

'The Czech rulers did not surrender because the people were losing; the Czech people lost because their rulers surrendered'

Is It All Lost?

Coventry Cross Tenants Defeat GLC

SINCE THE LAST article in FREEDOM which described the Coventry Cross tenants' visit to the home of GLC Housing Committee Chairman, Horace Cutler, OBE, in Gerrards Cross, a great deal has happened in the campaign, which has been victorious on many points.

Ever since the campaign started officials have been buzzing around like bluearsed flies. The visit to Cutler's produced a similar result. The very next day Cutler and other 'big-wigs' visited The Cross. The national press reported that they were 'shocked' by conditions there. Cutler is shrewd—he's obviously out to make political capital for the new Tory administration of the GLC. He's not done badly, we must admit, but most important—HE FOOLED NO ONE AT COVENTRY CROSS. The tenants' reaction was to use his 'shock' as an excuse to push all the harder for their demands. It is just such divisions, among the bureaucrats that we should exploit.

Later that week George Vale, GLC District Housing Officer, attended a general meeting of tenants in The Rising Sun pub. He annoyed them so much that it was decided there and then to 'put the screws' on him. Mr. Vale left the meeting literally visibly shaking.

The next two weeks saw a march to his suburban home in Gidea Park, his neighbours called on and leafleted and repeated phone calls to his home up until 2 and 3 in the morning. I even heard that someone got a funeral director to call to measure up 'the late Mr. Vale' for a coffin. Vale's voice over the phone showed he was getting more and more rattled by these tactics.

It was also decided to 'have a go' at Dr. Watton, Medical Officer of Health, London Borough of Tower Hamlets. Mr. Vale had informed us that it was his department that was responsible for the rat infestation at Coventry Cross. On August 6 more than 50 people blocked the road outside his office in Commercial Road, E.1, and gave out leaflets to motorists and passers-by. The office was then invaded by women and children. As one official passed the buck to another, so the 50 women and children invaded office after office demanding action. Attempts by officials to meet 'deputations of three' were futile. As soon as three went in, the rest followed.

More promises of action resulted from this, but most interesting was a letter received from Dr. Watton a couple of days later in which he said that 'the ultimate eradication (of the rats) . . . is the responsibility of the GLC'. More buck-passing!!

EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGN

However the campaign had had an effect. Buck-passing cannot be effective for long when ALL officials are hounded as soon as they are brought into the matter. The amazing victory came on August 9. All tenants received a letter signed by the Director of Housing, J. P. Macey, which stated that the rehousing of ALL 190 FAMILIES in The Cross would start IMMEDIATELY, and the whole block would then be modernised before being relet; removal expenses would be refunded and tenants would have the first week's rent of their new home paid for them. This letter ended by asking tenants not to have any more demonstrations, as it is 'unfair that tenants should seek to exert pressure on any officers at their homes', and asserted that the 'tenants' cause is (not) being helped by the demonstrations'. This caused great excitement at Coventry Cross.

The tenants were naturally overjoyed and so reluctantly (and I mean reluc-

tantly) called off yet another demonstration planned for the following Monday—this time a sleep-in at the GLC District Housing Office (Vale's office). There has been a lull in activity lately, but things will soon be restarting—there are still issues on which the tenants wish to fight. In the words of the tenants' secretary, Mrs. Hilda Farnsworth, 'We've won so much, but this is only the beginning; we mustn't stop now.' The feeling generally is that, as Mrs. Sadie Ali said, 'I've never enjoyed myself so much, we must keep this up.' But this article is long already, so I will wait until next week to outline the next stages in the campaign.

ANOTHER VICTORY

However I must finally mention another victory over the GLC. The lull in activity has not meant a cessation of activity, and on Tuesday, August 20, still annoyed over the buck-passing regarding the rats, a dozen angry tenants appeared on 'London Today', carrying rats and describing how they'd found them in their baths, saucers, on the stairs and even in their babies' cots. This was finally too much and the GLC have now begun a major operation of inspecting the canal banks next to Coventry Cross, properly blocking up and cementing over the rat holes, and locating the source of the infestation, so it really can be ended.

As I said, the campaign is by no means over (the proposed rent increases are one issue it will be continued on), and may well see some extremely radical action, not witnessed in Britain for many years.

RON BAILEY.

FOR ONE WEEK, the Czechoslovak people put up an astonishing resistance to the Russian 'occupants', as they called them—perhaps the most impressive case of unarmed, unviolent, unpassive resistance not just on record but in full view of the whole world, thanks to television. At the same time, the Czechoslovak rulers—that is, the leaders of the dominant liberal faction of the Czechoslovak Communist Party—put up an astonishing resistance to their Russian captors in Moscow.

At the end of that week, the Czechoslovak people were still going strong; but the Czechoslovak rulers gave in. The Russian rulers could not win the battle for the hearts and minds of the Czechoslovaks (just as the Americans cannot win that for the hearts and minds of the Vietnamese), and they lost face in front of all their friends and all their enemies; but the Czechoslovak rulers could not win the battle for the limited degree of national independence and liberal democracy which had developed during the past year, and rather than lead the resistance to the Russian occupation they accepted the Moscow agreement.

FATAL TO FREEDOM

The Moscow agreement was as fatal to Czechoslovak freedom as the Munich agreement thirty years ago or the Prague coup d'état twenty years ago. The important difference this time is that the final blow was given by the Czechoslovak rulers themselves. This is a crucial point in the anarchist argument about the crisis. One must admire both the Czechoslovak people as a whole and such rulers as Svoboda, Dubcek, Cernik and Smrkovsky for the resistance they all put up, but one cannot admire the former for putting so much faith in the latter. In 1938 the Czechoslovak government rejected the German demands and was ousted by the subsequent German invasion. In 1948 the Czechoslovak government rejected the Communist demands and was ousted by the

subsequent coup d'état. In 1968 the Czechoslovak government rejected the Russian demands—and then accepted them.

No doubt there were good reasons for this, and it is not reasonable for us in our relatively comfortable situation to attack Svoboda and his colleagues, who seem to have behaved with great personal courage at great personal risk. But it is reasonable for us to point out that this is what comes of putting faith in governments. *The Czechoslovak rulers did not surrender because the people were losing; on the contrary, the Czechoslovak people lost because their rulers surrendered.* There is no reason to believe that the popular resistance could only last a week; on the contrary, there is every reason to believe that it could last as long as the Russian occupation. But the Moscow agreement means that the Czechoslovaks have lost and their resistance has been wasted.

RESISTANCE DISCOURAGED

What is happening now is that the Russians are having everything their own way in Czechoslovakia even more than they would have done anyway, because the Czechoslovak government is discouraging rather than encouraging resistance. The free radio stations and newspapers, which reported and reinforced the resistance, are being suppressed. The intellectual leaders of the freedom movement are being driven into futile exile or removed from positions of influence. The Communist Party is being purged of liberals and socialists. The economy is being taken back from the reformers and put back to its previous job of supplying industrial products to the rest of the Russian block. Even if Novotny himself is not restored, the Novotny regime is being restored—just as the Rákosi regime was restored with Rákosi in Hungary—and even if Dubcek is (as he seems to be) a better man than Kádár, he is, however unwillingly, fulfilling the same function. The Russian occupation continues until the Russians want to go.

In our last issue, we said that if we are ever in the same situation as the Czechoslovaks, let us hope we have half their brains and half their guts. We must now say that we should hope to have the brains not to follow even the best leaders too faithfully, and the guts to face the consequences of rejecting them. There is still little we can do for the Czechoslovaks, but we can still say what we think, however unpleasant that is, and this is what we have tried to do.

