

### A Spring Election?

OVER THE LAST few weeks there has been a great deal of comment in the newspapers on the prospect of an early General Election. Ever since the Labour Party came to power, with its very small majority, there has been considerable speculation as to the date when Mr. Wilson would decide 'to go to the country'.

The Government seems to have started an election campaign, with its published plans for leasehold and rates reform. The Tories, for their part, have been busy publishing their Party statements on different matters. What we are being subjected to, in fact, is an election campaign before the real thing, and the Government's compulsory 'early warning' wages bill will be a good vote catcher, especially those of the middle class.

From what the public opinion pollsters say, this Spring would be a favourable time for Mr. Wilson to call an election and of course that small majority must be taken into consideration. Obviously from a financial viewpoint, neither the Tories nor the Liberals wanted an election to be too close to the previous one, but now I should think that the Tories will not be so generous with pairings and will want to outvote the Government. With the present programme of legislation, Wilson would always be too close to possible defeat. The general state of the economy will also be taken into consideration. Uncertainty on the political side of things is never very good for business for managements like to know where they stand.

#### ANTI-ELECTION CAMPAIGN

On the whole, I should say it was a good time for Mr. Wilson to choose for a General Election and if he does,

what are we, as Anarchists, going to do during the election campaign? There are a number of alternatives to carrying out an anti-election campaign. It has been suggested that we put up a real or imaginary or imprisoned candidate, paying the £150 deposit, with the assurance that if elected he would not enter Parliament. This would show the definite support one had gained.

On the other hand, the money used for a deposit could be used to produce a lot more propaganda, and if one concentrated on a particular constituency, it could have considerable effect. Whatever means are used, obviously groups must start now, working out what they intend to do, even if they intend to ignore the election altogether.

The Labour Government has carried out many of the things we said they would do in our previous anti-election campaign, particularly in respect of wages and trade union affairs. This point, I think, should be pressed home, but at the same time, our campaign should not be based just on an anti-government platform and should put forward Anarchism as a positive alternative to the present authoritarian society. Refraining from voting is not enough, for people who do only this are usually just apathetic. A person who knows why he votes for a particular party is much more likely to see Anarchism as a possible viable alternative.

A General Election period is a good time to put across our ideas to a much larger section of the community. There is far more social and political interest shown at a time like this and so it is an opportune moment to show not only the futility of voting, but that Anarchism is a 'positive do-it-yourself alternative'.

BILL STICKER.

# Rhodesian Fiasco

RHODESIA HAS ALWAYS been close to S. Africa, no more so than in her political outlook toward apartheid. Whilst she mildly criticised S. African policies in the past, it was always with tongue in cheek. In fact all Rhodesian governments to date have had a similar attitude towards Africans in varying forms of apartheid, possibly the milder outlook could be termed at best, patronising.

When Rhodesia declared UDI just over three months ago it was expected that she would receive at the very least the blessing of the S. African Government. The Prime Minister of S. Africa Dr. Verwoerd is nobody's fool, he has been playing a 'wait and see' game. Europeans in Rhodesia may be blood brothers of S. Africa but long term business and trade is thicker than blood, Verwoerd awaited developments.

When Britain organised economic sanctions against Rhodesia including oil, Verwoerd adopted a neutral position and declared he would trade with Rhodesia 'on a normal basis'. As is the wont of all political parties to exploit any situation, climb on any bandwagon, to gain votes, the Opposition party in S. Africa, the United Party, proved no exception. Sir de Villiers Graaf, leader of the United Party, knowing the feelings of the majority of the European electorate in S. Africa strongly advocated support and recognition of the Smith regime, to the embarrassment of Verwoerd's Government. Obviously some of Verwoerd's ministers strongly supported Graaf's position but dare not say so.

Verwoerd must play it this way, emotionally S. Africa is not very popular with the rest of the world. (In fact I believe that most governments couldn't care less what policies are practised in S. Africa provided there is money to be made

and their investments are safe, and at the moment there is no reason to believe otherwise.) Therefore if S. Africa came out strongly in favour of the Smith regime her own oil supplies might be in jeopardy.

