

Mobilise Against MILITARISM!

AT A RECENT meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party, the 'left-wingers' produced a resolution calling for a cut in military expenditure, and were forestalled, possibly to their disappointment, by Emmanuel Shinwell's announcement that the government accepted this policy itself. The excitement over this was so great that there was no time to discuss the government White Paper on immigration, which is also a topic on which the left wingers disagree with Wilson.

In the current *Observer* (15.8.65), Andrew Wilson asks in a long article 'How can Britain police the world, as well as contribute to the defence of Europe, on a defence budget of £2,000 million a year?' He goes on to criticize the lack of rationality in the way this sum is being spent, for instance by maintaining bases in parts of the world where a hostile population could make them unusable. His solution is of course, modern thinking, the new scientific age and the rest of the *Observer* ideology.

The idea that is common both to parliamentary socialists, who hope to reduce military expenditure by a decision on party policy, and the modern thinkers of the *Observer*, is that decisions about this subject are reached as a result of rational arguments about how to achieve a definite objective.

There can be few people left who think of parliament as a collection of men and women representing the ordinary people of the country and putting their interests forward. The politicians who decide on military policy represent a collection of conflicting interests related to the exploitation of markets, securing access to raw materials, maintaining friendly relations with other states and so on. Unfortunately they also represent the short-sighted interests of trade union leaders and professional interests, whose members' prosperity depends on a flourishing war industry. They are also influenced by professional soldiers and strategists, and highly placed civil servants in ministries dealing with these matters.

The reason why military policy is so confused and absurd from a logical point of view, so that it can be pulled to pieces in a few thousand words by any competent 'defence correspondent', is because it arises as a result of compromises between these hard-headed economic speculators, with one faction gaining the upper hand long enough to make a fat profit on a supply of aeroplanes, then another coming to the top and ensuring a few thousand soldiers being posted where they can defend some

corrupt oil sheik against an internal revolution, and so on.

ONLY THE WORKERS LOSE

The only group whose interests are not felt are the workers, for whom the result of the military farce is that the collective wealth of the people is squandered on useless war production whose only 'value' is to the capitalists who make profits out of its manufacture, and the generals, civil servants and politicians who thrive on tension and an economy of shortage. It may be pointed out that workers in the front line of the profit-making machine and the military industry have never had it so good, but even this is at the expense, in the context of the structure of our society, of the low wages of workers doing jobs which are socially essential but non-profitable (postmen, transport workers), the old people who live on miserable pensions, and low paid workers who suffer the terrible housing conditions of some parts of London.

The reason the interests of the ordinary people are not felt in deciding how wealth should be disposed of (if it were, they would get rid of the whole murderous farce and live like human beings), is that only a minority understand their situation with respect to the power political set-up which controls their lives. (Before being criticised as Marxists, we are not suggesting that this understanding will come about as a result of a mystical historical process, but believe on the contrary in the vital importance of propaganda to put our ideas across.) Furthermore, the traditional avenue by which working people who become more politically conscious used to set about changing society—by securing the election of their leaders to parliament—has failed so often that only despair and apathy are left, after each wave of working class politicians has been absorbed into the state and the machinery of oppression via parliament or the union bureaucracy.

PROPAGANDA AND ACTION NEEDED

It is because we do not believe that governmental decisions are arrived at as a result of rational processes, that few anarchists are enthusiastic about the possible results of the numerous centres for peace research and conflict resolution that are springing up in various parts of the world. We do not see any value in arguing or discussing with representatives of the state whose interests clash with those of the ordinary people to the extent that the removal of the threat of war would mean the loss of their fortunes and positions of power. The state and capitalism have to be fought, not reasoned with.

Our two aims therefore, in combatting militarism, must be to awaken the opposition of the ordinary people, and together to find ways of changing society in the way we desire. The anarchist movement, despite temporary successes in some parts of the world, has not so far been able to get its ideas across to sufficiently large numbers in Western Europe. The Committee of 100 has had some successes over the last few years, has left behind a militant propaganda group, but has lost the thousands of supporters that it could call on four years ago. Clearly some new initiative is called for. There must be thousands of supporters of the Labour Party scratching their heads and wondering if they are really getting what they voted for last October. Could that be a possible field for the expansion of anarchism and direct anti-militarism?

P.H.

HOW COSY IT WOULD BE for revolutionaries if revolt were always expressed in rational and constructive terms! How reassuring for pacifists if oppressed peoples would always learn to love their oppressors and earn their respect by turning the other cheek! How the lib-labs would love it if the constitutional progress of law reform could solve problems and salve bitterness in reality as well as in their dreams!

From the squalid Negro ghetto of Watts suburb, City of the Angels, USA, a black hand reached out last week and sharply smacked the faces of all people with good theories. It demonstrated quite clearly that you cannot expect rational behaviour from people who have been treated with contempt for irrational reasons for a century; that you cannot practice constitutional, organised violence, that you cannot degrade human beings by every social and economic practice for generations, without sooner or later facing an explosion of unconstitutional and unorganised violence against your social and economic domination. And the more degraded and hopeless you have made these people feel, the more hate will be generated and the more irrational and apparently pointless will the explosion be.

Does one have to be a student of revolution to see this coming? It would seem so, for the prevailing tone of the reporting on the Los Angeles riots has been one of pained surprise. How could this sort of thing happen—in the very month that President Johnson has signed the Civil Rights Bill and Negroes in the South have been fearlessly lining up to put their names on the voting registers for the first time in their lives?

Can it be that the Negroes who have escaped from the ghettos of the South to the ghettos of Chicago and Detroit and New York and Los Angeles have realised that there is more to integration than the right to use the white man's bar, and there is more to democracy than the right to vote?

Or is there? Is the view from the bottom of the pile made so clear that democracy can be seen to be a sham—that it is just the right to vote and nothing more: not the right to be free in any real sense of the word? What has the right to vote brought the British worker except the right to choose his political masters? He cannot choose his economic masters—unless it can be said that he can choose to be exploited by the State in a nationalised industry instead of by private enterprise bosses—a very slender choice, as experience shows.

For the American worker, the

choice between the two parties is even more slender than for the British worker—and the American Negro is the submerged, the lumpen-proletariat, of the American working class, not allowed by his white brothers to join his appropriate trade union, not allowed to join in the affluence for which his white brother has sold himself. In the Northern States he is already 'allowed' to vote—but his unemployment rate is twice as high as for whites and the figures are rising; his wages are just over half that of the white worker and the figures are dropping; Negro infant mortality is nearly twice that of white children. As the whites get richer, the blacks get poorer, in every significant factor.

