

CIVIL RIGHTS CAMPAIGN CONTINUES

ARMAGH'S CIVIL RIGHTS march is over. What are the lessons to be learned from it? Over 5,000 unarmed passive civil rights marchers, after following police instructions to the letter, were met with a police barricade after a march of 10 minutes and informed by County Inspector Sherrard that 'Unfortunately I am unable to keep my road to you. I have been unable to keep the "opposition" from the centre of the town. You cannot proceed.' This was an admission that Craig's minions, the gallant boys with the batons in Derry, were unable (or unwilling) to attempt to control an armed horde of about 1,000 Paisleyites, brandishing sticks with nails in them, chair legs, sledgehammers and assorted small arms. Police searches of all vehicles coming into Armagh that morning resulted in the confiscation of over 200 bayonets, several dozen swords (shades of 1690), shillelaghs, axes, knives and the arrest of five gun-carrying Paisleyites. This armed mob, screaming what they fondly imagined were Biblical slogans, e.g. 'No Pope here', took over the city centre, ignoring police 'requests' not to, beat up TV cameramen (at one stage their work was done for them by the police themselves who attacked the 'Panorama' film team) and prevented a peaceful CR march through the city.

The thug Craig has (surprise, surprise) blamed it all on the 'rogues and rascals who make up the so-called civil rights marches which bring anarchy into our streets'. Paisley & Co. have passed

—aye! so was Brickie Challoner! But this isn't preventing Craig and his Lardner-Burke-type lunatics from openly displaying their contempt for the spineless O'Neill, whose best hope is that the frightened businessmen and bourgeoisie will rally round him and help him purge the UDI-minded backwoodsmen. (When asked how they would manage without the £112 million p.a. from Westminster if UDI were declared, one MP blithely announced that this could be easily done by abolishing the family allowances of the promiscuous large-familied RCs.)

Despite the light relief of these lunacies, the situation is tense. Every peaceful CR march is going to be met by Paisleyites, many of whom will be armed, if Armagh is anything to go by. Ulster has plenty of guns left over from 'the troubles' and recently all B Specials (see FREEDOM No. 32), were offered brand new British rifles and ammunition for only £2! Many availed themselves of the offer. If Craig and Paisley do succeed in stirring up sectarian violence, it will provide the opportunity for the equally lunatic IRA to step in and blood will flow merely according to a man's religion (agnostics and atheists being fair game to either side).

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY GROUPS

This we must strive to avoid at all costs. The struggle here must be a class struggle. Poor Paisleyites need basic civil rights just as much as poor RCs, but for too long the divide and rule tactics of the Unionists and the Orange Order, ably abetted by their green counterparts, the Nationalists and the Hibernians, have ensured that the bigotry and hatred that men like Paisley feed on exists. Only the People's Democracy has shown a truly

non-sectarian face so far, and it is encouraging that PD groups have been set up already around the province and that it is broadening out from a purely student base. Now members of PD are being harassed and threatened by the Special Branch. Suspended sentences are being used as intimidation as well as the threats of loss of grants. All this is being strenuously resisted. Nobody with any wit is being conned by the supposed 'concessions' of O'Neill's 5 points. The fight goes on. We hope for large scale support from England and Scotland for our march on the 14th.

The new Governor Grey of Naunton, arrayed in all his archaic finery, was given a democratic welcome when his cavalcade drove up to Stormont. Perched atop the statue of the immortal Carson was a member of the PD with a large sign saying 'Welcome to Fascist Ulster'. Up to now the governor's job has been merely a well-paid sinecure. Maybe this can be changed.

Only by more and more demonstrations and meetings and ceaseless activity can we hope to influence events here and remove the stigma of fascism and the Special Powers Acts which foul our province.

WILLIAM WEBSTER.

London Squatters Campaign

FROM THOSE WHO AGREE WITH WHAT THE LONDON SQUATTERS ARE DOING, we ask for—

Offers of individual and group support either to enter and occupy or to picket, leaflet, research, etc.

Details of suitable properties that you know of including the legal owner, how long they have been empty and why.

Offers of furniture, bedding, oil or

LONDON SQUATTERS' SPECIAL

The Danger to Freedom

THE TIMES' in an editorial (9.12.68) entitled 'The Danger to Britain' advocates a coalition government. This sounds innocuous, put baldly in this way. One government is very like another after all. The two parties have been much the same to all intents and purposes for years. However it is not quite so simple. The article deals in its first half with economics. The £ is in a very weak position, and so on. Economics is not my strong point, so I am prepared to accept this and take their word for it. As far as I can see an economic system based on money is always something of a confidence trick. I am intrigued by the theory put forward that people are losing confidence in money as such, and amused to learn that, in addition to investing in everything 'from silver to stamps', 'people are even inclined to prefer racehorses to money'. Being a poor man, when I have had any extra money I have spent it on clothing, furniture and bedding, beyond absolute necessity, because material objects deteriorate less rapidly than money loses in value. I discovered this trick many years ago. The general public seem to be catching on to it. If one has a religious veneration for the money system this development will seem distressing of course, but not if one regards it as a great big swindle.

What I find more alarming is the way in which in the second half the writer changes over to quite a different line of approach, and starts to talk about the indiscipline (as he regards it) of modern life in general. The connection between this and the economic arrangements of our society is obscure to me. One gets the impression that the economic arguments are intended to 'mystify' (as the current phrase is) the reader, so that he will imagine that the financial difficulties of Britain are a moral issue. (They are in a way, but not in the way the writer means. It is as if a gang of pirates have robbed their victims, then adjured them to work hard, deprive themselves, in order to amass more treasure so that they can be conveniently robbed again.)

THE MYTH OF PERMISSIVENESS

People are always talking about

the 'Permissive Society'. I wish I knew where this society was. I would go and live there. In fact, although there is more freedom to publish satirical journals, which are amusing but do not really threaten the status quo, and pictures of kinky ladies in boots, and so forth, society seems to me to be very well disciplined indeed. There is very little freedom for anybody. One can wear one's hair long and a flowered shirt, but that's about as far as it goes.

The Times goes on, 'The classic political answer is well known... the first thing that has to be done is restore confidence in the ability of the Government to govern. The best way to do that is to have a coalition or national government...' This coalition government will check 'the rising anarchy', examples of which are to be found in the universities, on football trains and of course on the factory floor. This government will not be afraid to reduce its expenditure and 'face unemployment', which means to cut down the social services and create unemployment as a means of social control.

To me it is alarming that a semi-official organ such as 'The Times' should come out with these opinions. Obviously it reflects the point of view of some very powerful people. The trend is clear. The post-Second World War boom is over. New techniques (automation) are creating unemployment. The youth are dissatisfied. Therefore what is needed is a 'strong government' to crush all manifestations of dissatisfaction by moral bullying, by economic pressure and by brute force. Such small increases of personal freedom which have been won in the past two decades are alarming the rulers of our society, and their followers, and the poor little plant of 'permissiveness', which has scarcely begun to show itself above the earth is to be squashed under heel. NOT OUR MORAL PROBLEM

Need one say in an anarchist paper that 'Britain' does not exist? It is not an entity of which we are members. The people living within the confines of the British state are not a colony of ants, communicating or empathising by telepathy. The students who protest and the wor-

kers who strike are as much inhabitants of this state as the people who write in *The Times*. One sometimes gets the impression that 'students' and 'strikers' are evil spirits living in another dimension, who come in from 'outside' in order to vex the 'decent ordinary people' or 'Britain' out of sheer malevolence.

You, I, the man next door, and so on, have no moral obligation of any kind to work hard, or go without, or submit to being bullied, in order to rescue the economy. Let those who manipulate it to their very great profit rescue it themselves.

The very great danger that faces us is that a regime, analogous to that which existed in Nazi Germany in the thirties, may come into being in this country in the next few years. The publicity which Enoch Powell has received from the press contrasts oddly with the ignoring for years and years of various extreme Right-wing groups and their activities. Why have they suddenly become newsworthy? Because some force is needed to crush the youth, the workers and the immigrants. Hence the free publicity given to Powellism, and to the extreme Right.

THE BRITISH WAY

The British way is not to do things by extremes, but to achieve the same end by crafty and subtle compromises. One does not advocate a 'strong man', a dictator. One advocates 'strong government'. It is not certain whether we shall ever see full-blown concentration or extermination camps in Britain. Maybe they will not be 'necessary'. However things may get very ugly indeed. They are bad enough already.

We anarchists must oppose this development in every way we can. We must point out the fraudulent nature of 'economics'. The raw materials of the earth, either growing on its surface, or buried beneath, are always there, regardless of the way money is passing from one nation to another. We must nail this phoney collective thinking, which invites us to be humiliated and guilty because of economic arrangements made by international bankers. Above all we must oppose all efforts to divide people up artificially, making use of undoubted cultural differences to drive wedges between people of different race, social class, age and sex.

We must resist these totalitarian trends however they manifest themselves, by argument, by the written word, by demonstration, and by whatever other methods may be appropriate. Freedom is in danger. A.W.U.

The Great Reform Bill?

THE WIND of change blows across Ulster, the papers scream. O'Neill's dynamic new measures. The so-called 5-point plan is as dynamic and appetising as undigested vomit. Let us examine it.

1. 'An impartial commission' to rule Derry instead of its corrupt council for an unspecified period. Thus instead of one man one vote, one of the main civil rights watch-cries, we now are to have one man, no vote. Of course one man one vote would only have meant that green Tories instead of orange ones would have controlled Derry and we know from

experience what the electoral farce is all about. Nonetheless the new commission 'impartially appointed' by the government will ensure even worse dictatorship in local misgovernment here.

2. An ombudsman for Ulster. Even the aged nationalist buffoon Macateer can see through that piece of window dressing. Since of course he isn't going to be given any powers to investigate local government corruption and discrimination, the job will merely prove to be a well-paid sinecure for some retiring political toady.

3. The abolition of the business vote. Big deal! This is totally unimportant since the company vote represents only 0.1% of all votes cast in local elections. It is a mere sop which should fool no one.

4. 'A crash housing plan for Derry to be completed by 1981.' Those of us who have lived in Ulster for any length of time know exactly what is meant by crash. If they've done nothing for 48 years why should they be trusted now, even by those gullible enough to trust any politician.

5. Finally and, to us, most important. O'Neill's statement said that 'it might prove possible to put the special powers

act into "cold storage" if conditions warranted it'. This would have enabled Wilson to sign the European Human Rights Charter. Later the same 'historic' evening the thug Craig announced—'I am the minister of home affairs and it is therefore up to me to make any changes in the special powers act if and when I deem it necessary. You can definitely take it from me that the act is going to stand as hitherto. There will be no changes.' Of course there won't be any changes so long as Bully Craig and his merry men have their way. The most reactionary piece of legislation outside Russia, Spain and South Africa will stand, a permanent affront to the freedom of the individual. It must go, along with Adolf Craig!

ON SALE NOW

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DISCUSSES

The Machinery of Conformity

What happened at Derry and Armagh shows why Craig had to go

motions of confidence in Adolf, who reciprocated by speaking in the Ulster Hall, Rev. Ian's stamping ground, on the Thursday before Armagh to a large crowd of predominantly fanatical Paisleyites. He gave an incredible display of rabid RC-baiting and ranting to an enthusiastic crowd, and attacked the 'dynamic' 5-point plan of O'Neill which he himself is supposed to implement. (Paisley's latest publishing venture is *Catholic Terror* by Avro Manhattan, a 10/6 must for your Xmas stocking.)

The irony of the meeting, however, was highlighted by what happened in Armagh. The meeting was called to give support to the official Unionist candidate for West Belfast, McRoberts the mouth. At present the seat is held by the Paisleyites' bete noire, Gerry Fitt (Republican Labour), due to a split in the Unionist vote. Regarding the official Unionist candidates as too moderate, the Paisleyites selected a Protestant Unionist candidate, thus splitting the vote and allowing Fitt in. Brochures for last Thursday's rabble-rousing fiasco announced that it had been called 'to lay Fitt to rest', but it seems that this provocative plea may not be answered for McRoberts so incensed the extremists that they wrecked his car and tried to beat him up in Armagh. They will almost certainly be putting up their own man again. Fitt's presence in W. Belfast is particularly galling for Paisley since the constituency includes Sandy Row, the staunchest Protestant slum area in the city from where he draws much of his support.

PAISLEY SUMMONSED

The scene here is now chaotic. The thug Craig has reluctantly had to issue a summons against Paisley and his henchman the gallant Major Bunting for 'unlawful assembly' at Armagh, and O'Neill has just asked opposition MPs to remember that 'Mr. Craig is acting under great strain and we must take that into account when considering his Ulster Hall speech'

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Police Brutality in Brussels

ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, at 2 p.m., 20 policemen charged with billy clubs the 200 students who had just occupied the office of the Dean of Belgium's Free University of Brussels. By 5 p.m. 300 policemen and National Guardsmen had infested the campus, and were firing dozens of CN grenades into the ranks of 1,000 students grouped behind a flaming barricade on the campus' main street.

Last spring the entire administration building as well as adjoining humanities classrooms had been occupied for two months, without any comparable repression. Because of the near-revolution in nearby France at that time, the University's Counsel of Administration dared not use force. Replacing itself through elections (boycotted by 50%) by a 'democratic' C of A and setting up (non-binding) mixed study commissions, it launched a counter-offensive based on reformist 'participation' of the entire university community in its management as a streamlined servant to the ruling interests. Over-confident, the 'new' academic authorities rented the campus' biggest auditorium to the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry for a lecture on 'Participation'; students were not admitted; only invited financial/technocratic bigwigs could enter. When several dozen students picketed the entry, the Dean first tried to fashion a scab-squad out of the blue collar workers of the University. This failing, he called the cops, under the pretext that the dignity of the King of Belgium (an invited guest) was in danger. By the end of the evening, a hundred students had been manhandled by the police.

The next day (fateful December 4) these students, accompanied by delegates of the offended workers, went to ask the Dean to reply before the student body to these three points: (a) freedom of information (i.e. no more 'private' lectures on campus); (b) independence from intimidation for the campus workers; (c) no more police. The Dean being out to lunch, his office was occupied; reinforcements streamed from the restaurant, lecture courses and libraries as the news of the occupation spread. At 2 p.m. the Dean and several other C of A figures returned to find hundreds milling in and around his office, chanting 'Student-worker solidarity', 'Dean resign', etc. Refusing the demand to leave his office and come to a mass assembly on these points, the Dean conferred for a half-

hour with the C of A President, a prominent politician of the Socialist Party (now in power with the Christian Democrats). Then the two telephoned the cops—right in front of the peaceful and astounded students.