#### 'BAT BOTH WAYS'

Verwoerd gave his blessing to the scheme of 'Oil gifts for Rhodesia' in an attempt to 'bat both ways'. This scheme has caught on, so much so that Wilson had the South African Ambassador on the carpet for half an hour. There has been no report on what transpired at the meeting but one can hazard a guess at the gist of the conversation. Verwoerd has a general election on March 30, he is expected to increase his majority, but no government can take chances, therefore, to keep in with the electorate he must express some support for the Smith regime. On the other hand S. Africa's whole future could be at stake if she got fully involved in the Rhodesian crisis. This, without a shadow of doubt, is what the Wilson-Dr. Carel de Wet (S. African Ambassador) meeting was all about. Wilson being a politician himself no doubt appreciates the position, but he is in a spot himself, the left wing of the Labour Party want results and so do the African states, therefore he also is trying to bat both ways.

The situation in Rhodesia is as vague as ever it was. We were led to believe that big business was strongly opposed to UDI. There is no obvious evidence at the moment of them exercising any pressure against Smith. There was also talk about a shadow cabinet opposed to UDI and ready to challenge Smith. Selwyn Lloyd appears to have come back with very little. When asked if he thought Mr. Smith would have to renounce independence before negotiations could start, he said there should be 'no preconditions'

before negotiations started.

#### PAY-TRIOTS

Don Perry (*Sunday Express*, 20.2.66) reports that forbidden trade links with Rhodesia are being maintained, tobacco, engineering and motor accessory firms are striving to retain close contact with Rhodesian traders. It would appear that it is not a question of how long it will take for sanctions to strangle Rhodesia, but how long business can resist trading with Rhodesia. If money making interferes with patriotism then pack in patriotism, this is their motto.

It will be interesting to see what happens at the Rhodesian tobacco sales which start next month. The official US policy is that 'in the United States national interest they should comply with the British ban'—I wonder?

The whole Rhodesian affair is one of ducking and diving and 'tongue in cheek diplomacy'. In the meantime the Africans in Rhodesia continue to be humiliated and suppressed, mere pawns in the game of international finance and power politics.

BILL CHRISTOPHER.

## ANARCHY 61

OUT THIS WEEK

discusses

## CREATIVE VANDALISM

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### AS IT BECAME INCREASINGLY

obvious that Johnson was going to resume bombing North Vietnam, the peace movement rose up in arms. The New York Workshop in Nonviolence planned to trigger the protest activities with a 24-hour vigil at the 'Swords and Plowshares' monument in front of the UN. At the termination of the vigil, a wreath was to be placed on the steps of the US Mission to the UN. Thereupon a second demonstration would begin wherein civil disobedience would be offered in Times Square.

The announcement of the resumed bombing was made early Monday morning January 31, so the vigil began at 5 p.m. as scheduled. After a few hours it was agreed to transform the stationary vigil into a picket line in a desperate attempt to generate a bit of heat. The temperature was hovering in the neighbourhood of 20° and it might be mentioned that Mr. G usually reserves some of His coldest gusts for the East River. (He hates the UN.) The picketing reverted to a standing vigil the next morning, and remained so until 5 p.m. Hot coffee and tea were provided, although many of the vigilers fasted for the 24-hour period. The primary source of comfort and/or surcease, however, was the warmth of two rooms which had been rented at a nearby hotel—an absolute masterpiece of forethought.

There were no leaflets distributed, but black armbands with the single word VIETNAM were worn. The signs were limited to either of two slogans: 'We Mourn the Dead in Vietnam' or 'They Shall Beat Their Swords into Plowshares'. By way of comic relief I would have suggested two others, one asking, 'What did Washington say when he crossed the Delaware?' Then a second, right next to it, answering, 'Fa un cazza da fried!' The reference here is to the famous painting which depicts George Washington being rowed across the Delaware River to attack the British at

# Inconveniencing Brass Monkeys

Trenton on Christmas Eve. Surrounded by ice floes, he is standing in the bow with an inordinately stern expression on his face. It may well be that his concern is not confined solely to the cold, but may dwell occasionally on the fact that Martha didn't have more money when he married her in view of the alarming wartime rise in the price of slaves. Be that as it may, the world's oldest Italian joke is based on this painting, and the punch line, delivered in the crudest Sicilian dialect, could be translated roughly as: 'I'm freezing my balls off'.

