

Freedom

Anarchist Weekly 6d

DECEMBER 20 1969 Vol 30 No 40

I WANT TO JOIN THE PERMISSIVE SOCIETY

AT THIS TIME of the year (and century) we are apt to be flooded with reviews of the year and the decade. We have been presented with the Fearful Forties, the Frightened Fifties and the Swinging Sixties. When one is confronted with the clichés of the present time, one is told that this is a 'permissive society'. This is taken as evidence of how tolerant everybody is to the awful behaviour of everybody else—youth in particular.

Duff Hart-Davis, to name only one has been spilling his soul in the *Sunday Telegraph* at some length on Permissive Britain. According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary the word 'permissive' means 'giving permission', its secondary meaning is even more interesting: 'permissive (of legislation) giving powers, but not enjoying their use'.

It would be tedious and almost impossible, to list the factors that make up the 'permissive' society. One can isolate a few issues which are apt to raise temperatures in the *Sunday Telegraph* and elsewhere: Long hair and picturesque garments for men; beards; cannabis smoking; illegitimate children; couples living together without marriage; decay of religious belief; and, of course, demonstrations violent and non-violent. These are only a few of the factors which are assumed to be everyday occurrences widely practised—even this is not true.

As for these being 'permissive' (i.e. having been given permission), this is largely untrue. Every one of the items listed have been fought for with the penalty often paid of verbal and physical insults, victimization at jobs, imprisonment, denial of housing and welfare, and hostility and scorn from all mass-media. These are for what one might feel to be minor eccentricities. For holding deeply (and acting on) major philosophical beliefs such as anarchism, pacifism and atheism, the penalties are greater.

But the newspapers, and all those in what are called 'communications', tell us that we are 'permitted' to do these things. True, if one is a leader of society such charming eccentricities are permitted one—example Lord Harlech's son's hippy costumes at his father's recent wedding, his second, one adds! Wealth and position are one of the safeguards against being persecuted, although this is not always so. Also it is obvious that when something has been accepted by the establishment it is probably on the way out anyhow!

But for most of the freedoms that we exercise we must fight for constantly. In the last two weeks in this 'enlightened' country warrants have been issued against the *International Times* for publishing advertisements of a homosexual nature, also the magazine *Student* for unspecified offences; there has been a police raid on a publisher for an obscene book; a publisher's sentence for obscenity was cut — after twelve months in prison awaiting appeal he was told he would be freed. (As an odd footnote to this case the Court granted, subject to the approval of the Director of Public Prosecutions, a request of the British Museum to keep copies of volumes 1 and 2 of *My Secret Life* (the subject of the prosecution), as this was their first publication in England.)

Day after day in the Courts one can hear cases of homosexual 'offences', drug offences, insulting language which prove the permissive society to be a myth. These offences are picked out as merely being offences for which one can expect the law to be changed in order to conform with the growing development of other customs. In *Life* (10.11.69) one finds an approach to the idea of the legalization of marijuana. At the same time that *Life* estimates that twelve million Americans have tried it, it reports a young man getting a sentence of twenty years for possessing marijuana. Hard cases make bad law. One can only compare this situation with the situation in America 1920-1930 under prohibition.

This is, of course, not to examine the many cases of wrongful arrest, of denied bail, and of prolonged remand which make up the pattern of 'justice' which is not even concerned with changing the law to make society more 'permissive' but is merely concerned with the administration of pains and penalties under existing law.

The permissive society is only as permissive as we can make it. It is true that there is more liberty in non-essential things but essential liberties are the ones worth having and the ones worth fighting for.

Every constitutional liberty we have—useless as some of them are—have been gained by people who broke the law. Freedom is a thing taken—not given.

I want to join the Permissive Society!
JACK ROBINSON.

There Will Be No Christmas

LO. A VIRGIN shall conceive and bring forth an abortion and its name shall be the World Pig'. Does that grab you where it hurts? Are we 'going too far'? Are we 'offending against good taste'? Then you're most definitely part of the problem.

For present-day Christianity is an abortion and nothing shows this more clearly than Christmas. From the mutual masturbation of present-giving to the drunken desolation of Boxing Day, Christmas is a disaster. Have you ever travelled across London on Christmas

Next issue of Freedom will come out on January 10

BIAFRA—Illusion and Reality

THE MORE ONE reads about the Nigerian-Biafran conflict the more one becomes sickened with the hypocrisy which surrounds this criminal tragedy. Whilst various organisations are struggling to fight hunger and disease in Biafra, governments are making political capital.

Britain, as the ex-colonial power, still treats the situation as a newly-established independent government fighting a bunch of rebels in an attempt to establish law and order. As far as the British Government is concerned, Biafra officially does not exist (like China and the United Nations). A few more raids on the Nigerian oilfields and Shell BP will take the Government's blinkers off for them. Economic wealth is far more important than people's lives.

The recent Commons debate on the Nigerian situation filled one with nausea. Only 23 Labour back-benchers defied the Whips, as a result of a much-publicised expected revolt. The Government carried the day, arms will still be supplied to the Federal Government, and Mr. Foley, the British Minister who was then in Lagos, was told that Biafra did not exist and therefore he could not go there.

The British Government claim to be the power in the best position to mediate, by supplying arms to one

side and failing to recognise that the other side exists.

If one casts one's mind back to the day of Nigerian independence, Britain, in typical imperialist fashion, believed that by a stroke of the pen Nigeria could become one nation overnight. If I remember rightly, Dr. Azikwe, a prominent Nigerian politician, said at that time that such a Constitution agreed by Nigeria and insisted on by Britain would at some time create the present situation.

As is usual in times of war, and becoming practice in time of peace, 'truth is a first casualty'. Reports of conditions necessary for a cessation of hostilities vary from week to week. One thing is for sure—the Ibos are not prepared to accept a situation where they can be massacred at periodic intervals as in 1945, 1953, and 1966, therefore they want guarantees of protection. The only people who can guarantee their protection are the Ibos themselves. Britain failed to do it when she was in occupation, the Federal Government certainly failed. The question then posed is 'How can this be achieved?' The only way at this period of time is an independent Biafra responsible for its own security. It is useless for the Federal Government to guarantee the Ibos

security in exchange for re-entering the Federation because they could not honour such a guarantee.