And they are offered—the vote! Is it any wonder that the liberal and moderate leaders are falling into disfavour—if indeed they were ever in favour with the more disillusioned Northern city Negro. The Reverend Martin Luther King is regarded as a sort of Uncle Tom. He is reported to have called upon Californian Governor Brown to 'take what steps were necessary to quash the violence' and to be on the way to Los Angeles to 'do what he can'. He should be careful—at least one moderate Negro leader was shot by a Negro sniper while trying to reason with rioters. What can 'Civil Rights' in the Martin Luther King sense hold out for the American Negro except the merest basis for long-term educational and constitutional improvement within the American rat-race. For the Negro of today, with things getting worse not better, the immediate future seems hopeless. After all, they've seen it all before. What did 'emancipation' bring but the change from chattel slavery, where at least they were looked after like a piece of property, to wage slavery where nobody gave a damn outside of working hours. From the steaming Watts suburb of Los Angeles, itself one of the world's ugliest urban sprawls, from the Watts ghetto, the Negroes look at the prosperous three-car white families in the spacious white suburbs, at the glamour of Hollywood, at the raucous advertising selling the huge

Hate Grows in Ghettos

production of luxury goods when they haven't got the necessities of life. They turn their rage upon themselves—Watts has a record of nearly 200 murders, rapes and felonious assaults and 800 other crimes in the last three months! While the white police are renowned for their brutality.

Last week they turned their hate outwards. Not very far outwards, it is true. It was their own environment they were smashing up, although it wasn't their own property, because they haven't any. And it was the police, it was authority, it was the white man's world they were hitting out at.

In this country, if we have any lumpenproletariat at all, it is the ill-educated, untrained, underprivileged, cheated, pop-sodden teenagers who break out into violence every so often. But their riots are, literally, kid-stuff, compared with those of the hate-filled Negro in America, where guns are for sale across counters and from mail-order stores. And where, more importantly, the ghetto is established in every major city.

This dreadful development must be prevented from arising in this country. If the mild 'colour problem' which we already have here is not to grow into the institution of hate that it is in America, then the ghetto must never be allowed to take root. It can never be anything but a festering ingrowing vicious circle, coiling in on itself and feeding with fear and distrust the problems it creates. While from outside, it becomes the focal point for prejudices, fears, more hates, and the feetid politics of racists.

Perhaps the most important of the immediate tasks facing libertarians on the social field is this issue of race relations. While the shoddy Labour Government backslides, Liberals try to be moderate, and (pause for genuflection) sociologists investigate the problem, anarchists should be going all out to propagate and educate for, and to practice, integration.

If ghettos take root in Britain, they will eventually be destructive of much more than property.

P.S.

REMEMBER HIROSHIMA

COVENTRY FAST

ON FRIDAY, AUGUST 6 (Hiroshima Day) a forty-eight hour fast was commenced in Coventry city centre. The fast lasted until 6.30 p.m. on Sunday evening. The fast was organised by the West Midlands Committee of 100, Birmingham and Coventry Working Groups, and was supported, in membership, by Birmingham Anarchist Group, the Peace Pledge Union (who lent their film van), and several comrades from London. A collection was taken (with police permission) for War on Want.

The aims of the fast were several: to commemorate Hiroshima and bring people's attention to the present nuclear insanity; to suggest how this war expenditure could be better spent; to attempt to get to the Coventry people and so halt the prevailing political apathy in this 'boom' town; to revive the, now dormant, peace movement (even the CND has collapsed); and as a more practical step raise money for the underdeveloped countries, more specifically, in this case, to aid a children's hospital in Kenya.

The fast opened with a vigil organised by the Regional CND which was quite well attended. Throughout the evening people arrived for the fast. About fifteen people fasted for the whole period and others for a shorter period. Collecting was fairly constantly maintained both

day and night with fasters taking turns during the early hours of Saturday and Sunday mornings, while others slept either in a tent, a nearby car, or two local comrades' houses.

While many people gave most generously (especially when we assured them that the money would not be used to aid the 'ban-the-bomb' movement), few seemed very interested in our aims, though several thousand copies of a specially printed pamphlet were given out, and it is doubtful whether much contact has been made. The fast seems to have had little political effect; and, with the exception of one young reporter from a weekly, the press, despite our press-statements, totally ignored us. There was little support from the churches, political parties, and trade unions. However, time will show. The ground seems very fertile, the SLL are already there, and politically Coventry seems an open city.

As a collection 'gimmick' the fast appeared to be a great success and raised £120. More would have been raised had the police allowed us to collect throughout the town instead of being restricted to one area. There was very little ill-feeling observed apart from the usual nut-cases, a South African who thought enough had been done for negro children, the verger who ejected

two comrades from the Cathedral precincts when they gave out a very mild PPU pamphlet on Coventry Cathedral, and the individual who disappeared with two collecting tins on Saturday night.

I think it would be correct to say that the fast was, in the short run, a great success both financially and morally. In the long run we are not so sure, though it had a very good effect on the morale of the participants (two girls, one of whom had a birthday on Sunday, and had to return home early, even began fasting on Friday morning). It must be noted that on this occasion we did accomplish something definite, without the usual state-tithes at the end of it. Whether it has had any lasting effect within Coventry is another matter, and will be up to us to keep plugging away.

One thing however does come out of this type of direct action, and that is, it indicates the change over on the part of the Committee from a purely 'ban-the-bomb' group to a highly mobile and highly organised citizen's action group, and in a way vindicates the move on the part of the editors of *Resistance* to see the Committee in a broader spectrum of activity, though, of course, this is merely a personal view and perhaps (?) not universally held by all Committee supporters. Still time will show.

Concurrently with the Coventry fast, the CND and YCND held vigils and other activities in Redditch, Wellington, and Burton, and the YCND held a propaganda week in Birmingham. On Sunday we were joined by comrades from Redditch and a visiting American CNVA supporter.

Birmingham

PETER NEVILLE.

ANARCHY 54

DISCUSSES

MARTIN BUBER
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ON AUGUST 1, tucked away on page three of the *Observer*, was a small headline 'Insecticide traces in rainwater'. The small report said that traces of DDT and dieldrin had been found in rain water by scientists at the National Vegetable Research Station, Warwick.

Is this news important? Is it anything to get worried about? Well, someone said that the world would end, not with a bang but with a whimper, and brother, this could be the whimper.

When one writes an article about the dangers that lie in the use of pesticides, one is invariably accused of being a 'crank'. The scientists sneer and say 'Muck and mystery', for they have all the answers. They have presented the gardener with enough poisons to kill everybody in the world a million times over and most farmers appear to follow them blindly. Everything they put on the market is 'harmless to animals and birds'; well, it says so on the packet doesn't it?