At the termination of the vigil, the wreath was laid at the entrance to the US Mission to the UN. Its ribbon bore only the words, 'In Grief'. Technically this concluded that particular demonstration. It had been planned that anyone interested in offering, observing, or supporting a sit-down in Times Square could gather one block away for that purpose. In practice, however, the entire vigil executed a right turn and walked over there in formation. The police then formed us into a column of twos and guarded our way across intersections, etc. Thanks to their expert handling of the march, a ten-minute walking distance required only one hour and fifteen minutes.

The original printed instructions read: 'If the authorities stop the walk between First Avenue and Times Square, it is possible that those marchers prepared for civil disobedience will nonviolently sit down at the point of stoppage. Those who do not sit down should simply step to the sidelines, stand by, and observe peacefully'. This plan was superseded by a better (more individualistic) ploy transmitted via the peace movement's

telephone tree. The new gambit was to disperse if stopped and make our way separately to Times Square.

The police didn't make any attempt to prevent our walk, although any number of bystanders would have wished them to. The size of the walk must have been impressive because even the *New York Times* admitted to 'at least 1,000'. The response was mostly negative, as could be expected, but some people were surprisingly sympathetic. One of the best things we had going for us was a well-dressed, highly inebriated blonde, standing in the doorway of a bar dancing and singing at the top of her lungs: 'A-tisket, a-tasket, you're a bunch of yellow baskets...' (That was no lady; that was my agent provocateur.)

At Times Square several separate picket lines were formed at various vantage points—no one spot would hold us all. The first group of civil disobedients sat down at Broadway and 42nd Street—the 'crossroads of the world'. Later another group sat down at Broadway and 43rd Street. All told there were 32, of whom twelve were girls. Rush hour traffic was brought to a complete standstill. In making the arrests the police acted extremely well—I heard the commander of the detachment order, 'No sticks! No sticks!' Perhaps they've all been reading that policeman-is-your-friend jazz which they hand out to the school kids.

After the arrests the demonstrations continued in the square for about half an hour at which point the police dispersed everyone. One small contingent decided spontaneously to picket the nearest police station, but discovered on arrival that the sit-downers had been taken to another precinct.

At Night Court, Judge John J. Ryan seemed far more reasonable than most of the judges encountered. He paroled all the women and most of the men on their own recognizance, which meant that no bail had to be raised. In addition he dismissed the charges against David McReynolds because no arresting officer could identify him. Oddly enough McReynolds was the only one of the five draft-card burners of November 6 fame who was not indicted. At that time it was stated that because of his age he was not eligible for the draft anyway. If this sort of thing keeps up he's liable to get a complex.

The arraignments might have gone along quite smoothly if the police counsel had not been drinking so heavily. At one point he and the judge put their heads together for a consultation and a nearby peacenik said, 'Good! Now the judge will smell his breath.' But either the judge was devoid of nostrils or perhaps he was a trifle guilty too. (Let him who is without gin castigate the first stoned.)

The court procedure is that each protestor is considered a separate case, each with a personal arresting officer who swears to the truth of the charges. Indeed it was the lack of an officer for his very own which caused McReynolds to be released. Years ago they used to have one or two officers press the charges against a whole group *en masse*. This could lead to some interesting situations, the *ne plus ultra* being the 1955 Civil Defense Protest in City Hall Park. In that instance the official complaint was directed against one 'Rocco Parilli and 28 others... acting together'. But poor Rocco was far from a latter-day Thoreau; he was merely an elderly shoe

shine man who had picked a singularly inopportune time to wander into the park for a drink of water. He didn't know shit from Shinola about civil defence, let alone civil disobedience. I was told he sat around the police station in a fog—he just couldn't figure out what he was doing there. To this day he doesn't know what it was all about. In fact he's still around the park shining shoes, but it's rumoured that he hasn't had a drink of water in ten years.