Reading Julius Nyerere's address to the Addis Ababa Conference (*Peace News*, 21.11.69), he makes the point that the Federation could let the Biafrans go their own way, the Federation could attempt to build a successful united Nigeria and then at a later stage Biafra may wish to rejoin on mutually-agreed terms.

Nigeria is infamous for its tinpot leaders, Sir Jo Jo of Back and Beyond or Sir Whosit of Somewhere Else all determined to maintain their power and status. Meanwhile the manipulation of Nigeria's Joe Soaps continue. One heartening factor has been reported from the front line, the repeated fraternisation of the opposing troops; this is more important than all the chat from politicians.

Many thousands of words have been written about the Nigerian situation and still one is left with a sickening frustration. One can assist in the numerous small ways in relief work, but the ultimate solution is with Nigeria. Biafra is a fact. An appeal on humanitarian grounds has no effect, maybe decreased profits will force commonsense to the fore; cash works in many mysterious ways.
BILL CHRISTOPHER.

HOW TO BE UNCIVILISED AND UNCHRISTIAN

or cricket.

Some demonstrations have gone horribly wrong in the past, partly one suspects because a solid line of unthinking bluebottles is no antidote to latent frustration. It is not just an effort to make South Africa seem the only country guilty of ruthless subjection of her own subjects, but because there is a very real and immediate chance of at least trying to do something while sporting relations with Britain are kept up, and much as many anarchists and others would like to see trade links severed, sport for the moment offers the best and perhaps the only opportunity.

'LAW AND ORDER'

One man who fears too much dissent may bring the required amount of pressure in the right places is Quintin Hogg, QC, the holder of the utterly safe Marylebone seat for years past and the probable Home Secretary (take note) in the next Tory government. His recent speech at Trinity College, Dublin was inevitably about 'law and order'. As Mr. Hogg, along with the rest of us, can hardly help seeing 'hippies' in most towns, that universities are no longer cloisters of learning but more like a

four-year base for debate and experimentation in readiness for a bewildering world, and lastly that many pop promoters are benevolent enough to put on a free binge after their all ticket concerts have shown a profit, has led Mr. Hogg into proclaiming that civilisation, no less, is threatened.

Students, the durability of the underground community and the fantastic response to free concerts, and the fact that a dwindling number of people, except within a certain age and sector, are prepared to believe all he says, is what worries Hogg, who opposes really desirable change under the pretext that such changes (one of which would be the usurping of totalitarian white supremacy in South Africa) would be the ending of tradition, a hallowed word which has meaning when applied to art, the culture of a race or nation, or perhaps the part that tradition has played from the historical angle, but which can never be used to justify the brutalization or possibly extinction of the coloured population whose country it once was before a band of greedy settlers turned their backs on their own country for riches and despotism in the countries nearer
Continued on page 2

See No.107 for why you didn't get a comic sexy cover on No.105

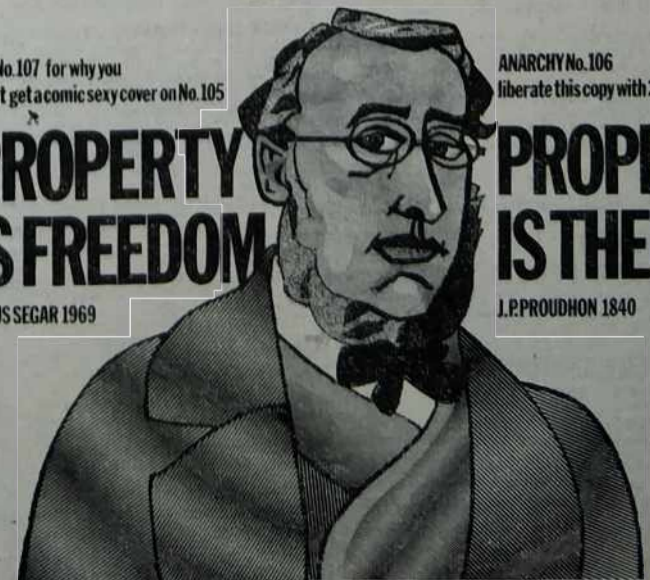
PROPERTY IS FREEDOM

RUFUS SEGAR 1969

ANARCHY No.106 liberate this copy with 2- or 30¢

PROPERTY IS THEFT

J.P. PROUDHON 1840



PETER LUMSDEN.

ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, two large demonstrations took place at Murrayfield, where the Springboks were playing Scotland. The first demonstration consisted of a silent picket outside the ground and was eminently respectable in every sense of the word; it consisted mainly of liberal and bourgeois elements such as clergymen, teachers and housewives. Nevertheless, as this gathering was moving away from the ground, it was savagely broken up by police, who wrested banners from the protesters and tore them up, and were at one time seen to drive a Morris Minor police car straight into the midst of the demonstration.

The other demo, which readers will no doubt have heard rather more about, took place inside the ground. The press and TV presented this as a peaceful occasion, when the strength and good sense of the Scottish police contained the more extreme elements and allowed the match to be played undisturbed. This

THE MURRAYFIELD DEMO

account was, of course, quite erroneous. Because the pitch was not invaded, it was assumed that no violence occurred. In fact, it was only violence by police and stewards that prevented a mass invasion of the pitch by the demonstrators, who were over a thousand strong. The ground had been turned into a virtual concentration camp. The two terraces behind the goals were cordoned off by four foot steel barriers guarded by hundreds of police. The terrace opposite the stand was separated from the pitch by two five feet steel barriers; behind the second of these were four rows of wooden benches, on which police and stewards stood four and sometimes six deep. Despite a promise from the Chief Constable of Edin-

burgh that stewards would not be used to guard the pitch, many stewards were standing in the front line. Whenever we tried to break the cordon, both police and stewards began to swing their fists freely, felling some demonstrators with heavy blows to the head, grabbing others by the hair and hauling them over the barrier, where more police behind proceeded to beat them up. During these incidents, a girl from Dundee had her leg broken and several students were dragged from the ground with blood pouring from their noses. Such violence was gratuitous and unnecessary; the police could easily have defended the pitch simply by standing their ground, without lifting a finger.

But the worst violence came, incredibly, after the match had finished. Whilst one large group of police rushed down from the top of the terracing, another group vaulted the steel barriers which had been guarding the pitch. We were trapped between these two groups and quite unable to get out. The police then proceeded to lay into demonstrators, yanking them up the terracing by the hair, kicking and punching them with gay abandon. It was obvious from their smiling faces and their intoned remarks such as 'Get into the bastards' that the police were relishing their own mini-riot. They completed their activities by hurling many of us over the top of the terracing and down a forty foot grass bank to the compound

below. Anyone who tried to remonstrate was immediately arrested, beaten up, and charged with breach of the peace, insulting behaviour or assault.

