

Freedom

Anarchist Weekly 6d

SEPTEMBER 21 1968 Vol 29 No 29

THE AMERICAN STATE
vs. AMERICANS
IN CHICAGO



The State is the State is the State

IN 1956 THE ABILITY OF THE Western democracies to make political capital out of Russia's bloody repression of the Hungarian uprising was completely destroyed by their own lunatic adventure in Suez. Tanks and artillery in Budapest, bombers over Cairo, presented the rest of the world with nothing less than examples of cruel and bloody repression in the good old imperialist fashion from both sides of the political spectrum.

In 1968 almost a parallel situation is provided by, on the one hand, the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, and on the other, police action in Chicago which was sufficiently brutal to shock millions of Americans with no political sympathy with the battered demonstrators.

At both these times, this year and

twelve years ago, what was demonstrated for all to see was the essential nature of the State, which overrides all superficial differences arising from slight variations in economic organisation. For many years objective observers of the world scene have noted the growing identification in practice of social systems which are supposed to be different. As America becomes a super-state it demands of its citizens the patriotism and conformity that Stalin demanded of Soviet citizens while dragging feudal Russia into the twentieth century. Hitler forced on Germany as a solution for its post-war chaos, and imperialist Britain classically demonstrated.

The super-state is the twentieth century pattern for capitalism, solving its internal conflicts by cen-

THE RUSSIAN STATE
vs. CZECHS
IN PRAGUE



Stuart Christie: The Verdict

LAST Monday, September 16, the case of Stuart Christie versus Her Majesty the Queen, was heard in Court One at West One Police Station. The Court was packed with Special Branch men clutching bulging brief cases which effectively prevented any of Christie's friends from attending the hearing.

British law was shown in its true colours: reactionary defenders of the system of law and order. The charge, under Section 9 (e) of the Forgery Act, was 'for possession of pieces of paper, bearing marks, words, and devices peculiar to and used on United States \$1 bills, without lawful authority or excuse'. The defendant pleaded not guilty before a jury on a charge preferred on May 1 at Highgate Magistrate's Court of the bourgeois homeowners and voters of London.

Even these voters and proud exponents of do-it-yourself were moved to laughter when shown Exhibit 8 (a sample of each type of phoney dollar taken from Christie's flat). The course of the trial was even more predictable than the most cynical anarchist could have predicted; even a jurist called Philby.

The American expert on currency had changed from Brooks T. Keeler, that latter-day Frank Dickens, to Stanley Griffiths, Assistant Agent to the Secret Service of the American Government in Paris; a specialist on forgery.

He got very confused by defence's cross examination of his evidence. At one point he even said: 'We are getting confused here with roles and missions. My mission is to assist; not to conduct investigations.' Yet he later admitted that

his 'mission' was to provide evidence that forged notes might be from specific presses or persons.

Later that day Stuart Christie gave evidence. Under questioning he claimed that the so-called bills were to be used in a demonstration in Spain. He said that there were precedents in bank advertising and such that would provide instances of the reproductions of 'marks, words and devices' which had not been prosecuted with the full weight of the law. Prosecuting counsel, appropriately named Mr. Buzzard, then asked if Christie had ever heard of the Chandler case: humorous references were made to it in the course of the proceedings by both counsels. Stuart said that he regarded it as totally farcical.

The jury then retired at the judge's request (one Christmas Humphreys, QC, of Buddhist fame). Then ensued an extraordinary wrangle between the counsel for the defence, Keith McHale, and the judge. It emerged that McHale was not to be allowed to address the jury on ANY POINT WHATSOEVER. Anything he raised was ruled out of order as inadmissible in law. He fussed and fumed and ended up by pleading with the judge on the grounds that when the case came up for appeal he would look bad. The judge took pity on him (though not on Christie) and said, 'Very well, Mr. McHale, you have gone to the limit; you are here refused any defence. I don't think you can help any further.'

The judge, on the return of the jury, then made a remarkable speech. He told the jury that he alone would be concerned with the political aspects of the case. They should bear in mind that cases of this kind were commonly 'tainted with politics', which were irrelevant to 'the cold, calm, dispassionate atmosphere of an English court.' He added that the judge may permit politics to enter his mind while sentencing but the jury may not. 'What's the excuse? He has none. Your task is simple, members of the jury.'

Detective-Sergeant Ferguson then entered the box to inform the assembled company that Christie had served three years in Spain for terrorist activities. The jury appeared unmoved but the judge was thrilled to hear that Stuart had a solid job as a gas converter, starting soon. This weighed heavily with the QC and the verdict was 'guilty'; two years bound over in the sum of £250. Judge Humphreys ended by saying, 'we are living in a country where we are proud of our freedom'. Like hell.

AUDREY BLACKBURN.

tralised control and justifying its own existence by maintaining some degree of external conflict which is equally kept under control for its own safety.

The fact that these super-states, for their own purposes, give themselves different labels and pretend to be motivated by different principles, is a simple device which has deluded millions of simple people, including Marxists, for, we should have thought, far too long. Only anarchists have had the key to this device, for we are the only social revolutionaries who have, first and foremost, analysed the power game.

When you break down your social and economic systems without regard for their labels, whether they are called democracy or communism or fascism or whatever, you find that in fact all they are is a series of comparable devices for maintaining power over people by those who are interested in the pathological business of governing others. The ambition of the free enterprise businessman does not stop when he has achieved security for himself and his family. By the time that happy state has been achieved, he is caught up in the power game, just as your 'normal' politician is very soon after he has entered politics, ostensibly to look after the interests of his constituents.

Marx analysed capitalist economics brilliantly, but gave a tragic wrong turn to the revolutionary movement of his time when he linked revolution with the achievement of state power. He saw the corrupting influence of the profit motive, but ignored the corrupting influence of the power motive. But there is no excuse for anyone ignoring this today. The two biggest monsters who have achieved power in our century—Stalin and Hitler—were both of humble origins (with religious backgrounds!) who sought no great financial reward for themselves, but who slaughtered millions to justify and hang on to their own power.

The sheer scale and complexity of power structures today; the technical resources and personnel necessary for the efficient operation of the modern state is such that dictators are becoming old-fashioned.

Who can follow Franco and de Gaulle? Salazar, please God, is almost gone. Tito won't last much longer, and then Europe will be virtually without any dictators in the old-fashioned sense. A military junta, maybe, as in Greece, but for your actual dictators we shall have to look to the smaller republics of South America and newly 'liberated' African or Asian states. And even they, personally, will wither away.

Dictatorship today has to be operated by the apparatus. The faceless 'apparatchik' of the civil service, the bureaucracy, the secret police, the nationalised industrial board, the MPs meeting in committee, the Senators in smoke-filled rooms, the spies and narks and Permanent Under-Secretaries of State. And behind them all, ready to defend the apparatus—the Army and Navy and Air Force and the Special Security Forces and the Police.

The idea, fundamental to all variations of Marxist, that this collection of dehumanised psychopaths can be taken over for the purpose of making a libertarian revolution is laughable. Any rank-and-filer who can even think in these terms is already to that extent corrupted by the thought of power, and just by giving credence to this specious

rubbish helps to maintain the brutal apparatus that will crush him.

The State is our enemy. This simple truth, so clearly seen a hundred years ago by Bakunin, and by anarchists ever since, is now being recognised by greater and greater numbers of young people. The dead hand of the apparatus—in the factory and the university alike—is the factor which stifles spontaneity and creativity, defends exploitation, crushes freedom, breeds hate not love, prevents us from living as we should live.

The State is being rumbled. The one thing which analysts of the May Days in France, the growing revolt in America, Czechoslovakian resistance, student unrest around the world, drug-taking and so on, are agreed upon is that these are all aspects of the revolt against authority.

We want to be free. In every country the State shows itself to be the great barrier to freedom; its face as ugly in Chicago as in Prague.

In Britain our kid-gloved State has yet to be challenged. When we challenge it we shall see that its face is as ugly as in Moscow or Madrid. The State is the State. It is the enemy of every freedom fighter everywhere.

P.S.

PRINTWORKERS MUST DECIDE!

IT TOOK *The Economist*, dated September 7, to indicate the ramifications of the Society of Lithographic Artists, Designers, Engravers and Process Workers (SLADE) dispute. In a general article on Fleet Street it pointed out that Fleet Street had to report the story of the year, Czechoslovakia, without a single news picture because of SLADE's dispute, but the papers kept printing. The article also makes the very telling point: 'A few years ago, dismissal of even a few apprentices would have stopped every national newspaper, far less the sacking of an entire section of the production staff' (SLADE). 'Times have changed', says

The Economist, and the old moneybags journal has never spoken a truer word.