Fifteen minutes later, many 'innocent' students emerged from their courses to find themselves attacked in their own university, and had to flee with the initial occupiers through the maze of hallways being 'cleaned out' by the policemen. Their indignation increased an hour later when, the interior skirmishes being over and the students spilling out onto the lawns, they were fired on by semi-toxic-CN grenade-launchers. Now up to this point (3.30-4 p.m.) the ripostes to police violence had been only sporadic; helmets and clubs occasionally, a few dug-up paving stones. But then a barricade went up (planks and bricks from construction sites, chairs and benches from the buildings) right in front of the Student Centre.

Between 4 and 6.30 p.m. a shifting group of 150 students manned it, hailing with stones the periodic arrival of police/Guardsmen busloads and the

THIS IS A SEQUEL to the Anthony Engurube case which appeared in FREEDOM on 28.9.68. The original manuscript was sent from Copenhagen on 5.10.68 to London but did not arrive. There seems to be a Danish Iron Curtain.

Anthony Engurube shared a cell with three others. He was very concerned with the fate of his companions. He said help should be found for Mr. Gosta Hellberg, sentenced to 8 years for stabbing a policeman. Mr. Hellberg was sitting in the kitchen talking to a friend when police entered and asked him to go with them. He asked why and they replied, 'Because we say so'. They then tried to force him to leave and he seized a knife and stabbed one of them. A.E. stated that almost a third of the prisoners were charged with similar 'crimes'.

A.E. asked to see a priest but this request was refused by prison officials. He complained that a Swedish prison is worse than a Nigerian, because at least one is allowed to walk around in the latter.

periodic advances of the water cannon. Dozens of CN grenades rained down, not only on the barricade but also on the additional hundreds of students watching from the Student Centre steps. Wet rags and lemon slices were passed around, to protect eyes and throat against the white smoke; many grenades were tossed back before letting out all their load, or else smothered by blankets or water squirted from the Centre. Morale was fantastic. Only 100 rightist students stayed near the police ranks, chanting 'students forever, communists never'.

Finally the police counter-attacked, charging down the unbarricaded end of the street. Everyone ran, panicking, into the Centre, which was soon filled with grenade smoke. The police pulled out, the teary-eyed veterans had dinner in their mud-stained garb. In all, a dozen students had been hospitalized, another dozen arrested. Material damage to the campus was quite moderate in the context. The first day was over.

The next days may see the students occupy en masse once again, confident that the police would not be used again after such a poor showing and amidst such general anti-repression sentiment. Already many students plan to organize self-defence material within the university for use in case of a new crisis. Many new people were involved; next

time their battle experience will permit a more disciplined resistance. Those absent on December 4 will be perhaps radicalized in the numerous knots of spontaneous discussion that already have sprung up. The C of A increasingly discredited, the right cut off from the left and from much of the centre, left-liberal and social-democratic students being displaced from the co-optive reform study commissions into the street, certain radical groups encouraged to drop their extra-establishment but reform-oriented organizing, the university's workmen's union pushed leftward in reaction to administrative manipulation and police intervention—all points to a new offensive at the level of this university.

Outside the university: the Socialist Party may split wide open, tottering present government (last year a week of violently suppressed demonstrations by Flemish students at the Catholic University of Louvain led to a split of the Christian Democratic Party and the fall of the government). In Liège a record turnout of 600 Walloon students closed a showing of *The Green Berets*. If the students succeed in reaching the working class more effectively than does the present chorus of press denunciations, the Belgian pot will boil over once and for all.

YVES RAMAEKERS.

... and in Sweden

On Monday A.E. told prison officials that he had pain in his stomach, and blood in his excreta, but difficulties were placed in his way when he sought medical treatment. He sent the following letter, 'The lawyer has been to see me on August 6 and on the 30th I had been bleeding for three days before they took me to the hospital. The doctors say I have an ulcer which came from the result of the beating.'

A certain Sister Margareta sat by A.E.'s bedside and stroked his hand murmuring, 'You must understand that no one wants to hurt you, no police have hurt you—you only believe this because you are coloured, you must forgive the police.'

Two days after the elections were over Scandinavia's biggest daily newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* broke their silence, the day after A.E.'s release, pending trial. Its headlines read, 'Homicidal Nigerian Gets Support', 'Beaten Up in Police Bus', and described A.E. as a Communist.

One policeman stated during the court hearing that he was afraid to out for fear of being attacked by A.E.

A.E.'s trial was set for September 4, but owing to A.E.'s illness had to be postponed till the 23rd. A small court was chosen, and it was packed.

The police painted a frightening picture of A.E. Lantern slides of the policeman's bruises were shown, and we were told how much pay they had lost during sick leave. The political aspects of the case were ignored. A.E. defended himself well on a political basis. He said the police had been persecuting him for many months.

Among the seven charges a policeman stated that A.E. threatened him with a broken bottle. Another individual claimed to have been hit with a stone, but could not be sure it was thrown by A.E. Another Swedish youth claimed that A.E. (after being provoked) had said, 'Next time I see you I'll kill you.' A.E. said that on one occasion, during the Swedish student occupation of a building, the police saved him from being lynched by a mob of 200 people.

On the 26th the *Dagens Nyheter* printed on their placards, 'Bodyguard for Woman Prosecutor in Nigerian Case'. On the 26th the *DN* said that someone connected with the trial had been given permission to carry a tear gas gun because his life had been threatened.

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Anarchist Federation of Britain

General enquiries should be sent to the London Federation, c/o Freedom Press, 84a Whitechapel High Street, London, E.1.

LONDON FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS. Sunday evening meetings at the 'Metropolitan' (corner of Clerkenwell Road and Farringdon Road), 7.30 p.m. Sunday, December 15, Sherrard Kar (United Front of Immigrants): 'Immigrants and their Problems'.

LEWISHAM. Contact Mike Malet, 61B Granville Park, Lewisham, London, S.E.13. Phone: 01-82 8879.

WEST HAM ANARCHISTS. Contact Stephen Higgs, 8 Westbury Road, Forest Gate, London, E.7. GRA 9848. Regular activities.

NORTH LONDON ANARCHISTS. Contact Cindy Scott, 54a Mountfield Road, Finchley, N.3.

EALING ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact: Lindsay Wither, 19 Aylmer Road, Shepherds Bush, W.12.

HARINGEY. 'Siege of Sidney Street Appreciation Society'. Meet Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at A. Barlow's, 2a Fairfield Gardens, Crouch End, N.8.

ARCHWAY ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Marcus M. Sanders, 6 Gladsmuir Road, Upper Holloway, N.19. Tel: ARC 5531.

PORTOBELLO ROAD ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Andrew Dewar, 16 Kilburn House, Malvern Place, N.W.6. Meetings 8 p.m. every Tuesday.

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.

3rd Friday of each month at Donald and Irene Room's at 13 Savernake Road, N.W.3, at 8 p.m.

REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND GROUPS

BEXLEY ANARCHIST MOVEMENT, C/o John Bonner, 40 Lullingstone Crescent, St. Paul's Cray, Kent. Tel: 01-306 8890. Meetings every Friday, 8 p.m., Lord Bexley, Bexleyheath Broadway.

BEXLEY PEACE ACTION GROUP. Enquiries to 150 Rydal Drive, Bexleyheath, Kent.

BIRMINGHAM LIBERTARIAN AND ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Geoff and Caroline Charlton at Flat One, 69 Sandon Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham 17. (Entrance side of house.) Regular discussions being held on Tuesdays, 7.30 p.m., Crown, Corporation Street (upper room).

BOLTON. Get in touch with John Hayes, 51 Rydal Road, Bolton.

BOURNEMOUTH AREA. Local anarchists can be contacted through Nigel Holt, Rosmore, Harvey Road, Canford, Wimborne, Dorset. (Wimborne 2991.)

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 Otter, 35 Natal Road, Thornton Heath (LIV 7546).

EDGWARE PEACE ACTION GROUP. Contact: Melvyn Estrin, 84 Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middx.

HERTS. Contact Val and John Funnell, 10 Fry Road, Chells, Stevenage.

IPSWICH ANARCHISTS. Contact Nell Dean, 74 Cemetery Road, Ipswich, Suffolk.

LEICESTER PROJECT. Peace/Libertarian action and debate. Every Wednesday at 8 p.m. at 1 The Crescent, King Street, Leicester.

NORTH SOMERSET ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Roy Emery, 3 Abbey Street, Bath, or Geoffrey Barfoot, 71 St. Thomas Street, Wells.

NOTTING HILL. Meetings at John Bennett's, Flat 4, 88 Clarendon Road, W.11. Every Monday evening, 8 p.m.

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

REDDITCH ANARCHISTS AND LIBERTARIANS. Contact: Dave Lloyd 37 Feckenham Road, Headless Cross, Redditch, Worcs.

SELBY ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact D. Mackay, Residential Site, Drax Power Station, Drax, Selby.

TAUNTON LIBERTARIANS. Jill and John Driver, 59 Beadon Road, Taunton, Somerset.

ESSEX & EAST HERTS FEDERATION

Three-monthly meetings. Groups and individuals invited to associate: c/o Peter Newell (see N.E. Essex Group). Group Address:—

BASILDON. M. Powell, 7 Lincroft, Basildon, Essex.

BISHOPS STORTFORD. Vic Mount, 'Eastview', Castle Street, Bishops Stortford, Herts.

CHELMSFORD. (Mrs.) Eva Archer, Mill House, Purleigh, Chelmsford, Essex.

EPPING. John Barrick, 14 Centre Avenue, Epping, Essex.

HARLOW. Ian Dallas, 18 Brookline Field, Harlow and Annette Gunning, 37 Longbanks, Harlow.

LOUGHTON. Group c/o Students' Union, Loughdon College of Further Education, Borders Lane, Loughton, Essex.

NORTH EAST ESSEX. Peter Newell, 91 Brook Road, Tolleshunt Knights, Tiptree, Essex. Regular meetings.

NORTH-WEST FEDERATION

LIVERPOOL ANARCHIST PROPAGANDA GROUP AND 'HIPPI' MOVEMENT. Gerry Bree, 16 Faulkner Square, Liverpool, 8. Meetings weekly. 'Freedom' Sales—Pier Head, Saturdays, Sundays, Evenings.

MANCHESTER ANARCHIST GROUP. Secretary: Sue Warrack, 9 Boland Street, Fallowfield, Manchester, 14. Every Saturday, 'Freedom' and 'DA' selling outside Central Library, 2.30-4.30 p.m. Regular weekly meetings. Contact Secretary for venue.

MERSEYSIDE ANARCHISTS. Meetings every Tuesday at 8 p.m. at 118 High Park Street, Liverpool 8. Contact: Chris Kneath, Basement, 52 Belvidere Road, Liverpool, L8 3TQ.

PRESTON ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact J. B. Cowburn, 140 Watling Street Road, Fulwood, Preston. Meetings: 'The Wellington Hotel', Glovers Court, Preston, Wednesdays, 8 p.m.

SUSSEX FEDERATION

Green, Crawley, Sussex.
SUSSEX UNIVERSITY ANARCHIST GROUP (see details under Student Groups).

YORKSHIRE FEDERATION

Meetings every 8 weeks. Next meeting February 2. Secretary: Colin Beadle, c/o Oakwood Farm, Lund, Selby, Yorkshire. Look out for 'Liberty!'—monthly 6d.—out in January.

HALIFAX: David Stringer, c/o Paul Simon, 91 Essex Street, Parkinson Lane, Halifax.

HULL: Jim Young, 3 Fredericks Crescent, Hawthorn Avenue, Hull.

KEIGHLEY: Steve Wood, 26B Cavendish Street, Keighley.

LEEDS: Direct Action Society. Contact John Woodcut, 142 Brudenell Road, Leeds, 6.

SELBY: D. Mackay, 247 Residential Site, Drax Power Station, Drax, Selby.

SHEFFIELD: Dave Jeffries, c/o Students Union, Western Bank, Sheffield, 10.

YORK: Nigel Wilson, Derwent College, University of York, Heslington, York.

WELSH FEDERATION

CARDIFF ANARCHIST GROUP. All correspondence to:—Peter Raymond, 18 Marion Street, Splott, Cardiff.

SWANSEA ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Ian Bone, 3 Bay View Crescent, Brynmill, Swansea. Weekly meetings, 'Freedom' sales and action projects.

LLANELLI: Contact Dai Walker, 6 Llwynnendy Road, Llanelli, Carm. Tel: Llanelli 2548.

EAST LONDON LIBERTARIAN FEDERATION

Support wanted for numerous activities in area. Secretary: Anthony Matthews, 35 Mayville Road, London, E.11. Meetings fortnightly on Sundays at Ron Bailey's, 128 Hainault Road, E.11 (LEY 8059). Ten minutes from Leytonstone Underground.

LEYTONSTONE GROUP. Get in touch with Anthony Matthews or Ron Bailey (address as above).

STEPNEY. Trevor Jackales, 10 St. Vincent de Paul House, Dempsey Street, Cliefly Estate, E.1.

NEWHAM. F. Rowe, 100 Henderson Road, E.7.

ILFORD. Del Leverton, 12 Hamilton Avenue, Ilford.

DAGENHAM. Alan Elliot, 98 Hatfield Road, Dagenham.

WOODFORD. Douglas Hawkes, 123 Hermon Hill, E.18.

LIMEHOUSE. M. Solof, 202 East Ferry Road, E.14.

STUDENT GROUPS

ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY GROUP. C/o Ian and Peggy Sutherland, 8 Esslemont Avenue, Aberdeen, AB2 4UL.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Matthew Robertson, Trinity College, or John Fullerton, Jesus College.

SUSSEX UNIVERSITY ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Francis Jarman, Red Brick Lodge, 49 Upper Rock Gardens, Brighton. Meetings every second Thursday jointly with Brighton Group; bookstall every Monday outside J.C.R., 12-2.30 p.m.

YORK UNIVERSITY. Contact Nigel Wilson, Derwent College, University of York, Heslington, York.

EAST ANGLIA UNIVERSITY. Contact Dave Lomax, E.A.S. 11, U.E.A., Norwich, NOR 88C.

LIBERTARIAN STUDENTS FEDERATION. Contact address: Keith Nathan, 138 Pennymead, Harlow.

LIVERPOOL UNIVERSITY ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact us at the bookstall in the Students Union Foyer every Friday lunchtime.

OXFORD ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Francis Casline, Pembroke College, or Steve Watts, Trinity College.

MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY. Contact Mike Don or Bill Jamieson, c/o University Union, Oxford Road, Manchester, 13.

SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY. Contact Robin Lovell at the Students' Union.

LSE ANARCHIST GROUP. C/o Students' Union, LSE, Houghton Street, W.C.2. Read and sell 'Beaver'.