NO HOPE FROM THE WEST

There is after all no hope for Czechoslovakia from the West. The only hope for the Czechoslovaks is that the Yugoslavs and Rumanians resist being reabsorbed into the Russian block, that the Bulgarians, Hungarians, Poles and East Germans escape from it either

by pushing their rulers on as the Czechoslovaks were doing or pushing them out as the Hungarians did twelve years ago, and—above all—that the Russians and other inhabitants of the Soviet Union destroy it from inside by undermining the fifty-year-old tyranny of the Communist regime.

The best news from outside Czechoslovakia during the whole crisis was that the East German government was unable and the Russian government was only just able to prevent demonstrations of solidarity with the Czechoslovaks. The comparison with Vietnam is illuminating; the only hope for the Vietnamese is an American defeat not in Vietnam but in America; and it is significant that more armed men were needed to hold down Chicago during the Democratic National Convention than to hold down Prague during the Russian occupation. It is when more are needed to hold down Moscow that we may be able to expect real changes in Czechoslovakia and Eastern Europe as a whole.

So the most permanently effective thing we can do for the Czechoslovaks and all the other subject peoples of the world is to struggle against our own rulers and play our part in destroying the system which makes possible the Russian attack on Czechoslovakia, and the American attack on Vietnam. It is possible that the Russians will leave Czechoslovakia because of pressure from Tito or Mao, just as the Americans may leave Vietnam because of pressure from their allies; but this would not stop the same thing happening again. The only way to make sure that it doesn't happen is for the peoples of the world to seize control of their countries from the governments.

REVIVE THE RESISTANCE!

The best thing the Czechoslovaks could do would be to forget about Svoboda and Dubcek and all the rest of them, and to revive the resistance which they ran so well for a week. The best thing their East European friends could do would be to ditch Kádár and Gomulka and Ulbricht and all the rest of them, and to follow the example of the Czechoslovaks. The best thing the Russians could do would be to ditch Brezhnev and Kosygin and Podgorny and all the rest of them as well, and to follow the example of their own populist socialist tradition by returning to the libertarian experiment which was destroyed by the Bolshevik Revolution. And the best thing we could do in the West would be to ditch our rulers and destroy our power blocks, and join hands at last with our comrades in the East.

The news from Czechoslovakia is very grim, but if the Czechoslovak lesson is learnt by people on both sides of the Iron Curtain perhaps their resistance will not have been wasted, and that week will not be quite lost after all.

N.W.

The Struggle in Notting Hill

IN NOTTING HILL the attempted persecution of militants continues. Ever since the first demonstration to reclaim Powis Square for the people last May, when eleven of those who led the attempt were arrested, the hostile pressure has been maintained. Shortly after the successful taking of the Square in June, the local police laid an ambush for the people they considered to have played the largest part in the affair, the Notting Hill VSC, outside their local, at Finches in the Portobello Road, at closing time. On that occasion four men were arrested, or rather 'captured', and taken to the local station where two were beaten up and later, quite cynically, charged with assault, the other two being booked for 'obstruction'. These cases are remanded till October 5. Their defence is being fought bitterly on their behalf by Mrs. May and Lord Gifford who are openly questioning the honesty of certain of these local police, notably Mr. Pulley.

More recently, however, police hostility has intensified and renewed. They still appear to be confident in their role, because summonses have now been issued for criminal prosecution on grounds of malicious damage against six people whom the force appear to consider primarily responsible for the Powis affair. These are accused of having done wilful and malicious damage to the fences that once encircled the Square but which were pulled down by a mass demonstration of at least 300 people. These six are not being accused of being the instigators but simply of being the ones who did the damage which is claimed to amount to £360. How this figure was arrived at is extremely puzzling. The fence was of torn and rusty chicken wire, at least 8 years old. Taking it down was really

doing someone a favour.

Clearly these six individuals are being victimised. The reasons for this are plain enough. If they are dealt with in this way, others will be less willing to challenge authority in the area, which would be a pity, since a struggle has been developed in Notting Hill that must continue.

ATMOSPHERE OF AMITY

One worthwhile result of these most recent charges being brought is that an atmosphere of amity has now sprung up among local organisations not formerly in proper communication or agreement with each other. The Vietnam Solidarity Campaign, the People's Association, Black Power, Situationists and Anarchists have come together in defence of the most recently accused.

It would be helpful if any FREEDOM readers who witnessed or participated in the successful June demonstration in Powis Square, at which the fences were torn down while the police stood by, unable or afraid to interfere, would come forward as witnesses or to offer their support for future activities. The six who have received the summonses for malicious damage are these: George Cochran, Manolo Gonzalez, John Gravelle, Ken Murray, Phil Powell and Micael Horowitz. Of these, the first three have already had to fight cases in connection with the taking of the Square.

The only maliciousness one can really prove in all this is the starting of a prosecution so long after the event and knowing that the fences have stayed down and children have been playing there ever since.

Please contact Allan Green, Notting Hill People's Front, 122 Ladbroke Grove, W.11 (BAY 5023).

NANCEKUKU ACTION

ST. IVES, ON SEPTEMBER 1, though packed solid with tourists, seemed to be completely without police. The group, complete with Committee of 100's black flags, marched onto the bandstand in the middle of the front, set up a loud-speaker system and proceeded to hold a long and well-attended public meeting without any sign of any fuff!

The principal speakers were Douglas Kepper and P. Prior, the local Liberal candidate, who is violently opposed to Nancekuke and who volunteered to speak on hearing of the meeting, but a number of the comrades in the group also spoke. There was considerable interest raised, a large crowd stayed to listen and not only read the leaflets handed out, but most actually took them away with them; two well-behaved hecklers were answered by Douglas Kepper and Percy Prior and the crowd remained until the end.

At the evening meeting to discuss the proposed local demonstration, it was decided that this should be put off until after the London demo. Concrete proposals as to tactics were approved. These can all be carried out by the local group as they do not require large numbers of people and are designed to appear, for

the most part, as part of a ministry investigation into the possible results of an accident at Nancekuke. Properly carried through, as planned, and I see no reason why the operation should not prove successful, providing the group can raise sufficient funds of which they are urgently in need, this should cause the establishment the maximum amount of embarrassment.

A number of volunteers in various parts of the country are required to 'find' balloons and write to their local papers about them, also possibly a few to release balloons or plant them.

Offers of assistance and donations should be sent to Graham Hewitt, 24 Back Road West, St. Ives, Cornwall.

JOSEPHINE.

Report on International Anarchist Congress in next week's Freedom

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CRICKET, IN THE EYES of most people, has always stood for the epitome of the essential English character, the love of ritual and tradition, and the unwritten code referred to as 'fair play'. No cricketing body would let the filthy business of politics creep into the game.

Alas, these choice sentiments are merely mythical, for with the exclusion of Basil d'Oliveira from the MCC party to tour South Africa this winter, the governing body of cricket has shown itself only too ready to play along with the wishes of racist South Africa.

The team, from a playing point of view, was left entirely to the test selectors, who had to review form over the past season, and decide how well a player might be expected to perform abroad. The selectors are, in their turn, all picked to do a job, and are mere specialists in a more powerful ruling organisation, who were most likely briefed in advance about d'Oliveira, and from then on they had to pick two or three players which would make his exclusion fairly logical.