SLADE found that not only was it very cold being 'out on a limb' but bloody lonely, because the majority of printworkers were carrying on as if nothing had happened. Quite frankly the Newspaper Publishers Association (NPA) has Fleet Street printworkers mesmerised by threatened closures of the *Sketch*, *Mail*, *Sun* and *Telegraph*. These threatened closures have been held over the heads of printworkers for the last few years. The newspaper labour force is being rationalised to the 'enth' degree, and still the blackmail

Continued on page 2

Art and
Anarchy
discussed in
ANARCHY 91

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Biafran Interview

THE AFRICAN AUTHOR Chinua Achebe, with several interesting books to his credit, arrived in Sweden at the end of March for the promotion of one of his books that has been translated into Swedish. Mr. Achebe also works for the Biafra information service and confesses to be on a kind of propaganda tour of Europe presumably to sell Biafra independence to a European public. I happened to attend the press conference

Scene: A room in Bonniers publishing buildings in Stockholm. There were cocktails and cigarettes served in a very small room. A collection of journalists were dressed in the polite clothes of conversation. I felt I was intruding on a private party. Many looked like figures out of an Oscar Wilde play, with all the women's magazines represented in full force, dressed above the knees, looking like birds of paradise pecking olives from some Emperor's silver plates.

I wasn't expecting a barrage of investigating sharp political questions from the great democratic Swedish press who are probably more used to interviewing the false glamour boys and girls of Hollywood than a man like Chinua Achebe. The questioning was as follows:

H: In view of the fact that Biafra has very large oil deposits, do you think that the workers who will yield these profits will benefit from an 'independent' Biafra?

Achebe: Yes, that's what we are trying to make possible with our break-away.

H: Is Britain giving its support to Biafra in the hope of gaining access to the oil interests there?

Achebe: No, Britain is supporting the federal government.

H: Don't you think that with all these little nationalist states springing up like mushrooms in Africa with their own armies, flags, etc., it will create capitalist rivalries between each state—after all look at the antagonisms between Ghana and Nigeria. How does this situation make for any kind of so-called African unity?

Achebe: This is something I can't know at the moment, we hope this will not be the case, and anyway what do you expect me to do about rivalries between Ghana and Nigeria? African unity is a long way off.

H: When white liberal intellectuals, politicians and journalists tell you that they are against race discrimination, and talk of 'equality', etc., are you inclined to trust them, even though they might be insincere and yet want to speak in the name of Africans?

which Bonniers Press arranged for him on his arrival here. I did send a copy of this interview to Freedom Press around April 2 or 3 from Denmark but I'm not sure if FREEDOM ever received it. However, I'm hoping that this copy gets through and doesn't get 'lost' in the post. I've tried to rewrite this interview in view of the Antony Engurube case now going on in Stockholm. 29.3.68

Achebe: Well, at the moment we can't trust anyone as far as I can see.

H: I'd rather you answer the question, are you inclined to trust them?

Achebe: No, we are not.

H: Within South Africa and Rhodesia there are Swedish immigrants. Would you say they are more tolerant to the negro people than the other white settlers, and if so how is it they can remain there without getting deported?

Achebe: South Africa and Rhodesia are a long way off and I don't know anything about Swedish attitudes as I've only just arrived here.

Another African voice softly: Africans not Negroes.

H: I apologise for using the word negro, it's the word Swedes use for Africans.

Swedish journalist: What would you say your definition of a negro is, Mr. Achebe?

Achebe: Anyone with a black skin.

H: You tell us about the corrupt politicians in the federal government—don't you think that all politicians are corrupt when carrying on the so-called 'business' of government?

Achebe: Well, this is what I have been saying, we want to put an end to this sort of thing.

H: Do you think with Biafran independence, corruption among politicians there will cease?

Achebe: Yes, I think so, at least I hope so.

H: But you are not sure?

Achebe: How can I be sure about anything, I'm not God.

H: Isn't it a fact that a very large percentage of the Ibo tribe are Roman Catholics, as much as say 80 per cent?

Achebe: Yes, we have a very large Catholic population. I can't say the percentage, but it is very large.

H: With a big amount of corruption within an African state and another nationalist group wanting to create a state within a state, don't you think there is just as much chance of totalitarianism?

Achebe: I'm not sure that this is the case, I didn't know this, is this true?

Swedish journalist: What can we in

Sweden do to help you down there?

Achebe: Send some correspondents and reporters to Biafra to inform your public what is happening, get some first-hand information. The reason why no news is coming through is because it's being stifled and smothered by the English BBC and English news agencies. (The interview took place in April—Ed.) That's why you're getting no news about our struggle for independence.

H: Of course you know that if Sweden sends journalists to Biafra you will get many conflicting reports. Each newspaper has its own political policy and will try to present their 'facts' in a different way. After all the servants of the press are at the mercy of their papers policy and the politicians behind the press.

Achebe: Yes, but we can at least try, some news will come out, what

Printworkers Must Decide

Continued from page 1

The question which has to be posed is 'When do the victims cry halt to the blackmail?' It has been reported so many times that the *Sketch*, *Mail*, *Sun* and *Telegraph* are losing money, are we then to believe that the owners of these newspapers are philanthropists or, nearer to the point, masochists because they continue to publish? Newspaper proprietors would like their papers to make a profit or break even but there is more in owning a newspaper than just a financial return, there is power, prestige and political influence, and such things bring their own rewards plus finance through other channels.

Printworkers have now to face the issue fair and square. In the very near future many of them will be balloting on a new wage agreement which DOES NOT include the previously enjoyed sliding scale cost of living (COL) arrangement. To accept such an agreement is suicide, even though it is only for two years. The official Index of Retail Prices has moved to a record

H: Because Nigeria has been colonised by the British isn't there a tendency to do things in the British way still, isn't it a fact that the two opposing military leaders both in Biafra and the federal government were schooled in England in the art of warfare?

(Laughter from a Swedish journalist.) Achebe: Yes, this is true. A colony is bound to be influenced by its rulers in a sense. (End of interview.)

It's amazing that this question makes the servants of the 'free' press laugh. What a situation. Africans being trained to use white man's weapons of destruction to destroy each other. Going back to Africa and killing their own brothers and sisters whatever their tribe may be.

Anyway, if the Swedish capitalist press are so interested in freedom for the African workers, why have they been so silent about the case of Antony Engurube? Whilst Sweden's newspapers were talking about freedom for the Czech peoples, this African was beaten up and thrown into jail for using his right of so-called 'free' speech.*

*Details of this very disturbing case will be printed in next week's FREEDOM.

high, and there is NOTHING whatsoever to indicate that it will drop. Obviously such a state of affairs means that any wage increase, unless it is fantastically high, will be swallowed up by the rising cost of living in a matter of months. One does not need a degree in economics to appreciate that fact, the hole in one's pocket is sufficient.

The NPA, with the support of the Government, are refusing point blank to continue the COL arrangement, therefore the issue is sharp and crystal clear—any proposed agreement *Without COL Must Be Rejected*. The consequences of such an action could mean a 'shut down' in Fleet Street. It is a well-known fact that vast changes will take place in the method of producing and publishing newspapers within the next few years, which could in turn mean increased rationalization of labour. If printworkers do not make a stand now, the employers having seized the initiative, will dictate their own terms for ever more.

BILL CHRISTOPHER.

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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.
- FENCH'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 (Acre 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. 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.
- BERMINGHAM 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 Pendarves Street, Beacon, Camborne. 7.30 p.m. Visiting comrades very welcome.
- CROYDON LIBERTARIANS. Meetings every 2nd Friday of each month. Laurens and Celia Oter, 35 Natal Road, Thornton Heath (LIV 7546).
- EDGWARE PEACE ACTION GROUP. Contact: Melvyn Estrin, 84 Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middx.
- HERTS. Contact either Stuart Mitchell at South View, Potters Heath Lane, Potters Bar, Welwyn, Herts OR Jeff Cloves, 46 Hughendon Road Marshwick, St. Albans, Herts.

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, Gosport'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, Methy, 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.

during the vacation. Can we have correct addresses as soon as possible.

LIBERTARIAN STUDENTS FEDERATION

Contact address: Keith Nathan, 138 Pennymead, Harlow.

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-(TREASON. Australian Anarchist, c/o Melbourne University Union or Paddy Evans, c/o the same.

MELBOURNE. Get in touch with Bob Hopkins and Margie Rojo, P.O. Box 192, Carlton South 3053. Public meetings at Yarra Bank, Melbourne.

DANISH ANARCHIST FEDERATION. Gøthager, 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 Torvory Drive, Weston, Ontario, Canada. Weekly meetings.

BELGIUM: LIEGE. Provos, c/o Jacques Charlier, 11 Avenue de la Laiterie, Sclécin-Liege, Belgium.

PROPOSED GROUPS

MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY. Contact Mike Don or Bill Jamieson, 14 Victoria Road, Manchester 14.

Domination by Exiles?

The conference was held in the local Opera House, and delegates and observers from many countries were present. It was said that there were 100 delegates and 80 observers, but this is hard to determine since some were completely fictitious. A Portuguese delegate, for instance, had not been in that country for some fifty years; the Spanish had not been in the country they allegedly represented for thirty years. What came out in the conference, above all, were two things: one, a challenging of the 'exile' dominance of the international movement since for so long it had been assumed individual figures really represented illegal movements which had long since forgotten their existence; two, a showdown between what was in fact advanced liberalism, on the one hand, and revolutionary anarchism on the other. The advanced liberalism that retains anarchism as a mere ticket was unable to rouse any enthusiasm. The television cameramen knew what they were about when they crowded round the revolutionary spokesmen to speak on French, Italian and German TV.*

The best report appeared in *Le Monde*. *The Times*, though somewhat inaccurate, was not so bad as the *Guardian*, which published a completely misleading agency report, in order to bolster up the cliché that this was a 'war of the ages' which it undoubtedly was not. (The decision to send Christie as British delegate was a last minute one by the London international secretariat, and the question of age had nothing to do with it. According to the *Guardian*, however, he was a 'Youth Delegate' and they declined to publish a correction.)