SCOTTISH FEDERATION

Secretary: Dave Coull.

ABERDEEN ANARCHIST GROUP. Bob Comrie, 28a Hargate or Ian Mitchell, 3 Sinclair Road.

GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP. Robert Lynn, 12 Ross Street, S.E. or Joe Embleton, 26 Kirkland Road, N.W.

EDINBURGH. Tony Hughes, Top Flat, 40 Angle Park Terrace, Edinburgh 11.

HAMILTON AND DISTRICT ANARCHIST GROUP. Robert Linton, 7a Station Road, New Stevenston, Motherwell.

FIFE. Bob and Una Turnbull, 39 Stratheden Park, Stratheden Hospital, By Cupar.

PERTHSHIRE / CENTRAL SCOTLAND. Iain MacDonald, Craigreath, Bridge of Gour, near 77 Rannoch Station, Perthshire.

MONTROSE. Dave Coull, 3 Eskview Terrace, Ferryden.

NORTHERN IRELAND

BELFAST ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Robert Dunwoody, 10 Newry Street, Belfast, BT6 9BN. Meetings every Saturday, 2 p.m., 44a Upper Arthur Street (top floor). 'Freedom' sales.

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, 59 Eveleigh Street, Redfern, Sydney, 8 p.m.

USA. James W. Cain, secretary, the Anarchist Committee of Correspondence, 323 Fourth Street, Cloquet, Minnesota 55720, USA.

DANISH ANARCHIST FEDERATION. Gøthersgade, 27, Viborg, Denmark.

VANCOUVER, B.C., CANADA. Anyone interested in forming anarchist and/or direct action peace group contact Derek A. James, c/o 24-160 East 20th, N. Vancouver, B.C., Canada. Tel: 985 7509 or 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: Libertat, Allmänna Vägen 6, Gøthenburg V.

TORONTO LIBERTARIAN-ANARCHIST GROUP. 217 Tor York Drive, Weston, Ontario, Canada. Weekly meetings. Read the 'Libertarian'.

PROPOSED GROUPS

LANCASTER & MORECAMBE. Contact Les Smith, 192 Euston Road, Morecambe, Lancs.

KINGSTON, WIMBLEDON, MERTON, New Malden, and Surrey. New group forming. Please contact K. W. Bennett, 63 Hook Road, Epsom, Surrey, or G. Wright, 47 Coleridge Road, Epsom, Surrey.

WATFORD. Anyone interested please contact Ronnie Anderson, 31 Marlborough Road, Watford, Herts.

ROCHDALE, BURY & OLDHAM areas. Those interested in libertarian activity contact David Purdy, c/o 35 Balmoral Drive, Darn Hill Estate, Heywood, Lancs.

**Why the London Squatters' Campaign began - How it started
 Why our sense of OUTRAGE - What we did - What we intend to do
 How you can help - Why we occupied the HOLLIES - and WHY**

● Further copies of this broadsheet are available at 5/- a dozen or 50 copies for £1. From London Squatters Campaign, 128 Hainault Road, Leytonstone, E.11. Tel.: LEY 8059.



6d.

Proceeds from sale of this broadsheet to the London Squatters Campaign

we won't wait - Occupy Empty Houses!

THE INITIAL SHOWING of Jeremy Sandford's film 'Cathy Come Home', about the plight of the homeless, aroused righteous indignation at all levels of society. However, since then the situation has worsened; the number of people on housing lists has increased and the national figures for the homeless decreasing by only 156. In the London area the number of homeless people has actually increased by nearly 2,000. The formation of the London Squatters Campaign came as a direct result of the third showing of 'Cathy Come Home', when a number of comrades decided the time was ripe for a direct action campaign to be got under way.

FIRST MEETING

The inaugural meeting of the London Squatters Campaign took place on Monday, November 25. Most people present were comrades who had previously been involved in direct action campaigns concerning housing or homeless hostels (e.g. King Hill, Abridge, Coventry Cross). Prior to the meeting, comrades living in the Waltham Forest area had done some research into various empty buildings in their area, and suggested to the meeting that the first step in the campaign should be the token occupation of a luxury block of flats in Wanstead called 'The Hollies', built four years ago, and yet more than half of it still empty. This was agreed upon (the date fixed for the occupation being Sunday, December 1), and the various officers necessary to carry this out successfully were appointed.

PREPARATIONS

Two leaflets were prepared, one for general circulation and one directly concerned with the occupation, both of which are reproduced in this broadsheet. The press were told of the formation of the campaign and the demonstration, but were not told where it was to take place or at what time. Instead they were to meet one of us at a specified place some distance from the target. This worked very well, as all the nationals gave us coverage yet the police knew nothing of our plans. With the obvious need for secrecy, interested people who were not at the

meeting were given the names of several meeting points, at which they were to be met by comrades who knew the target and were to be taken there.

THE BIG DAY

One comrade entered the building at

five minutes to two on the pretext of being from the London Electricity Board, to ensure that the entrance doors were unlocked. At 2 p.m. comrades assembled at Snaresbrook Tube Station and, with members of the press, walked around the corner to The Hollies and gained entry. Before the surprised residents could lock the doors, 22 people were on the roof and several stayed on the stairs. The London Squatters Banner went out over the roof together with showers of leaflets.

During the 90 minutes spent on the roof, interviews and statements were taken by the press, and in the forecourt below comrades and sympathisers were holding meetings which drew the resi-



dents and passers-by. Others collected our leaflets and distributed them at all corners of the main crossroads where The Hollies stands. The police arrived but were very unsure on what to do, in fact they

left us to go and get Joseph Kasner, one of the directors of Luxor Flats, the owners. When he and the police returned, we were first asked then told to leave. The comrades on the roof held a meeting and decided to give the impression that we were leaving and going home.

The roof occupiers held a quick meeting in the forecourt again. Then suddenly we broke off, rushed for our small fleet of cars and vans and then drove to Embassy Court, also owned by the same company and where only 3 of 18 flats are occupied. Unfortunately, the police on motorcycles arrived first, obviously having read our leaflets and put two and two together. The inside foyer door was locked and the lift turned-off. Again, in front of Embassy Court a meeting was held (a lot of supporters and passers-by walked the mile from The Hollies to Embassy Court). Several people spoke on why they supported the occupation and twice Kasner (who looked remarkably like Al Capone) was offered the platform to put his case. He refused, muttering about legal action, victimisation, and spoilt Sunday dinner.

M.C.

MORE SLUMS...

MORE PEOPLE IN HOMELESS HOSTELS... YET GOOD HOUSES STAND EMPTY!! WHY? BECAUSE PROFITS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN PEOPLE!!

'CATHY' STILL OUT IN THE COLD

In November 1966 'Cathy Come Home' was first shown on BBC television. There was a national outcry; politicians, clergymen, journalists and ordinary people everywhere were shocked. People became aware of the plight of the homeless for the first time. The national conscience was pricked.

As a result 'Shelter' was formed to help the homeless and people forced to live in slums. This is now a widely known charity which receives money from all sections of society.

BUT...

- Between that first showing of 'Cathy' and the third showing, in November 1968 the situation has got worse rather than better.
- The Ministry of Housing admits that 1,800,000 people live in places 'unfit for human habitation'.
- There are now 15,574 people in homeless hostels—an increase of 1,000 from last year.
- The number of people on local authority housing lists has increased by 10,000 to 160,000 since 'Cathy' was first shown.
- The number of people in Part III accommodation in London has increased since that first showing from 7,613 in 1966 to 9,450 in 1967.
- The figures for children being taken into care due to homelessness and bad housing conditions, in England and Wales, has hardly changed over the last three years—despite all that concern.
- Week in, week out, the papers are full of heartbreaking stories of people living in slums, having to put up with rats, damp, their homes falling down around them, incredible overcrowding, no electricity or gas, etc. London, and other major industrial cities, where people go to find work, are the worst places; in London itself East London is famous for its slums.
- In 1966 (the last year for which figures are available at present) there were in London 781 children in care because of homelessness and bad housing conditions.
- Housing is then, in short, a national emergency—or rather the LACK OF HOUSING is a national emergency.

DESPITE ALL THIS...

Large office blocks stand empty for years. Examples are everywhere to be seen—Centre Point at Tottenham Court Road, Telstar House in Paddington, the tower block in Stratford, E.15, overlooking the East London slums.

Blocks of luxury flats, built years ago, stand empty for want of buyers—but well outside the pockets of ordinary people. Centre Point is again an example.

Further, Councils (and the Church and British Railways) own houses and leave them standing empty for years. *The Times* (November 19, 1968) reported that Westminster Council had refused to allow 60 such houses to be used for the homeless.

THIS CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE

We are launching this campaign both to protest about this state of affairs and to organize in the near future serious attempts to occupy and claim these buildings. We will thus arrange token occupations and also real attempts to install homeless people or slum dwellers in these empty properties. **WHY DIRECT ACTION?**

- Because things are getting worse.
- Because organizations like 'Shelter' (and we do not wish to denigrate their efforts) cannot solve the problem.
- This shows that the 'shock' following 'Cathy' was not enough. Action is now needed, **AND DIRECT ACTION WORKS.**
- It was the year-long campaign by husbands, wives and friends that finally forced Kent County Council to end its 'no husbands' rule and its three-month time limit on the women's stay (after which their kids would be taken into care), in summer 1966 at King Hill Hostel at West Malling, Kent.
- It was only when husbands and friends occupied Abridge Hostel that Essex County Council were forced to close the place down, rehouse all the families and convert the place into family accommodation; previously 11 women and 38 kids had lived in a dormitory.
- It was only when tenants at the Coventry Cross slum, E.3, kicked up a fuss that the GLC was forced to rehouse all 190 families earlier this year.

OCCUPY EMPTY HOUSES

We call upon people everywhere to occupy empty houses and so end this social crime of leaving them empty. Let us unite and organize and in our thousands take over these homes—slum dwellers, homeless and their supporters.

Please contact us; offer us support; help us in this campaign. In return we offer advice on tactics, legal points, and we offer our support to you.

London Squatters Campaign, c/o 128 Hainault Road, London, E.11
 Tel.: LEY 8059.

KCC VERSUS THE HOMELESS

The King Hill Campaign: Story of the Struggle. Price 1/6 (plus postage) from Andy Anderson, 40 Tudor Close, Dartford, Kent.

HOW TO BEAT THE GLC

The Coventry Cross Tenants' Victory. Price 6d. (plus postage) from East London Libertarian Group, 128 Hainault Road, Leytonstone, E.11

For further accounts of the struggle against homelessness and bad housing READ:

'SOLIDARITY' (monthly, 6d., or by subscription 10/- a year) from H. Russell, 53a Westmoreland Road, Bromley, Kent.

'FREEDOM' (weekly, 6d., or by subscription £1 13s. 4d. a year) and 'ANARCHY' (monthly, 2/-, or by subscription £1 7s. a year), both available from Freedom Press, 84a Whitechapel High Street, London, E.1.

DIRECT ACTION FOR HOMES—1946

Asses, swine, have litter spread,
And with fitting food are fed,
All things have a home but one,—
Thou, Oh Englishman hast none!

—SHELLEY: *The Mask of Anarchy.*

THE POLITICIANS of the post-war Labour Government, who were taken by surprise by the 'Squatters' Movement' which swept Britain (and other countries), in 1946, showed, by their astonishment and unpreparedness, how far out of touch they were with the desperation of the housing situation, and with the mood of the people. They were blind to the evidence provided by the earlier seizures of empty buildings by homeless returning servicemen which occurred in 1919, or by the Scottish examples during the 1939-1945 war—the 'Blitz Hotel' incident in Glasgow, and the occupation of empty houses at Blantyre in the spring of 1945. Above all, they ignored the lessons of the Vigilante campaign of the summer of 1945—that far-off summer which saw the beginning of the 'peace', and of the atomic age.

The picturesque, but perhaps ill-advised name of 'Vigilantes' was adopted by committees largely composed of ex-servicemen, who, under cover of night, installed homeless families and their furniture in unoccupied houses—usually successfully since no action could be taken to evict them once they were in, until the usually absentee property-owners could initiate legal proceedings against them. This campaign started, and was most active, in seaside towns, for example Southend, Hastings, and, most of all, Brighton, which has a rather unique place among the South Coast resorts, in that it has a large working-class population. The original and outstanding grievance against which the Vigilante campaign was aimed, was the way in which big seaside houses were being kept empty for most of the year in order to be let at very high rents during the short holiday season.

From this, as the movement spread, it became an attack on the right of landlords to keep property unoccupied for any reason. The success of the Vigilantes forced the government to grant wider powers to local authorities to requisition property for housing purposes, while the threat of further direct action ensured that the councils would use these powers. Thus the campaign began with an effort to put right an obvious public scandal, it spread to become a challenge to the hitherto hardly disputed right of the landlord to do as he liked with his property without reference to public needs, and it ended with the official sanction of this challenge.

The squatters' movement of the following year sprang from another of these scandalous anomalies—the emptiness of hundreds of army and air force camps during the worst housing shortage we have known. The first of the 1946 squatters was Mr. James Fielding, a cinema projectionist at Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire, who, desperate for somewhere to live, moved on May 8 with his family, into the former officers' mess of an unoccupied anti-aircraft camp. As soon as the news of their action got around the town, other young couples in a similar predicament moved into the other huts, and the first colony of squatters was born. Shortly afterwards two other camps in the same area were seized, and this was followed by the occupation of several camps around Sheffield. The Sheffield settlers formed a Squatters' Protection Society and quickly linked up with the pioneer squatters at Scunthorpe.

CAMPS SEIZED

These events were rapidly followed by the seizure of hundreds of camps in every part of Britain. The authorities who at first disclaimed any responsibility for the squatters—passing the buck from one department to another—were forced into recognising the occupations, and local councils were instructed to turn on water and electricity and provide essential services. Later in the year the Ministry of Works, which had previously declared itself 'not interested', found it possible to offer the Ministry of Health (which was then the government department responsible for housing) 850 former service camps.

The government announced on October 11, 1946, that 1,038 camps in England and Wales had been occupied by 39,535 people, and on September 5 it was stated that 4,000 people had squatted in Scotland.

Since the government could not destroy the movement, it tried to absorb it, and expressed itself confident that the settlers would 'see reason' and 'move out when the situation had been explained to them'. A leading article in the *Observer* commented:

'The Ministry piously hopes that squatters, after certain explanations, will "return to the homes from which they have come". What homes? Bits of caravans or crannies in the overcrowded lodgings or the premises of others from which they are desperately trying to escape? The fact that ex-soldiers who have had plenty of camp life in their time should now regard an army hut as a little bit of heaven is surely strong enough evidence of their misery and despair. Nor are they likely to be terrified by the talk of winter weather.'