A WONDER CHEMICAL

DDT: 'One part in a million sounds like a very small amount—and so it is. But such substances are so potent that a minute quantity can bring about vast changes in the body. In animal experiments, 3 parts per million has been found to inhibit an essential enzyme in heart muscle; only 5 parts per million has brought about necrosis or disintegration of liver cells; only 2.5 parts per million of the closely related chemicals dieldrin and chlordane did the same'.

DDT was a wonder chemical which was to wipe out all insect pests over-

This could be the Whimper

night. Fleas, flies, mosquitoes and all other insects were going down like corn before the scythe. They went down all right but came back again next year and in some cases next week. The wonder sprays had a habit of wiping out the natural enemies of the insects, like other insects, or birds for example. In spite of this ICI has been pumping them out by the ton and gardeners and farmers have been using them by the ton and the result is that the pests are still there and ICI has made a packet.

There have been scares like the time when DDT was found in the milk of cows that had been sprayed to kill a pest or when thousands of birds started to drop dead out of the skies. But this is soon forgotten especially if you put 'harmless to birds and animals' on the packet. The Government has banned the use of dieldrin so how come it turned up in the rain? Well, it seems that the scientists found how to make the stuff but not how to make it disappear. It just lays around. The rain washes it deep into the earth, into the rivers and into the sea and it now goes up into the atmosphere and it comes down again.

'Darwin himself could scarcely have found a better example of the operation

of natural selection than is provided by the way the mechanism of resistance operates. Out of the original population, the members of which vary greatly in qualities of structure, or physiology, it is the "tough" insects that survive chemical attack. Spraying kills off the weaklings. The only survivors are insects that have some inherent quality that allows them to escape harm. These are the parents of the new generation, which, by simple inheritance, possesses all the qualities of "toughness" inherent in its forbears. Inevitably it follows that intensive spraying only makes worse the problem it is designed to solve.' This quote comes from Rachel Carson's book *The Silent Spring*. I could add that while the chemist is trying, his employer is making a packet (of money as well as of poison).

DIELDRIN: 'As the chemical penetrated the soil the poisoned beetle grubs crawled out on the surface of the ground where they remained for some time before they died, attractive to insect eating birds. Dead and dying insects of various species were conspicuous for about two weeks after treatment. The effect on the bird populations could easily have been foretold. Brown thrashers, starlings, meadow larks,

grackles, and pheasants were virtually wiped out. Birds seen drinking and bathing in puddles after the spraying were inevitably doomed.' In case no one is intelligent enough to realise how important birds are to our lives, ninety per cent of the cats in the area died and some sheep as well.

OH DEAR!

Why does all this go on? Well it's rather like the atomic weapon bit. It's easy to start off, but it's not so easy to stop. They've given the farmer a tool which doesn't work properly but it does work a bit, and once you start to use it you can't stop or all your crops will be eaten up and your customers will be in a bad way without food. They won't have the strength to go to work to get the money to get the strength to buy the food to get the . . . One minute, there won't be any food. Still, the people won't need food if they're all poisoned, will they? Science marches on.

JACK STEVENSON.

All quotes from 'The Silent Spring'. Penguin 5/-.

Bakunin in Poland

IN AN INTERESTING review in the *Freie Arbeiter Stimme* (New York, July 15), H. Rüdiger remarks on an apparent reawakening of interest in Bakunin's ideas in Poland. A volume of his selected works, promised for many years, is now in print. Moreover, a sympathetic study with the title 'Bakunin and the inner contradictions of freedom' has just appeared in a series on Marxism.

According to Rüdiger's review, there is no mention of the personal attacks on Bakunin, made by Marx and his followers. The authoress, Anna Tamkinova, traces Bakunin's development from pan-Slavism to collectivist anarchism, not omitting to mention his irrational tendencies to anti-German and anti-Jewish attitudes. However, her main subject is Bakunin's concern with individual freedom and its relationship with social freedom. She concludes that he did not reach a satisfactory solution . . . but by his dramatic searchings and struggles, Bakunin gave us a clear conception of the internal contradictions involved in the freedom problem.

The review goes on to remark that the book contains a liberal description of the fundamentals of anarchism, and a copious bibliography.

P.H.

ROUND THE GALLERIES

DAVID SYLVESTER HAS headed an extract from his forthcoming monograph on the work and personality of Alberto Giacometti as 'the residue of a vision', yet when one examines this broad mass of work now on public view at the Tate Gallery one is justified in the assumption that this is but the residue of a clever but limited talent and that here is the final phase of a man who has spent his creative life pawing among the swiftly changing fashions of his age in a successful attempt to find one mode to frame his limitations. In 1940 there died the English sculptor and engraver Eric Gill and Giacometti's work loses its alleged visionary qualities when viewed and judged in relation to the work of Gill whose reed-slim figures of Christ pose against their marble crosses without pain, without sorrow, and without intestines, the epitome of religious symbolism. Gill died in 1940 and a major example of his work can be judged on the piers of the nave within Westminster Cathedral. Here is Gill's interpretation of the fourteen stations of the cross. These are no peasant primitives rising from the heart and soil of unquestioning faith, but the sophisticated imagery of those versed in the world's cynicism of eclectic knowledge. The beauty of line replaces the agony of faith and the soft and feminine curve of arm and robe bind with aesthetic gauzes the torn and aching muscles. Divorced from their peasant background, they become philosophical equations bearing as little relation to the human condition as $E = mc^2$ does to the ploughboy's ploughshare.

And Giacometti now offers Gill's symbols turned to rust for Giacometti's figures, thin and corroded as ancient sword blades stride into a void or stand thin and rigid as coffin nails waiting for the final peace of decomposition. Row upon row they stand within the Tate Gallery, turning these sounding halls into an armoury of rusting blades from broken swords.

His early work is below student level and the bronzes of his father and mother, dating from the year 1927, would be rejected in any collective exhibition. His cubist work never at any time rises above the coy furniture of a St. John's Wood gardens contemporary in that it is valueless but of the mode. It is his 'Woman Walking', modelled in 1934, that forms the key to Giacometti's future career, for this is the work that, if taken out of context, would almost without question be attributed to the English sculptor Eric Gill. It was indeed unkind that those who compiled the catalogue should have placed this 1934 work alongside Giacometti's 'Chariot', for here is the obverse of this cultural coin, the early work imitative of the English sculptor, as smooth and meatless as a picked bone, and the now fashionable version, pock-pitted and turned over to the worm. Yet if Giacometti succeeds as an artist, it is with his painting, for though clay may be his palette, his figures have the haunting beauty of death masks. They tell nothing of the personality, for beneath these frameworks of pencil-thin strokes of white and black, all life has seeped away. On a single string Giacometti plucks his single note; on an open wound

he plucks his single nerve.