It is hard for the bourgeois press to understand what is going on at an anarchist conference. In their reports they use the politely condescending but sarcastic tones which gentlemen of their breeding use when addressing the lower orders; like Old Etonians in a whorehouse, they contrast the banality of their surroundings with their lurid expectations, and comment dryly upon the respectability of the hired hall or the dress of the delegates.

The International Anarchist Congress Carrara 1968

It is pleasant in its way to face the reporters and TV cameras instead of speaking as usual to deserted street corners; but at least at the street corner one is not faced with the trained journalist, who is far from being educated up to the level of the public, and whose comments, if not misleading, are irrelevant.

It is a sober comment of fact, not mere revolutionary rhetoric, that the only language these gentlemen understand is that of the gun; when the shooting starts they look through their old reports with an air of surprise, like the Austrian journalist whose sole story from the famous CNT Congress of Saragossa was the resolution on whether nudism was possible in a free society; but who later found, with a certain dramatic suddenness, that they were the only people fighting fascism while his own country slipped away into the wilderness one night.

Speeches

The Congress opened with a speech by Marzocchi (Italian Federation) on the Saturday morning. He spoke on Czechoslovakia and Vietnam, and on the role of the Anarchist movement. The meeting reopened in the afternoon when Joyeux (France), an Italian delegate, a Bulgarian exile and representatives from Germany and Japan took the rostrum. A report was given by the Preparatory Commission, after which the AFB delegate, Stuart Christie, asked to give our point of view before the Congress opened.

He made it clear that he was not speaking merely from the point of view of British comrades but on behalf of revolutionary anarchists generally. The AFB sent its fraternal greetings to the Congress, to those comrades who have been invited and those who had been excluded. As anarchists, we were opposed to speech-making and parliamentary procedure. It was for us far more important to exchange experiences, opinions and ideas in order to build a truly effective international organisation.

We felt that the spirit in which this Congress had been called is not the true spirit of anarchism. We noted with regret that some of the most militant anarchist groups and organisations were not represented, e.g. the FIJL, Noir & Rouge, 22nd March Group, Federation Locale de Paris. We therefore proposed that this Congress be declared open to all observers from all anarchist organisations and groups be they affiliated or not, to 'national federations'. Our movement should not be divided under racial or national bases. We absolutely refused to accept these bourgeois concepts which destroy the roots of international revolutionary solidarity.

We did not want, he went on, to play any part in an international bureau that could only hold up communications between various international bodies, as we have already seen in the calling of this Congress. We are enthusiastically for the example of the Paris workers and students and we are attempting to encourage similar trends in Great Britain. We must however examine the success and failure of our French comrades dispassionately if we are to be successful in bringing about an international social revolution. The British movement regarded it as essential that the movement be built up from the grass roots and that the first task of every organisation and group is to build itself up. We believed that fictitious organisations, some of whom were represented here today, or invented solely for the purpose of the Congress, were worse than useless. They were extremely dangerous. He gave as example the FAI, as represented by ex-Minister Federica Montseny, and the

so-called Bulgarian Federation, as represented by Balkanski.

After his speech, Failla (Italy) asked that a vote be taken by the conference.

He was answered by another delegate from the Italian Federation, saying he was against a vote being taken, as the constitution of the Congress had been decided on beforehand by the Preparatory Commission. Marzocchi then went on to propose a motion condemning aggression in Czechoslovakia and Vietnam: Christie got up again and demanded the dais, saying we were opposed to any motion of this nature as we were completely powerless to enforce it. By stooping to such methods we merely imitated the procedure of Harold Wilson and similar politicians. It was up to anarchists, surely, to show their disgust and contempt for military aggression by revolutionary direct action.

Balkanski ran to the platform and screamed 'Provocateur, fascist', etc.—by this time most of the delegates began to realise what the two trends in the Congress were. A vote was taken from which the Swiss, Dutch, German and British delegates abstained; the motion was carried with the French, Italian and exile movements acting in concert. It became clear that these were the delegations from movements with a fossilised bureaucracy, determined to run a conference on parliamentary lines, and to deny a hearing to 'dissident' factions among the French, Italians and exiles.

The meeting was then declared open to the press, TV and public, and went on over Saturday and Sunday. It had been agreed by the London Federation months before, acting on international relations as decided by our last British conference, that anyone excluded from the conference could enter as a British delegate. Meltzer and Walsh, writing to the Preparatory Commission, had made it clear that so far as we were concerned, they could all be 'British in exile'—this had been regarded as our 'English sense of humour' as Malouvier put it, but we made it clear we were against the pre-conceived idea of nationality and race in which France had three 'national federations' including the bureaucratically-dominated FAI and the fictitious 'Bulgarian in exile'.

Cohn-Bendit therefore began to speak as a 'British observer'. (His speech was distorted by the press.) He interrupted the Mexican delegate, who had given a report allegedly by the Cuban anarchists. In fact, this was not the real anarchist movement; it was an exile group in Miami strongly suspected of being under American domination, and associated with neo-fascist elements. Cohn-Bendit pointed out that this was obviously not the Cuban anarchist movement; he did

THE Anarchist Congress planned by the Preparatory Commission in Paris was held on August 31 and following days in Carrara. Carrara is a marble quarrying town, with old anarchist traditions going back to the International. It is said that a third of the population are anarchist; their sympathies are certainly anarchistic, much as those in Welsh mining towns are socialistic or communist, though it would be a mistake to assume that as a result they are revolutionary. The ideas have gained an influence beyond the degree of militancy existing, and Carrara itself is an interesting example of how mere 'propaganda' on its own, however necessary, however effective, can in the end fail to be successful when it becomes part of the daily routine rather than an incentive to action.

not support Castro, on the contrary he pointed out that the majority of the real Cuban anarchist movement was still there in Cuba fighting against Castro's dictatorship. They were not in Miami living upon American handouts.

Joyeux (France) took the platform and launched into a demagogic invective against 'adventurists' in general and Cohn-Bendit in particular. It was rather a display by Joyeux of his complete lack of understanding of anarchism. He denounced those who were 'bastardising' anarchism by associating with Marxists. Cohn-Bendit returned to explain his position. This had been made clear already by Lebel (Switzerland). We were against American and Soviet Imperialism; and it was the moment when we should demonstrate our solidarity not just morally but by facts with the Negro revolutionaries. The worst thing that could happen to anarchism would be to become an institution. Revolutionary institutions acted as a brake upon revolution. We had to break with institutionalism and to bring forward the idea of spontaneous organisation.

This was reaffirmed by Christie, who asked how anyone could condemn Cohn-Bendit in the name of 'purity' for associating with revolutionary Marxist groups in the fight against capitalism; when Montseny had associated with the CP, Liberals, Catholics and what else in order to bolster up capitalism against the workers.

These arguments however did not prevail against the phalanx of delegates who had already been represented on the Preparatory Commission who wanted a Federation of Federations to be created, and who insisted that the constitution of the Congress was already worked out. In the meantime long discussions went on amongst the revolutionary wing outside the Congress; so far as we could see, the Congress only proposed to read out reports of the historical past, and vastly magnified and glorified accounts of the importance of the movement in various countries which simply were not true and largely represented the dreams of exiles. Accordingly, on the Monday, shortly after the Congress opened, when the agenda was discussed with the usual parliamentary procedure moving from one point to another, Christie rose to state that we regarded the set-up as farcical, and that with the vital and dynamic elements absent we were withdrawing. The Swiss delegate made a similar speech and a second Swiss delegate made a speech from Noir & Rouge, saying that the anarchist international should be something in accord with the facts of the world revolutionary movement. It could only be achieved in action, and in fact had been so amongst many Spanish, Italian, French and English comrades for many years; but one did not need this sort of a conference where one was obliged to divide nationally. We should unite on bases of unity of action and not on the accidents of geography. That is why they condemned the notion of a national movement in exile, unable to carry on the struggle in the land where it is living. We could hardly tolerate a situation where pro-Yankee Cubans and ex-Ministers like Montseny were included, and comrades who were alleged to be outside the pale of organisation were excluded. As anarchists we were in solidarity with the action of the FIJL in Spain, the British participation in the Rank & File Movement, of propaganda by deed and direct action all over the world. We are against an anarchism harking back to Proudhon, with bureaucrats of the CNT and USI reproducing old hierarchical structures in the movement. Our aim is not the struggle for anarchism as an abstract ideal but a revolutionary movement with the most libertarian character possible. That is why we prefer to work with large numbers of revolutionaries some of whom might not bear our anarchistic label, rather than with certain bureaucrats for whom the only thing that made them anarchists was the use of the label itself.

Congress as such

Too much could not be expected of the international conference; nor, so far as we in London were concerned, was it. The international movement has in fact fought a rearguard action for years, faced with the fact of the conquest of the proletariat by the social-democratic movement on the one hand, and by Marxism, of the peasantry, despite its own inclinations, on the other. Against its intention of being the voice of the people, anarchism became a mere voice of protest.