As the camps began to fill, the squatters turned to other empty buildings: houses, shops, mansions, disused school buildings, race tracks and a stadium, were among the places occupied, and on August 26, two Aberdeen hotels and a hostel were taken, while on the 29th two big hotels in Glasgow were seized, though they had to be abandoned later.

The final, and most spectacular phase of the campaign began in London on

ensure that all doors and windows were secured, but it did not ask them why, at a time when families were being prosecuted for sleeping in fields and ditches, their property remained empty.

THE COMMUNISTS

The Communists, although a year earlier they had denounced the Vigilantes, were very active amongst the squatters in London. So much so that people who had to rely on newspapers for their information assumed, and have assumed since, that the whole thing was a Communist stunt. Diana Murray Hill, the only person to make a serious study at the time of who the squatters were and what kind of straits they had been in (*Pilot Papers*, November 1946), reported from Abbey Lodge that 'as to the argument that the Communists gave them the idea of squatting, they said there was nothing to it. Many of them had been squatting of their own accord before the taking over of the flats. In some cases the huts they had been squatting in had been taken away from them'. And, 'Finally the crowd of sympathisers outside, the majority of whom Mr. R. knew personally and could vouch for their not being Communists... and of the squatters themselves: "Again he knew many of them personally, and of the ones he knew none were Communists. The squatters formed their own committee.'

Or as FREEDOM (21.9.46) put it:

'The fact is that the Communists wish to exploit the movement now that it has become widespread. One must recognise this fact even when one expresses sympathy for the arrested leaders, and solidarity with those rank and file Communists who have given genuine support to some squatters. Nevertheless the support of the Communists is a real danger to the movement. Legal action against the squatters was obviously very difficult; but the attempt of the CP to organise them has provided the government with just the handle they needed. The legal prosecutions will deflect attention from the real issue—the desperate plight of the homeless. It will lower the whole question to the level of political strife and opportunism. Perhaps most dangerous of all, the CP themselves will seek to turn the movement into legalistic channels. They have already formulated "demands" of the govern-

ment. Soon they will be urging the homeless to avoid further direct action and "do nothing to hamper the realisation of your demands".'

The truth of this evaluation was shown in the anti-climax of the 'general evacuation' by the London squatters when the High Court injunction was granted. This was treated by the press as the end of the squatters, and the fact was concealed that the many thousands of camp settlers were not affected by the set-back, and had settled down until they could find something better, while many of the London squatters were eventually provided with accommodation of one sort or another by the LCC.

In October, Aneurin Bevan sought to turn public feeling against the camp squatters by suggesting that they were 'jumping their place in the housing queue', when in fact they were jumping out of the housing queue by moving into buildings which would not otherwise have been used for housing purposes. It took most of them years in fact to get into the 'housing queue'. Over a hundred families who in 1946 occupied a camp known as Field Farm in Oxfordshire, stayed together and in 1958-9 were rehoused in the new village of Berinsfield on the same site.

A notable feature of the whole campaign was the way in which, quite spontaneously and without disputes, the accommodation was divided among the would-be squatters in accordance with their needs, the size of their families, and so on. The best huts and buildings, usually the former Officers' Mess, needless to say, went to large families, while the ordinary Nissen huts were divided among the childless couples. Of one of the earliest squatters' camps, it was reported on 24.7.46:

'The campers today discovered a 20,000-gallon water tank and have turned on the water. A youth, appointed as water inspector, is carrying out hourly checks to ensure that taps are not left running. A camp committee has been elected and the camp is being run on communal lines. Tradesmen call with their vans.'

HOPEFUL SPIRIT

In camps I visited in Hampshire I found everywhere that hopeful, adventurous spirit that springs from independ-

HOMES IN A FREE SOCIETY

THE FRUSTRATION arising from an ugly, monotonous and unhealthy environment is only part of the general frustration which is inevitable in an acquisitive and authoritarian society. Only as they become free can men build the environment in which freedom will be developed and enjoyed.

After a social revolution, the problem of providing some immediate improvement in the living conditions of the workers will have to be faced. As private property will have been abolished, all dwellings will become vested in the community. In each district communes will be formed to administer local affairs not directly concerned with industries, and these communes, or workers' councils, will take over the administration of all houses in the neighbourhood. It will be their business to make a survey of all accommodation, so that the large residential houses of the rich can be shared among those who live in overcrowded slums. Areas like Mayfair, with a surplus of large mansions, can offer some of their accommodation to the people of working class districts.

This, however, will be a solution both incomplete and temporary. The rich men's houses of London and the provincial cities, the mansions of the country gentry, large as they may be in the aggregate, are certainly not sufficient to house all the workers who now live in unsatisfactory homes. Nor are houses of such a kind convertible into really satisfactory units for families who wish to live comfortably instead of ostentatiously. Such a measure, therefore, will be a partial and a very temporary solution of the problem of rehousing the workers.

Most of the workers, and eventually all of them, will have to be housed in new buildings of various kinds—either flats or individual small houses. The task is an enormous one, involving the building of at least five million houses within a very short term of years. This would merely remove the overcrowding and bad housing, which are admitted by the standards of more or less orthodox criticism within the present society. After this has been completed there remains the even more formidable task of pro-

viding the rest of the workers with houses pleasant to live in and functionally complete to a far greater degree than the ugly and inconvenient cottages considered satisfactory today. In addition there is the almost equally great task, intimately associated with the rebuilding of houses, of reconstructing the public utilities, such as streets, parks, water and electricity supplies, cleansing, etc., so as to integrate them into a socially satisfying and unwasteful environment for living.

Great as these tasks appear, there is no reason why they cannot be completed within a relatively short number of years in a society that uses all the potentialities of a scientifically mechanised industry in order to achieve a much greater rapidity of production than exists today.

BUILDING WORKERS' SYNDICATES

The construction of new houses will be done by the syndicates of building workers, working in collaboration with the syndicates of factories producing construction units of various kinds. Included among the syndicates of building workers will be the architects and designers, who will no longer be hampered by the artificial barrier which in the past has divided the man who designs houses from the man who builds them.

The syndicates of building workers will co-operate closely with the local communes, formed by the workers on a residential basis to administer the affairs of districts, villages and towns. Each commune will decide how much land can be devoted to building and how many houses it requires. It will also consult with workers from other communes who need accommodation outside their own districts, or, if its own population is too great, arrange for those who wish to leave to be given homes in other districts. Similarly, country communes will maintain a proportion of houses for workers who wish to leave the towns for a short while.

The communes, having decided what accommodation they needed, will arrange with the building syndicates for the work to be done. The building syndicates will undertake all the constructional details, in

ence and spontaneous co-operation. Everywhere I saw attempts to make those bleak huts look 'more like home'. Communal cooking, laundering and nursery facilities sprang up. Fathers took turns to stoke the boilers, mothers took turns to do the settlement's shopping, and the children collected up the rubbish left by the army and made bonfires of it. For them at least, it was a real adventure. Squatters Protection Societies and Federations were formed to protect their mutual interest. Some memorable scenes of solidarity were seen during the seizures at London hotels, when, in the face of police opposition, complete strangers threw into the buildings blankets and parcels of food, without hope of recompense.

One of the remarkable features of the squatters' communities was that they were formed from people who had very little in common except their homelessness—tinkers and university dons were amongst them. A very revealing report on the squatters, in the series 'How Are They Now?' appeared in the *News Chronicle* for January 14, 1947. The correspondent describes a camp in Lancashire:

'... There are two camps within the camp—the official squatters (that is, people who have been placed in the huts after the first invasion) and the unofficial squatters (the veterans, who have been allowed to remain on sufferance).

'Both pay the same rent of 10s. a week—but there the similarity ends. Although one would have imagined that the acceptance of rent from both should accord them identical privileges, in fact, it does not. Workmen have put up partitions in the huts of the official squatters—and have put in sinks and other numerous conveniences. These are the sheep; the goats have perforce to fend for themselves.

'An interesting commentary on the situation was made by one of the young welfare officers attached to the housing department. On her visit of inspection she found that the goats had set to work with a will, improvising partitions, running up curtains, distemper, painting and using initiative.

'The official squatters, on the other hand, sat about glumly without using initiative or lifting a hand to help themselves and bemoaning their fate, even though they might have been removed from the most appalling slum property. Until the overworked corporation workmen got around to them they would not attempt to improve

Continued on page 4

their turn arranging with other syndicates for the manufacture and transport of the necessary materials. They will gain the opinion of occupants as to faults and possible improvements in design, and modify their practice accordingly. They can also carry out experiments in design on their own account, building trial houses which they can invite workers to use in order to test the practical value of new ideas in architecture or equipment.

The relations between the communes and the workers' syndicates will be similar with regard to the public utilities which complete the communal environment. Electrical workers, for instance, will undertake to supply the necessary current for the communes and for industrial plant and to provide the requisite electric equipment.

CHANGED ATTITUDES

Certain general tendencies seem probable. The first is a changed attitude towards the town. When their work no longer ties them to one spot, many people will desire something different from the life of the great cities which have sprung from the administrative and industrial centralism of the last century. In a society based on decentralisation and federalism in communal and industrial affairs, the practical justification for large cities will vanish, and many of the inhabitants will begin to desert these overgrown agglomerations. The result will be an increase in the population of the country districts and the smaller towns. It will also, no doubt, be desirable to build new cities, of limited dimensions, in order to avoid the growth of further bands of suburbs round existing cities. These new cities would be surrounded by country—nowhere should the fields be more than reasonable walking distance from the centre, and within their boundaries, as in the old mediaeval cities, there would be gardens and public lawns. In general, the new society will probably see a strong tendency for the country to become more thickly populated, and for the towns to become more ruralised. Even in the old cities, this is likely to take place as their populations shrink and old, useless buildings are pulled down and replaced by parks and gardens.

Dwellings will be built for health and pleasure. They will be so oriented and spaced as to receive the maximum sunlight. They will be constructed so as to

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STRUGGLE OF THE HOMELESS

King Hill Campaign

Law, being a tyrant, compels many things to be done contrary to nature.

—PLATO: *Protagoras*.

THREE YEARS AGO, the persecution of homeless families at King Hill Hostel by Kent County Council was a national scandal. This was the hostel near Maidstone where KCC discharged its statutory obligation to give temporary accommodation to homeless families. Many will find it a shock to realise it was 'all that time ago', so great was the disgust at inhuman Bumbledom, so inspiring the fight against it by the families and friends.

For many others, the events are already dim and distant, the lessons forgotten or never learned. There is fortunately a well-documented study, 'KCC versus the Homeless'; unfortunately, space permits here only the barest outline.

On October 5, 1965, a Kent Solidarity Group leaflet exposed the scandal, as follows:

'At West Malling, in the heart of Kent, is a collection of dilapidated wooden huts, surrounded by a high wire fence. It looks like a Nazi forced labour camp. The Kent County Council call it King Hill Hostel. Many years ago this place was a workhouse. The living conditions then could not have been much worse than they are now. On entering, it's hard to believe that it's 1965 and not 1865. Yet the 43 mothers and over 100 children who are cooped up in the small partitioned sections of these huts are desperate to stay. They are homeless. They have nowhere else to go. This miserable misfortune enables the worthy Kent councillors to get from the families a signed acceptance of a degrading list of rules and conditions before being admitted.

'No intoxicants. No animals. The communal toilet facilities and the large corridors must be scrubbed (no mops allowed) and polished every day. Uniformed staff inspect whenever they like. Some enter a family's living section without knocking. There is no privacy. If a mother or one of her children is ill, the "Officer-in-Charge" decides whether a doctor is necessary. This "OC" has no medical qualifications. Another rule is that a family must move after 3 months although the councillors will not help to find anywhere else for them to live. Many families have overstayed this 3-months limit. The councillors are taking court proceedings to turn them onto the streets. Much exalted "British Justice" then goes a step further. The children are taken from their mother as "being in need of care and protection".

'This alone is a good reason why husbands should break the rule which only allows them to visit during certain times at weekends. Although the penalty for disobeying is eviction of the whole family, 14 husbands recently moved in and are determined to stay. There are other good reasons. Their wives fear the "prowlers" who knock on the windows at night. They have to pay the KCC for their wives and children and also for their own digs. They have to pay fares to visit their families. They can't get work in the area—local bosses tell the employment exchange not to send anyone from the half-way house.

'But how do families get into this apparently hopeless situation? The immediate reason is the greed of landlords who have evicted them. But they are really the victims of a rotten society. The bosses of the political parties all agree about spending £2,000 million on means for waging war. Shareholders make fantastic profits out of it. While thousands are homeless, millions of pounds are spent on luxury flats and houses, and gigantic office blocks. While all this continues apace, the homeless at West Malling must suffer the intimidation and blackmail of the local and County authorities.'

The leaflet went on to describe the case of Stan Daniels and his wife Joan and four children. Evicted by the new owner of their home in Bromley (20 miles away), Mrs. Daniels and the children were eventually forced to come to King Hill. They hated to be split up under the 'no husbands' rule, but had no other choice, save having their children 'taken into care'.

'By the end of the three months, neither Stan nor Joan Daniels had been able to find anywhere else to live although they were prepared to pay a reasonable rent. Now Stan fought back. The family did not move out. Stan moved in.

'On August 31, officials of the KCC arrived to evict the Daniels. They barricaded themselves in. Intimidation was used. The water supply to all huts was cut off. Other residents in the Daniels' hut were told to leave so as to isolate them. Mrs. Carol Dore says she was given three days' notice to quit when she refused, although she had been there only

two weeks. A Council official, Mr. H. Brown, said that "thirty women and eighty children crowded into the corridor in a solid mass... and the entrance to the hostel had been barricaded by dustbins". Mr. Brown concluded that efforts to force the Daniels out therefore had to be abandoned. With the solidarity of the other residents, Stan and Joan Daniels won the first round.

'Thirteen other husbands moved in. In the High Court on Monday, October 4, the Kent councillors got an interim injunction which enables them to use force to separate the 14 husbands from their wives and children if they are still there after midday on Friday, October 8.

'We say to the Kent councillors: STOP SMASHING UP FAMILIES! IF YOU CAN'T HELP REHOUSE THEM, KEEP YOUR HEAVY HANDS OFF! We call on all working people to make these facts as widely known as possible. These families are human beings, not things to be moved according to bureaucratic rules and regulations.

'Show your solidarity. Hold collections at work. Help them in their defence and other costs. WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

'Will the Labour Government send bailiffs and hordes of police (as the Tories did in St. Pancras in 1960) to evict working people from their miserable accommodation? WILL YOU LET THEM?