For the rest, there are Douglas Portway's pleasant abstractions of a Klee-like line upon a background of subdued greys and browns at the Drian Gallery at 5 Porchester Place, W.2.

Max Ernst at the Hanover at 32a St. George Street, W.1, busily churning out 'Max Ernst' paintings for the commercial market with a teutonic insensitivity to colour that even, when they are luminous, possess a clumsiness in the application of the different tones that jars upon those who wish to remember him only for the intimate artistry of the early work now lost forever. The garret created collages, so witty and so cruel, the small and deadly surrealist paintings of the ham-fisted amateur obeying the mind and eye of the artist are now part of the history of our time and for that we must say 'thank you', but the world owes Max a living and he is now collecting by giving the paymasters what they desire and hire.

And let Dame Laura Knight take the final curtain. At the age of eighty-eight, the Royal Academy in Piccadilly, W.1, has given her a major exhibition of her work and all are to be congratulated. A brilliant draftsman and a confident colourist, she has always reflected but never anticipated fashions in art. Her work lacks that single spark of inspiration that would flame them over the border of great artistry but she is a craftsman who loved her subject matter and her craft. She loved the artifice of the circus and the brutal and defensive dignity of the gypsies and her kindly brush became her passport to their world. Laura Knight, by the very nature of her limited talents, could never have made the hysterical applause of the Tate audience for they have little need of the arts when their halls are given over to the clowns. ARTHUR MOYSE.

London Anarchist Group 1 & 2

'Lamb and Flag', Rose Street, off Garrick Street, London, W.C.2. (Leicester Square tube) 7.45 p.m. All welcome. Sundays.

Aug. 22 Bill Gape
Obedience: the Original Sin

Aug. 29 LAG Two meeting and report followed by discussion.

Sep. 5 Wynford Hicks
Subject to be announced

Public Meetings every Sunday Hyde Park 3 p.m. Correspondence to J. Rety, 10 Gilbert Place, W.C.1.

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-

ANARCHIST FEDERATION OF BRITAIN

Co-ordinating Secretary: Frank Hirshfield, 4 Albert St., London, N.W.1.

REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND GROUPS

BIRMINGHAM ANARCHIST GROUP. Details of meetings from Peter Neville, 12 South Grove, Erdington, B'ham, 23.

BRISTOL FEDERATION. Enquiries to John Coveney, 12 Normanton Road, Clifton, Bristol, 8.

CARDIFF ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Mike Crowley, 36 Whitaker Road, Tremorfa, Cardiff.

DUNDEE GROUP. Contact Mike Mallet, 20 South George Street, Dundee. Meetings Saturdays 2.30 p.m.

EDINBURGH ANARCHIST GROUP. Meet fortnightly Star Bar, Northumberland Place, Mondays 7.30 p.m. Correspondence to D. Truman, 13 Northumberland Street, Edinburgh, 3. Tel.: WAVErley 7459.

bury Avenue, S.W.2 (Streatham Hill, Nr. Station).

3rd Friday of each month at 8 p.m. at Donald & Irene Room's, 148a Fellows Road, Swiss Cottage, N.W.3.

First and third Tuesday of every month at 8 p.m. Arthur Uloth's, 30 Arundel Gardens, W.11. (Top bell.)

GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP. Correspondence: Joe Embleton, 11 Balliol Street, Glasgow, C.3.

Meetings at Horsehoe Bar, Drury Street, Tuesdays at 8 p.m.

MANCHESTER & SALFORD ANARCHIST GROUP. For information contact c/o 4 Ouse St., Waste, Salford 5, Lancs. Open air meetings Sundays at Old Shambles, Victoria St. at 8 p.m. FREEDOM selling Saturday afternoon, Central Library.

ILFORD LIBERTARIANS. Regular meetings and direct action contact W. E. Rodgers, 4 Sheldon Road, Dagenham, Essex.

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. Next meeting September 19. 5 p.m.

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

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.

SOUTHALL ANARCHIST GROUP. Get in touch with Roger Sandell, 58 Burns Avenue, Southall, Middlesex.

PROPOSED GROUPS

WEST KENT LIBERTARIAN ALLIANCE. Anybody interested contact Peter J. Clarke, The George, Frant, Sussex.

NORTHOLT ANARCHISTS. Projected formation of group contact Jim Huggon, 173 Kingshill Avenue, Northolt, Middlesex or Miss Jean McLean, 6 Epsom Close, Northolt Park, Middlesex.

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, Willerby, 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.

LEEDS LIBERTARIAN ALLIANCE. Anybody interested please contact Roy and Frankie Todd at 15 Clarendon Place, Leeds, 2. Telephone 24282.

NEW ZEALAND. Auckland Anarchist Group. Public Meetings every Sunday in Myers Park at 2 p.m.

Shorter Letters, Please!

Dear Friends,

In his recent letter 'The Lighthouse of Truth', Peter Neville throws out a challenge which the editors of FREEDOM would do well to meet. It's obvious there isn't a great deal of space for articles of a purely cultural nature, but I feel a little more could be done in this direction. May I make a suggestion? To save space wouldn't it be a good idea to shorten the letters published in FREEDOM by intelligent editing? Indeed Peter Neville's own letter, though interesting and exciting, was far too long and out of all proportion to the size of the paper.

I know the workers responsible for bringing out FREEDOM do a difficult job and do it extremely well. But what a much brighter and more exciting paper it would be if in it one found the short poem, or a brief essay in autobiography, or a prose vignette of some sort, however inconsequential seeming.

It's a challenge which I feel certain the editors, as well as the readers of FREEDOM, would welcome.

Sincerely,

Glasgow, N.2 FAROUHAR MCLAY.

Anarchism in a Mass Society

Dear Editors,

I read John Papworth's letter in FREEDOM, July 24. His criticism of anarchism is of course one of the hardy perennials but in case nobody else replies I should like to do so.

To start with I should like to suggest that he read ANARCHY as well as FREEDOM. In particular I should like to mention the articles on Cybernetics, Grey Walter in 25 and John McEwan in 31, and numerous articles on workers control, in particular James Gillespie 'Towards Freedom in Work' ANARCHY 47.