However, soon after being selected for the team to face the Australians in the fifth test at the Oval, Priddleaux withdrew through illness. Obviously it was unwise to field an unbalanced side, and d'Oliveira was the right player to bring balance to the side. Besides we all knew d'Oliveira was keen to return to his homeland, where he was banned from competing with white cricketers. If 'Dolly' had failed, then we could have believed just about anything cricket's parliament told us, but his unquestioned temperament asserted itself when the strain must have been considerable. He hit 158, and took a vital wicket, yet we were told he was passed over because he wasn't one of the best seven batsmen in the country.

TEST CASE

D'Oliveira came here to escape from the bitterness of being an outcast, and when he first played for England two years ago he had every right to believe that he would be treated fairly here, and not judged on his colour. Actually South African newspapers were becoming very interested, and regarded d'Oliveira's selection as a test case. A lot of people (and not just the non-whites who saw 'Dolly' representing their own) would have been glad to see this challenge met. Instead the National Party can feel pretty secure in the knowledge that England, though allowing a multi-racial society herself, can be relied upon to support apartheid whenever it comes to a major decision. Two years ago the New Zealand Premier told South Africa that the All Blacks rugby team would include Maoris or else no tour. This uncompromising statement daunted Vorster and Co., and the tour took place on New Zealand's terms.

A lot could have been cleared up and d'Oliveira spared considerable anguish, but the MCC at about the time Sir Alec Douglas Home was President did nothing. Home (the man who 'sold out' to Rhodesia, and should have the right background to handle the matter), A. E. R. Gilligan, S. C. Griffith and 'Gubby' Allen

cricket cowards

are the men who constitute an 'inner cabinet' of the game. These men defend the very thing all fascist regimes defend, namely the policy of divide and rule, and you can add support of South Africa to that of Nigeria, Greece and American foreign policy. D'Oliveira's curt exclusion goes beyond cricket, because it must make many coloured people here wonder how safe they really are, and since almost every county team has at least one coloured player within its ranks, some of whom may be eligible for England if good enough, these players may be forgiven if they think they've merely escaped one trap to walk into another one.

Indignation has been quite prolonged, and gives hope that the tour may yet be

RON PEARL.
(Abridged)

UNDERGROUND PRESS CONFERENCE September 28-29

A DISCUSSION on the Underground Press was held at the Arts Laboratory on August 27. Dialogue between IT and FREEDOM showed the need for co-operation on fundamentals and the possibilities of creative interchange.

At the conference on Peace Research, Peace Journalism and Action, the last of the present series of conferences sponsored by 'Resurgence', we shall map out new points of departure to surmount obstacles such as self-defeating divisions, the departmentalisation of research and action and purist isolationism, and try to work out an integrative policy for effective nonviolent revolutionary action. Speakers will include Geoffrey Ashe on PEACE AND THE ENGLISH REVOLUTIONARY MYSTIQUE; BLAKE, SHELLEY, EDWARD CARPENTER, G. K. CHESTERTON; Roger Barnard on THE FUNCTIONS OF A RADICAL PRESS, and Dr. Fred Blum and Donald Groom on research for non-violent action and approaches to peace action.

The conference will be held at Edge Hill Farm, Edge, Stroud, Glouce. It is essential that all participants should book beforehand so that accommodation

called off. I don't think the selected players will refuse to tour. Inasmuch as the ordinary county cricketer is held in a benevolent kind of bondage from his own club committee upwards, the honour of selection, of seeing the world, which seems to justify throwing over the duller but more secure life of the office, is justification enough to say nothing. Though cricketers are men surprisingly free from rancour, and no doubt deplore d'Oliveira's omission as much as anyone, seeing how apartheid works with one's own eyes (and a Middlesex player told me it is impossible to look the other way) is more of an education and can harden one's resolve against the system more than opting out to sabotage the tour. D'Oliveira has plenty of support on his side. There have been some resignations from the MCC, and the Rev. David Sheppard has taken up the matter and so far he is working well enough to force the MCC's hand, perhaps to the point where they will rethink the position. Cricket writers E. W. Swanton, John Arlott and Alan Ross have all condemned the d'Oliveira omission. As Alan Ross said in the *Observer* (1.9.68), 'D'Oliveira stands for a symbol of hope and achievement in a repressive society... the rejection of d'Oliveira, whatever the ostensible reasons, will now come as a soothing breeze to the sweating but complacent apostles and fellow-travellers of apartheid.'

can be worked out. Please confirm your presence with a note enclosing a minimum remittance of £1 to include sleeping bag accommodation and board.

HELEN MAYER.

There are different kinds of censorship

'Last Exit to Brooklyn' CALDER & BOYARS report that between the Old Bailey judgment on *Last Exit to Brooklyn* and their successful appeal, a number of booksellers have been importing another English language edition of the book. They state that legal action will be taken against any bookseller who continues to do so.

—Bookseller, 31.8.68.

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

This year's AFB conference is to be held in Liverpool on September 21 and 22 in the Co-op Hall, 54 Derby Lane, Liverpool.—All enquiries about accommodation and proposals for the agenda to John B. Cowan, Merseyside Anarchists, 16 Devonshire Road, Liverpool, 8.

Anarchist Federation of Britain

General enquiries should be sent to the London Federation, c/o Freedom Press, 84a Whitechapel High Street, London, E.1. LEWISHAM. Contact Mike Malet, 61B Granville Park, Lewisham, London, S.E.13. Phone: 01-852 8879. EALING ANARCHIST GROUP. Get into touch with Ken King, 54 Norwood Road, Southall. FINCH'S (PORTOBELLO ROAD) ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact: Pamela Pearce, 271 Portobello Road, W.11. Meetings every Wednesday evening at Finch's. S.W. LONDON LIBERTARIANS. Contact: 14 Clapham Court, King's Avenue (Acree Lane end), S.W.4. WEST HAM ANARCHISTS. Contact Stephen Higgs, 8 Westbury Road, Forest Gate, London, E.7. GRA 9848. Regular activities. Meetings every Wednesday, 7.30 p.m., at Tony Gay's, 109 East Road, Plaistow, London, E.13 (2 mins. Plaistow Station). OFF-CENTRE LONDON DISCUSSION MEETINGS Every Wednesday at Jack Robinson's and Mary Canipa's, 21 Rumbold Road, S.W.6 (off King's Road), 8 p.m. September 25, Dennis Gould: Poetry reading and talking. Meetings at Donald and Irene Room's are suspended until September. 3rd Friday of each month at Dennis Fen's, 314 St. Paul's Road, Highbury Corner, N.1 (above Roundabout Self-Service).

REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND GROUPS

BEXLEY PEACE ACTION GROUP. Enquiries to 150 Rydal Drive, Bexleyheath, Kent. BIRMINGHAM LIBERTARIAN AND ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Geoff and Caroline Charlton at Flat One, 69 Sandon Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham 17. (Entrance side of house.) Regular discussions being held on Tuesdays, 7.30 p.m., Crown Corporation Street (upper room). BOLTON. Get in touch with John Hayes, 51 Rydal Road, Bolton. BOURNEMOUTH AND EAST DORSET ANARCHISTS. Please contact John McCain, 65 Norton Road, Winton, Bournemouth (B'm'th 59509) or Tim Deane, Juliet, West Moors, Wimborne, Dorset (Ferndown 3588). BRISTOL ANARCHISTS. Contact Susie Fisher and Adam Nicholson at 15 The Paragon, Bristol 8. CORNWALL ANARCHISTS. Contact Arthur Jacobs, 76 East Hill, St. Austell. Discussion meetings on the second Friday of each month at Brian and Hazel McGee's, 42 Penderaves Street, Beacon, Camborne, 7.30 p.m. Visiting comrades very welcome. CROYDON LIBERTARIANS. Meetings every 2nd Friday of each month. Laurens and Celia Otter, 35 Natal Road, Thornton Heath (LIV 7546). EDGWARE PEACE ACTION GROUP. Contact: Melvyn Estlin, 84 Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middx. HERTS. Contact either Stuart Mitchell at South View, Potters Heath Lane, Potters Heath,

Welwyn, Herts OR Jeff Cloves, 46 Hughendon Road Marshalswick, St. Albans, Herts. IPSWICH ANARCHISTS. Contact Nell Dean, 74 Cemetery Road, Ipswich, Suffolk. KILBURN, LONDON. Contact Andrew Dewar, 16 Kilburn House, Malvern Place, London, N.W.6. Meetings 8 p.m. every Tuesday. LEICESTER PROJECT. Peace/Libertarian action and debate. Every Wednesday at 8 p.m. at 1 The Crescent, King Street, Leicester. NORTH SOMERSET ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Roy Emery, 3 Abbey Street, Bath, or Geoffrey Barfoot, 71 St. Thomas Street, Wells. NOTTING HILL. Meetings at John Bennett's, Flat 4, 88 Clarendon Road, W.11. Every Monday evening, 8 p.m. ORPINGTON ANARCHIST GROUP. Knockholt, Nr. Sevenoaks, Kent. Every six weeks at Greenways, Knockholt. Phone: Knockholt 2316. Brian and Maureen Richardson. READING ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Alan Ross, 116 Belmont Road, Reading. BERKS REDDITCH ANARCHISTS AND LIBERTARIANS. Contact: Dave Lloyd, 37 Feckenham Road, Headless Cross, Redditch, Worcs. SELBY ANARCHIST GROUP. Forwarding address: c/o 45 Gouthorpe, Selby, W. Yorkshire. TAUNTON LIBERTARIANS. Jill and John Driver, 59 Beadon Road, Taunton, Somerset.

ESSEX & EAST HERTS FEDERATION

Three-monthly meetings. Groups and individuals invited to associate: c/o Keith Nathan, 138 Penny-mead, Harlow, Essex. 'Insurrection 1968'—July/August issue now available. Group addresses:—BASILDON. M. Powell, 7 Lingercroft, Basildon, Essex. BISHOPS STORTFORD. Vic Mount, 'Eastview', Castle Street, Bishops Stortford, Herts. CHELMSFORD. (Mts.) Eva Archer, Mill House, Purliegh, Chelmsford, Essex. EPPING. John Barrick, 14 Centre Avenue, Epping, Essex. HARLOW. Ian Dallas, 18 Brookline Field, Harlow and Annette Gunning, 37 Longbanks, Harlow. LOUGHTON. Group c/o Students' Union, Loughton College of Further Education, Borders Lane, Loughton, Essex. MUCH HADHAM. Leslie Riodan, High Street, Much Hadham, Herts. NORTH EAST ESSEX. Peter Newell, 91 Brook Road, Tolleshunt Knights, Tiptree, Essex. Group meets first Monday in each month at 7.15 p.m.

NORTH-WEST FEDERATION

CHORLEY ANARCHIST GROUP. Secretary: Kevyn Lynch, 6 Garfield Terrace, Chorley, Lancs. LIVERPOOL ANARCHIST PROPAGANDA GROUP AND 'HIPPI' MOVEMENT. Gerry Bree, 16 Faulkner Square, Liverpool, 8. Meetings weekly. 'Freedom' Sales—Pier Head, Saturdays, Sundays, Evenings.

MANCHESTER ANARCHIST GROUP. Secretary: Sue Warnock, 9 Boland Street, Fallowfield, Manchester, 14. Every Saturday: 'Freedom' and 'DA' selling outside Central Library, 2.30-4.30 p.m. MERSEYSIDE ANARCHIST GROUP. Correspondence to Jack Bennett, c/o 16 Devonshire Road, Liverpool, 8. Meetings 1st and 3rd Thursdays of month at Pete Dukes, 70 Huskisson Street, Liverpool, 8 (3 rings), at 8 p.m. SUSSEX FEDERATION Groups and individuals invited to associate: c/o Eddie Poole, 5 Tilsbury, Finden Road, Whitebank, Brighton. BRIGHTON & HOVE ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Nick Heath, Flat 3, 26 Clifton Road, Brighton, BN1 3HN. Poetry readings, Fish Market Hard, every Sunday 2 p.m. Meetings every Thursday, Combination, 76 West Street, 8.30 p.m. CRAWLEY ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Richard Ashwell, 87 Buckswood Drive, Gossop's Green, Crawley, Sussex. SUSSEX UNIVERSITY ANARCHIST GROUP. Information from Francis Jarman, 39 Harefield, Harlow, Essex.

WELSH ANARCHIST FEDERATION

CARDIFF ANARCHIST GROUP. All correspondence to—Pete Raymond, 18 Marion Street, Splott, Cardiff. MERTHYR TYDFIL ANARCHIST GROUP. Correspondence to Huw Rowlands, 16 Cromwell Street, Mertyr Tydfil. SWANSEA ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact J. Ross, 111 King Edward's Road, Brynmill, Swansea. Weekly meetings, 'Freedom' sales and action projects. LLANELLI: Contact Dai Walker, 6 Llwynnendy Road, Llanelli, Carm. Tel: Llanelli 2548.

EAST LONDON LIBERTARIAN FEDERATION

Support wanted for numerous activities in area. Secretary: Anthony Matthews, 35 Mayville Road, London, E.11. Meetings fortnightly on Sundays at Ron Bailey's, 128 Hainault Road, E.11 (LEY 8059). Ten minutes from Leytonstone Underground. LEYTONSTONE GROUP. Get in touch with Anthony Matthews or Ron Bailey (address as above). STEPNEY. Trevor Jackales, 10 St. Vincent de Paul House, Dempsey Street, Clifty Estate, E.1. NEWHAM. F. Rowe, 100 Henderson Road, E.7. ILFORD. Del Leverton, 12 Hamilton Avenue, Ilford. DAGENHAM. Alan Elliot, 98 Hatfield Road, Dagenham. WOODFORD. Douglas Hawkes, 123 Hermon Hill, E.8. WALTHAMSTOW. Desmond MacDonald, 80 Martin Road, E.17. LIMEHOUSE. M. Solof, 202 East Ferry Road, E.14.

STUDENT GROUPS

There are groups at East Anglia University, Liverpool University, LSE, Oxford University, Sheffield University, Southwark College, Sussex University

HOW REVOLTING!

THE OCTOBER BOMB-PLOT is an event likely to go down in newspaper and police annals as an Extremist attempt at partial overthrow which was forestalled well before it occurred. If it occurred.

I refer to the recent alarmist 'stories' run in the nationals concerning small Left-wing factions preparing arsenals of 'molotovs', bombs and small-arms in readiness for insurrection at the October 27 'demo'.

The thing (which appears remarkably similar in references to 'Anarchist and extremist groups' to American Press publications during the McCarthy witch-hunt of the '50s), illustrates the degree of liaison between Fleet Street and Scotland Yard.

One can picture the plot's conception; a frustrated novelist of a Defective Inspector hearing of petrol bombs thrown at No. 10 Downing Street during a recent 'Biafra' demonstration. Then remembering a diagram of a 'molotov' he'd heard was at the *Black Dwarf* offices. One can see him pick up a 'phone and demand a raid. They then break into the offices, threaten Tariq Ali with prosecution, take some photos and bugger off. The news is then broken to the papers.