Then too there was an internal problem; the residue of a past, larger and broader movement. In years to come here, when the hippy happenings are all forgotten, aged dropouts in yellowing flower-suits will totter along the sea front and claim to be the real hippies, the only hippies, ever young, ever the beautiful people... but the years will have taken their toll and nobody will need them or feed them when they're sixty-four. After all old revolutionary movements there is always a residue of the old faithful who have come to regard themselves an establishment; but only to those accepting press clichés is this a sign of the 'age war'. Within the Spanish movement, for instance, the reformist-authoritarian bureaucracy is headed by Federica Montseny, and criticised by all the young Spanish Anarchists, but also by all those who were revolutionary and opposed Montseny's collaboration in the

Republican Government a third of a century ago.

A clique within the Latin movements has tried to establish a bureaucracy; it is significant that it applies to the French, Italian and Spanish movements because these were strong before the First World War. They have a natural residue of tired former militants which does not apply in those countries which had no great strength before the First World War and whose 'veterans' of today date back to the thirties. But again this is not a generation problem. There are those who are revolutionaries; who go on being such and get out. There are a few who are bureaucrats; they cease to be active but wish to carry on, and the only reason can be because of some small office with some glory. Hence the divisions in the French, Italian and Spanish movements. Hence the reason the British movement stated categorically that it considered the day of national federations was over; that it was absurd to maintain racial and national barriers; that any dissidents in France or Italy could call themselves British and go as our delegates. If in France there could be three national delegations (French, Spanish-in-exile, and the almost mythical Bulgarian-in-exile), we were quite prepared to grant British nationality (if any bureaucrat wished it) upon anyone excluded by 'their own' national federation.

Was the Congress a Failure?

There had all along been a reluctance on the part of the AFB to commit itself on the question of the conference because much of what had happened had been foreseen. However we felt it was useful that we had sent a delegate, for the Congress was not a complete failure. For many years within the international anarchist movement generally, and certainly in the IWMA as far as it still exists, that a bureaucratic phalanx existing to dominate international congresses and having no real existence within their countries, received no criticism, and it was felt we should even pretend it did not exist. It was the hangover from the days of the 'great thinkers' on whom the mantle descended. Any individual could get up and pretend to be representative of a vast, non-existent movement. We helped to clear the air internationally. Within the bungalows at the beach where the delegates were housed, a great discussion went on among the people at the conference. An enormous amount of support was found for our idea that a revolutionary movement should be based upon action, not geography; that common ideas and methods of struggle should unite us; strategy and plans were

talked over. Each country has something of its own to contribute to a plan for revolutionary success; for instance, the idea of the shop stewards' movement is virtually unknown on the Continent.

This marked a cleavage within the international movement; although at the end of the Congress the delegates who had walked out returned to show they were still in solidarity with the majority of delegates in the hall, who had not already received clear viewpoints from their instructing bodies. An International Federation was formed on the lines already envisaged by the Preparatory Commission which simply wanted something to show to enable them to put up the fiction of being representative of something more than themselves. But the cleavage was highly necessary. It was not a 'War of the Ages' as the press generally presented it, but a division between those who wanted an institutionalised adherence to a doctrine; and those who wanted freedom of revolutionary action. Such a cleavage has always been present in the international movement, but it has not always been recognised. It is often forgotten that on such subjects we have had a far greater

opportunity for understanding in view of an unbroken and unbridled public discussion of ideas and tactics for eighty years. Some Italians believed there was no difference between attacking bureaucracy and attacking all organisation as such! They had reinstated a bureaucracy. All bureaucracies become fossilised as they get older; that is the nature of institutionalism. But not everyone becomes a bureaucrat. The problems of the international anarchist movement are not specifically those we have to face in

this country; though here too there is the need to make a sharp division between the advanced liberal—who wishes to adjust himself to society as it exists, in a freer fashion—and the revolutionary, who wishes to change society. If we are capable of creating the nucleus of a revolutionary anarchist movement with grass roots, we can think in terms of international action.

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT AFB.

FOOTNOTES ON CARRARA

Besides the gathering of Anarchists, one can mention that the biggest international collection of fuzz outside an Interpol conference turned up. Swiss, Italian, French secret police jostled in the bars in the town, and around the bungalows where the delegates were staying; the Commissar of Police for Carrara came out in the open and asked Cohn-Bendit for his autograph!—Dany, who had paid for most of the food out of his

advance royalties on his German book, obliged in exchange for the Commissar paying for the wine. There were no British cops, however.

Exceptional hospitality from local Anarchists was also received; and incidentally a fascist who tried to plant a bomb in the Congress was found out and considerably roughed up by the local quarrymen.

IMPOSED UNANIMITY, controlled discussions, empty cries of friendship are not substitutes for critical analyses of the forces of capitalism and the means and strategy of combating them. This is part of the communiqué of July 30 signed by scores of organisations of the New Left and Socialist 'heretics' at the IXth World Youth Festival in Sofia. By the second day the anti-authoritarian left had experienced the full extent of the manipulation in favour of the orthodox views of European Communism. The biggest question mark was, and still is, what the hell did the Bulgarians think they were up to? Did they really hope to present a front of youthful 'Solidarity, Peace and Friendship' to the world? The student situation in the West today bears little resemblance to that of 1962 when the last World Youth Festival was held, in Helsinki. If the International Preparatory Committee had made the most cursory study of the student situation over the last few years, they would have seen that shoving paternalism down our throats only serves to radicalize and unite us.

Thus by the end of the Festival an ultra-left 'Add the Fourth Motto Movement' had emerged combining such disparate elements as the Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund (SDS), Yugoslav and Czech students, our own Young Liberals, and other organisations from dozens of delegations. The official Festival newspaper continued to come out with such banal headlines as 'The Youth of the World are (sic) Solid', when the only cement was opposition to American intervention in Vietnam.

Events in France, the German Federal Republic, and Czechoslovakia this year had obviously made the Bulgarian authorities very nervous about the Festival, and all young people without proper delegation credentials, especially if they didn't wear dark suits, short

ANOTHER CONGRESS

Sofia: the Sham Solidarity

hair, and nice white shirts, were to be kept out of the country. Unfortunately, very few, if any, of the delegates were provided with credentials before they left for the Festival, so that large numbers of actual delegates, travelling independently to Sofia, were turned back at the frontier. Significantly, these included the official delegates of l'Union Nationale des Etudiants de France (UNEF), a group of Czechs who had walked from Prague, and many Americans. The present writer has direct evidence of this, as he encountered many of these at the Dimitrovgrad road and rail checkpoints. Apparently, beards were considered a good index of dangerous opinions!

The rift within the British delegation with the conservative Young Communist League on one side, and the Young Liberals and independent-minded on the other, became plain as early as the opening parade, when the latter wished to fly the Cuban flag but were prevented from doing so by the former. The Yugoslav and Czech delegations in their colourful and chaotic groups were in complete contrast with the stiff uniformed ranks of the other East European countries. Enthusiastic chants of 'Dubcek! Dubcek!' arose from several quarters in the new Levski Stadium. There were other headaches for Moscow, however. A large number of young East Germans somehow entered Sofia, and wanted no contact with their own country's delegation. Many were put up 'illegally' in other delegations' build-

ings including our own. Also, some of the Hungarian and Rumanian students took part in the unofficial teach-ins of the Fourth Motto movement.

Strict security arrangements were made about the Czechs. They were housed in the Festival village of Durvenitsa, far away from the other East European delegations, to avoid contamination, and visitors were barred from the building. We succeeded in meeting some of the students at night and found out that many Czechs were still being kept at the frontier and that a lorry-load of exhibition equipment, duplicating apparatus and copies of the Action Programme had been stolen by the border authorities. Some broadsheets of the Union of University Students had been brought in unnoticed. One of them, 'What Are the Aims of Czech and Slovak Students?' included the following:

... we don't forget that our duty is to rank ourselves to the left of [the liberalizing] process, to be consistent socialists and democrats, to establish conditions under which students of Czechoslovakia, after years of silence, become the real political power in our life... we understand the fight of leftist students in the West and we should like to unite our strength with theirs for the ideas of socialism should penetrate in these countries. *We wish to support students and youth in the socialist countries of Europe in their creative efforts.* (My italics.) This last is particularly interesting if one reads between the lines.

On the second day of the Festival the

German SDS and many other groups had an unofficial demonstration in front of the American Embassy in Sofia. This was, in fact, an event of great significance, as it was a direct confrontation between the New Left and established Socialism on the latter's own territory. Over forty countries were represented in the demo, including Latin Americans, Czechs and Hungarians. The Bulgarian police had thoroughly blockaded the road past the Embassy, so the demonstrators contented themselves with marching, arms linked, round the group of buildings near the Embassy, shouting revolutionary slogans.

The SDS organized a teach-in which was rapidly broken up by a Bulgarian crowd which had gathered 'spontaneously in sympathy' with the demonstration. The front row of this group were large tough-looking men in dark suits. A gun-belt was observed on one of them during a scuffle with an Iranian who was translating the proceedings into Russian for the benefit of Sofia's citizens. These men, who frequently appeared as if from nowhere during our teach-ins, became known sarcastically as 'Spontaneous Bulgarian Workers' (SBWs). Besides these men, it seemed that one man in ten was a uniformed policeman. We were told that, for the Festival, all the whores were moved out, and many country police brought in.