The crux of the matter however is that although someone may work in a factory employing two thousand or even twenty thousand people, he does not come into close contact with anything like that number. One's really close contacts are generally very few indeed. One person acts on and is acted on by very few people. Self-organisation is not merely more humane but also more efficient partly because there is continuous feedback and what is more, feedback at first hand; secondly because the wider the job, the greater the work satisfaction. On the second point refer to 'The Anatomy of Work', Georges Friedmann (Longmans). Organisation should be

STUART CHRISTIE

AS we hear from Mrs. Christie that Stuart is definitely appealing in September, we would like to request that there will be no demonstrations on his behalf for the time being as they may tend to prejudice any chance he may have, or be taken as a pretext for rejection. Please remember that it is Stuart who is serving this sentence and his 'martyrdom' must not be of your making.

We shall be quiet for a purpose, not from apathy.

J. ROBINSON.

Release SPANISH and PORTUGUESE POLITICAL PRISONERS!

Demonstration:

3 p.m., September 19th

Belgrave Square

Demonstrators are asked to carry a placard stating a prisoner's name, length of sentence and whether he is Franco's or Salazar's prisoner. They are asked not to bring other banners, flags or posters.

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LETTERS and Controversy

organic not mechanical, i.e. should grow and not be contrived artificially, Durkheim 'The Division of Labour'. An article in *New Society* a couple of years ago made a similar point. A comparison of two electronics factories showed that the organic factory in which communications were free was more efficient than the mechanistic one in which communications were fixed and hierarchical. This sort of thing has been found to occur so often that it is almost accepted knowledge. In the last analysis, society is kept going, goods produced, services operated, etc., by people doing things and not by people giving orders to other people to do things. Co-ordination is necessary but this is most efficiently and humanely provided by the person himself. A human being is self acting, to use people as machine tools is not merely inhuman but also stupid, people make lousy machine tools.

Society and industry operate in spite of bureaucracy and rules rather than because of them, the most striking recent example being, of course, the work to rule on the Southern Region of British Rail. I remember an aircraft firm for whom I worked some years ago had, at one stage, produced 80 pairs of wings, but only twenty front fuselages in spite of a production control department numbering over two hundred, an army of progress chasers and similar people and a reputed ten pounds of paper to every pound of metal on the shop floor. To avoid having their sections idle foremen would get components made on the strength of rumour or hearsay and square the paper work which was supposed to control production afterwards. This sort of thing must be common to the experience of many people.

I think perhaps there is some substance in John Papworth's criticism of FREEDOM but it is perhaps unfair to expect a topical weekly to give the kind of detailed critique he demands.

MICHAEL WOOLLS-CROFT.

London, N.W.6

Call it Living?

Dear Comrades,

I think we would all save ourselves a lot of needless confusion and misunderstanding if, my take-off point is Jeff Robinson's letter (July 24), we stopped using the phrase 'standard of living' when all we merely mean is the standard of consumption. The United States has a standard of consumption far in advance of most countries in the world, yet in many important respects its standard of living is inferior to that of the city states of Ancient Greece, in most respects it is inferior to that of the city states of Renaissance Europe, and in nearly all respects it is grossly inferior to that of many African tribal villages today.

London, S.W.5 JOHN PAPWORTH.

The Sex Myth

Dear Editor,

It is a pity that 'P.S.' chose to mar an otherwise cogent piece on the 'problem' of teenage sex by facile and inaccurate jibes at some of the apparently obvious findings. For instance the statement that teenagers' first sexual experiences tend to take place in the girls' homes was not quite the crashing statement of the obvious that 'P.S.' made it out to be. It was actually contrasted to the common assumption that such events usually occur

in cars or at parties. With the trend to earlier physical maturity, it had also become important to establish whether what our society would consider precocious sexual experience was impelled by purely sexual desire, or whether peer group emulation was an influential factor.

In any case, the investigation of facts 'that everybody knows' is an integral part of the sociologist's task; so frequently such 'facts' turn out to be spurious. During the post-war period, the belief grew up that we were living in a welfare society and that 'we are all middle class now'. Anarchists may have known better but a large part, certainly the influential part, of the population believed this. It was not until the publication of Titmuss's *Essays on the Welfare State* that the continuing and violent inequalities of our society could be effectively contrasted to the myth of general welfare. Even today his findings have yet to find general acceptance among the middle and upper classes. Indeed, if Runciman's recent broadcasts on inequality can be accepted, and the empirical evidence suggests that they can, a high proportion of the working classes still accept the myth too.

Again it was generally believed (and much stated by the holy and righteous) that the family as an institution was declining and being stripped of its functions. Fletcher's Penguin, *The Family and Marriage* shows that exactly the reverse was the case. To judge by the sermons issuing from pulpits and magistrates' benches, the divorce rate has reached catastrophic proportions. A quick look at the real, as opposed to the apparent, evidence shows that 93% of marriages do not end in divorce and that most divorcees remarry. Such evidence is important for those who seek a relaxation of the present ludicrous divorce laws. Again Kinsey blew up the general belief that working class people 'had sex' more often than middle class people and also established that working class women were less likely to achieve orgasm and found nudity more shocking. Which would also seem to indicate that the good things of life are not as free as is often alleged.

Anarchists may well say 'To hell with marriage' but if we want to change society we should have accurate knowledge of the society we are trying to alter. It is because of the contemptuous attitude of so many contemporary anarchists to the social sciences, an attitude that Kropotkin and Malatesta certainly didn't share, that so much of the work of importance to the creation of the type of society that anarchists want to see is being carried out by non-anarchists. Dahrendorf's recent 'coercion' theory of society is a

case in point. And if Kropotkin had relied on 'what everybody knows', then *Mutual Aid* would never have been written.

As Alex Comfort has written: 'In the absence of facts, poppycock of every kind flourishes in the public mind and much sheer moonshine in the medical textbooks.' Of course Michael Schofield's book has faults. What pioneering work doesn't? But facts instead of prejudices, a knowledge of real instead of supposed behaviour, were badly needed in this field, and this book provides the knowledge needed as an 'antidote to the brayings of magistrates, Moral Reformers, and the like'.

Anarchists, and I still number myself among them, may regret that the sexual revolution appears to be progressing more slowly than we would like but that is hardly the fault of Michael Schofield.

London, S.E.1

JOHN PILGRIM.

Unite with the GP?

Dear Comrades,

As a new reader of FREEDOM who has surprised me particularly is the violence of the attacks on Marxist communism. As Anarchists we must condemn both private and State capitalism as intrinsically evil because they limit freedom. But it would be a coincidence if both these things were exactly in the same degree bad, and so we must ask ourselves which is preferable, i.e. less bad. For example there is a war going on in Vietnam, people are dying and all Anarchists can do is retreat into vague chat about frying pans and fires. Who are we to align ourselves with in the struggle taking place between communism and capitalism?