Since this violence took place mainly on the terracing, it has not received the publicity which surrounded the incidents at Swansea, which were mainly on the pitch, in full view of TV cameras. Therefore it is all the more important to expose the Scottish police for what they are. A dossier is being compiled to be sent to the Home Secretary. We already have 200 photographs but require many more written statements. Anyone who was at Murrayfield and who saw anything (as you must have!) please write to:

Pete Wallington,
Department of Constitutional Law,
Old College,
Chambers Street,
Edinburgh.

CHRIS MOON.

Is Squatting Finished?

THE SQUATTING MOVEMENT seems, of late, to be taking a breather, if not a dying gasp. The reasons for this are not clear. On those previously active, possibly strain accounts for a lot, also discouragement. But why discouragement? We never foresaw a quick victory, what is needed is continual pressure. Victory is often nearest when it seems furthest away, but one must keep going. To those who suffer from strain, what can one say, if not to ask, 'Is it really impossible to go on, or is it not worth it?' The original campaign at Ilford picked up an enormous number of recruits, until they just about equalled the original number. And by no means all were 'politicos'; indeed, amongst the recruits these may even have been in the minority. This is the stuff success is made of, and it was a vigorous campaign that fired their enthusiasm.

It always amazes me the numbers who turn up to protest at Vietnam, Biafra,

Rhodesia, etc., but who pay scant attention to things at home. Of course there is the answer that the atrocities in some foreign lands far exceed those happening here, and therefore it is more important to protest about the foreign happenings. This doesn't, however, explain why, if these people feel so strongly about these things, why they confine their involvement to a Sunday afternoon's marathon marching or the occasional riot. Of course they can't travel far away and take up arms, and some may give most of their free time to Solidarity Campaigns, but what of the vast majority? To counter the argument of atrocities abroad being worse, one can also argue that our effect on these is much less, and cannot be but less, than on domestic issues.

Like I think 'Lumpenproletariat' does, I too begin to suspect that the majority of the revolutionary mass in this country is composed of mainly middle-class hypocrites, who confine their activities to the

Sunday demonstrations on countries hundreds of miles away, less they be forced to look around them and be shaken out of their complacency forever and have to do something about the soul-destroying living conditions of a large percentage of the working people in Britain. Their lives would never be the same again, and they would have to make a clear decision between really working for a better life or admitting that they don't care or it isn't worth it. There would be no more self-delusion.

It seems to be a common attitude that once people who have attracted the authorities' attention and treatment through their earnest endeavours are arrested, everything should quieten down and that hard-won publicity should be allowed to die. All this in the hope that the prisoners will get lighter sentences. But this propagation of ideas and actions was exactly the reason why they had risked imprisonment. In other words, in the rather naive hope of a lighter sentence one forsakes what one has been doing, so that even the little punishment one receives has, nevertheless, been for nothing... rather get three years for something, than six months for nothing, if the something is worth it.

To those who argue that it's not revolutionary (shades of IS), one can point out that for the most part, in jobs, etcetera, the least militant are those which are the worst oppressed. With betterment comes understanding and a lift in morale. For me, their suffering plus the good possibility of achieving the relief of that suffering, is enough reason. The knowledge that the movement educates merely gives me extra resolution. In putting us here and refusing us bail they are hoping that the whole thing will be forgotten. Well, even if you can forget, there's 20,000 homeless people who can't. They can't fling their heels on Sunday and enjoy themselves reaping the fruits of the society they claim to detest or alternatively dropping out of it for the rest of the week. The authorities responsible must not be allowed to forget either. Let's have a People of Britain Solidarity Campaign for a change, huh?

D. HOBBITT.

Footnote: The above document is from certain squatters who are at present imprisoned while awaiting trial for their activities.

REV. A. BERKES.

Ghosted Soul

THE PRICE OF MY SOUL by Bernadette Devlin. Deutsch & Pan.

FROM THE MAUDLIN TITLE to the last page this so-called book is a bitter disappointment. The titles should read: Devlin as told to Maureen McConville (ghost hack) for Women's Own readership.

This book is not an autobiography, a work of art or a political manifesto, the foreword explains—it's just as well! The book is replete with mawkish sentiment, fulsome schoolgirl slang and wild generalizations. The members of PD are treated as cardboard caricatures—each with his label. Inaccuracies abound, some of them obviously deliberate. No attempt at analysis of the current situation is made—indeed the 'book' is already months out of date and only occasionally is theory allowed to interrupt the chatty little anecdotes—and when it does it is

merely the rehash of her latest guru's words of wisdom. The only persons to receive favourable mention are Farrell (adulation), McCann, Kitty O'Shea and her former headmistress at her 'madly republican' grammar school. We get hints that her father was 'something to do with the IRA' and 'proof' that her mother was a saint.

BOOK REVIEW

The stated intent of the book is 'to explain how the problems of N. Ireland threw up the phenomenon (sic) of Bernadette Devlin'. After reading it, the reviewer almost threw up himself. This was a golden opportunity wasted. The struggle in NI will not be helped by these trivial tales, although doubtless Bernadette's coffers will. The one attribute Bernadette undoubtedly possesses is courage—but it's a pity she hadn't the courage to disown this shoddy ghost-written rubbish.

Uncivilised

Continued from page 1

Next Mr. Hogg wants us to believe that the perpetuation of an unequal society is Christian. The trouble is Hogg is a member of the Anglican Church which has never bothered much about keeping in step with changing circumstances nor doing anything much about the evils of race, class and creed. The founder of Christianity would never have tolerated apartheid, while Hogg if he'd been alive then would have been in all probability Pilate's right-hand man, ready to help trick the rebel into accepting his own death. Hogg says apartheid is 'anathema' to him but this is mere speciousness, the sugaring on an unpalatable pill. Politicians can, and do, change their opinions at a moment's notice, and for that reason they've never fooled anarchists into taking sides behind sincere-sounding words.