On July 31 Karl Dietrich Wolff, President of the SDS, read out a communiqué signed by many organizations deploring the manipulation of the Festival, including the bad treatment of groups like the French UNEF and the Iranian Students Union (CISNU) who were leaving in protest. Later that day a speaker from the Greek Lambrakis Youth (a rival group to the orthodox communists) was physically attacked by SBWs when he tried to speak at a meeting 'in solidarity with the people and youth of Greece'. That evening a special policy meeting of the anti-authoritarians was held in the West German delegation building under a state of siege by SBWs. (A group of the British delegation, including the present writer, had to enter like burglars by ladder through a cellar.)

An ugly incident occurred outside the Chinese Embassy when some students, including K. D. Wolff, came out with Chinese pamphlets. Members of the Western Press filming the confiscation of these pamphlets were beaten up and had their cameras smashed by SBWs.

On several occasions we were told that entry to the so-called 'Free Tribunes' on student and youth politics was by tickets only, but tickets were not available. Despite many empty seats we were not allowed in. However, Poles, Russians, etc., were let in without fuss.

K. D. Wolff complained about manipulation of the speakers' lists at these discussions, which prompted a Bulgarian delegate to accuse Wolff and the SDS of fascism. As Wolff approached the

platform to answer this slander he was attacked by a group of SBWs, had his glasses broken, and was dragged from the hall. The Czechs issued a strongly-worded protest about this and other incidents, while the Bulgars refused to apologise.

The final violation of open discussion occurred at the major teach-in on 'Tactics and Strategy against Imperialism' organised by the Fourth Motto Movement (as we had now become). This was by far the most interesting political event of the Festival. The International Preparatory Committee allowed us the use of one of the University lecture halls with facilities for simultaneous translations, and we provided our own interpreters. The atmosphere was extremely tense, with a large number of SBWs present. Moscow's opportunist foreign policy (e.g. aid to the Shah of Persia) was attacked, *Pravda* accused of printing lies, and China's Cultural Revolution lauded. These ideas were countered by Russian and Bulgarian speakers. Many other important issues were discussed, including Black Power and the rôle of the student class in 'educating' the workers, and so forth.

A praesidium of five had been elected at the beginning and it was agreed that the teach-in could continue as long as was desired by the majority. At 1.30 a.m., however, after six hours, the Bulgar on the praesidium came down to the microphone and announced that the meeting was closed, without consulting the rest of the praesidium. When his speech was translated a vote was taken which clearly showed that we were in favour of continuing. The Bulgar, nonetheless, persisted in his demand, while SBWs spread round the room cat-calling, clapping and banging the tables. The microphones were cut off. In spite of this, the British delegate (Chris Gilmore of the Radical Student Alliance and a Communist) furiously denounced the Bulgars for this 'undemocratic' behaviour. A Yugoslav student followed suit. The Yugoslav students had voted previously to walk out of the Festival; but the delegation as a whole had decided to remain, while publishing the fiercest and most specific criticisms of the Festival, which showed that 'the attainment of the goals of the 9th World Festival is seriously hindered, and in certain instances even prevented, as a consequence of the effort to impose upon the Festival certain concepts of a narrow ideological and sectarian unity'.

We voted to 'close the teach-in under great protest'. It was said that the obstruction by the Bulgars was to prevent a speech by the Czech representative, but this has not been substantiated. In any event it had an unforeseen effect on those present (even some orthodox communists) who were sickened by this manifestation of repressive bureaucratic paternalism. Wolff said to me next day: 'There will be no more festivals'. He was referring to festivals of this type. What about a libertarian Fourth Motto conference?

Sofia August 1968 P.R.A.S.

*The Cubans had suggested the addition of the slogan 'Revolutionary Struggle' to the official Festival ones of 'Solidarity, Peace and Friendship'. This had been ignored. The Cubans refused to participate.

WILLIAM MORRIS LIVES!

WILLIAM MORRIS is for some people an anachronism, a sentimentalist, a utopian, a bore, a fool, a joke, a fake, and so on—just as he was in his own lifetime. For others he is now—as he also was then—a tragic example of a fine artist and poet who sold his birthright for a pot of message by going into politics and actually becoming a socialist. But for many he is still a great man, still all of a piece, still worth looking at whole; this is especially true of socialists, from the extreme right to the extreme left—social democrats, Communists, Christians and anarchists. For many he is in fact the greatest socialist this country has produced, precisely because he was an artist and poet before and after he became a propagandist, a romantic before and after he became a revolutionary, precisely because he expressed in his life and his work the conviction that socialism meant something more than a mere rearrangement of economic organisation. These will find a new paperback edition of *Three Works* by William Morris particularly valuable, for it contains the trio of imaginative writings expressing his socialist principles—*A Dream of John Ball*, *The Pilgrims of Hope*, and *News from Nowhere*—as well as an interesting introduction by A. L. Morton (Lawrence and Wishart, 10s. 6d.).

All kinds of socialists claim to be heirs of William Morris, but the probe of history must surely award his political legacy to the Communists, as Morton argues, following the studies by Page Arnot (1925) and Edward Thompson (1955). Morris called himself a socialist but also a communist: 'Between complete Socialism and Communism there is no difference whatsoever in my mind.' Moreover, he was an explicit Marxist. He frequently and deliberately acknowledged his debt to Marx, and his own writings are full of clear and definite reflections of Marxist doctrine. When he left the Social-Democratic Federation in 1884 he did not cease to be a Marxist; on the contrary, he broke with Hyndman after consultation with Marx's alter ego, Engels, and in company with Marx's daughter, Eleanor. In 1890 he was forced out of the Socialist League by the anarchists who had taken it over, and in 1894 he explained 'Why I am a Communist' to the readers of the anarchist paper *Liberty*.

But his communism was not orthodox by later standards. He was a Marxist, but he would hardly have been a Leninist, and certainly not a Trotskyist, Stalinist, Maoist, Castroist, and so on. He soon broke with Engels and Eleanor Marx as well as Hyndman because of their parliamentary and conspiratorial tendencies, and he was always as much opposed to dishonest and elitist as to

wouldn't have lasted very long in the Labour Party, but he wouldn't have lasted much longer in the Communist Party. Nor indeed did he last very long with the anarchists, and he always insisted on the necessity of 'laws of some kind—either political laws, instituted by the citizens in public assembly, as of old by folk-moots, or if you will by real councils or parliaments of the people, or by social customs growing up from the experience of society'. Nevertheless, we can at least claim that Morris was very much a libertarian rather than an authoritarian communist, and we shall therefore reject attempts to assimilate him to the Party Line of the last fifty years—though it must be said that Morton's attempt to do so is reasonable and restrained, and is a good introduction to the three works in question. He is after all well known as the author of many books which have followed the Party Line but have been read far beyond it, from *A People's History of England* to *The English Utopia*. He is in fact a good example of what could be called a 'Morris man'—a very English but highly romantic socialist of an eccentric Marxist type—others being Christopher Hill and Edward Thompson.

The three works reprinted in this collection were all written in a hurry for serial publication in Morris's paper, *The Commonweal*, and they represent socialist views of the past, the present, and the future. *A Dream of John Ball* (1886-1887) has Morris travelling back in a dream to the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, joining the Men of Kent and listening to and talking with the ideological leader John Ball. A serious obstacle to modern enjoyment of the story is the mock-medieval language of the dialogue, but once this is overcome there is a convincing impression of the Middle Ages as Morris would have liked it to have been, and there is also a profound analysis of the problems of the revolutionary movement in this country during the last six hundred years—as when his hero ponders

how men fight and lose the battle, and the thing that they fought for comes about in spite of their defeat, and when it comes turns out not to be what they meant, and other men have to fight for what they meant under another name.

The Pilgrims of Hope (1885-1886) is the only one of Morris's many poetic romances which dealt with contemporary life, its hero being an English socialist who fights in the Paris Commune of 1871. The obstacle to modern enjoyment of the poem is this time the emotional Victorian flavour of the verse, and there are also chronological confusions and some intrusive autobiographical echoes. But *The Message of the Meek Wind* is still worth

reading (aloud, like all Morris's poetry), and there is a rare self-portrait of Morris as the man who converts the hero to socialism—the grizzled man' who rose, thickset and short, and dressed in shabby blue... He spoke, were it well, were it ill, as though a message he bore, A word that he could not refrain from many million of men... Of man without a master, and earth without a strife, And every soul rejoicing in the sweet and bitter of life.

News from Nowhere (1890) has Morris travelling forward in a dream to the socialist paradise of the twenty-first century, and discovering how it came about and how it works. It is probably the best known of Morris's works, now that *The Earthly Paradise* is almost forgotten. There is little to say about it which Morton doesn't say very well himself; it is after all one of the most straightforward things Morris wrote, and one of the easiest to read. But it is worth adding that, as Kropotkin pointed out in his obituary of Morris (FREEDOM, November 1896), *News from Nowhere* is 'perhaps the most thoroughly and deeply Anarchistic conception of future society that has ever been written'.

Despite Morris's insistence on the necessity of some kind of government in a community, there is none in his picture of the community he would really have liked to see; despite his quarrel with the anarchists and his repudiation of anarchism, there is no other word for his beautiful dream. 'And if others can see it as I have seen it,' he ended, 'then it may be called a vision rather than a dream.'