Three points spring to mind:—

1. In which system do the workers have more say in the running of their lives and of the industries?

2. In which is most of the profit used for the communal welfare (excluding the production of atomic weapons)?

3. In which is a change to Anarchism most possible?

In a Marxist society, the workers can elect the bosses and supervise the running of the factories by means of workers committees, but once outside the factory,

It is not the leaders and the dictators, it is not God who is going to get us out of the bloody mess we are in. It is only you and me.

JOAN BAEZ.

TONY HULSE.

OUT OF THIS WORLD

'Russia Looks Again at Moon's Backside'

A TITAN I Inter-Continental Missile with a range of 6,000 miles, whose purpose was to wipe out a whole city scientifically, failed, when a fire at the Little Rock Base killed only fifty-three workmen accidentally. Complaints were made that Household Cavalry sentries slashed visitors and tourists, accidentally or purposely is not known. A nuclear disarmer returning from a Hiroshima day commemoration at the Cenotaph complained he was slashed on the forehead, an Italian tourist said that he too was gashed after he had pretended to test the sharpness of a sentry's sword. . . .

ALISTAIR COOKE in the *Guardian* (9.8.65) reported that the Vietnam war 'is wonderfully good for business'. He writes 'Both labour and business were privately disappointed about one aspect of the President's budget and economic messages. It was in the very small increase planned in defence spending. Last fiscal year it was \$46.2 billions and the President's estimate for this year was \$47.9 billions.' The same paper reports from Moscow 'Marshal Malinovsky, the Russian Minister of Defence, and Pravda, the Communist Party newspaper, stated today that Russian military power must be increased to meet imperialist challenges in Vietnam and elsewhere.' Same paper, same day reports from Hella Pick at United Nations that Washington has cold-shouldered at least two opportunities for contacts with North Vietnam in the past two years. The first was that Hanoi was willing to discuss the establishment of a coalition neutralist Government in Saigon after the fall of President Diem in 1963. Secondly, Ho Chi Minh wanted a secret meeting with US representatives in Burma last year. In the first case there was no response; in the second there was five weeks delay before a negative reply arguing that the meeting could not be kept secret enough to keep Goldwater supporters from making capital of it during the Presidential campaign, furthermore it might cause violent riots in Saigon which would topple the Government there—which recently fell. Senior United States officials revealed, in the following day's *Express* that North

Vietnam had several times suggested peace talks—but each overture was accompanied by unacceptable terms. . . .

IN VENICE, a suburb of Los Angeles, California, Richard Register, a 22-year-old sculptor, is constructing a symbol to dramatise a 'no war-toys' movement. He explained 'I'd like kids to learn sportsmanship and fair play instead of being stuffed with violence by television. They should be creative instead of destructive. They should not have tanks and guns and I am appealing to them to give them up. I don't think parents should be encouraged to buy more war toys.' He went on, 'Already a lot of war toys have been handed over to me by youngsters and we are planning a huge bonfire with them in the crater of an extinct New Mexico volcano. That will be another act of symbolism.' If we are to believe the *Daily Express*, the symbol he is building is a twelve-foot-high sandcastle. 'I don't know how high it will go,' said Register. . . .

A BRITISH subject who distributed leaflets in West Germany saying 'Hitler was right' was jailed for twelve months at Karlsruhe. The headquarters of the National Socialist Party of Great Britain were painted with the words 'Remember the Six Million Dead' and the Star of David. John Tyndal, leader of the Greater Britain, claimed that an organization 'which inflicts physical violence' on extreme Rightists might have been responsible for the firing of a .45 revolver through the windows of his headquarters. . . .

A CORRESPONDENT on racial prejudice in the *Chelsea Post* advised readers to study the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* to show 'how the softening up process of undermining moral standards by importing aliens, is no new idea.' At Wolverhampton magistrate's court six men were remanded in custody charged with threatening behaviour. It was reported that one hundred and fifty white people marched on a coloured family's home chanting 'Let's get the blacks'. A police superintendent said there was a feud between coloured residents and their white

on the country-wide scale, they have as little say as the workers in capitalist countries.

In the second instance it is obvious that, as such things as advertising are unnecessary and that company directors do not have huge salaries, state capitalism is preferable in terms of social services. Fifty years ago about 200,000 Russians and 600,000 Chinese were starving; now, very few are starving. This, no matter what you say, is good.

The third question is rhetorical. Obviously people used to the 'collective way of getting things done', even if it is authoritarian, because they are bound to see eventually that the coercion is unnecessary, are more open to anarchism.

In none of these things is state capitalism just, it is merely less bad than private capitalism.

In relations between anarchists and communists a tacit alliance would benefit both (Red Front! is a phrase that has always fired my blood)—or at least we should not criticise them too much. For we have the same ultimate aim—only our methods differ and, let's face it, they are practical and we are not. Also when (if?) the millennium comes, we could assist at the 'withering of the state' and claim that the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' had nothing to do with us. In the coming struggle we must align ourselves with the Marxists. The letters of B. J. Clifton in FREEDOM (July 10) and of Jörg Christian Fausser (July 17), I entirely agree with. Wake up! People are dying!

Fraternally,

Kincarth, Aberdeen I. R. MITCHELL.

Eroticism—loving Comrades—make a Stand!

Dear Fellow-readers,

Dave and Tina Cunliffe may need financial aid in a slight difference the GPO has with them. I suggest to all eroticism-loving comrades that, since the state appears to read everything over its shoulder, through the looking-glass, then a publication considered obscene by the GPO will be by any normal standards worth reading. Therefore may I further suggest that, to help Dave and Tina, those who expect to enjoy the *Golden Convolution*, if and when they are allowed to, risk an advance payment or deposit for the publication as soon as possible, money which in the case of trouble will be used to make a stand against what we consider to be obscene—the state.

TONY HULSE.

—Sunday Citizen

neighbours. 'It came to a head on Friday night. A large number of white people, estimated at about 100 to 150, went, armed with sticks and bottles, throwing stones and expressing a certain amount of racial hatred.' Fenner Brockway in *Tribune* wrote an article about the Labour Government's immigration policy entitled 'My Head is Bowed in Shame.' Mr. John Papworth, a member of the British Overseas Socialist Fellowship, has tabled a motion calling on the Labour Party to repudiate the Government's immigration policy. He said that the White Paper made the Government look like 'moral pygmies'. There seemed no point in belonging to the Labour Party any longer. . . .