Our Inspector has a further brain-wave, why not also tell the papers in an extremely vague way that there are rumoured to be 'Extremist Arsenals' scattered over London and the home counties, not mentioning the one at Woolwich of course. He then sits back to let the papers blow the whole thing out of proportion. The Yard then disclaims the story.

Now forgetting the Inspector, it will be seen that the 'plot' has achieved quite a bit. It has some alarming aspects. For example, it will make certain Fuzz behaviour more 'justifiable', i.e. more Fuzz brutality at 'demos' will be tolerated by the public. It will make Fuzz stock-piling and use of tear-gas for 'demos' more 'justifiable'. (The British public forgetting its previous horror of 'British Made' CS in Paris and Berlin, will condone it as the police will be dealing with 'nasty armed extremists'. It will also make easier the inevitable modification of the present (impractical) Fuzz uniform to something on CRS lines.

Happily the October Bomb-plot has been seen through as 'sensationalist lies' by most libertarian thinkers. However, it will remain an evil slur on the cause (if you'll excuse the cliché) in the eyes of the regrettably sheep-like public. Though the short-term results are almost negligible, it's the far-reaching ones that are serious.

A. R. SADIEV.

and College of St. Mark & St. John, Chelsea. For reasons of space we are leaving these out during the vacation.

SCOTTISH ANARCHIST FEDERATION

Secretary: Dave Coull (see Montrose). Groups and Proposed Groups:— ABERDEEN ANARCHIST FEDERATION. Contact Bob Comrie, 288 Hargate or Liz Smith, 3 Sinclair Road. FIFE. Contact Bob and Una Turnbull, 39 Stratheden Park, Stratheden Hospital, by Cupar. GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Robert Lynn, 16 Ross Street, C.1. HAMILTON DISTRICT FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS. Contact Ronnie Anderson, 100 Union Street, New Stevenston. MONTROSE. Contact Dave Coull, 3 Eskview Terrace, Ferryden.

LIBERTARIAN TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Meetings—discussions—activities. Contact Peter Ford, 36 Devonshire Road, Mill Hill, London, N.W.7.

ABROAD

AUSTRALIA. Federation of Australian Anarchists, P.O. Box A 389, Sydney South. Public meetings every Sunday in the Domain, 2 p.m. and Mondays, 72 Oxford Street, Paddington, Sydney, 8 p.m. EAST AFRICA. George Matthews would like to make contact. Secondary school teacher from UK. PO Box 90, Kakamega, Kenya. USA. James W. Cain, secretary, the Anarchist Committee of Correspondence, 323 Fourth Street, Cloquet, Minnesota 55720, USA. GROUP (T)REASON. Australian Anarchist, c/o Melbourne University Union or Paddy Evans, c/o the same. MELBOURNE. Get in touch with Bob Hopkins and Marie Rojo, P.O. Box 192, Carlton South 3053. Public meetings at Yarra Bank, Melbourne. DANISH ANARCHIST FEDERATION. Gøthersgade, 27, Viborg, Denmark. VANCOUVER, B.C., CANADA. Anyone interested in forming anarchist and/or direct action peace group contact Derek A. James, 1844 Grand Boulevard, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada. Tel.: 987-2693. USA: VERMONT. New Hampshire Anarchist Group. Discussion meetings. Actions. Contact Ed. Strauss, RFD 2, Woodstock, Vermont 05091, USA. SWEDEN. Stockholm Anarchist Federation Contact Nadir, Box 19104, Stockholm 19, Sweden. SWEDEN: Libertad, Allmänna Vägen 6, Gothenburg V. TORONTO ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact R. Campbell, 219 Toroyork Drive, Weston, Ontario, Canada. Weekly meetings. BELGIUM: LIEGE. Provos, c/o Jacques Charlier, 11 Avenue de la Laiterie, Scllessin-Liege, Belgium. PROPOSED GROUPS MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY. Contact Mike Don or Bill Jamieson, 14 Victoria Road, Manchester 14. BELFAST. Fellow anarchists contact Robert Dunwoody, 10 Newry Street, Belfast. BT6 0NN

The Black Flag

DURING the uprising in France this year when the black flag flew again on the barricades of Paris and other towns, capitalist journalists explained to the readers of today that the black flag was the flag of anarchism. After a long demise the black flag had come once again into the public eye. How and why did the anarchists acquire the black flag?

The first recorded example of the black flag being used by workers in revolt is in 1831 at Rheims where it waved over a crowd of navvies inscribed with the words 'Work or Death'. Later the same year it appeared again carried by navvies at Lyon, this time decorated with a skull.

But it wasn't until 1883 that the anarchists adopted the black flag. Before this they had used the red flag together with the authoritarian socialists, but the differences between the two left movements had become more and more acute. However some anarchists still preferred the red flag, notably Kropotkin. But the decisive influence seems to have been played by Louise Michel, who spoke of the black flag as a symbol of mourning for the fall of the Paris Commune. She carried a black flag made from a skirt at the head of the crowd that looted the Paris bakeries in 1883.

The anarchist Insurrectionary Army that operated in the Ukraine from 1917 to 1921 had a black banner, rumour has it made from a priest's cassock, decorated with a skull and crossbones and inscribed with the words 'Freedom or Death'.

The use of the skull and crossbones in Russia and the skull in France suggests a connection with the flag of those stateless persons who lived outside the territories of all countries and who were the enemies of all governments: namely the buccaneers. According to a book intended for children that I read some time ago, the pirate captains were not

the dictator-tyrants that they are made out to be: they were elected, their authority was extremely limited by the power of the crew and the spoils were carefully divided. Research into pirate communities might bring to light some interesting facts.

With the development of anarcho-syndicalism a new flag was used: the red and black. This was most popular in Spain where it was the flag of the CNT. Several explanations have been given for the use of the colours: red for socialism, black for anarchism, red for the proletariat, black for freedom, and more melodramatically red for blood and black for death.

With the revival of the anarchist movement in Britain in the early 1960s the red and black was used by all, whether anarcho-syndicalist or not. Perhaps this was due to a revival of interest in the Spanish Civil War, perhaps because the red and black is more distinctive and prevented confusion with the black CND banners. But now black flags are reappearing in Britain. The first one I noticed was used by Harlow Group about three years ago.

On demonstrations flags are useful because they act as a rallying point for comrades and are a means of letting people know where we stand. They can however cause difficulties. For example if one is protesting about the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, does a socialist carry a red flag, which is the basis of the flag of the USSR? Does a representative of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign on the same demonstration carry the flag of North Vietnam, when this same government supports the Russian action?

But whether we use the black or the red and black, our position is plain, for these are the symbols of an idea that no state, the basic expression of a class society, can accept or incorporate: anarchism.

B.B.

ANARCHISTS AT THE HARLOW TOWN SHOW

HARLOW GROUP took part for the second year in Harlow Town Show. This year the poor weather appeared to bring fewer people to the Show, and the separate marquee the group took this year, situated at the bottom of the field, resulted in fewer visitors to the anarchist display; last year in a large marquee with other local organizations there was the twofold advantage of the people who inadvertently came upon the anarchist scene, and the fact that anarchism shows

up rather well against the political parties. The larger space gave greater scope for Harlow Group's talents as poster makers and collage assemblers, and a fine colourful display it was, too, headed by a large strip banner ANARCHY MEANS FREEDOM MEANS RESPONSIBILITY. The judges highly commended the result. The endeavour should be acknowledged here, for besides the imagination and labours of creating the display, this young group met the costs of the space and hire of the marquee, totalling £28, apart I believe from one donation of £5, by running jumble sales and folksong evenings, etc., locally.