MORE THAN MERE TALK

Quintin Hogg knows as much about true Christian charity as he does about Anarchism, which is dimly little. To him an anarchist is simply someone who runs on to the pitch at Twickenham. Actually I don't disagree with him that verbal argument backed by sound reasoning can state one's case very well as it has for hundreds of years, but although not a rugby follower himself, Hogg must know that this fraternity are amongst the most diehard of all reactionaries, even down to the cliché characteristics of this breed. Since these people retire into their own warrens, i.e. the club bar, where and when can those who wish to put their case, actually meet them? It needs something more public-spirited than mere talk to get the rugby tour abandoned and the cricket tour not to take place at all. If being decent, as these people so often claim

'Freedom'

Buy two papers this week

they are, and that means cultivating an attitude of indifference to racial hatred and persecution, long may we at least remain indecent. Decency is allowing the coloured man sitting next to you the same rights you automatically expect, and is not, as these suburban mental midgets seem to think, a matter of long hair, provocative female dress and four-letter words.

SPONSORED TOUR

As I'm finishing this, the news has come through that the Test and County Cricket Board are determined the cricket tour should take place, though the cost of policing each ground could make the cost prohibitive. John Arlott, who knows more about cricket from the reporting angle than almost anyone else alive, believes individuals and firms who've sponsored the game in the past will act as benefactors so saving the counties from insolvency, but failing this the profit each first class county hopes to make will go in protection money, the fee for 'adequate' policing of each ground probably amounting to between £6,000 and £8,000 depending on the size and accessibility 'under attack' of each venue. The fact that we live in a lunatics' paradise, with some wealthy men prepared to misuse their wealth and helping Voerster to believe his foul policies are acceptable to everybody here, does nothing to settle the moral issue. It was because Voerster dictated to the MCC selection committee that our team didn't tour South Africa last winter, yet here we are ready to welcome his team here next April. Last time England played South Africa at Lord's, only a sergeant and five PCs were needed inside the ground; next year the figure will be five hundred or more, which speaks for itself. Cricket is a game of intense concentration and I believe the tourists will be affected by what they observe here. Policemen too won't see the funny side of straining every muscle to prevent interruption from 11.30-6.30, and all to satisfy the whims of a small group of men who've never done anything else but behave like gangsters to uphold their power. There's plenty of good cricket elsewhere, if this is your idea of spending a day outdoors. I think the Test and County Cricket Board will regret their decision by the time the Lord's test is played.

RON PEARL.

Anarchist Federation of Britain

Contact: Peter Le Mare, 5 Hannaford Road, Rotton Park, Birmingham, 16.

LONDON FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS. All correspondence to LFA, c/o Freedom Press, Black Knight Group, 5 Nelson Road, N.E. Meeting Wednesdays.

LAVENDER HILL. Contact C. Broad, 116 Tyneham Road, S.W. 11 (228 4086).

LEWISHAM. Jon Rainer, 12 Oakcroft Road, S.E. 13 (852 0951).

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

FINCH'S ANARCHISTS. Regular meetings. Contact P.P., 271 Portobello Road, W.11.

BEXLEY ANARCHIST MOVEMENT. Steve Leman, 28 New Road, Abbey Wood, S.E.2. Tel: ET 35377. Meetings every Friday, 8 p.m., Lord Bexley, Bexley Heath Broadway.

S.W. LONDON ANARCHISTS. Meeting alternate Wednesdays. Correspondence c/o Freedom Press.

NOTTING HILL S.P.S.H., 18 Powis Square, W.11.

NEWHAM. Pat Keen, 98 Clova Road, London, E.7.

EAST LONDON LIBERTARIAN FEDERATION
Secretary: Anthony Matthews, 35 Mayville Road, London, E.11. Meetings fortnightly on Sundays at Ron Bailey's, 128 Hainsault Road, E.11. Ten minutes from Leytonstone Underground.

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.

Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Flat 10, Chessington Lodge, Regents Park Road, N.3.

REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND GROUPS
BIRMINGHAM ANARCHIST GROUP. Secretary, Peter Le Mare, 5 Hannaford Road, Rotton Park, Birmingham, 16. Meetings every Sunday, 8 p.m. in the smoke room of St. Martin pub, corner of

St. Martin's Lane and Jamaica Row.

BOURNEMOUTH AREA. Bob Fry, 30 Douglas Close, Upton, Poole, Dorset.

CORNWALL ANARCHISTS. Contact Arthur Jacobs, 13 Ledrah Road, St. Austell, Cornwall. Meetings on the second Friday of each month at 42 Pendarves Street, Beacon, Camborne, 7.30 p.m. Visiting comrades very welcome.

PEACE ACTION. Rory Weightman, P.C.T. Peace Action Group, St. Pauls Road, Portsmouth, Hants.

CROYDON LIBERTARIANS. Laurens and Celia Oter, 35 Natal Road, Thornton Heath, CR4 8QH (653 7546) or contact Keith McGain, 1 Langwood Street, West Norwood, S.E.27. Phone 670 7297.

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

FARNBOROUGH. 81 Mytchett Road, Mytchett, Camberley, Surrey. Tel: Farnborough 43811.

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

LANCASTER. John King, 4 The Grove, Lancaster.

LIVERPOOL ANARCHISTS & SITUATIONISTS. Contact Gerry Bree, 16 Faulkner Square, Liverpool.

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

MUTUAL AID GROUP. c/o Borrowdale, Carriage Drive, Frodham, Cheshire.

NORTH EAST ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Peter Ridley, 4 Rockcliffe Gardens, Whitley Bay, Northumberland. Phone 23759.

Road, East Ham, E.6. Tel: 552 4162.

ESSEX & EAST HERTS FEDERATION

NORTH ESSEX. Write: Peter Newell, 'Aegean', Spring Lane, Eight Ash Green, Colchester.

BASILDON & WICKFORD. Mick Powell, 24 Cannon Close, Brentwood, 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. Annette Gunning, 37 Longbanks, Harlow.

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

NORTH-WEST FEDERATION

NORTH. Phil, 7 Trinity Square, Preston.

BLACKPOOL. Contact Christine and Graham, Top Hat, 4 Rusk Avenue, South Shore, Blackpool.

BOLTON. Contact John Hayes, 51 Rydal Road, Bolton.

CHORLEY. Contact Kevin Lynch, 6 Garfield Terrace, Chorley.

LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE. Contact Les Smith, 30 Dunkeld Street, Lancaster. Meetings Monday at 8 p.m., Phil Woodhead's, 30 Dunkeld Street, Lancaster. Regular literature sales.