Meanwhile back in Night Court the demonstrators were being brought out in clusters of three and all was well until the arrival of the Eric Weinberger trio. At that point the ossified police counsel made some comment about Eric's connection with an organization working for peace which brought forth an objection from the defence attorney. I missed both comment and objection, but not the explosion which followed. Swaying back and forth with one hand braced on the railing, the police counsel began raving loudly and incoherently about wanting it 'clear for the record that I did not make any prejudicial remarks, and did not even allude to his activities... but he has no roots in New York'. I half expected him to end his harangue, '... and what's more, I can lick any man in the house'. Probably the only reason he didn't was the pacifists had him scared stiff.

Judge Ryan was evidently convinced that Eric was just the type to skip town, so he set bail at \$500. The defence attorney pleaded successfully that it be reduced, but even as it was being dropped to \$100 cash, Eric was interrupting with a statement that he would not accept any bail at all because it was

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# Rank & File Opposition to Legislation

IT WAS IN 1899 that the Trades Union Congress passed the resolution giving instructions to the Parliamentary Committee to organise a conference embracing all working class organisations with the intention of putting forward their own candidates for election to Parliament. After years of debate on the subject, steps were taken to this end and, in 1906, the Labour Party was born, with 29 members in the House of Commons.

Trade unionists at that time felt it was necessary to have 'their own' men in Parliament, for when they formed the Government, they would be in a position to legislate in favour of trade unions. It is ironic now that the very party formed to act in support of trades unionists is now proposing legislation against them. The Labour Government's Bill for compulsory 'early warning' of wage claims and price rises will fine trade unionists and officials of trade unions if either or both take industrial action or both.

The TUC, who gave birth to the Labour Party, are now worried about what their very grown-up child proposes in this Bill. The Government, for constitutional reasons, cannot disclose its contents, but Mr. Brown has assured the TUC that union leaders will not pay fines if their rank and file take industrial action to further a pay claim. He has also assured them that large companies would pay a much heavier fine than an individual worker or a small union. With

these assurances, the TUC seems certain to approve the legislation, for the union leaders, no doubt, see that the legislation is really aimed at their rank and file members.

## LOBBY OF PARLIAMENT

This week, while TUC bureaucrats talk with Mr. Brown, rank and file union members have been organising their opposition to the Bill. Three unofficial committees, representing dockers, building and exhibition workers, have called for a mass lobby of Parliament in protest against the proposed legislation. These committees are the London Port Workers' Liaison Committee (West India Docks), the Joint Sites Committee and the London Exhibition Workers' Coordinating Committee. In their Press release they say: 'Views have been widely expressed that the compulsory notification and deferment proposals in the Bill will apply not only to national claims for higher pay, but to local claims, and to claims for shorter hours and improved conditions.'

'Reports have appeared that fines might be compulsorily deducted from wages.

'There should be no illusions on the scope of the legislation. It could mean that during the deferment period—which could last for months—an official strike, overtime ban, work to rule, mass demonstrations, mass meetings during working hours, publication, or any action at national or job level, could lead to heavy fines and imprisonment in default of payment for any or all of those taking part.'

Further on, it says: 'Our committees know from experience that the wages and conditions of our members have been won, to a considerable extent, by local as well as national negotiation and action. We are not prepared to surrender hard won rights to secure such advances.'

Other trade unionists in every industry are called upon to support this campaign. 'Every Member of Parliament must be made fully aware of the mounting opposition to the Bill. Every Union which opposes such legislation should make clear to its sponsored and financed MPs where the union stands. Every Labour MP must be urged to oppose the Bill. The TUC, which only endorsed legislation by a narrow majority and which is clearly having serious second thoughts, should come out strongly against the Bill.'

## Fire Down Below

WHILE IRISH EMBASSY officials were busily scurrying around to New Scotland Yard to instigate another series of police raids on the houses of Irish workers in London, 500 yards from the Embassy 49 Irishmen were fighting their way out of a smoke-filled tunnel 65 feet below the streets of London's busy West End.