Keith Nathan made and sold badges on the spot, *International Times* did a brisk enough trade with the young in posters, but there was little market for literature. Nonetheless there were some lively discussions, and fortunately the group had copies of the Essex-Herts. Federation's very good *Freedom Why Not?* leaflet to give away. Some contacts were made with people who asked to be kept in touch for the future.

It is hard to tell what impact is made by shows such as this, where people drift around the immense variety of activities and huge number of stalls where every kind of commercial and social service, and religious and political idea, is offered, and one forms an impression that all are accepted on the same level; including for example, H.M. Prison Service with a display of wicker baskets and copper kettles made by prisoners and advertisements for a bright career (no such things as a model cell—with three occupants—and overnight-full chamber pots on show). Or the Hovercraft SRN5 model: **This fast, highly efficient 18-seater hovercraft is capable of 70 knots, has already been proved in both commercial and military service worldwide.** One thinks of those Vietcong men a couple of weeks ago hiding submerged in a river and breathing through straws, who were efficiently picked off by this brilliant British technical achievement, and one wonders did anybody else think of this.

Yet this kind of occasion is about the only one in which anarchists as a group mix with the community as part of it and are not looked on as some foreign species, or a 'spectacle' as in demonstrations; and we should be grateful to Harlow Group for initiating this, which other groups may follow in their own communities (as Kilburn did last year).

M.C.

WHAT SORT OF FREEDOM DO YOU WANT? And what are you prepared to do about it? Send us your views for discussion in next week's issue

PROMS PROTEST

PADDY FIELDS' article was moderate in tone and, at least, expressed regret at the necessity for the mild demonstrations that were carried out, but it also stated that a boycott of the concerts would have been the 'ideal'.

Now acts of supreme courage in interfering with Russian orchestras playing music in England may receive wild praise from the *Daily Express*, but anarchists might be expected to show less enthusiasm.

So far, I have noticed no boycott of US orchestras, though their government has been engaged in Vietnam for some time, nor of the Australian cricket team. Why not, in the name of logic?

Secondly, the idea that each member of the USSR State Orchestra is personally responsible for his government's policy shows a belief in Soviet democracy that would seem exaggerated even in the *Morning Star*.

A TU exchange boycott is quite another matter: the TU leaders deal in politics and have dirtied their hands as much as dockers in the US who service weapons for Vietnam. But to stop listening to Russians playing music; to stop writing to Russian friends because they happen to be civil servants, etc., etc.—this sort of reaction is pure emotionalism, and will do harm, not good. Music is, in fact, subversive, as Stalin admitted when he stringently controlled what was played and what was written in his empire. In fact Shosta-

FIFTH COLUMN MATERIAL FOR CONTROVERSY

UNLIKE DAVE CUNLIFFE who wrote on *The Rejection of Materialism* two weeks ago, I am a materialist. This is not to say that I consider myself obsessed by the desire to acquire material possessions but that I assert: there are no such things as genies, ghosts, gods or gremlins. The distinction is obviously important: many Christians try very hard to serve both God and Mammon; many materialists in the philosophical sense serve neither.

Now Dave is quite right to say 'materialism is unproven because it is essentially unprovable'. But then materialism is an essentially negative attitude.

We materialists simply say that the universe consists of matter and nothing else. We leave it to the idealists of Rome and Tibet and Haight-Ashbury to try and prove to us that there is something transcendental hanging about in our minds or the stratosphere. And we know they can't.

Idealists cannot prove idealism because proof belongs to the ordinary world of calculation, experiment and demonstration. And your angel Gabriel has never yet made an appearance in a test tube. But the only way to establish to the rest of us that there was such a thing as a spirit would be to persuade it to make a physical appearance: it would then of course cease to be a spirit.

It helps if we compare materialism and idealism with other philosophical ideas such as existentialism and empiricism. Not one of these theories can be proved: they are attitudes with which a person approaches the world not hypotheses which can be tested. Of course we can still argue about them but in the last analysis they are, as Dave says, subjective.

To arrive at this conclusion we do not need 'psycho-experimental research' or 'depth psychology' or even 'deep interpenetration of the unconscious'—whatever these may mean. We need only a rough understanding of the philosophical ideas and a degree of familiarity with elementary logic.

Having gone to great lengths to establish the obvious, Dave chucks in a few words of abuse. Since everything is subjective, materialism is 'simplistic', 'irrational', 'perverted' and 'anti-intellectual'. But where does that leave Dave? If everything is subjective, Dave's dismissal of materialism is subjective: which establishes his ideas as simplistic, irrational, perverted and intellectual. Which leaves all of us—materialists and idealists—firmly in the shit.

But Dave isn't satisfied with 'anti-intellectual': we materialists must be accused of being responsible for capitalism and all its works and pomps. I have been through this particular movie before. Once upon a time when I was a schoolboy in the clutches of the Jesuits I was solemnly warned of the terrible consequences of abandoning God: I would be unable to stop myself acquiring television sets one after the other. I was offered the horrifying thought of gaining the whole world and suffering the loss of my own soul.

Whether from the Jesuits or Dave, the assertion that not believing in whatever they believe in drives you to go about acquiring television sets is just plain silly. Capitalism has been and is fought by many materialists: it was in any event first built by men who went to church on Sunday. If you look more closely (and forget for a moment that the one word materialism is used in the two ways) you will see there is no reason why philosophical materialists should automatically become grasping capitalists.

Matter is not only made objects: it is the air, the sea, brain cells, nerve endings, sound waves. My assertion that the air I breathe doesn't have fairies floating about in it doesn't lead me to scorn the air—or to want to fill it with chemicals.

But even if Dave were to concede that we materialists were not responsible for creating capitalism he wouldn't let us help him struggle to replace it. Nonviolence is only permitted to those who have cleansed themselves in the Ganges. Dave says it is a 'proven fact that methods cannot be extracted and separated from the philosophies which shaped them and still work properly'. If that is true we are all in the shit again. For nobody could possibly argue that the Eastern philosophies contain all the techniques and methods necessary for the achievement of a libertarian revolution in the industrial West.

Anarchists who accept the idea of nonviolence generally talk in terms of some kind of synthesis between it and traditional anarchism. But if nobody can borrow from an alien tradition the only successful revolutionary would be somebody who by birth inherited both, somebody who had an Emma Goldman for a mother and a Gandhi for a father.

We cannot afford to wait for the female anarchists of the West to meet and mate with the gurus. **WE WANT THE WORLD AND WE WANT IT NOW.** If this means borrowing bits of other people's ideas then we must take the risk that we'll get some of them wrong: the alternative is to resign ourselves to the failures of our predecessors.

WYNFORD HICKS.

Why No Protest?

Dear Editors,

It rather disturbs me that the anarchist movement (at least if *FREEDOM* reflects it accurately) does not seem to concern itself much with one of the most blatant examples of rampant police power. I refer to the mass-fingerprinting of whole towns carried on from time to time on the excuse that there has recently been an unsolved murder.

I don't quite know what one could do about it, except protest and refuse to co-operate if one was unlucky enough to influence public opinion on this matter one point which might make some impact now is, how much easier the Russian Secret Service ghouls would be finding it to subjugate Czechoslovakia if they had a computer full of everyone's fingerprints (which is obviously where all fingerprints on police files will eventually go, assuming (a) such computers haven't been secretly installed already, and (b) there is no strenuous public opposition). *Cheshire* GEOFFREY BOARDMAN.