SUSSEX FEDERATION

Groups and individuals invited to associate: c/o Eddie Poole, 5 Tisbury, Findon Road, Whitehawk, Brighton.

BRIGHTON & HOVE ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Nick Heath, Flat 3, 26 Clifton Road, Brighton.

CRAWLEY ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Richard Ashwell, 87 Buckswood Drive, Gossops Green, Crawley, Sussex.

SUSSEX UNIVERSITY ANARCHIST GROUP. (see details under Student Groups).

YORKSHIRE FEDERATION

Secretary: Contact Leeds Group

HARROGATE. Contact David Howes, 16 Park Parade, Harrogate.

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

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

LEEDS. Direct Action Society. Contact Colin Arch, 11 Melrose Terrace, Horsforth, Nr. Leeds.

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

YORK. Keith Nathan, Vanbrugh College, Heslington, York.

WELSH FEDERATION

ABERYSTWYTH ANARCHISTS. Contact Steve Mills, 4 St. Michael's Place, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, Wales. Aug-Sept. correspondence only.

GROUP. Robert Linton, 7a Station Road, New Stevenston, Motherwell, Glasgow, S.E.

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

MONTROSE. Dave Coull, 3 Eskview Terrace, Ferryden, Montrose, Angus.

ROSS-SHIRE. Contact David Rodgers, Broomfield, Evanton, Ross-shire, Scotland.

NORTHERN IRELAND BELFAST ANARCHIST GROUP. No address available. Letters c/o Freedom Press.

SOUTHERN IRELAND ALLIANCE OF LIBERTARIAN AND ANARCHIST GROUPS IN IRELAND. c/o Freedom Press.

ABROAD

AUSTRALIA. Federation of Australian Anarchists, P.O. Box A 389, Sydney South, NSW 2000. Phone No. 69-8095. Open discussion and literature sale in the Domain—Sunday, 2 p.m. Call at 59 Eveleigh Street, Redfern, NSW 2015 for personal discourse, tea and overnight accommodation.

BELGIUM. Groupe du journal Le Liberaire, 220 rue Vivegans, Liège.

PROPOSED GROUPS

MONTREAL, QUEBEC. Anyone interested in forming a Montreal area Anarchist group please contact Ron Sigler, Tel. 489-6432.

VANCOUVER I.W.W. and Libertarian group. Box 512, Postal St. 'A', Vancouver 1, B.C., Canada. Read 'The Rebel'—please send donation for postage.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE. All those interested in forming a group contact Terry Phillips, 40 Grosvenor Way, Kettering, Northants.

NOTTINGHAM and area. Contact Dave Smalley, top flat, 43 Burns Street, Nottingham, or through folk club at the Central Tavern, Monday nights.

NORTH EAST ANARCHIST GROUP. Mick Renwick, 122 Mowbray Street, Heaton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 6.

MID-SUSSEX area. Contact Adrian Howe, 10 Silverdale, Keymer, Hassocks, Tel. Hassocks 3458.

NOVA SCOTIA. P. Ridley, c/o Newport Post Office, Newport, Nova Scotia, Canada.

These notify us if entries in these columns need amending.

THE RECENT WAVE of terrorist bombings in Italy has raised again the hoary old anarchist bomb-thrower bogey. On the day after the appalling incident in Milan, when a bomb exploded in a crowded bank, killing 14 and injuring over one hundred, it was announced that four anarchists had been picked up for 'interrogation'.

The *Guardian* had the grace to refer back to a similar incident earlier in the year, after which anarchists had also been arrested—but quickly released for 'lack of evidence'.

Since the weekend, it has become perfectly clear that there is no evidence in this case either, for speculation ranges far and wide as to who was responsible for this particularly bestial incident. The police are wildly thrashing around, among 'known' supporters of 'extremist' groups of both left and the right—for in the ferment that is Italian politics today, the emergence of neo-fascist groups has raised the temperature of violence considerably.

Some of these groups are known to act as provocateurs—creating incidents and getting their opponents blamed for them—as well as simply using violence 'straight' against their opponents. We reprint below a short item about Palermo that was in fact in our hands six months ago, but was held back for lack of space. It indicates not only the actions of neo-fascist groups, but the attitude of the Italian police to them (much as usual, in fact).

What is necessary here and now, how-

BOMBS AWAY!

ever, is for us to state our attitude to activity like the bomb in the Milan bank last week. This is quite simple: we are opposed to it.

Blowing people to pieces in a quite haphazard manner; killing men, women and children totally unconnected with your supposed or real enemies; maiming and blinding for life individuals about whose way of life, or social, religious or political ideas you must be completely ignorant, is an atrocity.

It is an atrocity whether it is done by a bomber pilot from 10,000 feet up, or a sergeant in the US forces in Vietnam face to face with his victims on the ground. It is an atrocity whether it is done in the name of the fatherland or motherland, the glorious nation, the church, law and order, or the libertarian revolution.

Inasmuch as FREEDOM has a policy on violence, it may be said that a majority of us who work on the paper accept that there have been times, and will be times again, when violence is unavoidable. But we don't like it, don't want to be involved in it if there is a better way of reaching our goal, and don't think it has anything whatsoever to do with the ideas of anarchism. It may have something to do with achieving an anarchist society

—but that's all.

In other words, a majority of us are not pacifists, though a minority are, and we can work together in harmony with them precisely because violence is not any part of our way of life or our ideas of how life should be. And we are at one with our pacifist comrades when we are disgusted by mindless murder like war, like concentration camps, or pointless propaganda by the deed which kills innocent people.

We want, therefore, to go on record before the culprit is found for the Milan killings, to say that we oppose this kind of action—and we hope sincerely that it was not the work of anyone calling himself an anarchist.

We say this, knowing that in the recent past we have supported a comrade who went to Spain with explosives in his kit-bag and the determination in his heart to further an attempt on the life of General Franco; and we have supported two young comrades who planted a bomb on the closed doors of the deserted Bank of Bilbao, in London.

We do not admit that we are being inconsistent here. If ever a gallant

Christian gentleman deserved to die violently, General Franco does. He has been responsible for the murder of countless thousands of men, women and children. He has imprisoned and tortured thousands more. He has been responsible for crushing social institutions and forms of industrial organisation more beautiful and just than any this century has seen. Only those who could say they are glad the bomb plot on Hitler in July 1944 failed, could say they would be sorry if one on Franco succeeded.