Appealing against the injunction mentioned, the 14 husbands lost. Four of them were at once singled out, accused of breaking the injunction, and found guilty of contempt of court. On legal advice they gave an undertaking to Mr. Justice Lawton that they would 'keep away from this hostel except at the proper visiting times which are between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays'. 'In the event of an emergency such as the illness of a wife or child' they could enter only after 'first reporting to the police and being accompanied by a police officer...'

As the judge spoke, pickets belonging to the Friends of King Hill outside in the Strand carried posters saying, 'Four men on trial for sleeping with their wives', and 'Is marriage a crime? KCC says yes'.

However, two men, Brian Lomas and Roy Mills, almost at once withdrew the promises regarding their families. Embarrassed already by the publicity raised by public meetings of the Residents and Friends of King Hill, the law at first wouldn't listen. A fortnight later, Lomas and Mills got a hearing and were jailed by Lawton on November 19.

Within this fortnight, the campaign had already gathered more momentum. The principal demands were the changing of the rules that (1) excluded husbands, and (2) restricted the stay of families to three months.

King Hill Residents and Friends went to Labour Party Erith bye-election meetings and asked visiting Ministers awkward questions. The stewards replied with blackshirt tactics, giving the campaign more national publicity.

Nine husbands entered the hostel for a 'sleep-in' on Saturday night, November 13, and showed that even the KCC couldn't tamper for ever with the laws of nature.'

Residents and Friends interrupted the expenses-paid torpor of Kent County Council meetings with more awkward questions, and the scandal grew.

When Lomas and Mills were jailed, the whole affair was blown sky-high. At a demonstration outside Brixton, police regulations were defied and messages sent over a loudhailer relayed to the two imprisoned men by other prisoners.

By now, so vast was the Crown's embarrassment that it rapidly accepted Brian Lomas's and Roy Mills' offer to renew their undertakings. On November

30, 1965, they were freed. They were asked for no apology; instead the judge, Lawton, spoke some ridiculous words about the Christmas spirit—while Christmas was still three-and-a-half weeks away!

Pickets were held at the homes of the Minister of Health, and the county medical officer, Elliott—Kent's workhouse master'. A lobby of Kent Labour MPs was organised.

Eventually the question was tested in the High Court whether or not husbands had a right to stay at King Hill. The judges found for the KCC—against the homeless. Nonetheless, the husbands stayed on. No evictions took place.

Finally, the Kent County Council climbed down. Husbands (who had been staying at the hostel in force for some months) were officially admitted. The three-month rule was not rescinded, but had, from the moment of Stan Daniels's action leading to the launching of the campaign, become a complete dead-letter. The committee of the Friends of King Hill nonetheless remains in existence 'to keep a watchful eye on developments at the hostel'.

The pamphlet 'KCC versus the Homeless', issued when the campaign was largely won, contains not only an account, but some excellent conclusions. Space here again allows only a short extract:

'Life at King Hill starkly shows up the totality of the modern proletarian condition. These families are caught in a web. The impersonal and hostile fabric of this web dominates and permeates every aspect of their lives. Wherever they turn, they come up against a cold, callous reality, based on rules, regulations and institutions beyond both comprehension and control. The object of the rules appears to be simply the imposition of an alien almost abstract will on those

Abridge 'known and feared' Hostel

AFTER THE VICTORY at King Hill, I decided to visit a place I'd heard rumours about from many homeless people in Sutton's Hostel, Hornchurch and from the half-way house in Ilford. This was Abridge Hostel: all those who knew about it feared it—for Abridge was the 'punishment block'—where those families who'd 'misbehaved' at other hostels were sent.

On September 29, 1966, I'd read in the *Chigwell Times* that some of the husbands had been sleeping in cars to be near their families. Throughout October 1966 I visited the hostel many times and got to know the husbands and families well. I soon learnt why Abridge was known and feared.

I've visited many hostels over the last three years—but never have I seen a place like Abridge. Eleven women and 38 children lived in two dormitories—one all night, the other all day. There was absolutely no privacy, no separate rooms, no escape from those two rooms (unless you went to the bog!). In these two rooms the residents lived and died. Men, of course, were not allowed—indeed it would have been impossible for them to live there, as all the women slept in the one long dormitory. They were allowed in for four hours on Saturdays and Sundays only. The women had to be in by 10 p.m. To go away for a weekend they needed special 'passes'. This was Abridge Hostel.

PETITION

The men had already presented a petition to Essex County Council, and during October they campaigned for its acceptance. After a month of waiting it was finally decided that action was necessary.

On Sunday, October 30, six husbands with supporters invaded the hostel and 'inspected' it. Measurements were taken of the dormitories and the 'isolation' block—an empty block with extra beds and blankets. The blanket store was broken into, and new blankets handed out to the wives, who had only two blankets each—and these full of holes. The men then attempted to eat a Sunday dinner with their families. By this time the police arrived and removed the men eating their dinners.

The publicity was enormous and the Council was obviously embarrassed. The men threatened to return next Sunday if conditions were not improved. They also threatened to convert the place into family units, if the Council continued to separate them from their families—this was the reason they had measured up the buildings.

On Wednesday, November 2, the Council's Chief Welfare Officer, Mr. W. Boyce, visited the hostel. The men were granted concessions—the main one

least able to fend for themselves.

'Few of the families at King Hill have any savings. Wages are usually well below average. From economic necessity many of the King Hill husbands have had to change jobs. Or if they have kept their jobs, hours have to be spent on travel. Being pushed around, at work, is nothing new to these families. In this respect their fate is commonplace. Hundreds of thousands are submitted to this in modern industrial societies. Where these families differ is that in every other aspect of their lives they also experience the tremendous pressures of a hostile environment. Outside of work, they experience the same alienation, the same degradation, the same systematic dehumanization. When husbands apply for work and they say their families are at King Hill, prospective employers turn their noses up. When wives apply for accommodation giving the address of the cursed hostel people just don't want to know. The children get snubbed at the local school. The tradesmen are calculating and cautious. The very name of the hostel carries a social stigma. Treated like dirt, the families gradually begin to feel like it.

'Those who end up at King Hill have been deprived of a part of themselves. The destruction has taken place bit by bit. They have lost some of their self-confidence, some of their awareness of their rights, some of their ability or will to fight back. Because less articulate than most they get pushed around—by the local NAB bureaucrats, by local doctors, by the officials of housing committees, etc. They are on the receiving end 24 hours a day. Look at the picture of 28-year-old Mrs. Mildred Mills, taken outside Brixton prison (see cover). It sums up the totality of the proletarian condition, even in 1965.

'The Friends of King Hill have helped these families regain something of what they had lost. They have helped them stand on their feet again and look the world in the eye. They have helped them appropriate a fraction of their lost humanity.'

was being allowed to visit their families every evening and all day weekends. Unanimously they rejected these as completely inadequate.

HUSBANDS MOVE IN

On Sunday, November 6, the men returned to the hostel. This time, however, we were all 'armed' with doors, carpets, electric drills, tools, hardboard and other equipment. The aim was to convert the hostel into family accommodation units—to enable the husbands to move in. Work was commenced immediately—moving two families into the empty 'isolation block' and converting the dormitory for the rest. There were about 20 of us doing this—and soon the police arrived and tried to remove us. This proved a more difficult task than they'd bargained for—as fast as they removed us we climbed back in the windows. Eventually more police arrived—and more, and so the battle went on for a couple of hours.

Eventually the police put through a phone call to Mr. Boyce. We spoke to him. He told us 'we couldn't do this sort of thing—it wasn't allowed, etc., etc.' We replied that 'we had done it'. The police explained that they were 'having difficulty' removing us. Boyce agreed to 'look into our plans' for conversion of the hostel. We replied that this was not good enough and we refused to leave the hostel.

Eventually, faced with this, and the threat that we would return the following Sunday with 100 supporters, Boyce agreed to call a special meeting of the Welfare Committee the following Wednesday. At this we agreed to leave—but promised to return 'next Sunday' unless the Council backed down.

The Welfare Committee meeting on Wednesday decided to give in. They closed down the hostel, rehoused all the families and converted the place into proper family accommodation. The husbands, wives and friends had been absolutely successful. Once again 'the impossible' had been achieved.

THE LESSONS OF ABRIDGE

A number of points should be realized, which are of importance to the present squatters campaign:

1. Achieving the impossible: Essex County Council had claimed that they couldn't improve conditions, as the place was 'unsuitable for whole families'. Further, they claimed that they were 'not a housing authority' and so couldn't rehouse the families. Under pressure it's surprising what authorities suddenly discover they can do.

2. The weakness of the police position. Our occupation of Abridge, like our demonstration of The Hollies, was certainly a Civil Trespass—in other words the owners could sue us for damages. As regards the police there is great

Caption to Ronan Point

IT HAS TAKEN THE DISASTER

at Ronan Point to convince tenants in tall blocks of flats hate them. But they of course are the last people whose opinion has been seriously sought. Le Corbusier's vision of 'skyscrapers in a park' came true years later, except that the park got left out. In fact most of the amenities he envisaged got left out, in the interests of economy, and it now transpires that in some cases structural stability got left out too.

Architects, living no doubt themselves in picturesque converted windmills, advanced the Corbusian dogma; it was taken up by local housing managers who saw ways of housing a larger number of people on a given area, with the aid of a bigger grant from the government. Big contracting firms peddled their package-deal point blocks to housing committees, and that is the way that the Ronan Points got built.

It has often been demonstrated that you can house people decently at high densities, provided that you



are willing to meet extra expense on providing some of the amenities that the rich take for granted in their high-density life in Park Lane. But this doesn't apply in Canning Town.

The Ronan Points are monuments to the managerial approach to the human environment. If ordinary people had the slightest control over their own surroundings, would they ever choose to house themselves that way?

doubt as to whether they can arrest people. Certainly there are no minor charges (in this instance this works in our favour). As regards serious charges—there's really only Conspiracy to Trespass—and whether or not that's an offence at all is extremely doubtful. (The situation as regards real installations of families is rather different—here they might be able to make Forceful Entry, under the 1881 Statute, stick—but only might—there are ways of avoiding even this.)

3. Despite their victory, the Abridge families are still active. One is a very active member of the London Squatters Campaign—another has phoned up offering 'any support we need'. With this sort of attitude this campaign will win!

RON BAILEY.

Coventry Cross Struggle

COVENTRY CROSS, at Bromley by Bow, is an estate that should never have been built. It lies at the side of a canal, with a flour mill and a waste paper sorting factory in the vicinity. Consequently the whole estate is infested with rats.

There are 190 flats, most of which are occupied by families with children. Overcrowding is thus another problem. The children have no play space, and an area on the estate that could be made into a play space is occupied by air-raid shelters that have stood since the last war. There have been several attempts in the past to get the Home Office to remove them, but all were ignored.

After years of broken promises by the GLC and our requests being ignored, the tenants decided the time had come for action. An action committee was formed, with the help of the East London Libertarian Group, and we got to work. We drew up a Tenants' Charter and got it signed by nearly all tenants.

On July 9 we held our first march to the Eastern District Housing Office of the GLC where a Tenants' Charter and explanatory letter were nailed to the door. From there, we marched to the homes of two local GLC councillors, Cllrs. Branagan and Boyce, where we also left Tenants' Charters.

The next demonstration took place on July 21 when we visited the stately home of Mr. Horace Cutler, Chairman of the GLC Housing Committee. Seventy adults and 20 children arrived at Mr. Cutler's country estate in Buckinghamshire at 5.40 p.m. where he was waiting to receive us in the long driveway to his house. A heated talk took place, but while this was going on a group of tenants stormed onto the lawn. At the end of the interview, throughout which Mr. Cutler, like the clever politician he is, was most charming, we extended an invitation for him to come and see the appalling conditions to which the Coventry Cross tenants are subjected.

The next day, Monday, July 22, at

2 p.m., Mr. Cutler and his retinue of bureaucrats arrived at the estate. We took them on a tour, showing them the rat-holes, the drains and the general condition of the area. We also took them into a few of our flats, and they all agreed that the flats were not fit to live in.

After the official visit of the bureaucrats and their statement that the flats were not fit for habitation, we decided to mount pressure on the local officials. We called on Mr. Vale, District Housing Officer, informing him beforehand. He declined to see us at his comfortable home in Gidea Park, so we phoned him repeatedly at all hours of the day and night, and I hear that someone sent an undertaker to measure up the late Mr. Vale for a coffin.

Our next move was to get something done about the rats, so we decided to pay a visit to the Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Watton, as we had been told by Vale that rodent control was his responsibility. So, on August 6, about 50 of us blocked the main road outside Dr. Watton's office in Commercial Road, dishing out leaflets.

We then entered the offices and, as one official told us it was another's responsibility, so we invaded the next one. The officials then tried to split us by meeting 'deputations of three', but this did not work, because, as soon as the chosen three entered any particular office, they were joined by the rest of us. We left after being told that our complaints would be seen to, and the interesting outcome of this demonstration was that we received a letter from Dr. Watton a few days later informing us that 'the ultimate eradication of the rats is the responsibility of the Greater London Council. . . . The buck passed back to the GLC who formerly had passed it to the local borough!'

However, the GLC were finally pressurised into meeting our demands on this point when we appeared on television on August 20 carrying rats and describ-

ing the places we had found rats in the flats, e.g., in the bath, in a baby's cot, etc. Embarrassed by this, the GLC have now commenced the major operation of properly locating and blocking up all the rat runs on the canal bank.

On August 9, out of the blue, when we were all planning further action, came a letter to all 190 families on the estate, informing us that we would all be rehoused as soon as possible! Included in the letter was a load of balderdash saying that the demonstrations that had taken place at the homes of members of Macey's staff hadn't helped our cause at all, and would we see that no more took place.

We have gained two more victories since the initial one. We have received notification from the Home Office that demolition of the 20-year-old air raid shelters, which take up all the children's play space, would begin on September 3 (about bloody time too!).

The other victory came after a visit to the District Housing Officer, Mr. G. E. Vale, who had agreed to meet us, but insisted that we came unaccompanied by Ron Bailey, a member of the East London Libertarian Group, who had previously caused Mr. Vale considerable embarrassment. However, Ron came with us, in his capacity as Press Officer, and to our surprise the officials treated us with extreme civility.

The subject was raised about lodgers and deserted wives. We believed that these would be sent to homeless hostels, but they nearly fell over themselves to assure us they would be treated as tenants (lovely to see them squirm!). We also told them we were not paying the rent increase and this was not a threat but a reality! They replied that this was out of their control, but that they would definitely approach the Chairman of the GLC Housing Committee, Mr. H. Cutler, on this matter.

The change of attitude in the bureaucrats was something that had to be seen to be believed.