Inside Out

Dear Comrades,

Has anybody ever suggested that *FREEDOM* should become a British anarchist newspaper? I searched the current issue in vain for news of current British anarchist activities. Unless of course the nationalistic protest directed at Russian musicians was meant to count as anarchist activity. There is plenty about Czechoslovakia, about Berkeley, California, about the Russian Trade Fair, but what about Britain? If anarchy is directed against governments, the only government that anarchists in Britain can reasonably direct their activities against is the British Government. What are British anarchists doing?

I am not a factory worker, but I recognise that if a revolution ever comes in this country it will come in the factories. I suggest that the editors turn their paper back to front and outside in. The back page should become the front, the front should go inside and the inside should disappear. As things stand now, one gets the impression from the pages of *FREEDOM* that when the revolution comes British anarchists will be found contemplating their Buddhist navels, smoking

kovitch's 10th Symphony, which was played at the protested Prom, strained Soviet official tolerance when it came out because its unremitting (and Russian) tone of tragedy appeared to imply that State Communism had not turned Russia into a paradise. The friendship between Britten's circle and Shostakovitch's has certainly not strengthened that side of the Kremlin which forced the Czech invasion, and will certainly continue to not strengthen that side. So it seems to me that we help the Czechs rather by going on contacting Russians and exchanging tours; cultural links between peoples are exactly part of that alternative and saner reality beside which the tragic inhumanity of politics is diminished.

Rostropovitch himself is a 'cultural link': that he is here at all is an advance on the old Cold War days. As to his individual 'guilt', the article admits that he could not with safety say anything in words. But he did in fact play as an encore a work which he had played at the Aldeburgh Festival specifically as an Elegy to a certain person. I doubt if he could have offered a plainer comment.

To kill the messenger who brings the bad news is the classic idiom of the enraged. To want to kill a messenger who only happened to be about when the bad news came is madder still.

Fraternally,

JOHN ROE.

LETTERS

pot, arguing about what really happened in Kronstadt in '21 or demonstrating against an American baseball team. *Somerset* GEOFFREY BARFOOT.

Sack Hicks!

Dear Comrades,

I've just been reading your Fifth Columnist's report of a demonstration at Kensington Palace Gardens. I feel I must point out that the bourgeois press and TV gave it more sympathetic coverage.

Undoubtedly many people went along with the intention of causing as much physical damage to the British branch of the Kremlin as possible. Under the circumstances, a healthy and praiseworthy aim. Some, however, evidently thought it necessary to have speeches by members of the Labour Party and similar delights. I can only say that while I enjoy debates with people of differing views, I prefer to have them in a hall, or better still a pub. As for the self-appointed leader who offered the microphone to a Conservative—he should have realised this would provoke a violent response. The Tories have plenty of opportunity to put their view that 'we' must have weapons of mass murder, 'we' must strengthen NATO, 'we' must have troops in Asia, 'we' must save the Argylls. This was neither the time nor the place to give such views a hearing.

Wynford Hicks's touching concern for police who are injured in clashes with demonstrators, his anguished squeals when private property is damaged, his obvious desire to get back to the good old days when protesters sat on their arses and waited to be arrested, all these I find strange. But what seems even stranger is that the Editors of *FREEDOM* should have asked him to write the only regular column in the only anarchist weekly we've got.

DAVE COULL.

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Gift of Books—London: M.K.

Blackpool Follies

THE ANNUAL union gala at Blackpool carried 'Auld Lang Syne' with a very small majority, the platform wished to dispense with the ritual this year as they believed that some old acquaintances should be forgot and the sooner the better.

The TUC celebrated its hundred years of militant working class struggle with noble lords well to the fore, the policies of the cloth cap and choker are outdated comrades, the employers and the Government are your friends. We may huff and puff at them now and again but they know we do not mean them any real harm.

Auntie Barbara enjoyed the show, she enjoyed Hugh Scanlon breathing fire and brimstone, although she winced a wee bit when he went too near the knuckle. Fancy mentioning increased profits and dividends at a TUC conference, and then Hugh committed heresy by commenting on the rising cost of living. But Aunt Barbara soon recovered, because she remembered that whatever the TUC pass or do not pass the Government will continue its policies the same as it will after the Labour Party Conference scheduled in a few months' time.

Sidney Greene had a grand time warning the Government about rising unemployment. One thing that worries me, Sidney, is that your Windsor Agreement will not exactly cut unemployment. Still it gave you a chance to have a dig at ASLEF.

The annoying part about the TUC gala is the fact that the star comedian is always the same man, Clive Jenkins. It was really comradely how he rubbed the Clerical Workers' delegate's nose in the dust then put his heel on the back of his neck to make really sure he ate dirt, that really was the spirit of comradeship. Other than that Clive's patter was quite good, particularly when he had to ad lib the amendment to the ASLEF motion.

The delegates did give the platform one or two jolts purely in terms of 'losing face'. The amendment on equal pay caught them with their trousers down, not that the TUC could do anything about a strike on equal pay, still it is nice to be 'on record'. In ten years' time when the goal is achieved they can say they were in the vanguard, providing of course no one mentions how long women have been pressing for equal pay.

The ex-ILP-er Bob Edwards gave the drug and pharmaceutical industry a kick in the ribs. He accused them of milking the Health Service and that British-owned firms were only able to supply 27% of

the needs of the Health Service. In fact it is a fair old racket. Still it is far easier to castigate foreigners using our health service, than to attack the people who have been blackmailing it for years.

The economic debate on Thursday was pitiful. George Woodcock did not want the boat rocked, but Jack Peel wanted to find out if it was seaworthy. Brother Jack started the rocking and the big boys started using their weight, but the little fellows just held on long enough to prevent the boat from sinking. The TUC could continue to sail along its wage vetting course although by Christ! she shipped some water. The Government's boat was not so lucky, it was sunk. Not that it matters, there is plenty more where that one came from.

The closing act was to thank the Labour Government for all it had done for the workers. It may have kicked them in the guts a few times, but it did it with a smile; the Tories, on the other hand, are so serious when they kick, it makes one feel unwanted.

BILL CHRISTOPHER.

Freedom For Workers' Control

SEPTEMBER 14 1968 Vol 29 No 28

Job Control

AFTER A FOUR-DAY DISPUTE car workers have forced the management of Rootes (Ryton-on-Dunsmore plant) to concede the right of workers to have some say on how they should operate their job. All too often these days management dictate how a job should be operated without any concern for the men doing the job. Evidently Rootes is no exception.

The company accused the shop stewards of wanting to take over the management. The men claim the right of mutual negotiations on men assignment, track speeds, and labour loading.

Prior to the Chrysler takeover of Rootes the firm was renowned for its industrial peace. The workers suspect the imposition of American-style labour relations, e.g. Roberts Arundel.

The car workers also claim that there has been avoidance of collective bargaining. Workers have received letters at home appealing for co-operation and there have been attempts to persuade individuals to ignore their shop stewards advice. Management have also called in the national union organisers in an effort to pass over the heads of the shop stewards. To his credit one of the organisers after visiting the plant informed the steward that obviously he had a clear understanding of the situation.

Rootes have a £20 million modernisation programme at Ryton and they want the workers to pay for it by a 20% reduction in labour loading and increased track speed. The company's aim is to have all work scientifically assessed and planned and the workers would be told what to do and how quickly to do it.

In theory work study proposals react favourably for management, this is the reason for their introduction. But they neglect human factors like fatigue, or management incompetence such as delay in supply of components. Workers are expected to make this time up.