Morris said himself that 'the only safe way of reading a utopia is to consider it as the expression of the temperament of its author', and the temperament expressed in these three works is what makes Morris our greatest socialist. It is good to have them in a convenient form, when the Penguin selection, edited by Asa Briggs (1962), which is easy to get hold of, has only extracts from *The Pilgrims of Hope* and *News from Nowhere* and omits *A Dream of John Ball* altogether, and the Nonesuch selection edited by G. D. H. Cole (1934), which includes them all, is difficult to get hold of. They are well worth reading after eighty years, and together they make up the best introduction to the thought of the man who earned this obituary from a Lancashire branch of the Social-Democratic Federation:

Comrade Morris is not dead there is not a Socialist living who believe him dead for he lives in the heart of all true men and women still and will do so to the end of time.

Aims of the MAY DAY COMMITTEE

WE ARE NOT a political party and we don't want to become one. We are not people looking for votes or running for office. We are a committee of rank and file trade unionists and students who are convinced that the attempt to change society by electing Governments has proved a failure.

Governments come and Governments go—but the exploitation of the workers goes on unchanged. We always remain at the bottom of the heap with the rich living well off the profits derived from our labours.

The May Day Committee is convinced that nothing will ever change fundamentally until ordinary people themselves, through their own organisations—trade unions, shop and factory committees, tenants committees, teachers and students committees—dispossess the capitalists, take over society and run it co-operatively, democratically, and without armies, policemen and prisons.

Our primary aim is to persuade people—through meetings and all sorts of propaganda—that such a fundamental change in society is both necessary and possible.

It will mean a great change in outlook—for we have all been brought up to believe that ordinary people are not fit to do such things. We have all been taught to take orders, to rely on politicians, and to leave decision-making to Governments.

The trade unions are ill-fitted for the

great task of reconstructing society. Their job up to now has been to get us a few crumbs from the rich man's table—and today they don't even do that very well! They have accepted the system as such and are, in the main, as bureaucratic and dictatorial as all the other institutions in capitalist society. For our fellow trade unionists we therefore put forward the following ideas:—

1. Complete independence of the trade unions from the State and from all political parties.
2. Action in support of any group of workers who may come into conflict with the Government's wage freeze policy.
3. Rank and file control of the unions. Reduction in the numbers and the powers of trade union officials. No permanent officials. All workers to participate in trade union administration at all levels. Greater autonomy for shop floor organisations with the right to federate with similar organisations for the better prosecution of the common struggle.
4. Against all forms of racialism—for solidarity and brotherhood among all workers against the common enemy—the capitalist system.

If you are interested in helping to forward these ideas contact

The May Day Committee,
29 Love Walk, London, SE 5

WELCOME TO THE CONFERENCE

NOW THAT ANARCHISTS ARE becoming the main opponents of governments, and are used as scapegoats by governmental spokesmen, where such opposition is still embryonic it becomes necessary for those who propagate anarchism to put forward the strongest possible case in defence of our ideas and in furthering our aims. It is no coincidence that de Gaulle, Brezhnev, George Wallace, Hubert Humphrey, George Thomas and Gale of the Police Federation have, within the same month, singled anarchists out for attack. We are dangerous to the State, wherever we are. Where we are only potentially dangerous we are still Authority's Enemy No. 1. Even if the accusations are monstrous, as in the case of the recent Welsh bomb explosion, where Thomas simply put the blame on the anarchists, it is an indication as to who Authority fears most.

In this country 'Freedom' is the only consistent voice of anarchism in the printed word. We have always striven to oppose Authority to the best of our ability. When pressures are great, and anarchists are under attack, our voice and opposition should increase in volume. We take our job seriously, and at times like this we feel that we cannot, through lack of space, give as good as we get.

We feel that there is much good will towards our paper from readers and comrades. We feel that more should be done to help us. We want people to write for us, and sell the paper. There are not enough public meetings. In Glasgow alone, in the past, 750 copies of the paper were sold by one group alone. Now the entire Anarchist Federation of Britain, with its 62 listed branches, sells the pitiful figure of about 500 copies.

We realise that this has come about while there was little interest in anarchism—but this situation has now changed. We do not wish to re-ignite, and readily accept our part of the blame, and point to shortage of space and the difficulty of accommodating the internal affairs of a small movement and the intrigues of bored individuals with the duties of a revolutionary publication.

We have this request to make to the assembled comrades at Liverpool. Help us to increase our sales by at least 5,000 copies. We, on our part, will produce the paper every week and increase the pages to six. Of course we will also increase our editorial content, and to this end we are calling a 'Freedom' Writers' Conference at the beginning of next year.

The AFB Conference has come at just the right time for the movement, which is clearly growing. We think that, whereas it was right in the past to do without a National Secretariat, there is now need for at least Regional Secretariats to be set up. We no longer wish to carry on the work of the AFB, as in the past. The AFB must have a life of its own. The work ahead of us is tremendous. We are prepared to work day and night. We are sure that comrades are willing to do their share.

In order to show comrades what the paper would look like regularly, we have produced this enlarged issue. But this is already straining our resources, and it makes us angry that ONE newspaper seller at ONE railway station sells more copies of ONE evening newspaper than the entire circulation of 'Freedom' from here to Japan.

EDITORS.

Concrete Proposals Wanted

Dear Comrades,

The criticism usually heard of FREEDOM is that it is too much a newsletter for the initiated. Certainly such a thing is neces-

'We will not be intimidated'

THE SIX COMRADES WHO WERE arrested on charges of assault, obstruction and insulting behaviour during a police swoop on a libertarian pub in Hornsey were duly tried and convicted last week at Highgate Magistrates' Court. Fines totalling £90 were imposed.

However this should not deter anyone from pleading 'Not Guilty' following a wrongful arrest (can there be a rightful arrest in this society?). The police were so ludicrous when giving evidence that some of them even blushed themselves. The magistrate chose to ignore the fact that the police wrongly identified one of the accused. When a policeman was asked why the accused had been asked which one of them was Stuart Christie—when in fact he had not been involved in the incident—his amateur but obviously rehearsed denial that he even knew of his existence was so pathetic that even his colleagues squirmed with embarrassment.

It is a fruitful, if costly, experience to opt for trial as it shows the police up for what they are and makes a valuable contribution to the increasing public awareness that the police and those who endorse their corrupt and anti-social actions can neither be respected, trusted nor tolerated.

If the left are now the main target for police interest, taking precedence over the working class or the coloured community, it is our duty to prove that we will not be intimidated.

P.G.

Hold It!

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Estimated Expenses:	
37 weeks at £90:	£3,330
Income: Sales and Subs.:	£2,767
DEFICIT:	£563

PRESS FUND

Oxford: J.R. 3/3; Glasgow: A.M. £1; Wolverhampton: J.K.W.* 2/-; J.L.* 3/-; London, S.W.10: S.W.T. £5; Smethwick: E.W. £2/10/-; Arran: D.G. 10/-; Devon: A.W. 10/-; Toronto: R.K. 7/6; Manchester: R.C. 3/6; Oxford: Anon* 5/-; Hove: H.C. 4/10; Nottingham: H.T. £1; Barnsley: R.M. 10/-; Sevenoaks: B.R. 16/-; Worthing: B.B. 10/-; Reading: R.M. 10/-; Aberdeen: I.M. 3/-; Glasgow: A.J. 1/9; Witney: R.P. 10/-.	
TOTAL:	£14 19 10
Previously Acknowledged:	£588 2 2
1968 Total to Date:	£603 2 0
Deficit B/F:	£563 0 0
TOTAL SURPLUS:	£40 2 0

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

sary and, as the movement develops, will be increasingly important, but a duplicated effort restricted to our own dirty linen, self congratulation, and fratricide, could be more forthright and productive. Anyone interested?

The space gained by this pruning of articles, etc., largely irrelevant to a casual reader (such as letters about the format of FREEDOM!), could be used for more commentary and news items written from an anarchist viewpoint for just such an imaginary being.

Most of the regular features are very good, thanks are due to Nic Walter and Jack Robinson who consistently write intelligent and entertaining articles; the back page has improved considerably of late as more comrades seem to share the burden of writing articles. (I don't want to join the fruitless 'controversy' over front page/back page supremacy, but, is it not possible to print one side upside down so that sellers can feature the one they prefer?). 'Fifth Column' may be controversial to some, but it is usually clear and consistent and, in its way, as enjoyable as the regular pieces by Arthur Moyses—they all make it more of a newspaper.

All criticisms are obviously linked to lack of funds, and it is in rectifying this that all of us who offer our opinions

LETTERS

should apply the bulk of our energy. The Moving and Premises Funds seem to have stuck well below targets, these need to be reached before radical or even moderate changes to boost sales, e.g. regular 8-pagers, more illustrations and photographs, can be made. To this end I suggest groups commit themselves to a fund-raising activity specifically for Free-

Marriage Epidemic

Dear Comrades,

There seems to have been an outbreak of weddings and proposed weddings in this area recently. Amongst those intending are some professed Anarchists and some with attitudes that way. It seems not a desperately important matter but if one greets two friends' announcement with amusement one puts oneself in danger of being called narrow-minded.