DR. SIMON YUDKIN in a paper on the health and welfare of the immigrant child said that this country has always been multi-racial. He further said, 'We should realise that our own very small, very tight families, that seem to be becoming the typical English family, constitute a new phenomenon, and hardly exist anywhere else. Loose family ties, wider family networks, are much more the rule all over the world than they are in this country, and it is very unusual, taking the world as a whole, for children not to be looked after by a number of aunts, great-aunts, grandmothers, friends, relatives and neighbours. A child in many parts of the world can wander into his village street knowing that somebody will look after him, and without having to worry that he might be away from his mother. We have no evidence that this affects him adversely in later life.' . . .

IT HAS been estimated by Desmond King-Hele, a space scientist, that there are 100,000 million stars in the earth's galaxy of which 10,000 million have planets, 5,000 of which planets are habitable. 2,500 million have life, 500 million have advanced communities, one hundred million stars wish to signal and one million are signalling now.

TONY HULSE.

Rank & File hold the Initiative

THE DEVLIN REPORT'S 'first night' has been and gone. It has been widely acclaimed by the many who are not dockers, but the dockers themselves have yet to study and inwardly digest.

Ray Gunter is madly keen to get cracking and has met union leaders and employers at the Ministry of Labour. He has hinted that if he can't get implementation by full co-operation, then he will seek other means. It could mean the velvet glove or the big stick but knowing our Minister of Labour it will probably be the latter, but dockers have heard this all before and have their own means of defending themselves.

The section in the Report which implied that the T & GWU was not militant enough has upset this august body. Mr. Tim O'Leary, National Officer in charge of the docks, stated that it would have been possible to have made all the unofficial strikes official, and thus to have reduced the number of unauthorised stoppages attributed to the union, but would this have been right? Certainly bloody not, making a dispute official is usually the kiss of death, before you know where you are a compromise is signed, sealed and delivered with a net result that you are left standing with your trousers down.

Throughout the last few weeks,

Contact Column

New Poster

War Waste
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Politics!

3½d. each plus postage. Orders to Bill Sticker, c/o 17a Maxwell Road, London, S.W.6.

Illegitimate Parents! Young couple would welcome other readers' experiences of whether children in a stable home are likely to suffer if their parents aren't married. Also whether one loses many state benefits (or liabilities) in this situation. Darke, 29 South Villas, London, N.W.1.

Correspondent. Dutch anarchist—speaks English—wants English anarchist correspondent. Arthur Mendes-Georges, c/o W. de Lobel, Wilgenstraat 58b, Rotterdam 11, The Netherlands.

New Zealand Federation of Anarchists. First Annual Congress, December 26 to January 6. Enquiries Box 5455, Auckland C1, NZ.

Canadian Camp. Libertarian Summer Camp to be held on the week-end of August 20 at Doug Worthington's, Church Road, Sooke BC, Canada. Informal discussion groups, etc. Activities to be decided on by the participants.

Accommodation Wanted. Young man, ex-freedom-school pupil would like bedsitter with cooking facilities or full board, or share flat with one or two others, South London area, before end of July. Please phone: STReatham 6085.

Vietnam Posters. 'Who Loses in Vietnam—Always the People'. 4d. each, 30/- per 100. Orders to Freedom Press.

Room Wanted—London. Shift worker would like room with mod. cons. South, or West Kensington. Box 11.

Leicester Accommodation. Unfurnished cheap weather-proof accommodation wanted by mature (?) student, wife and two children. Any proposals (sharing, etc.) considered. Mike Radford, 90 Westfield, Harlow, Essex.

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

L.A.G. Two. Barn/Studio/Basement wanted to house meeting place, library, etc. for LAG II. Suggestions, ideas, details and details of rent required to J. Rety, 10 Gilbert Place, W.C.1.

If you wish to make contact let us know.

whenever the national press has mentioned the docks, great play has been made of the antagonism between the T & GWU (White) and NASD (Blue). This may be so at national level but at rank and file level it is virtually non-existent, because it is one out—all out. So close-knit is the solidarity, that sometimes the 'nonners' (non-union) are the strongest militants.

The suspension by the London Dock Labour Board of 1,600 dockers for attending an unofficial meeting during work time was a first-class piece of diplomacy, and now they are looking for 'out'. The trade union reps. on the Dock Labour Board are wishing there was a hole big enough for them to crawl into, whilst the employers are more coy than a girl on her first date. Tom Cronin, T & GWU

Going to Coventry?

I have it from a very authoritative source that London busmen are leaving for Coventry; it appears that London busmen are now the poor relations. For a 42-hour, 5-day week, including Saturday and Sunday, the new offer to Coventry busmen will be £20 14s. 1d. This is exclusive of spread-overs, and overtime. The Federation of Municipal Transport Employers are choked; it was only recently at their London Conference they were rucking about municipalities paying over the rate to their bus crews. £20 per week must appear as a fortune to Coventry busmen but the unskilled labourer's take home pay is £20 a week—but nevertheless, this is progress. To quote the editorial of the *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, June 29, 'To workers outside the Midlands area of affluence a thousand pounds a year must seem riches. But, in Coventry, this kind of money, if not exactly "peanuts" is nothing out of the ordinary'. The editorial concludes, 'Coventry cannot expect the good bus service unless it pays wages that will attract and keep the right kind of people as bus crews. There have been all too many instances of what happens when the wrong kind are given the

official, is Chairman of the London Dock Labour Board and was thus part and parcel of the action to discipline the 1,600 men. He then has to change his coat and appeal to the dockers to come off their overtime ban and appeal through constitutional channels against the decision of the London Dock Labour Board. One wonders if sometimes he doesn't forget which coat he is wearing at a particular time. We now know that the diplomat's coat won the day.

All through the Devlin Report emphasis was laid on the need for de-casualization, this it would seem would be the same as opening Joanna Southcott's box, the solution to all problems. This is all right, provided (a) the dockers want it, and (b) if they do, it doesn't cost them their souls.

jobs and forget that they are there solely to give a service to the public'. The press have fallen in at last, London busmen have been saying this for years and so, in fact, did the Phelps-Brown Committee, the like of which the London Transport Board wish they had never heard of.

The ball is now at the feet of London bus crews. To quote the July issue of 'Platform', 'This is the pay packets of the four full-time members of the London Transport Board: Mr. Maurice Holmes (Chairman) £11,000. Mr. A. H. Grainger (Vice-Chairman) £9,500. Mr. Anthony Bull £9,500. Mr. E. C. Ottaway £9,500. Total: £39,500. The combined salaries of these four men is equal to the basic wages of 49 top rate central bus drivers for one year. Are they really worth it?'