The men, who were employed in the

Leaflets are being distributed calling for support for the Lobby and already other workers have pledged their support including those at the Royal Group of docks and the ENV shop stewards' committee. The campaign has quickly gained momentum and it looks as if there will be a very good turnout for the lobby.

## LINK-UP OF INDUSTRIES

First of all I think that a campaign at rank and file level is very welcome. At last we are getting action which unites workers from different industries and the link-up and liaison which we have been advocating in this paper for a long time. While welcoming and supporting this aspect of the campaign, I feel that as Anarchists we should oppose the idea of lobbying MPs. No doubt some pressure can be brought to bear upon them but there is no guarantee that they will keep their word. A lobby is a harmless method of channelling protest and opposition.

It is understandable that those who believe in the ballot box and the system of parliamentary election will take part in a lobby to express opposition, but why go to the very people who are likely to vote for the Bill? This may be part of constitutional procedure but surely trade unionists know that this will get them nowhere. There is the danger that the campaign will take this road and end up as a pressure group on MPs, the TUC, etc.

We already have a strong basis of rank and file support against the legislation and it is their action that will defeat it. We should have no faith in a lobby, MPs, the Labour or any other political Party, but rely on our own strength. We should plan not just for a one day stoppage for a lobby, but a campaign of stoppages. This is the way to force the Government to abandon this Bill.

Legislation of the nature proposed by the Labour Government illustrates the very reason why Anarchists do not believe in the parliamentary system. This Government is supposed to be 'our own'. Whosoever we put there ends up the same and the whole history of the working class has been one long string of betrayals by this or that leadership. This is borne out by the present Government. So are we to have another political campaign through the traditional channels of protest by a pressure group, or are we going to force the Government to abandon legislation by the widespread industrial action of rank and file trade unionists? I think the latter, though harder to achieve, will succeed. Let us hope the one day stoppage on March 1 will be the end of the former type of protest and a beginning to a definite programme of direct action.

P.T.

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## Contact Column

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**Circumnavigators.** Planning to work my way round the world and would like to hear from anyone who has already done it. Write to Bronwen Lee, 34 Bradley Gardens, London, W.13.

**Help!** Help wanted, male or female, to clean and redecorate room in East London. Evenings or Saturday afternoons. Remuneration by arrangement. Box 22.

**Help Wanted.** Thursday evenings from 5 p.m. onwards with folding and despatch of FREEDOM. No remuneration. Apply in person on Thursdays at Express Printers, 84a Whitechapel High Street, E.1 (up Angel Alley). Near Aldgate East Station. (Art Gallery exit.)

**Kenneth Patchen.** Anthology compiler wants to make up bibliography of Kenneth Patchen and would like details of publications by/and articles on Patchen. Dennis K. Gould, Box 24.

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# FREEDOM

## For Workers' Control

FEBRUARY 26 1966 Vol 27 No 7

# Westminster will Give you Nothing!

'WHEN WILL WE ever learn?' On Thursday, February 17, miners went to Westminster to lobby their MPs and one could scarcely distinguish it from a Sunday School outing. Even the *Guardian* which is the very epitome of parliamentary democracy, called it 'a sad affair', in spite of the embroidered banners which had led many a bitter battle in the old days.

Of course one must not refer back to the old days, we are more civilised now, there is no class struggle, master, man and government must work together to make Britain great again. To achieve this lofty objective it is now the fashion to lobby your MP, he is there to help you, he is the bloke who dishes out the bromide, if he finds you are not responding to treatment, he then cracks the whip and, at the death says, 'Well, really, there is nothing I can do'. You leave Westminster a sadder but unfortunately never a wiser man. One's immediate reaction 'Let's get these goats out and put another mob in', but funnily enough it's always the same old story; we must all be masochists at heart.