What does it matter either way—do you have the right to make fun? There is the obvious answer that participants have to choose between state or church and as libertarians should have nothing to do with either institution. I can see that there are pressures, often family

ones, which could make some go through these. There is, however, another argument against marriage. As Anarchists we are trying to break down all prejudices based on colour, class, etc., not least those against illegitimate children and unmarried mothers. The children of deliberately unmarried parents will stand with those accidental 'children of love'. Some will say that they would bring up their children not to be prejudiced though they, the parents, are married, but, if their parents preach one thing and practise another, will their children respect them?

Finally, I hope that as well as the usual criticism and 'if I was producing FREEDOM' speeches, concrete proposals of help will also be offered at this year's Conference.

Yours fraternally,
Harlow KEITH EDWARDS-NATHAN.

Fraternally,
PETE RAYMOND.

The Committee of 100 is Dead (AND HAS BEEN FOR SOME TIME IN FACT) Long Live Extra-Parliamentary Democracy

THE various Committees of 100 have been virtually non-existent for some time now. All that has remained is an active group in the Midlands and a small group of survivors from the National Committee, who are still very active at Goodwin Street. They are mainly concerned with Biafra and Czechoslovakia. However Peter Cadogan and Brian Green have now launched a new movement. It is for Extra Parliamentary Democracy.

The organisers say that they 'are not interested in the dogmatic elements of pacifism, socialism or anarchism, although all of these positions have, in other respects, contributed significantly to the tradition of thought and action of which we are part'.

They believe that parliamentary democracy is now a farce, and they aim at small-scale, local democracy. They intend to 'start a group in and around Hampstead and Highgate', and invite those with similar ideas to start their own groups and committees wherever they happen to live. The group should be small, no more than 20 to 30. When it reaches its maximum size it should split in two.

The groups are to function non-stop, keeping in touch by telephone and personal calls, with or without formal meetings. The plan is a little vague as to what is actually to be done by these groups, though letters to the local press and the production of local newsletters are advocated. Protest alone is not enough.

A list of questions these groups are to discuss is given. What are we to do with: the army, the police, local government, parliament, the crown, the universities, taxation, prisons, the welfare state, the judiciary, the established church, the schools, etc.?

Although the idea of local initiatives and direct action have always been favoured by anarchists, the ideas put forward by Peter Cadogan and Brian Green seem to lack definiteness. There is a great deal of use of the word 'revolu-

tion', but nothing very practical is suggested. There have been, there still are, indeed there are more than ever before, local anarchist groups in London and provincial cities, and even in the country, which meet to discuss social questions and carry on small campaigns about this and that. Although there is no reason why other movements should not also start such groups, it hardly seems necessary to launch this scheme with a fanfare of trumpets. Without being discouraging, one must point out that none of this is

We unmask Another Plot

WE CAN NOW reveal the presence in every office, shop, warehouse, factory and workshop in Britain of a band of disgruntled people who have sufficient knowledge gained by years of patient study to take over Britain.

These people bear no loyalty to the proprietors of the industries which have made their owners great and wealthy but are only concerned with the work which they come to do, which they see only as a means to support themselves.

However most of them are fully trained to take over the business when the occasion arises, indeed many of them are given full responsibility for the work they do. Is this wise?

On the face of it there seems to be no way to prevent the people who work at a factory from occupying it and carrying on the work. To sack them would defeat the object of the establishment and would

sabotage production. The intimate knowledge which this widespread group have gained of the running of affairs have made a take-over highly possible, if not probable.

Attempts have been made, by those in authority, to automate and eliminate this class of trouble-makers. However it seems unlikely (and uneconomic) that a complete elimination of these people will be possible. It is understood that not only have they succeeded in gaining control (in all but name) but they also have economic power in their dual role as consumers. Scotland Yard is helpless.

Meanwhile these people are freely entering every day establishments of vital production—factories and workshops—and, we are given to understand, fields. What are YOU doing about it?

Wake Up Britain!
JACK SPRATT.

Postage on Inland subscriptions is now increased by 1d. on each copy of FREEDOM and Anarchy, and adds more to our weekly production costs than our finances will bear. All new subscriptions and renewals from now on will therefore be:—

Wake Up Britain!
JACK SPRATT.

Declare your Interest!

THE RUSSIAN invasion of Czechoslovakia and the police terror in Chicago during the Democratic Party convention have this in common: both operations involved the use of massive force to overcome predominantly non-violent opposition; both operations were overwhelmingly successful in their primary objective—and both were major political blunders.

As the tanks rolled into Prague and Daley's Pigs lashed out with their clubs the world watched on television. In Czechoslovakia the prepared justification of the invasion was suppressed by loyal journalists. In Chicago scores of reporters and cameramen were themselves clubbed as they recorded the brutality.

In Britain we are unlikely to see such inefficient public relations. Politicians, the bourgeois press and the police themselves are already softening us up for whatever may happen in London on October 27.

Several MPs have demanded that the demonstration be banned because of the possibility of violence.

Certain newspapers, including *The Times*, have claimed to unravel sinister plots involving small groups of militant extremists who are planning to disrupt communications and law and order while the 6,000 police are dealing with the demonstration. The *Evening News* has warned that dangerous foreign students are likely to come to London disguised as tourists. *The Times* in a leading article has said that there is no right to riot.

The police have been raiding people's homes and offices—looking for Molotov cocktails. And the chairman of the Police Federation has talked of a campaign by a small body of anarchists to discredit the police by provoking them at demonstrations.

Between now and October 27 we can expect more propaganda of this kind. The authorities stand to gain from it in two ways. First some people may be deterred from joining the demonstration if they expect it to be violent. Secondly whatever police violence there is will be presented as essentially defensive.

The chairman of the Police Federation Mr. Reginald Gale is clearly aware of the importance of this second point. 'The only way these people can discredit us is by using violence against the police in the hope they can be made to retaliate.'

Now Mr. Gale knows that the police force is not exactly non-violent. So do we. So do a number of people who have fallen down steps in police stations. But he is obviously right in his assumption that the majority see the police as a peaceful body of men who dislike violence.

Mr. Gale is also right in thinking that anarchists want to discredit the police and that provoking them to violence is an excellent method of doing so.

We do not see the police as guardians of peace, order and liberty. We see them protecting the interests of the ruling class, imposing the regulations of the state, hunting down its enemies. We watch them help to break strikes and carry out evictions; arrest hash smokers and booksellers; and at political demonstrations suppress anything, violent or non-violent, which challenges the authority of the state.

We have an obvious interest in helping to create situations where the police openly attack the people they are supposed to be defending. The more violence the police use the more hostility they arouse. One swipe with a truncheon in front of a television camera is worth hundreds of kicks in the ribs in dark alleys and police stations.

So we agree with Mr. Gale: we are trying to discredit the police; we are trying to provoke them to violence. One disagreement though: using violence against the police is not the only way to do it. In fact the most effective way of tarnishing the bright blue image of the police is to challenge them without violence—and let them do the fighting.

Mr. Gale knows this. Which is one reason why he is so anxious that people should believe his story about agitators planning violence. Unfortunately he may be right.

WYNFORD HICKS.

With regard to Subscriptions

Postage on Inland subscriptions is now increased by 1d. on each copy of FREEDOM and Anarchy, and adds more to our weekly production costs than our finances will bear. All new subscriptions and renewals from now on will therefore be:—

FREEDOM only one year 33/4
Anarchy only one year 27/-
FREEDOM/Anarchy combined 54/4
These increases do not affect overseas subscriptions, and subscriptions already paid in advance, as some are well into 1969, will be fulfilled at the old rates.

NUR Rank and File Rebel

IT WOULD APPEAR THAT the leadership of the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) under Sidney Greene have the possible beginnings of a revolt on their hands. Both the North London District NUR and Manchester are very critical of the recently negotiated productivity agreement. Under the terms of the agreement railwaymen will receive a 7% pay rise BUT in return they must give greater flexibility and abolition of restrictive practices whatever the latter may mean. Arising from the agreement, 5,000 redundancies will take place again BUT both railwaymen and British Railways realise that the figure could be nearer 70,000 in the next two or three years.

According to the assistant general secretary of the NUR, the executive have decided there should be a temporary pause in the discussions at local level, pending clarification of

interpretation of the agreement.

Neither Manchester men nor London are concerned about interpretation of clauses, they interpret the whole agreement as disastrous and want the whole framework renegotiated. In fact they are calling for an emergency session of the union's national conference, to demand just that. To obtain such an emergency session would need the support of hundreds of NUR branches. The point was made in FREEDOM a few weeks back that no agreement can work unless the rank and file are prepared to co-operate. The London and Manchester men claim that 'too much has been given for too little', and to support this claim London men are proposing a boycott of local negotiations in terms of new duties and schedules. The whole package deal is dependent upon the local negotiations because this is the area where the railwaymen will pay for their national wage increase. The rank and file need to gain control now because their future looks extremely bleak to say the least.

WILL THEY WON'T THEY?

The Amalgamated Union of Engineering and Foundry Workers (AEF) find themselves in a rather peculiar position over their proposed September 23 strike over pay. Whilst

Hugh Scanlon, AEF president, obtained a majority of one on his union's national committee for strike action and managed to carry the day at the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, three of the unions of the Confederation have to ballot their members on the issue. One is the General and Municipal Workers' Union (GMWU), another is the Electrical Trades Union. This is the reason for the Confederation altering the date to October 21. Assuming that possibly the GMWU reject strike action, where does the AEF stand? Such a situation would allow entry for Mrs. Castle. In the meantime, the Confederation will attempt to drum up support for strike action with leaflets and mass meetings. The secret demand for ALL CONCERNED is 'Barbara please save our faces'.

