gathered.

In Barcelona, the police have been carrying out investigations into the activities of certain workers. These inquiries, which took place during the week preceding April 30, brought some arrests, but many got away before the police arrived and are, for the moment, safe. On April 30, an appeal from the ASO brought out 3,000 workers onto Las Ramblas, one of the city's most beautiful main streets. The police intervened violently but the demonstration carried on and lasted for more than two hours.

The English company of Babcock and Wilcox Y Aguirera Lasa sacked a number of militants who were organising for a claim for more money. Leaflets were printed calling for help and support for these sacked men. Last March, workers at the Altos Hornos de Viqueaya at Sagunto went on strike, claiming the same rates of pay as those at the company's plant at Bilbao.

Where other industries are on the increase and are employing more labour, one of Spain's oldest, the textile industry, is on the decline. In the textile towns of Saradell, Tarressa and Manresa, near Barcelona, over 4,000 workers are unemployed. Another 15,000 have to live on only four days wages.

FRANCO WATCHING HIS IMAGE

Franco is faced with a dilemma of how to deal with these demands for free trade unions, which in fact cannot be conceded as they would undermine and topple his regime. He cannot be too ruthless in putting down disputes like this as he has to preserve his respectable Common Market image, not that this mask has not slipped during the past. There is also the deep fear of another civil war. This, I think, restrains people of all political persuasions, and so everyone really waits for Franco to join his two mates, Mussolini and Hitler. Meanwhile the struggle goes on, but Franco will have to be dead before any real change takes place. Let us hope it is not too long to wait.

(Financial help is needed to pay for legal costs of those arrested and for assistance for their families. Send donations to A. Roa, 210 Bravington Road, London, W.9. All monies will be acknowledged.)

P.T.

'The Precious Life Blood'

IT CANNOT BE denied that there is something a little boring in the weekly chronicling of struggles for an extra 'twopence an hour' or 'an hour less per week', but viewed in the larger context of what should be the aim of those who only have their labour power to sell, these smaller struggles may be viewed as rehearsals for a larger struggle, for more ambitious aims, such as workers' control, or a free society.

Nevertheless, amidst all these puny chronicles, incidents occur which illumine the issue by their unexpectedness and novelty and demand our special attention.

Of all the fields of human endeavour which depress one by their servility, from *Kipps* to the lot of John Lewis' partners, the role of shop assistant is the most unrewarding, both from the financial point of view and that of gratitude for services rendered. The public is the worst possible contact in daily work. Bullied and brow-beaten themselves by bosses, they retaliate stupidly by bullying and brow-beating any hapless shop-assistant humble enough to take their insults. In many cases a supposed insult by the assistant is avenged by a complaint to the management and a 'carpeting'.

To add to, or compensate for this humble position, the shop-assistant or

'sales-clerk' or 'sales-lady' regard themselves as socially above that station in life which needs to organize to defend the standard of pay and hours which have been obtained.

The book-trade is on the lower rungs of this spiral staircase. There is a whole outlook on the bookselling business which may be defined as 'the precious life blood of a master spirit' outlook. There is a reverend hush when one talks about books, far removed from all the sordid commercial wranglings about wages, overtime, commission, discounts, copyrights, royalties and all that vulgar talk about money. A writer on the shopkeepers of England once defined bookselling as 'the only trade in which one could be, and still be a gentleman'.

Further down the spiral staircase, from where debts and ex-prime-minister's daughters work in bookshops because they 'just love books', we come to Foyle's described (incorrectly) as 'The World's Greatest Bookshop' which has long been known in the trade, in the unions and to many of the public as the world's worst bookshop for conditions and pay, for practices and for absence of 'service'. These three qualities are not unconnected, and it was without surprise that it was learned last Wednesday that an official strike

of assistants had broken out at Foyle's, and that the shop was being picketed.

Foyle's was founded by two brothers who, having failed in their Civil Service examinations started in the book business by selling their text-books. This rags-to-riches story is carried on by Miss Christina Foyle who queens it over the establishment today, gracing Literary Luncheons and issuing edicts on the non-employment of bearded or sandalled assistants. Queen Christina said to the *Standard* on Wednesday, 'This strike has come right out of the blue. Nothing like this has ever happened before. I run the firm as a trust for my father, and I could chuck it up and be a millionaire tomorrow if I wanted to be.' She said, referring to her imminent visit to America, 'I cannot possibly meet them [the strikers] today because I'm absolutely booked up.' Answering the complaint that Foyle's sack members of the staff who go sick, 'We get a lot of layabouts. If they are away very much, we sack them but we don't sack people who are any good.' She said that there would be adequate facilities for the staff when the new building was completed in September. Asked if she would sack the strikers she said, 'They can leave if they don't like working here. This is not a prison.' To the *Evening News* Christina said, 'It's a lovely place to work. I thought they were all happy here,' and to cap this happy-ending with a sob-story she said, 'My real concern is that it will upset my mother who is 83.'

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