Railway workers are in for a new wage claim, London bus crews are in; therefore shouldn't the rank and file of both passenger groups get together to ensure they get their just demands? If 'direct action' is needed to obtain these demands, surely bus and rail crews acting together will prevent one section being forced to black-out the other.

BILL CHRISTOPHER.

THE BLACKLIST

THE THREAT by the TGWU to order their bus transport workers in the London area to conform to a rigid adherence of the 1963 union agreement faded into words with the payment of fines for the crew involved. The anonymous payments of these two fines was an adroit political move on someone's part for it solved the problem without anyone having to lose face. The issue in itself was a simple one, but whether it was the culminating point of a number of irritants within the garage concerned is now an academic point. Clause 8 of the agreement lays down that there shall not be less than 12 hours off between scheduled duties but there is an official agreement that in the case of voluntary overtime and mutual-changed, only 10 hours need be work free between the duties involved.

The 12 hours between scheduled duties is not a pedantic point for it can mean that in a week that a bus crew are early turn, they may have to sign on at 5 o'clock in the morning. If one particular day of that week happens to be a Bank Holiday, it will count, according to the union agreement, as Sunday working and that crew could be given an early turn that would not finish until seven in the evening. With the 12-hours-off clause this would mean that they could not sign on again the following morning at 5 o'clock (so there!) for they must be given a duty on that Bank Holiday that finishes by five in the afternoon and this is obviously to the men's advan-

tage. The crew involved in the incident, it would appear, not only had less than 12 hours off in their mutual change of duty but less than the 10 hours off between duties as agreed with in the unofficial agreement.

For this they were fined £2 10s. each and they refused to pay but offered to pay their weekly union contributions. The union claimed that because they refused to pay the fine it meant in effect that they were now over 13 weeks in arrears and therefore no longer members of the TGWU and as such demanded that the closed-shop rule should be enforced and that the crew involved should be dismissed.

The employer argued that this was merely an internal union dispute and refused to discharge these two employees, and the union then ordered the enforcement of clause 8 and the rigid adherence to the 12 hours off between duties. The point of this ban was that with a fantastic shortage of staff and with more and more buses being worked by overtime crews, the allocation officials would find it almost impossible to cover the duties not covered by normal working. But an anonymous Father Christmas (August-short-time-working) paid the fines and saved faces all round. All

Freedom For Workers' Control

AUGUST 21 1965 Vol. 26 No. 26

All Power to the Workers?

IF YOU WORK as I do in a Nationalised Industry (electrical), the coming of a Labour Government is a very serious thing. The Unions (who under the Conservatives have previously been hostile to any idea of co-operation with management) fall in line with the Government's drive for maximum efficiency and higher productivity. They forget that they were designed to protect the interests of their members and go all out to screw them in the interests of their political friends.

Of course there is nothing intrinsically wrong in being more efficient, in fact it's a good thing. It means (as I understand it) the best way of getting a job done with the least inconvenience and the best possible result. But what does it mean in a Nationalised Industry? Let me tell a sad little story.

Once upon a time there were two little sub-areas of a district of the Electricity Board, Westown and Eastown. There were quite a large number of consumers in Westown but not very many in Eastown. To read the meters of these consumers of electricity it was necessary to employ 5 meter readers in Westown and 2 in Eastown. The men in both areas read 110 meters a day, and they got through their work in the time they had to do it. There were quite a few housing estates being built in both areas, and the men compensated for the extra readings by doing a little overtime now and then.

The two men in Eastown were great friends. They had been working together for years and they both knew almost everyone in their area. They were perfectly happy in their work which they did well simply because they knew the area so well, even to when people who went to work would get home in the afternoon or dinner time.

Then a great mind at Head Office, in no way connected with this work, and knowing nothing whatever about it, decided to amalgamate the two areas. No doubt they had a fine set of reasons thought up to do so. However the men in Eastown did not wish to work in

Westown, they had a pattern of work and they did not want it to be changed. The men in Westown had the same opinion, so one would have thought that there was no problem, just leave things as they were. Well, this was done for a short time and then, for some reason or other, it was decided that this could not be. So the men were shunted back and forth in and out of each other's areas. Result: Two Eastown men leave.

Then the consumer card idea was dropped and, as time was saved by this, the men were given more work to do. 140 calls a day. Result: 2 Westown men leave. The number of outs rocket to 30 a day, wiping out any gain in readings that might have occurred. During this time a computer was installed at inflated cost at Northmet House. Result: People get their bills three months late (this may be a step towards free access, but it was not the original idea).

After some time things quietened down and the chaos was overcome by the meter readers, in both areas, starting earlier. This was done off their own bat to get more people in as the office workers were complaining that there were a lot out. There were still some out but cards were left with dials marked so that people could read their own meters if they wished. This of course resulted in less trouble for those in the accounts department who didn't want people ringing up all day saying, 'that they couldn't possibly have used all that electricity'.

But this of course was too good to last. The cards were pre-paid and to save money it was decided to abolish them. Cards were left that simply said that they would be estimated. Result: many were estimated wrongly, irate consumers on the phone, and also having to refund people's money. The meter readers were getting quite good results with their early starting especially in Eastown. It was known about, but a blind eye was turned to it by those concerned. Then the great hand of planning got to work again. 'Make 'em start at eight thirty' someone must have said. And the news was passed to the men who grumbled, put up a bit of a struggle and then gave in (all you've got to do is stop their pay and you'll get no bother). Result: 'outs' rocket to 50 a day. The men on the job don't care what happens. They think that their Union is worse than useless. Some are not even bothering about the eight hour day that has been won for them and are just starting at 8 and finishing at 5.30 as they did before. They are utterly fed up because they are putting in more effort for less result. Wandering around housing estates that have hardly anyone on them all day. They are a burglar's paradise but a meter reader's nightmare.

And now, ladies and gentlemen, for the latest wizard trick—they are going to amalgamate Westown and Eastown with Nortown and Southtown. No doubt there is a good reason. No doubt it's for more efficiency. Whether this is being done to shut down a showroom or two, sack a general manager or make a few men redundant I don't know. We won't be asked to work in Nortown or Southtown (which is bloody miles away) of course. You see, I've already been told this by someone who should know. 'There would be no point in it,' he said. When I pointed out that there was no point in it last time, but that it was done, and the resulting confusion still has to be unravelled, he was silent. What could he say? And to think it says on my cap Electricity SERVICE. Well, at least they have a sense of humour.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

JAESIE.