And our two young comrades and their amateurish attempt on the Spanish bank in London? Well, they chose their time, when nobody would be in the bank, to make their protest without loss of life; to show the people of Spain (if they would ever hear about it) that they have friends abroad with strong feelings for their freedom.

To kill a dictator is one thing; to damage a bank as a gesture is one thing; to go in for indiscriminate murder is another altogether.

This is the way of governments, not of anarchists. It is one of the reasons why we do oppose governments and their various barbarisms. It does not further the cause of anarchy one little bit.

BILL CHRISTOPHER,
JACK ROBINSON,
PHILIP SANSOM,
PETER TURNER.

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Palermo Fascists Throw Bombs

RECENTLY the political squad from Police HQ and the local Carabinieri have been very 'concerned' about young comrades, imprisoning some and then releasing them after the customary day of interrogation and the usual house search.

Don't be too ready to connect these occurrences with the recent explosions of bombs and thunder-flashes which have disturbed this Sicilian city. From the way the investigations were carried out and the nature of the imprisonments we believe that this is a definite campaign of intimidation, against which we should act.

As everybody knows (since the press and TV have been full of it), a few squalid little fascists have been caught red-handed, and, reluctantly, the police were forced to prosecute them.

Long before their arrest, however, the

CID knew very well that these delinquents kept in their den that arsenal which has now, in fact, been 'discovered'. For, to judge from the 'courteous attention' which has been focussed on our group, nothing could escape the eye of the political squad, and besides, the young members of MSI and similar organizations have made frequent public appearances armed with chains, iron clubs, various weapons, and Molotov cocktails. So one doesn't need to give the police credit for particular acumen to believe that they have known for a long time who were the originators of the violence carried out against things and people by these worthy emulators of the fascist old guard, and their arrest was inevitable.

PALERMO ANARCHIST GROUP.
Umanità Nova, 7.6.69.
Trans. D.P.

Letters

An Idea

Dear London Comrades,

The excellent ground room at Freedom Press (derisively called Freedom Hall) is hardly ever used except on Thursdays when the hard-working voluntary staff despatch copies of FREEDOM. Once a month it is also used for the despatch of *Anarchy*, I believe.

At the same time FREEDOM, that sturdy flower amongst weedy anarchist journals, is always short of funds. Can six comrades 'living' in London come forward and join with me in eradicating the above blemishes.

I would open Freedom Press Hall for fund raising and social chit-chat, ideology, plus chess. Tuesday evenings I could look after.

Who also wants to 'run' his conception of entertainment-cum-education-cum-fund raising once a week? If there are more than eight volunteers we can arrange a rota system.

Reply by New Year, please.

JOHN RETY.

Healthy Differences

To the Editors,

I'd like to put in a plug for dogmatism and sectarianism if I may. Stephen Halbrook, in his November 15 letter to FREEDOM, makes a plea for unity and solidarity, saying that 'anarchists of every persuasion must co-operate with, not purge, each other'. That statement sounds innocent enough on the surface, but let's

examine it more closely. Is the pacifist-anarchist to co-operate by manufacturing bombs for the 'propaganda-by-deed' terrorist just because they both claim to be anarchists? Or how about the individualist-anarchist: should he co-operate with the expropriation of his property just because some communist-anarchist calls it 'theft'? I think not.

There are genuine differences between the various sects of the anarchist movement and this I think is healthy. The important thing is not that there are differences, but that there are areas of agreement. It is in these areas that each individual anarchist can choose to channel his limited energies and resources. Conversely, if one anarchist should disagree with another anarchist on some issue or another, the former should say so and work against the latter. This warped sense of solidarity which Mr. Halbrook seems to be advocating leads to nothing but 'party lines' and purges. Fortunately, most anarchists are immune to this disease which seems to infect mainly the state socialists.

There's another point which Mr. Halbrook makes: the communist-anarchist communes he says 'will be voluntary organizations, from which the individual may secede at will'. If only that were so the individualist would have no quarrel with the communist. But, alas, I fear Mr. Halbrook, in his quest for unity, has misrepresented the communist position. Let me try to help clarify that position with a quote from the founder of FREEDOM, Peter Kropotkin: 'We must see clearly in private property what it really is, a conscious or unconscious robbery of the substance of all, and seize it joyfully for the common benefit' (*Paroles d'un Révolté*). Perhaps Mr. Halbrook would be good enough to show me the fine print where individualist-anarchists were exempted from this 'joyful seizure'.

Yours truly,

Geneva, Switzerland KEN KNUDSON.

Conference

A CONFERENCE of the Anarchist Federation of Britain was held at Manchester University Union on December 13 and 14. Subjects discussed were the statement 'Where We Stand', Anarchist publications and the function of the Federation. The meeting was rather poorly attended and group reports were heard first.

There was discussion on the statement and it was felt that the meeting was too small and views were too diverse to put forward the statement (which had been amended some time ago from the version printed in FREEDOM) as a unified viewpoint.

Sunday's meeting was delayed owing to the failure of the Union to open on

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

Give a Subscription for Freedom for the Feast of Saturnalia

Sunday mornings. Discussion centred on a statement by FREEDOM's editors and there was some heated criticism of some of FREEDOM's contents as being 'drivel'. It was pointed out (by an editor) that one man's meat is another man's drivel. It was felt by all that the growth of regional magazines was a good thing and Manchester comrades spoke about *Penny Black*, a leaflet-newsletter that they are putting out.

The discussion of the work of the Federation revolved round the comparative failure of the present conference as a conference. It was felt that the successful function of the Federation was co-ordination and the issue of the bulletin was a step in this direction.

There was finally some desultory discussion on police persecution, on the tapping of phones, the advisability of pigeon post, the amassing and exchange of information.

JACK ROBINSON.

JUMBLE SALE
Freedom Press
Sunday, Dec. 21
Bring & Buy!

A PROMISING NEW YEAR?

WE PROMISE not to indulge in any more sick humour about money. Not to save space for other disgruntled contributors, but because we feel too sick to be humorous.

Perhaps our readers did not really believe that our financial situation was desperate? Perhaps you thought when we stopped bellyaching three weeks ago that our problems had been solved—by somebody else?

Well they haven't. The response to our appeals have been wonderful—from a very few comrades. What about the rest of you?