We have gained a victory over the GLC with three things; the help of the East London Libertarian Group, and UNITY and ACTION, action, action all the way!

T. JACKLES.

street will not stop housing problems.' It was an amazing piece of sloan painting; it stretched about 30 yards along the wall of Durham Buildings. Unfortunately he was caught (after completing the job) and charged with defacing property, and was conditionally discharged and bound over in the sum of £5 next day, November 4.

The tenants continued the struggle. They marched on the homes of Kenneth Robinson (then Minister of Health) and of Alderman Jack Parker. There is no doubt that they had a large degree of success.

Alderman Parker gave in to the pressure of tenants and public opinion. The nine month threat proved a paper tiger.

But the London Squatters say the campaign must continue.

THE TENANTS OF DURHAM BUILDINGS MUST NOT LIVE IN SQUALOR WHILST NEARBY COUNCIL HOUSES REMAIN EMPTY FOR 2-3 YEARS! M.H.

READ, CONTEMPLATE, ACT!

DURHAM BUILDINGS is typical of a number of similar buildings provided for homeless families as temporary accommodation. There is another equally grim and unhygienic place in Wandsworth itself—Battersea Bridge Buildings—and it is not clear why the families there were not similarly favoured with a letter placing a time limit on their stay. For the last few years these places have been run by the London Boroughs and before that they were run by the L.C.C. For generations they have been known as ghettos: that's where you go when you're down and out, you can't sink any lower than that. People in the locality know the Durham Buildings families, at school, in the play spaces, in the shops where no one is given HP if he lives in Durham Buildings. There is no bathroom for 90 families. Each flat has one cold tap, one electric power point and a lavatory which is reached by going through the flat and out onto a balcony overlooking the yard. The little children who play down in the yard pee on the stairs rather than climb perhaps four floors and there is a pervading smell of urine in the Buildings. Broken windows are not mended, on the stairs they are left gaping and in front door panels they are stuck over with paper and cardboard. Factories on both sides and behind the yard pour smoke, dust and steam into the Buildings. The heavy traffic on York Road, Battersea, pours petrol fumes. If a child leaves school and gets a job on reaching the age of 15, pressure is brought to bear by the

Council to get the child to leave home and find lodgings outside the Buildings. Some of these teenagers sneak back in at night to be near their families. When families become homeless, they are not allowed to bring any of their own furniture with them and this means either selling it all or paying for storage indefinitely.

—By Patricia Goldacre, of Wandsworth Community Workshop, who has been active in the campaign in defence of Durham Building Tenants.

ABOUT OURSELVES

WE want information on EMPTY

- luxury flats.
- officially owned places (church, council, government-owned premises).
- office blocks.

We need material goods (furniture, heaters, offers of free food) and offers of skilled work (by plumbers, carpenters, electricians, etc.) to make the empty places habitable.

We need cash for a 24-hour answering service. We want to hear from homeless families, families living in intolerable accommodation who are willing to occupy empty homes with our assistance.

We would like everyone to begin a campaign in their own locality.

The campaign continues.

Our address is:

THE LONDON SQUATTERS CAMPAIGN,
128 Hainault Road, Leytonstone, E.11.
Tel.: LEY 8059.

DIRECT ACTION—1946

Continued from page 2

affairs themselves.

How much this story reveals, not only about the squatters, but about the difference between the state of mind that induces free independent action, and that of dependence and inertia; the difference between people who initiate things and act for themselves, and the people to whom things just happen.

When the squatters' movement is viewed against other historical examples of direct action applied to the housing problem in a non-revolutionary situation, four definite phases, common to them all, can be discerned. Firstly, **Initiative**, the individual action that begins the campaign, the spark that starts the blaze; secondly, **Consolidation**, when the movement spreads sufficiently to constitute a real threat to property rights and becomes big enough to avoid being simply snuffed out by the authorities. The third phase is that of **Success**, when the authorities have to concede to the movement what it has won; and the fourth phase is that of **Official Action**, usually undertaken unwillingly in order to placate the popular demand, of which the direct action has been the most effective weapon, and to avoid further attacks on the interests of the propertied class. For nothing succeeds like success, and governments usually realize that, as Kropotkin observes, 'Once the principle of the "Divine Right of Property" is shaken, no amount of theorising will prevent its overthrow'.

The first phase was seen in Glasgow in 1915 when the Govan housewives refused to pay the rent increases demanded by rapacious landlords, while Partick women rough-handed the rent-collectors; it was seen in Vienna in 1921 when homeless ex-soldiers seized land in the ex-Emperor's hunting park, and began to build houses; it was to be seen again in 1938 when 250 tenants of Quinn Square, Bethnal Green, refused to pay any more rent until repairs were done and rents reduced; it was seen in Brighton in June 1945, when ex-servicemen moved a homeless family into a house in Round Hill Street, and thus began the Vigilante campaign; and it was seen in May 1946, when the Fielding family initiated the Squatters by settling in the Scunthorpe camp.

The second phase was represented by the great demonstration of housewives in George Square during the Clydeside Rent Strikes, and the strike of the shipyard workers who passed a resolution that 'unless the government took action to reduce rents to their pre-war level, a general strike on the Clyde would follow'. In Vienna it was the formation of the Land Settlement Movement whose banners were inscribed with the words: 'Give us Land, Wood and Stone, and we will make Bread!' In the London Rent Strike Movement, this phase was apparent in the development of the Stepney Tenants' League and the spread of rent strikes all over the London area; in the Vigilante campaign it took the form of widespread occupation of empty apartments and among the squatters it was still more noticeable in the seizure of service camps in every part of this country.

The third phase was implicit in the Glasgow Sheriff Court's decision in favour of 18 workers summoned for non-payment of rent, after a deputation had pointed out to the Sheriff that: 'These men will only resume work in the event of your deciding against the factor if you do not, it means that the workers on the lower reaches will stop work tomorrow and join them'. It was seen in the Vienna Municipality's recognition of the co-operative building clubs; and it took a very obvious form in the rent strikes before the last war when the landlord of Brady Street, Stepney, had to agree to big rent reductions, and to repairs costing £2,500 for one year and £1,000 for each year afterwards, or when, in the Municipal Tenants' Strike in Birmingham, 15,000 people got rent re-

ductions amounting to £30,000 a year. The official sanctioning of the first wave of camp squatters was the latest example of this phase.

In the final phase we see the complete justification of direct action as a means of forcing the authorities to take radical measures that they would not otherwise have considered. Fearing further big strikes on the Clyde, in the First World War, a government completely representing the landlord class, was forced to pass the first Rent Restrictions Act, and, remembering this, and with the 1938-9 rent strikes fresh in their minds, Chamberlain's government hastened to introduce the 1939 Rent Restrictions Act on the outbreak of the Second World War. The militant action of the Austrian workers made it necessary for the authorities, at a time of complete economic and financial collapse, to initiate the Vienna Municipal Housing and Town-Planning Scheme, one of the biggest and most comprehensive in Europe. In 1945 the Vigilantes coerced the government into granting local authorities wide requisitioning powers and the threat of further action made sure that they used them. In the same way, the announcement that 'Eight hundred and fifty former service camps are being offered by the Ministry of Works to Mr. Aneurin Bevan to help him in his emergency housing drive', was the measure of the success of the camp squatters. But for the opportunist intervention of the Communists, it seems likely that the seizure of hotels and luxury flats would have forced even more significant and spectacular concessions from the authorities.

The new London squatters' campaign is reaching out towards the first of these stages. Its importance is that it is one of those initiatives which could seize the public imagination and lead to large-scale direct action by and for the homeless. We, as anarchists, believe in popular action rather than government action, and in a situation in which people have surrendered their initiative to governments the best substitute for popular action is popular pressure.

The squatters' campaign is first of all, a symbolic cry for justice, a protest at the phenomenon of homeless in one of the richest countries in the world. Secondly it is a goad to government action. And finally, if widespread enough and determined enough, it will lead to an actual solution of the housing problem for individual homeless families. The organisers of the campaign will be accused of exploiting the misery of the homeless. But this is blatantly untrue. The exploiter of the homeless is a society which would willingly provide homes—at a price which they are unable to pay. The experience of, for instance the King Hill Hostel campaign of a few years ago, was that participation in a demand for better conditions, raised the dispirited homeless families out of apathy and despair into a new self-respect and self-confidence. The same can be true of the new campaign.

C.W.

(The author of this account witnessed and assisted the occupation of army camps by squatters in the summer of 1946.)

HOMES IN A FREE SOCIETY

Continued from page 2

admit plenty of fresh air and to make cleaning as simple as possible. They will make great provision for privacy—a need at present rarely catered for in working class families—and the elimination of external sound will be carefully achieved. They will be built away from through traffic roads, to avoid both the noise of such thoroughfares and their danger to children.

For the first time the social value of aesthetics in housing is likely to be fully realised. An ugly and monotonous environment can have harmful psychological effects and contribute to the most unhealthy frustrations. The endless bye-law streets of Victorian England with their barracks-like terraces of identical houses, the grim tenements of Glasgow and London, the ribbon roads of the suburbs with their miserably designed lines of detached villas, represent patterns of housing which cannot reappear in a society that builds for health. Instead there should be houses pleasant and various in appearance, comfortable and healthy for living. Variety, of course, does not preclude harmony, and houses in towns should be designed so as to make a satisfying whole, while those in a rural environment should be built to contribute to rather than detract from the environment. A brief study of any good textbook of house design, such as F. R. S. Yorke's *The Modern House*, will show what can be done—for those who can afford it—in the way of aesthetically satisfying dwellings built by methods and materials now available. When craftsmanship and design are freed from economic necessity and direction, the possibility of building pleasant homes for everybody should be even greater.

Homeless of Wandsworth

ON SEPTEMBER 25, 1967, Wandsworth Borough Council, a Labour Council, sent an astonishing letter to the homeless families living in its temporary accommodation (Durham Buildings and Nightingale Square). The letter demanded that the families vacate this accommodation as soon as possible and 'certainly within the next nine months'. The finding of alternative accommodation, said the letter, was the responsibility entirely of the families themselves. They had already been told that the Council would not rehouse them, said the letter, and they were being informed officially that they would not be permitted to remain in the Council's welfare accommodation for longer than nine months, that is, after June 1968.

The Chairman of the Welfare Committee (a strange name for a committee that sent such a letter) stated in the press that the letter was written after great thought as an attempt to discourage homelessness in anyone who might be thinking of becoming homeless as a way of obtaining a council flat; to present those families who were already homeless with 'an adventure and a challenge'.

This is the old, old story: after nine months—eviction into the streets—children taken into care—families broken up. Homelessness is no longer a reason for rehousing!

As soon as he heard of this scandalous letter, Ron Bailey visited them to see what he could do. He found them worried and indignant. Informal meetings were arranged and a Durham Buildings Tenants Association was formed as a result.

The first action was to send a letter to the Council, signed by 58 people, setting out basic minimum demands:

- a retraction of the letter and withdrawal of the 'nine months' threat;
- an assurance that no families will be evicted into the street;
- an assurance that no children will be taken into care, and all families given a decent place to live.

Unexpectedly they received a speedy reply from the Council: they would meet a deputation of three tenants. Charlie Dwyer, Jim Flower and Fred Gardiner met the whole Welfare Committee of the Wandsworth Borough Council on Wednesday, November 1. The meeting lasted for an hour, but the result was completely unsatisfactory. The Council asserted their determination to stick to their new homeless policy and refused to give assurances of any kind.

Alderman Jack Parker, Chairman of

the Welfare Committee, described his Council's policy as 'realistic and fair' (*Sunday Times*, 29.10.67) and 'a genuine social exercise' (*Guardian*, 30.10.67) and, following the receipt of the tenants' letter, asserted that he was 'not going to be browbeaten into making an irrational decision' (*Sunday Times*, 5.11.67).

This was just what was expected by the tenants, and they now prepared for a campaign to browbeat Alderman Parker into irrationally ending his realistic and fair genuine social experiment!

On the night of Friday, November 3, Charlie Dwyer, Chairman of the Tenants' Association, painted on the wall of Durham Buildings, in 3 feet high letters 'Stop Council persecuting children: 100+ children need their parents, not Council homes. Rachman on Wandsworth Council. Putting families into the

READ, CONTEMPLATE, ACT!

DURHAM BUILDINGS is typical of a number of similar buildings provided for homeless families as temporary accommodation. There is another equally grim and unhygienic place in Wandsworth itself—Battersea Bridge Buildings—and it is not clear why the families there were not similarly favoured with a letter placing a time limit on their stay. For the last few years these places have been run by the London Boroughs and before that they were run by the L.C.C. For generations they have been known as ghettos: that's where you go when you're down and out, you can't sink any lower than that. People in the locality know the Durham Buildings families, at school, in the play spaces, in the shops where no one is given HP if he lives in Durham Buildings. There is no bathroom for 90 families. Each flat has one cold tap, one electric power point and a lavatory which is reached by going through the flat and out onto a balcony overlooking the yard. The little children who play down in the yard pee on the stairs rather than climb perhaps four floors and there is a pervading smell of urine in the Buildings. Broken windows are not mended, on the stairs they are left gaping and in front door panels they are stuck over with paper and cardboard. Factories on both sides and behind the yard pour smoke, dust and steam into the Buildings. The heavy traffic on York Road, Battersea, pours petrol fumes. If a child leaves school and gets a job on reaching the age of 15, pressure is brought to bear by the

Published by
The London Squatters' Campaign, E.11

LILIES THAT FESTER

ONCE UPON A TIME in Charing Cross Road there was a radical bookshop known as 'The Bomb Shop'. Its proprietor was a Mr. Henderson, who also did some publishing. Such was the explosive nature of the literature sold there that on occasion soldiers (conscripts in 1914-18) were known to have smashed the windows. Came the Russian Revolution and the bookshop developed along orthodox Marxist-Stalinist lines excluding from time to time any anarchist or pacifist literature as dictated by circumstances. It prospered, notably during the 'patriotic war of the Soviet Union' and became Collet's, with subscription agencies for East European publications, a Russian, Chinese, gramophone record, and two paperback shops. This substantial publishing enterprise was, and is, owned by descendants of Quakers with business interests in mustard and starch.

In the early fifties Collet's expanded and in the re-construction the fascia board indicating 'The Bomb Shop' was taken down and more significantly a mural imploring the workers of the world to unite was plastered over. Perhaps this was just as well.

With the gradual recession in the publishing and bookselling trades signs were not lacking that Collet's were not prospering as formerly. Changes were gradually made and co-incident with this and the decline of 'Stalinism' and a more liberal approach in the matter of literature stocking—Trotskyist, Maoist and anarchist publications made their appearance. (However Collet's never was the official party bookshop. This function is filled by Central Books.) As was only natural with the conflict between capitalist and progressive aims there was tension reflected at staff level with increasing pressures on management and staff.