There is a school of thought which deliberately ignores the futility of the parliamentary system, but suggests that lobbying is good for publicity, and if you have an argument with the police in the process so much the better. Does this achieve the object of pressuring your MP to do something? I suggest no, the only thing achieved is a wasteful dissipation of energy, and what is worse disillusionment for all concerned. What will gain the objective? I suggest Direct Action on the factory floor, this is where the power lies. One of the organisations most feared by the employing class was the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) because they struck where it mattered most, at the point of production.

The miners are fed up to the teeth, once again they are in the struggle not only for better wages but their very existence. Nationalisation was to be the panacea for the mining industry, it was going to solve all their problems, not necessarily in 24 hours, but one would have thought 20 years was not an unreasonable amount of time. This has not happened; whilst it is true that nationalisation brought some benefits, the miners are no nearer controlling their industry than they ever were.

Miners now face their biggest challenge—oil, and all the powerful vested pres-

ures that go with it. I think one point should be established very clearly the sooner all mines are closed and men no longer have to risk their lives grovelling below the earth and sea the better it will be. But having said that, one must get down to basics on how such a policy should be carried.

The policy at the moment is a vicious one, on the basis of intense competition between oil and coal. As far as the oil monopolists are concerned the sooner the coal industry goes to the wall the better, and the Labour Government by its policy subscribes to this idea. In 1959 the Labour Party stated that to abandon coal production because of 'narrow cost margins as between coal and oil was the height of folly and for the nation economic suicide'. In 1961 again the Labour Party, 'The national interest requires the formulation of the wisest plan to ensure the preservation of our most valuable and essential asset, our coal reserves'. These are fancy phrases when in 'opposition', fine scoring points for party politics.

The miners demands are basic, security in terms of alternative employment, not vague promises in terms of closing pits and hoping to hell that something will turn up. Alternative employment before the pit is closed. A pit in the Rhondda is threatened with closure, 1,400 men threatened with unemployment, no alternative employment. The miners also demand higher pay for all day work men, all in all a national fuel policy.

On February 17 the miners not only saw their MPs but also the Minister of Power. The MPs dished out a double dose of bromide, they were sympathetic but the Minister of Power promised nothing for the future. One aspect of Government policy he did mention was a 'task force' consisting of representatives from the Coal Board, NUM and MPs whose job was to find alternative employment for miners when a pit was threatened with closure. What he didn't say was whether the pit would still be closed if alternative employment could not be found. You can bet your life if it's a question of economics the pit will close, alternative employment or not.

The miners have received their answer, they know the score if they didn't before. The remedy is in their own hands and it doesn't necessarily mean coming out on the stones.

BILL CHRISTOPHER.

## Inconveniencing Brass Monkeys

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discriminatory against poor people. Hence he was led back to a cell pending trial, while the defence attorney vainly tried to reconcile what he learned in law school with integrity.

Schenley's answer to Clarence Darrow didn't get obnoxious again until Gil Green was brought out. Green, whose occupation was given as 'political writer', is on the staff of *The Worker*, put out by the League of Russian Empire Loyalists, as a friend describes them. As soon as he mentioned the magic words 'Smith Act conviction' he hit the jackpot for a \$500 bond. This was hastily scraped up by Ralph DiGia of the War Resisters League, and Green was released.

The finale came when Brad Lytle and Marc Edelman were arraigned. Both had announced their intentions of defending themselves. Brad didn't say much except to request the police counsel's name. (I wonder if it was

W. C. Fields.) Marc, however, a 20-year-old, is already under indictment for burning his draft card at the same demonstration at which McReynolds burned his. He immediately made a statement: 'Confronted with a form of tyranny', he went on to say that he felt he 'must speak out against it' even though he knew it might render him liable to a citation for contempt of court. Hence he wanted to protest against the 'unfair manner' in which Eric Weinberger was singled out, and that consequently he himself 'could not accept any conditions less than those given Eric Weinberger'. Thereupon he and Brad were led back to their cells on \$500 bonds.

All of this would seem to indicate that although Dave McReynolds may have been around a long time, if he ever expects to get anywhere in this civil disobedience business he ought to get a few pointers from the up and coming Marc Edelman.

(Reprinted from the *Worker's News*)