By the standards of the underground press, maybe FREEDOM is a bit square (no lewd adverts—no adverts at all!) but the underground press is dwindling. FREEDOM remains.

But the effectiveness of our work demands better support from anarchists. We do not ask liberals or hippies or libertarian socialists to help pay for an anarchist weekly paper: we ask ANARCHISTS. Does this include you?

WE NEED

£1,000
WE'VE GOT £305.
IT'S NOT ENOUGH!

THROUGH THE ANARCHIST PRESS

IN PITTSBURGH with a 20% negro population, whilst the negroes form only 2% of union membership, belonging mostly to the unions of humble trades, as labourers, miners, there are unions who have no coloured members. Among these are the electricians' union, ironworkers' union, plumbers' union,

coppersmiths' union and asbestos workers' union.

L'Adunati, New York.

While the USA follows local tradition in jailing inconvenient dissenters, in Italy, also following the local traditions left by the Bourbons and by the fascists, they openly invent non-existent crimes to remove from circulation those who have only provoked the hatred of ambitious or vindictive police. Among the many victims, almost completely forgotten by the press, who with such ardour participated in the verbal lynching in April, are the Milan comrades arrested following the bomb explosions at the exhibition and at the station.

Meanwhile the true bombardiers continue dynamiting buildings, trains and electrical plants.

L'Adunati.

Wage Control Remains

UNLIKE previous Tory governments, the Labour Ministers are still trying to keep a tight rein on the economy even though this could harm their chances at the general election. As forecast in our anti-election campaign and in the columns of this paper, a Labour Government is a tough one when it comes to the economy.

This is not to say they have not climbed down, but often the very point of adopting an extreme position, as Barbara Castle did in the summer, is that it gives the government plenty of room for a retreat. Since the summer the incomes policy has taken a bashing, but it is worth remembering that whoever forms the next government, there will still be the legislation available to curb wage agreements that are felt to be against the 'national interest'. The machinery still remains which, if the economy demands it, can be used and strengthened if need be.

Contact Column

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

Wanted—20 tickets for the Springboks match at Bristol on December 30. Sale or return basis. Contact Chris Moon, 22 Windemere Road, Gloucester. Comrades wishing to demonstrate inside ground contact Chris Moon.

AFB Information Bulletin. Money from Groups urgently needed to pay for next issue. Address see Group List.

Gerald McKearney ('Mad Mick')—Endell Street squatter, in Brixton Prison and does not get visitors. Visiting hours 10-11.30 a.m. and 1.30-3.30 p.m. Mondays to Saturdays.

Jumble Sale at Freedom Press, Sunday, December 21, at 11 a.m. Jumble still needed.

Anarchist Revolution. (Leaflet back in print.) 5/- per hundred. Cash with order please.

Malatesta Poster Screen Printed. 7/6 (inc. post) from Freedom Bookshop.

Schools Action Union. Conference on 'Revolution'. December 19, 20 & 21. Arts Lab, 1 Robert Street, N.W.1.

Agitprop Information, 160 North Gower Street, London, N.W.1. Tel. 01-387 5406. Information and Communication for the Left: Contacts—Diary—Skills—Red Notes—International—Media. Send SAE for literature list and Brochure.

Floodgates of Anarchy by Stuart Christie and Albert Meltzer. Available mid-January at 22/- inc. post. Advance orders to Freedom Bookshop.

Off-Centre Discussion Group. Thursday 8 p.m., Flat 10, Chessington Lodge, Regents Park Road, N.3.

Computers for communication not control. Real Time. Sub. 9/- six issues. 66 Hargrave Park, London, N.19. 01-272 0093.

Nova Scotia. Comrades please contact Pete Ridley, c/o Newport Post Office.

Anarchistic films wanted. Please contact Ulf Arnström, Pedagoggränd 9B-104 902 54 Umea, Sweden.

Vietnam War. Statistics and information wanted on medical aspects by students and faculty of University of Nebraska. Write: Jim Hartford, 3326 Harney Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68131, USA.

Urgent. Help fold and dispatch FREEDOM every Thursday from 4 p.m. onwards. Tea served.

Visits Please! Three of five squatters remanded in custody do not have family in London, and would welcome visits. Brixton: Diarmuid Breatnach ('Buzz'); Ashford Remand Centre, Middx.: David Griffiths, Michael Ali. For rota please phone Sonia Markham at RENown 2014. (Letters also welcomed.)

Schools Anarchist Group in Gloucestershire? Contact Kate & Joe, 3 Withy Lea, Leonard Stanly, nr. Stonehouse, GL10 3NS, Glos.

If you wish to make contact let us know.

In the government's latest White Paper, 'Productivity, Prices and Incomes Policy after 1969', they say: 'Up to October 1964 everyone had been encouraged to take rising living standards for granted, regardless of whether they had been earned by higher productivity and exports. The Government was unable to bring home to people urgently enough the fact that it was this artificial boom which had precipitated, in 1964, the highest overseas deficit since the war. In 1965 and the first half of 1966, wage rates continued to increase at about 7½% a year, while productivity was rising by about 1½% a year.'

As well as being an attack on the previous Tory Government's handling of the economy prior to the 1964 election, it also shows the reason for the State's intervention and the government's incomes policy.

Following election, George Brown got his union-employer joint declaration on voluntary restraint, but despite this, wage rates continued to outstrip productivity and so, following the 1966 election, the Labour Government, with a substantial majority, ushered in its wage freeze and anti-trade union legislation. After that they relaxed it to allow a 3½% norm.

Now Barbara Castle is emphasising the educational side of the incomes policy and before people jeer at this, the thing she has continued to put over is that any wage increase should be more than covered by increased productivity. To show how successful this policy has already been, the White Paper says that over the past four years more than 6,000,000 workers have been involved in more than 3,500 productivity deals, the point being that on the whole the incomes policy has worked for the employers and the State. The education is, of course, that now workers expect any wage increase to be part of a productivity deal. They expect to give up their hard fought for conditions, to work hard or to be made redundant, while many of those who remain, expect those who are sacked to go without putting up a fight.

THE LOWER PAID

The White Paper lays down norms for wage increases of between 2½% to 4½% and retains delaying powers of up to four months while the agreements can be examined by the Prices and Incomes Board. As in

previous White Papers it says that an incomes policy helps the lower paid but 'if we want to improve the position of those who are worse off, the rest of us must be prepared to accept a little less ourselves'. But wages are never distributed in this way and any forgone increase would only mean increased profits. Higher paid workers are only that because they take action to get it. The dustmen learned this lesson and the teachers are following their example.