It is interesting to note that Hugh Scanlon has joined the wage-vetting committee of the TUC along with George Doughty, general secretary of DATA (draughtsmen). Both are opposed to the TUC wage-vetting committee, one must assume that George and Hugh will bore from within, as far as those two are concerned, all claims submitted will obtain their support. Or will they?

The newcomers to the TUC economic committee make interesting reading. R. Briginshaw, SOGAT, and Les Cannon, ETU. The former opposed to the Government's wages policy and the latter very much in favour, they should rock the TUC economic boat between them.

B.C.

Contact Column

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

Liberation News Service—Europe. Issue No. 3 from 30 Holland Park Gardens, W.14. News you cannot find anywhere else.

Orwell: 4 volume *Collected Essays, Journals and Letters*, ed. Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus, to be published September 30. Orders received with cash by September 26 can be supplied at the pre-publication price of £8 (please add 6/- postage). (Later price £10 or 50/- per volume). Freedom Bookshop.

United Libertarian Groups. Business meeting and working group (posters, placards for October demonstration). Sunday, September 29, 4 p.m., 84a Whitechapel High Street, E.1.

Birmingham Discussion Meetings. Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. Venue usually at The Crown, Corporation Street. Further information from Peter Neville, c/o Peace Action Centre, Factory Road, Birmingham, 19. (S.A.E.) September 24. 'Attitudes to Vietnam'. October 1. Godfrey Webster: 'The Nature of Social Mass Movements'. October 8. Mike Sheridan: 'The October Demonstration'.

Young Family wants information about communities, agriculture, jobs, help, anywhere. Contact Anthony Webb, Addisford Cott., Dolton, Winkleigh, Devon.

The Crypt, 242 Lancaster Road, W.11. September 25, 8 p.m., 2/6d. The People Band, October 2, 8 p.m., 2/6d. 'Hustler' Benefit.

Letter returned. Can any Scots comrade tell Doug Truman we have had letter returned from his address.

Resistance, c/o Peace Action Centre, Factory Road, Birmingham, 19. No. 5 now available. Help needed with sales.

'Alternatives to Punishment'. Day Conference organised by the Libertarian Teachers' Association. From 10.30 a.m. Saturday, October 5, 1968, at 15 Camden Hill Road, Gipsy Hill, London, S.E.19. 5/- P.O. to E. Petrakis.

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

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 Belsize 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.

If you wish to make contact let us know.

BACK TO WELLS FARGO

AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE of ours, in the course of frequent grumbles about the Post Office service, used to say 'It's never been the same since it was nationalized'. Benjamin Tucker, the American individualist-anarchist, used to claim that Wells-Fargo gave a better service than the US Post Office.

The postal service had always some sentimental attraction for the anarchist; its workers' union was for many years, and still is, in theory, committed to the idea of workers' control; the international postal service is an example of a moneyless free-exchange between nations and there have always been a high proportion of postmen with anarchist leanings.

The Post Office has always paid over a large sum to the Exchequer in addition to the multitudinous complex services it renders as tax gatherer and dole dispenser; on top of all this those sinister missives inscribed 'OHMS' are delivered free of charge by the Post Office. We know that most of these are mere book-keeping entries but the labour of Post Office workers is used by the Government for purposes other than facilitating communication between peoples or the distribution of information.

In recent years governments have become more greedy for revenue and the Exchequer contribution demanded of the Post Office was increased. The final blow came under the Labour Government when work-study and business efficiency experts were employed and the Post Office was turned into a nationalized industry—which must make its contribution—instead of a branch of the Civil Service—giving a service.

Post Offices were rationalized, that is to say, cut down in number, and sub-Post Offices are gradually being squeezed out by the low remuneration and the general decline of the small shopkeeper. Telephones are being automated and, as part of this, easily-remembered names are giving way to elusive numbers. (This may be part of the march of progress but some of us limp behind reality.)

When the new automatic phone boxes were installed they were put over to us as cheapening the phone calls from fourpence to threepence, despite the shortening of the conversation period. After an indecent interval the threepenny slots were bunged up with wedges and we were calmly informed the minimum charge was sixpence. Due to somebody's technical incompetence, or cheese-paring, the

new phone boxes had coin boxes which could be opened with comparative ease. What technology had overlooked magistrates sought to remedy by imposing harsh sentences upon those who succumbed to temptation and broke open coin boxes.

The telephone directory advertising was sub-contracted, as is good capitalist practice, and a firm produced a shortened version of the London classified directory which excludes firms with less than two telephone lines. A proposal to provide a 36-volume directory (to replace the present four volumes) is still in the pipeline and the emphasis is still upon making as much money as the contractor can from directory advertising.

The Post Office, having engaged a public relations firm, has resorted to the art of treating a liability as an asset, all these increases have been treated as 'changes' with ensuing 'benefits' to the consumer. This latest imposition of five-penny and fourpenny post with alleged quicker delivery for fivepence is part of the same confidence trickery which, were the GPO a private enterprise firm, would land them in court for misrepresentation or at least would lead to a grave lack of public confidence and the consequent bankruptcy which the capitalist system avers is the lot of the dishonest businessman.

However, the Post Office has one asset with which it can apparently ride out any storm, it has a complete monopoly of all mail delivery and all telephones; more than that, it can prohibit any competition in its fields, as a right vested in it. The Post Office monopoly and its obvious usefulness to the state facilitates in peacetime the surveillance of mail and monitoring of telephone calls which assuredly take place from time to time. Indeed during wartime the censorship through the Post Office is complete.

In the United States the telephones are under private control and Government wire-tapping is actionable under law but no doubt in the same way that 'state security' is sufficient excuse for our Home Secretary, US Government agents no doubt have an excuse.

The British Post Office's mania for automation has spread to an attempt to probe the possibility of reducing every town name to a cipher which can be read by a 'scanner' and sorted automatically. However, to do this successfully all envelopes must be the same

Freedom For Workers' Control

SEPTEMBER 21 1968 Vol 29 No 29

Aberdeen Paper Mills

DONSDALE MILL: attack working conditions.

DONSDALE WAS the only Mill in the Clan Group to show no profit last year, in fact it recorded a loss of over £500,000, mainly due to breakdowns on new machinery. The management, however, have used the loss as an excuse to attack working conditions and for the last few months the workers have been subjected to increasing speed-up. Of course the workers have resented and resisted this, and a situation has been brought about where 60 workers have now been sacked, allegedly for 'persistent malingering'. If the sackings are allowed to go unchallenged, the management will feel that it has a free hand to introduce further speed-ups and victimisations, and all workers in the Mill will feel the effects

of this.

CULTER: a mass of discontent.

In Culter Mill the bosses seem to think that because they are dealing mainly with country workers they can get away with anything. A profit of almost £700,000 last year for the Culter Guard Bridge Company has brought no improvement to the workers' conditions. They are continually cheated out of bonus and overtime payments as well as increments and have to go to great lengths to get them. Safety precautions in the Mill are poor: fire-fighting equipment is inadequate and electrical fittings a danger to life. To make things worse, men are often forced to do other men's jobs, with no compensation if they are injured. Another source of discontent is that many workers are on 12-hour shifts. What holds some workers back from action is the tied-cottage system; many workers live in Mill houses and to lose their jobs would also be to lose their houses. One thing which would be a big advance would be the right to elect shop stewards to deal with grievances as they arise.

STONEWOOD: bureaucratic capitalism.

Attempts are impending in Stoneywood to introduce a 4-shift system as a further step in rationalisation. This move would be unpopular with the workers (many of whom would like to see a change to three shifts starting at 8, 4 and 12) and is unlikely to go unopposed.

The Mill becomes more like a prison every day; not only have dogs been used against workers pilfering, but in some departments now employees must wear name and number tabs and carry pass-port-style passes.

It has recently been announced that Wiggins Teape (profit last year over £9 millions—a rise of 80% on 1966), who own Stoneywood, are likely to be bought over by the British-American Tobacco Company, who already own 34% of the shares. This would inevitably lead to further efficiency and productivity drives at the workers' expense.

There has been talk in the Mill lately of taking industrial action for better conditions: and a ban on overtime when the Mill has a lot of orders seems possible at the moment.

MUGIEMOSS: a 19th-century relic.

One outstanding fact about the 'Moss' is that tradesmen (sparks, engineers, carpenters), who are unionised, have much better pay and conditions than the millhands, who are 90% non-union. Although we are opposed to the present leaders of the unions, and we do not think the unions can create socialism, it is true that in certain situations improvements can be made through trades-union activity. The bosses of Mugiemoos remain bitterly anti-union and it is time they were taught a lesson.

TAIT OF INVERURIE: an appeal.

This is the only Mill in the area in which we have no contacts. We appeal to workers interested in our ideas and activities to get in touch with us at the address below; or better still, send us an article on the Mill as well.

—Reprinted from *Aberdeen Militant*, Aberdeen Branch SWF, 142 Walker Road, Aberdeen.

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

JACK ROBINSON.