The first public detonation of the new capitalistic bomb came in the circulation of a duplicated letter to publishers of several minority political magazines stating that with effect from a fortnight hence Collet's would cease to stock their publication. The notable exceptions to this ruling were *Peace News*, *New Statesman*, *Tribune*, *Black Dwarf*, and (of course!) *Morning Star* and allied publications. This circular was produced by the management without consultation with the staff. This type of development under capitalism is not unusual—a similar policy of cost-rationalization was made by Better Books before they concentrated their shops.

However more was to come. A fortnight ago Don Neilson, who was nominally the manager of Collet's Charing Cross Road bookshop, was given notice of dismissal (after thirty years

of good and faithful service). For some time his authority and management had been undermined by nominees of the owners and this new move followed the withdrawal of radical periodicals.

It has been rumoured that following the events (and non-events) of October 27 the central committee of the Party dictated a new line to Collet's but one is loth to believe such an explanation. The simple dictates of operating a capitalistic profit-making business and the desirability of making Collet's a book supermarket, like so many others we could name, have been sufficient to de-fuse the old Bomb Shop. The decline of a once progressive shop is evidence if need be that 'Lilies that fester smell worse than weeds'.

However, all is not lost if staff solidarity is anything to go on, for on Friday, December 6, ten members of Collet's staff (from all branches) picketed the Charing Cross Road branch. The total labour force is about twenty-five. Collet's Penguin bookshop closed its doors for the whole day with 100% withdrawal of labour proclaiming this by a notice on the door advocating 'workers' control'. This unofficial one-day strike in support of Don Neilson was supported by a petition to the firm signed by the majority of workers—some who did not strike, signed.

A concession has been made with regard to compensation discussion and the union is considering the case.

A member of Freedom Press group joined the picket for a short while and was invited (not by Collet's) to display upon the window a poster 'No Freedom at Collet's' and to sell copies of *FREEDOM outside the shop*; copies of the *Socialist Worker* were also on sale.

JACK ROBINSON

KEPT IN THE DARK

THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT, no doubt trying very hard to show its detractors that it isn't feeble or wasted after two and a half years of mismanagement, decided that this island should adopt British Standard Time, which means in the longest days of winter darkness up till and beyond 8 a.m. and an hour's more light in late afternoon. That other continental fad, the introduction of decimal coinage is so wrapped up in the mystique of high finance that the inept dare not contradict. There is nothing so obscure about BST. This is the usual government monkeying, with the usual disregard for the personal heartbreak which might follow. The worry it has caused demands that its retention should no longer be tolerated. As with the two-tier postal system, people are in a position to effect a change through direct mutual action, which will force the authorities to act to save face.

On the morning of November 28, when most people had just finished their breakfast, a five-year-old boy died on his way to school, hit by a car when crossing the road in the darkness. Unless a strong enough protest is raised there will be more accidents. Motorists cannot be blamed, considering most of them drive more slowly and show their lights anywhere children are likely to be, but beyond making toddlers very safety-conscious, and experimenting with all sorts of methods to warn motorists of the occasional careless child, nothing will succeed more than persistent agitation for daylight hours as they were.

Edward Short, Education Minister, said it wasn't his responsibility anyway. The big chain stores would not bother to stock luminous armbands.

In Holland older children are responsible for seeing the younger ones across the road, while in West Germany school does not start until daylight. Norwegian children wear a twinkler. The Scandinavians never get more than four or five hours daylight in the winter, so they are used to travelling in the dark.

Wilson seems determined to run the experiment for three years, but there are ways to oppose it. Parents should not send their children to school while it is still dark, for a start. Presumably if the full number of school hours allotted in a full week are altered it won't matter if the starting and finishing times are pretty flexible.

The people who have a stake in seeing their children alive by this time next year should not be fobbed off with government assurances. Parents worried about fatal accidents on dark mornings must bring all possible pressure to bear and see that our government loses this round.

(Abridged)

RON PEARL

Letters

Drummed Out

Dear Editors,

The Orange fascists here are being shown up by you splendidly.

As one who has lived here for 77 years with short breaks, I should know something about them. Years ago it was quite common for a Labour meeting at a street corner to be broken up by the deafening Lambeg drums (about four feet in diameter) as the drummers and the thugs with them passed through and through the meeting. I have been handled before now at Labour meetings. There were always numbers of police who looked on seemingly amused at it all.

Yours truly,

Belfast

WM. GORDON.

Scottish Get-together

Dear Editors,

Due to some talk in a few circles of Scottish anarchists concerning a proposed Scottish edition of part of an edition of *FREEDOM* once a month, I think that a get-together of Scottish groups and individuals to discuss this is necessary.

We could ascertain how many would commit themselves to the responsibility of the sale of the paper and how many would commit themselves to regular literary contributions. Some preparation along these lines I think is necessary otherwise too much weight may be burdened upon a few individuals—which is not unusual. In consequence, the project is more likely to fail.

Since Dave Coull, Scottish secretary, has suggested a get-together first week in the new year and I concur with this, may I ask comrades for suggestions of time and place to be sent to Dave Coull. Perhaps other items for an agenda could be sent also. Address is in *FREEDOM*.

I wish to make a special appeal to Scottish anarchist readers of *FREEDOM*: How about coming to this meeting and participate.

12 Ross Street, Glasgow, S.E. R. LYNN.

Welsh Anarchist Federation

Dear Comrades,

Until now the Welsh Anarchist Federation has hardly existed except in name. We would like to put it on a firmer footing by establishing regular meetings

Tory Smear Campaign Flattened

THE DIRTY TORY campaign against Aberdeen students has come to a sticky (and noisy!) end. John Marshall ('sell the council houses, bring back hanging, etc.') was howled down at his little meeting in Aberdeen Music Hall on Friday, December 5.

Marshall walked out, scared to face the hecklers and called his opponents 'thugs'. Thugs indeed! He didn't have a finger laid on him, and if he can't face hecklers and is scared to answer questions, then he shouldn't go public speaking.

The truth is that Marshall probably had no intention of answering questions and his peeved outburst about 'thugs', etc., is only his smokescreen. Marshall, or any other Tory, doesn't want debate. This meeting is simply part of the Tory pattern of creating 'non-events', simply stirring up things they know will upset students and then capitalising on the resultant publicity. Eunuch Foul and Adolf Wall have been doing this for months.

Aberdeen students should also deal with those members of the SRC who agreed to speak at this meeting. This was a dirty rigged-up campaign to mislead the public against the students, a squalid right-wing exercise in electoral skulduggery. Students should deal with these babies at the next SRC election. Of course, they may be innocent, but if they're that naive, who wants them to represent us!

To be fair, Principal Wright, in an interview with the local press, firmly opposed any attempt to take away grants from any student. Aberdeen voters should take note of Marshall's views. If he gets away with it, you'll wake up one

(say three or four times a year), a newsletter, etc. The difficulty in Wales is that comrades tend to be isolated and they slip into inactivity. Closer contacts with the larger groups in Cardiff and Swansea would help to offset this. Therefore would all Welsh comrades interested, please contact the writer at the address below.

Yours fraternally,

3 Bayview Crescent, TONY LEVENE.
Swansea SA1-4LP,
Glamorgan.

Wrong Arithmetic

Fellow Artists,

Simon Watson Taylor's statement (*Letters*, 30.11.68), that Guillaume Apollinaire is worth more than Nuttall's 'bucket of shit' in remembrance, is of course unquestionably true, he is worth two buckets.

It was rather disturbing to see Simon, who by his own words is the only artist who really understands what Apollinaire was about, stand in judgement of Nuttall's public trauma, when negating his own revolutionary consciousness.

For promoting these sycophantic adorations in one of the cultural cathedrals that's sole purpose is the bourgeois absorption of art, isn't exactly a 'new reality' for anybody.

We are all aware of the fact that culture, like the economy, is a politically manipulable abstraction. The ICA, like all art museums, is the end of the road for any artistic action, from then on in art becomes a commodity on the open market. What chance the revolution (art instigated) in this context?

No, fellow artists, nostalgic trips into dead forms do not work, the spirit and the PHYSICAL body need liberation. A liberated spirit isn't worth a levitation if there is a guy waiting to shoot your balls off if you attempt to use this liberation to liberate others.

As Apollinaire found, beauty springs from 'a new source: surprise'. There is nothing surprising about finding art in the cultural cathedrals.

The artist for too long has rationalised his position in the system, his prophetic ability is in limbo for as long as he is willing to incarcerate his form, or sell out. The time has come to act, to create even, in the streets, where it's at.

Yours,

S.E.9 MALCOLM ROSS.

GET YOUR ANARCHY 94 TODAY

GET YOUR ANARCHY 94 TODAY

fine day and discover your council house has been flogged to some property company run by one of his Tory council mates. Don't get fooled by Marshall's anti-student hysteria, it's you he's after too.

But we venture to bet he won't hold another public meeting for a while!

PETER THE PAINTER.

Posters & Leaflets

Holding back the Rent Rise?

FIGHT ON!

Remember!

116 GLC Councillors

cannot beat

half a million

united Tenants

issued by:

London Federation of Anarchists

84b Whitechapel High Street,

London, E.1.

The above text is printed as a poster (15" x 20") available NOW. 6d. each or 4d. each on dozen minimum. Postage extra.

Now reprinted:

'Who the hell do you think you are' Schools leaflet. £1 a 1,000, 2/6d. a 100. Postage extra. 4s6d a 1,000, 6d a 100.

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No Rent Rise — Unite and Fight.

For we are many and they are few. With excellent drawing of the Patch family dealing with the rent collector (by Arthur Moyses). Price 3d. each plus postage.

FIFTH COLUMN

UP WITH ANARCHISM!

IN 'FREEDOM' two weeks ago Geoffrey Barfoot shouted: 'Down with Anarchism: Long Live Anarchy'. His point was that, while anarchy was a moral proposition or a method, anarchism represented the rationalisation of the anarchist method—an attempt to construct theories of what an anarchist society should be like, blueprints for a future society.

I find this distinction very confusing. The word 'anarchy' is at present used in three principal ways. To the bourgeois anarchy is chaos, a state of disorder. To the academic anarchy is simply a society without authority. To the anarchist anarchy is a society in which people run their own lives. The connexion between these three meanings is obvious: the bourgeois takes for granted that in the absence of authority chaos will prevail while the anarchist asserts that a society without authority in which people run their own lives is both desirable and possible.

The common element in these meanings is equally obvious: anarchy is always a state of affairs or situation, whether concrete or abstract, real or hypothetical. It is neither a proposition nor a method.

Anarchism on the other hand can certainly be called a series of assertions or propositions, for example that society without authority is possible. Alternatively anarchism can be seen as an approach to politics, a method of attacking existing forms of social organisation and proposing alternatives.

As a series of propositions or as a method anarchism usually includes trying to answer the question: what will an anarchist society be like? Another way of phrasing this question is to say: what will anarchy be like? Anyone who wishes to suggest that anarchism should not ask this question would express his message more clearly by saying: Down with Anarchy: Long Live Anarchy.

I would not shout this last slogan myself. Any fundamental criticism of society raises the question: how should a future society be organised? The first and most important reply to this, as Geoffrey Barfoot says, is that anarchy cannot be 'forced into a predetermined pattern'—or it ceases to be anarchy.

But that is not the end of the discussion. All sorts of suggestions can be made about the way society might organise itself—from general principles like the abolition of the wages system to detailed proposals on such subjects as transport and waste disposal.

The essential thing to remember however is that all attempts to say what a future society would be like are based on our experience of existing society—and limited by it. Our picture of anarchy—whether it is vague or precise—is more appropriately described as a myth than a blueprint.

The myth is based on our current views, needs and aspirations: it reflects what we think and want now as we look at and object to the society we live in. The function of the myth is to help us argue in our present situation that an alternative to existing society is possible. The myth inevitably changes as society develops.

But to Geoffrey Barfoot a myth must be an absurdity: 'a proposition must be examined to see if its assertion is capable of being falsified by reference to sense data. If it is not, then the proposition can be said to be devoid of empirical meaning.' He goes on to say that the concept, working class, has little empirical content and is therefore meaningless.

Geoffrey's adoption of the bourgeois idea of 'empiricism' does not help him in his attack on the construction of theories; empiricism, to use his language, is the rationalisation of the empirical method. It is one thing to stress the importance of ensuring that our views should be based on the world as it is—quite another to attempt to restrict discussion to what can be demonstrated by appealing to the evidence of the senses. Moreover Geoffrey cannot do it himself.

As he is forced to admit the basic anarchist propositions cannot be tested or demonstrated in the way empiricism demands. If they too are therefore 'virtually meaningless' what exactly is he on about? The only move left to him is to redefine empiricism: a proposition must be capable of being falsified by reference to sense data—unless it is an anarchist proposition.

I suggest that empiricism should be left to those philosophers who are primarily interested in justifying the existing political set-up and their own inactivity.

I would not disagree with the idea that we should be empirical. But it can be demonstrated empirically that people do not restrict themselves to remarks like 'A pound of sugar, please'. If they did we could all give up.

WYNFORD HICKS.

MOVING FUND

Target is £500.

Received to Date—£426 0s. 3d.

PREMISES FUND

Target is £1,000 per year.

Pledges honoured to date and donations—£542 9s. 3d.

Dig Deep!

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Estimated Expenses:

48 weeks at £90: £4,320

Income: Sales and Subs.: £3,669

DEFICIT: £651

PRESS FUND

Devon: J.C. 3/4; Glasgow: A.M. 7/6; Wigan: B.B. 10/-; Oxford: Anon* 5/-; Wolverhampton: J.K.W.* 2/-; J.L.* 3/-; Holland: A.D. 12/6; Portland, USA: R.S. 8/-; Aberdeen: I.S. 1/-; Nottingham: R.G. 3/-; York: S.M. 4/2; London, S.W.2: M.H. 5/8; London: C. 4/-; Ilford: A.G. 13/7; Wolverhampton: J.K.W.* 2/-; J.L.* 3/-; Hindhead: F.F. 7/10; Ashton-under-Lyne: J.P. 1/10; Philadelphia: B. & D.L. 12/-; Lewes: R.G. 6/8; Ontario: E.A. £5/5/10; Falmouth: R.W. 2/6; Woodstock, Vt.: £2; Brentford: L.S. 2/6; Midhurst: P.W. 3/6; Keswick: F.E. 5/-; London, N.W.3: T.M. 1/-; Enfield: J. & M.S. 12/4; Belfast: W.G. 5/6.