On an occasion stewards gave the management a free hand in the planning of a department that had been transferred from the Stoke factory. The management made a 'balls up' of the whole operation and were compelled to call in the stewards to take part in discussion about equipment and labour loading.

Managements can have the most fantastic schemes in the world costing thousands of pounds but if the workers will not co-operate there is absolutely nothing management can do about it.

A compromise was found to this particular problem. The company determines track speed, the unions have the right to argue about manning. If an operator has a problem he raises it with the foreman with a shop steward present. If a whizz kid (work study engineer) is needed he can be brought in to settle any problems. The important factor that has been established is the status and responsibilities of shop stewards at least until the next dispute. American-styled managements seem very prone to learning the hard way.

FORD WOMEN STRUGGLE ON

The women sewing machinists at Ford Motors' Dagenham plant will continue to ban overtime. Jack Scamp's committee which set up a committee to examine the women's claim of upgrading, have rejected the women's long-standing claim. Unfortunately to date it appears that the overtime ban does not inconvenience the management, and therefore they hope that the women will give up in frustration. Let's hope the girls have other tricks up their sleeves. Fundamentally, of course, how comes Fords are still producing cars anyway.

LUMPENPROLETARIAN.

B.C.

Busmen brutally betrayed

TWELVE MONTHS AGO the hourly rate for a London bus conductor was seven shillings and eight point five five pence an hour and forty hours was the basis of his working week. From then on his weekly take-home pay and his hours of work became a matter between God, the London Transport Board and his Union's executive. Compulsory overtime, public holiday working, weekend working and a compulsory working of eleven- and twelve-hour split shifts made a joke of the forty-hour week but gave the London bus conductor a basic wage of £15 8s. 6d. that built up, with all this compulsory overtime, to an average wage of £19 0s. 6d. that left a single man with a take-home pay of £14 8s. Allowing for the general discomforts of the job, the wage compared favourably with most non-skilled jobs and over the last few years there was no great pressure by the rank and file for a wage increase.

Two years ago the LTB decided on a massive Bus Reshaping Plan and they baited the TGWU with a promise of various bonus payments if they were prepared to take part in the slaughter of the innocents. But for two years the bus workers' Negotiating Committee made brave noises and talked of one-day strike actions and then, without any reference back to the branches, signed away a lifetime of working-class struggle for the promise of a handful of shillings.

For two years the LTB just sat and waited for the Negotiating Committee to work itself into that final mindless panic and, on the day that the ignoble surrender was signed, the LTB spewed forth its cuts in services and its fare increases. With a moist hand on its paper heart the LTB cried that no one would suffer and that everyone stood to gain in this best of all possible situations. It was left to Bill Jones, speaking through the pages of his magazine *Bus Stop*, to play Dr. Pangloss among the ruins of the transport industry and this one-time darling of the militant left died the death when he stood among the Negotiating Committee on a public platform while attempts were made to justify this betrayal of so many men, for let there be no mistake about it, Bill Jones has long dominated the busmen's movements, both official and unofficial, and to him belongs the ultimate shame that, when thousands of jobs are in danger, he stood among those who cried 'retreat'.

Today, September 7, the hourly rate is still 7 shillings and 8.550 pence an hour and the basis of the working week is still 40 hours but the LTB can rightly crow with delight as they announce that after two years of simply sitting on their arse their Bus Reshaping Plan is this day going into operation and that 500 One-Man Buses are already taking to the road

with another 350 to follow by 1969, that on this day children's fares are to be increased and that hidden increases in other fares will be charged for the irritation of being forced to break one's journey.

One must surely ask who gains from this and the answer is neither the travelling public nor the employed men for the handful of shillings bonus for the surviving staff must ultimately be lost in the now automatic rises in the cost of living and the bus worker is left, after two years of negotiations and betrayal, with the simple and inescapable fact that, apart from a static bonus that neither increases with the hours worked nor rises with the cost of living, he has gained only the pyrrhic pleasure of wearing around his neck an economic dead albatross that will stink to heaven come the first long hot summer of discontent.

And once again, from the safety of its carpeted office, the LTB publicly cry that no man's job is in danger, yet the very fact that on this black September 7 they have again been forced to cry this matter screams treason to the simple mind.

One conductor has asked the LTB the naive and all-important question as to how the LTB intend to find alternative employment within the industry for the 16,000 conductors 'without defeating its main purpose, namely, an economic measure to reduce costs' and the LTB's answer to this is the same tired and mangy rubbish of 'normal retirements and resignations' and the suggestion that conductors could train as drivers and this to many who are grey-haired women or men or youths physically unfit to be in charge of the driving of any road vehicle.

Yet in the end the LTB has only one answer for the 16,000 busworkers and that is a limp handshake and a lump severance payment and one can only trust that the TGWU in its turn will hand back all those weekly union subscriptions that they have taken from these men and women over the years and that they have in the end so brutally betrayed.

If the LTB and the TGWU say they have not worked out a scheme for the sacking of busworkers then they are playing lightly with the truth, for a group of consultants have carried out a preliminary review of the work of skilled and semi-skilled maintenance staff at garages and as a result of the recommendations made by the Joint Working Party, it was agreed with the UNION to implement a staff productivity scheme which involves a saving of 270 staff out of an establishment of some 4,000. The LTB and the TGWU call it a saving of 270 staff and I call it the sacking of 270 men for a man, or woman, standing in the queue at the Labour Exchange is not redun-

Contact Column

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

Demonstration against Toll-bridge, Selby.

Date for Demo., Saturday, September 14. Ideas, offers of help to c/o 45 Gowthorpe, Selby.

Playwright involved in rehearsals needs reliable helper to live-in, and look after 4 small boys (outside school-hours and occasional evenings) September 20-November 10. Should be able to drive car. Some interest in theatre desirable. £7 per week. Lots of free time. Arden, 01-883 2355.

London Anarchist Banner. Long time no see. Information to Reg Broad. Box 20.

Brighton Anti-Censorship Demo. This Saturday, September 14 at 12 noon. Meet on the Level. Accommodation available.

Australian Anarchist Conference. Suggested venue: Melbourne or Sydney. Early 1969. Contact: P. Evans, Box 192, Carlton South P.O., Victoria, Australia.

YCND. New/old address: 14 Grays Inn Road, W.C.1.

Would anyone be interested in raising a libertarian group to cover Kennington and Southwark, straddling the Elephant and Castle? Contact: Harry Harmer, 6 Oakden Street, Kennington, S.E.11. Tel. 735 9644.

Student from Argentina offers Spanish lessons. Osvaldo Segalowitz, 7 Belize Crescent, Hampstead, N.W.3.

International Camp '69. We are still looking for a site in England. Will anyone who can help please contact co-ordinator: Ann Lindsay, 39 Upper Tulse Hill, London, S.W.2. 674 7886.

The Crypt, 242 Lancaster Road, W.11, September 18, 8 p.m., 2/6. Gillian Barron (poet), Ian Hardie (folk), The Third Ear Band (probably).

Anarchist doctor. Could anyone recommend one? Box 17.

Will any telecommunication and/or electronic experts who would like to see their skills used in a more constructive manner please write Box 19.

Red Paper produced to evoke radical response in those parts of East Anglia not subject to that gravitational pull towards London which deprives an area of any identity of its own. 6d.: from Tony Reeder, 44 Upper Orwell Street, Ipswich.

Anarchist Black Cross Bulletin No. 1 now available, 6d. (plus postage) from 7 Coptic Street, London, W.C.1.

If you wish to make contact let us know.

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