TOTAL: £14 14 3

Previously Acknowledged: £721 14 10

1968 Total to Date: £736 9 1

Deficit B/F: £651 0 0

TOTAL SURPLUS: £85 9 1

*Denotes Regular Contributor.

Gift of Books—London: M.W.K.

Gift of Pamphlets—London, S.W.1: T.C.

FIRE THE GLC

IT IS INDEED the measure of our time that the spectacle of London's firefighters standing on the forecourts of their stations publicly soliciting names for a pay increase is unworthy of newspaper comment and this in an age when a single blackleg at some small industrial plant can command the front page. As our economy disintegrates, as the State's demand for greater work output outstrips the weekly wage packet and the rise in the prices of our daily necessities, so the old Edwardian social myths flow down the sewer of history for the death of Empire is the death of illusion.

In a period of middle-class affluence and mass unemployment, they could fill the public services with men from the armed forces, already broken to the whip of discipline and the guarantee of the job for life, and the small but additional State pension at the end of a blameless job-life created a social working-class strata who could be relied on to take no part in the social unrest of the moment and in the final confrontation would stand by the State

against their less fortunate fellow workpeople.

But the days of the nursery and Kipling's grey cruisers guarding the lifelines of Empire, of the cheerful three-deliveries-a-day postman, of the jolly policeman haloed by gaslight, the plump and smiling cook, and the loyal colonial troops, no longer form part of the lore of our times and are but legends for the ancients of the saloon bar and the Ur politicians of the Young Conservative Group/Party/?

ILLUSIONS ARE ENDED— PEOPLE WORK FOR MONEY

The demand for labour has now created the situation in which the workpeople no longer seek the job that guarantees them a job for an X number of years ahead and the public sector of administration are now forced out into the open labour market to haggle with the private employer for the available labour. The public image of the doctor, the postman and the puffer train driver long ago crashed into the dust of yesteryear's idols as the cost of their industry lost contact with its service in the economic jungle of inflation. Only the nurse, the policeman and the fireman were left to hold back the sugar-sweet tears that flow from St. John's Wood and points west, for they restored the belief that somewhere within our ailing society were groups of people who accepted the moral responsibility for their work before material gain.

The police will always be protected by the State and the class in authority, for they are its final safeguard, and the doctors will always have a compliant press to alibi their demands leaving only the nurse and the firefighter to accept bad working conditions in exchange for the head-pat of public approval. Old and accepted illusions may crumble in but a matter of months but we who were weaned unthinkingly on them still feel that small sense of shock at the Hogarthian picture of a London policeman queuing with Carnaby Street-garbed strutters to sign, by the light of a Dance Palais, the petition held out by a uniformed and helmeted firefighter within the forecourt of the fire station.

SHOULD THE FIREMEN WITHDRAW ALL THEIR LABOUR

A sad world, my masters. The petitions themselves are valueless for anyone will sign a paper that saves their conscience and costs them nothing, and the firefighters are now one of the few working groups that can claim to have no enemies. For

POLICE BRUTALITY

Continued from page 2
A.E.'s witnesses were not reported in the press.

A leaflet with the title 'Stop Fascism' was handed out during the trial outside the court. It gave a history of police violence in Sweden, during 1931, 1932, and 1967. It told us that during the Second World War active resisters to fascism were put into labour camps. If this fascist tendency is not stopped Sweden will become a police state it said.

On October 18 Engurube was found guilty of six charges. He was sentenced to six months' imprisonment, a fine of £850 and deportation for life from Sweden. He is appealing.

The Right-wing Svenska Dagbladet said, 'A.E. is a typical left-wing extremist, and has been used as a martyr by left-wing youth organisations. . . . What type of criminal person will be the next martyr . . . ?' The editors of the Swedish capitalist newspapers have all played a part to keep the public passive, so that Engurube shall be victimised.

Xmas Subscription for a Friend?

three years the firefighters have pressed their claim for a wage increase and after this public manifestation of their internal unrest Mitchell and the Greater London Council have agreed to make an offer which at the time of going to press has already been rejected by many of the stations.

It is the firemen's case that they are forced by their job to work 56 hours a week for a flat 8s. 7d. an hour. With 500 men below strength they are, as in every other industrial situation, being exploited by the employers and they claim that for the 56-hour-week, 15-hour-long night shifts, undermanned stations, no overtime payment and no public holidays off they should receive an extra £2 a week. The firefighters claim that their weekly wage is £18 a week but one must point out that this is the take-home pay and the official rate for the rank and file firefighter is £1,040 a year, rising and sticking at £1,247 a year, but what matters is that we live on our take-home pay, not on what the employer records in his wage bill account book.

At the time of going to press the GLC have offered the firefighters a £1 1s. a week pay increase but as always the same evil productivity demands are included.

TO ACHIEVE PAY RISES WITHOUT STRINGS

They ask the men to surrender the given day off in lieu if called upon to work on a public holiday, with the exception of Christmas Day, and nastiest of all, the employer's demand that the practice of closing down the fire station at one mid-day Saturday for the weekend for all internal and external cleaning and repair work shall be surrendered and that the men shall agree, not only to be on fire call throughout the week, but that they will be on fire call on weekends and doing various manual jobs as well such as repairs and cleaning.

It is the old story on the part of the employer that if the men want a pay increase they must be prepared to pay for it out of the labour of other men axed by their extra work and in the firefighters' case it means that, with these and other concessions, the GLC will make a profit out of this 50% pay offer.

The final decision must lie with the London firefighters but they will be foolish to surrender one single working condition for payment, as the London busmen and women learned to their cost, and for those little comrades who believe that certain workers have a moral responsibility not to withdraw their labour, the question is, are you accepting your moral responsibility, little comrade, in the matter of the London firefighters and their £2 pay claim?

'BAD PUBLICITY'

A RISE IN RECORD TIME for the Dunlop tyre inspectors at Rochdale! After three weeks of stiff management resistance, stalling and bluff, the firm suddenly gave way to our demands for a 10/- a week rise.

What brought about this sudden change of heart was, very likely, the firm's dismay at recent reports in FREEDOM. Copies of this paper have found their way to the management, and the firm's in a flap about the 'bad publicity' it's been getting.

So at the same time as they were putting our pay up, the bosses were demanding to know the name of your correspondent. Luckily, the shop steward couldn't help them and nobody can prove who's writing this stuff.

And now as if this isn't enough, I've more bad news for bosses in the Rochdale area, for the formation here last month of the non-sectarian Socialist Action Committee is sure to take battle for industrial freedom up here, right into the bosses' backyard. Meaning of course more bad publicity for the local employers. How's your ulcers?

MUNICIPAL & GENERAL WORKER.

Freedom

For Workers' Control

DECEMBER 14 1968 Vol 29 No 38

PIB REPORT

Win a Penny, Lose a Penny

THE REPORT by the Prices and Incomes Board on the Building and Civil Engineering industries is a hard-hitting attack on both the employers and the trade unions. But in saying this, the report gives little comfort to the workers in the industries, for the PIB reports are first and foremost the State's attempt to make industry more efficient and to bring about more control over wages, union organisation, bonus systems and wage drift.

The report emphasises that the managements should bring these things about but adds that the Government ought to use its power, as purchasers of half the industry's total output, to force employers to implement these changes. After all, the Board is only doing the bidding of the Government and if Britain's industry is to remain competitive, it must be efficient. It cannot just be left to the employers, for they usually pass on wage increases to the consumer, so the State assists in keeping capitalism on its toes.

Of course one of the reasons why management in the building industry has been found so inefficient is because there is virtually no foreign competition on the home market. The *Financial Times* has suggested that it might be possible to experiment on inviting overseas contractors to tender for selected contracts.

FOLLOWING GOVERNMENT

POLICY

A lot of the report is taken up with wages and on this item the PIB does not waver one iota from the Government's policy on incomes. As was expected, the report comes out against paying the 1d. an hour of the agreed interim increase. It points out that the Government's White Paper on incomes lays down that the ceiling of 3½% on increases allowed under its criterion is to be applied as an annual rate, so that at least twelve months must elapse between settlements. Having got a 1d. an hour cost of living increase in March, under the previous agreement, the November interim award of 3½d. for craftsmen and 2½d. for labourers went beyond the 3½% in any one year.

The White Paper on increases says: 'Cost of living sliding scales are of diminishing importance in industry (sic), and pay increases resulting from such existing arrangements should be taken fully into account in applying the ceiling to the pay of the group covered.' Of course the opposite is true and the cost of living clause was one way of keeping up with rising prices.

With regard to the trade union claim, first submitted over a year ago, for a guaranteed 40-hour week with a 14% wage increase giving £17 11s. 8d. for craftsmen and £15 for labourers, the report agrees with the guaranteed week, but comes out fully against any further increase until November, 1969. The PIB justifies these conclusions not only because it thinks the industry is inefficient, but also because they 'cannot ignore the current economic situation in which the benefits expected of devaluation have been forthcoming more slowly than was expected. An important condition for the realisation of the expected benefits is that costs should continue to be contained.'

As with other industries, the PIB report notes considerable wage drift, both with companies employing a small number of men and the large concerns. However, wage drift in the large companies comes with bonus incentive schemes where union organised sites can push up their earnings by negotiating better targets. The small firms mainly pay a plus rate on the basic wage in order to attract and keep their operatives, but which, nevertheless, does not reach the levels paid by most large firms. After all, the industry is a large and complex one, covering the jobbing builder with one or two men to companies employing 2,000-3,000 operatives. Many building workers skip from one end of the scale to the other.

STEWARDS DID A GOOD JOB

The PIB finds that on the majority of the sites they investigated where bonus schemes were in operation, there was no real incentive, the productivity did not equal the wages being paid and firm guide-lines were not in operation for the schemes. Of course, what this means is that workers were earning too much in relation to the amount they were turning out, which usually means that the stewards had done a good job for the lads on the site.

There is no doubt that inefficient management does play a tremendous part in what the report calls a low output industry. In fact it estimates that workers are only productive for two-thirds of the time. This inefficiency, which often reduces the earnings of workers, occurs when the managements are unable to plan jobs in a proper manner, getting all trades working on top of one another in order to rush a job through. Usually it takes much longer because of this way of working. When you hear a head of the building department of the biggest local authority saying he will flood the site with men to get the job finished, just to satisfy some completion date set by bureaucrats who have little or no knowledge of the conditions prevailing on the site, one understands and sees how much better things would be with workers' control.

RECOMMENDS UNION- EMPLOYER TIE-UP

The whole emphasis of this report, as with previous ones, is on containing costs, including wage drift. As the PIB has pointed out before, wage increases gained at local and factory level are a major cause of this drift. In many factories and building sites, strong union organisation has achieved considerable bonus earnings. It is these costs that the Government and the PIB want to contain. To achieve this, the PIB calls on the unions to assist the employers to lay down 'guide-lines' for incentive bonus schemes, with no control by the shop stewards and members. Job evaluations are called for and the whole basis whereby the rank and file can negotiate targets would be undermined.

The PIB report favours more company agreements, giving facilities for shop stewards, such as meetings, etc., but keeping a tight union-employer rein on bonus schemes. They also recommend some variation in the pay scale for skill. This, of course, will mean some form of grading, adding further divisions between workers.

But workers cannot expect anything else from a State-sponsored body like the PIB. It is not meant to serve the interests of the workers, but quite the contrary. It means to pull the union bureaucrats and the employers up, by the bootstraps if necessary, to increase the exploitation of labour. It wants an efficient industry and estimates that productivity can be increased by 10-20%, but at whose expense? We all know the answer to that one!

As a postscript to the PIB report, the trade unions verbally condemned it. But now the trade unions are back to square one. At their meeting last week their endeavours to retrieve the situation had a tragi-comedy flavour. What they decided on was to put a constitutional amendment to the industry's national joint council reducing the basic rate by a penny an hour, but on condition that management introduce bonus schemes on all sites adding between 20-30% to basic wages. Of course the employers will reject this and even if they don't, the Government will, so where do we go from here? The trade unions, because they have been unwilling to face up to the Government and fight for the justified claim, are now in the embarrassing position of trying to find a way out of asking for a reduction in wages. If the trade union leaders wanted more bonus schemes, why wait all these years?

P.T.

Contact Column

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

Wigan Anarchist seeks contact with anarchists from same area. Brian J. Banks, 553 Liverpool Road, Platt Bridge, near Wigan, Lancs.

'Far from Vietnam' (Godard's film). AEU Hall, Robinson Road, Crawley, Sussex, 3 p.m., Sunday, December 22. Admission 5/-.

Poster Workshop Benefit Night. All Saints' Hall, Powis Gardens, Notting Hill, 7.30 p.m., Friday, January 10. Admission 5/- CAST Theatre Group, *Angry Arts Film Society*, Agit-prop Street Players.

Poster Workshop, 61 Camden Road, N.W.1. Silk screen facilities at the service of the class struggle.

French Student of British Anarchism 1918-1950 wants first-hand information. Lalloreth, 18 rue du Cdr. Bicheray, 76 Le Havre.

Orgone accumulator required. Pref. rent but buy if cheap. Write Frances Edwards, The Barn, Stair, Newlands, nr. Keswick, Cumberland.

Any comrades going to European Conference in Lucca, Italy, December 28-January 4 with car, please contact: Jen & Roz, 33 Clifden Road, Brentford, Middx.

Australian ANARCHY NOW. The price is 5/4d. not as previously stated in FREEDOM.

Free Schools Campaign. Support needed for anti-authoritarian Schools Campaign. Posters available 6d. each, 5/- per dozen. Duplicated leaflets 1/- per 100, postage extra. Any other leaflets or posters on schools needed. Contact Roger Sadiev, 90 Ermine Road, S.E.13, or phone Mike Rauley at DUN 1572.

The Crypt, 242 Lancaster Road, W.11. Music, Poetry, Theatre every Wed. 2/6. Audience participation. Dec. 18. The Mandala Sound and the Wherehouse Company.

Free Library at Trinity College, Dublin. Based entirely on trust. No fines, no membership. Open to all. Books freely donated and freely borrowed. Address for travellers: 20 College Lane, Dublin.

Red Paper. No. 2 now out 1/6d. plus 6d. post from: Anthony Reeder, 44 Upper Orwell Street, Ipswich, Suffolk.

Badges and Banners. Rectangular metal black/red badges 2/6 each post free or bulk rate (10 or more) 1/- each—resell at 2/- or 2/6. Also flags and banners to order, from 7/6. McGee, 42 Pendarves Street, Beacon, Cambridge, Cornwall.

Makhno Poster/Calendar. In aid of (Anarchist) Black Cross. Splendidly designed and printed. Poster 2/6d. Calendar 7/6d. from Freedom Press. Postage extra.

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.)

If you wish to make contact let us know.