The government is worried that any concession to the lower paid will be taken as a signal for wage claims from the higher paid. With their pledge for the gradual introduction of equal pay for women, they fear a similar spiral of wage claims.

The government says an incomes policy is designed to bring home the fact that continuing steady expansion of the economy depends on our striking the right balance between an immediate increase in consumption and the long term needs of economic development. In doing so, it widens the area of democratic choice. On the one hand we can choose to plan the rise in incomes so that it does not endanger exports and investment on which productivity, high real earnings and a high level of employment depends.

'On the other hand, we can claim the right to extort whatever increases in incomes we can get individually and thus force governments to control excess demands by slowing down the economy once again.'

DESIRE SOMETHING MORE

This is a statement for a State-planned capitalist economy, with incomes geared to productivity. In a planned economy it is vital that wages are also planned, otherwise inflation would ensue and the competitive price of our exports would be lost. However, the planned capitalist economy is one which cannot satisfy the needs of the people, who should desire something more than a rising standard of living in material terms, although many obviously need this desperately. The need today for workers to understand this is vitally important. The economic exploitation of man by man is far more subtle nowadays, but nevertheless it involves him in a productive process over which he has little control. The shorter working day now worked is often of the most tedious nature, doing a boring, repetitive, meaningless job.

Workers must realise that they and only they can alter this situation and that both social and economic liberation can only be achieved by themselves.

P.T.

LETTER

Anarchism & The Class Struggle

Dear Comrades,

I agree with Christopher Hargreaves (FREEDOM, December 13) that FREEDOM needs to give serious consideration to the nature of trade union disputes which it uses its valuable space to report but, nevertheless, I am completely opposed to his conclusions concerning the class struggle in general.

What is it that prevents us from securing a free society based on mutual aid if it is not the actions of the capitalists and their political partners? Who is going to dethrone our masters if not the working class? Anyway, aren't we all working class? Perhaps Chris Hargreaves is middle class or — wait for it — an intellectual!

He also leaves me in some doubt about his ideal anarchist society. He seems to regret that trade union agreements are not legally binding—so much for voluntary co-operation. He seems to believe in national interest—so much for internationalism. He seems to believe that workers will earn money in a true communist society—so much for the abolition of the wages system.

Well, what is the relevance of the dockers' strike to the social revolution?

Frankly, I still don't understand how paying some men considerably more money will compensate others for being made redundant. However, we cannot expect all trade unionists to act like anarchists because they are not anarchists.

Of course, it poses a great dilemma as to how much of FREEDOM's precious space should be devoted to industrial disputes. Clearly, union action which shows real working-class solidarity (as in Port Talbot) deserves plenty of space. The same can be said for rank and file action against the bureaucrats. Even when relatively highly-paid workers refuse to show any solidarity with their lower-paid comrades and only strike for their own selfish interests like frustrated bourgeoisie, it must be remembered that their case will be misrepresented by the capitalist press and FREEDOM is one of the few papers which will give them a fair hearing—without strings. If we call ourselves anarchists, we must act like anarchists.

However, perhaps sometimes we do get too detailed an account of a particular dispute. Surely a clear account of the principles involved would be

Freedom

For Workers' Control

DECEMBER 20 1969 Vol 30 No 40

BROTHER, OH! BROTHER

IN A WORLD of wars, riots and mystical mass murder, the matter of Local Union Branch L74 could be held to be of minor importance but the events within this branch are those that have triggered off the overthrow of executives, provided carrion for the right-wing press to publicly gorge and vomit for eager readership and, after the calvary of the Law Courts, provided powder and shot for the enemies of the organised working class.

One week ago the notice went up on the L74 notice board informing the members that it was now the time for voting for their committee and its officers and from one's store of worldly wisdom one tossed off a cynical cliché. It was a matter of small merit and one knew that the 'boys' would be re-elected to their minor offices. The only matter of local interest was the affair of Brother Cord.

Brother Cord was the thorn in the committees collective side and the Savonarola of the canteen rank and file. With the air of a curtain-raising music-hall comedian and a cockney charm he publicly bled for the boys and as always in these matters promised that if elected he would clear up our private Augean stable. And Brother Cord found his following, but as with all messiahs with a limited message it never went beyond a large minority. In the battle for the secretaryship it was obvious that if the two established contenders stood, they would split the vote and ensure the election of Brother Cord, so Brother Shore and Brother Richardson simply tossed a coin to see which one should stand down and Brother Shore lost the toss, wretched by refusing to withdraw his name, split the vote, and we found to our amusement and their amazement that Brother Cord was our new branch secretary.

A small matter of ill-judged knife-work among the boys, but we found that in losing one of the elder statesmen of the branch we were lumbered with Brother Cord who, at our most charitable, could never be described as a possible contender for the Nobel Prize. But Brother Cord soldiered on and each Friday found him at the union counter collecting the union dues and giving out with his cheerful cockney smile and his matey nod while Brother Shore and Brother Richardson did their small union tasks with that air of righteous anger that those out of office feel called upon to display.

A week ago we were to vote for the accepted re-election of the Establishment when the entire branch blew apart over a posted notice that Brother Cord had been suspended and that the election was cancelled. We of the lower depths loved it for here was scandal affecting high office and we sought out each vile rumour and gave it credence no matter how malevolent or bizarre or improbable. But truth, that sad sack of history, provided the anticlimax. A member of the committee had caught Brother Cord handing out a selected number of voting papers the day before the election was to take place. Brother Cord was now caught by the short and curlies and he leaned

sufficient and even, perhaps, clearer for the general reader? Also, this way FREEDOM could cover many more disputes in the same space.

Yours fraternally,

TERRY PHILLIPS.

Kettering, Northants.

14.12.69.

in splendid isolation at the union counter all that black Friday as Brother Shore played out the role of official receiver and the committee as the guardians of some dread secret kept closed mouths and open faces for our public inspection.

The branch was flooded with rumours that top echelon brass from Woodberry and/or Transport House had descended in force but it seemed that the Big Boys had decided that this was not their party and issued a directive that we must clear up our own mess. Two special meetings were then called to stand in judgement on the erring Brother Cord and it was an open and proclaimed secret that Brother Cord was for the chop. It was at this point that matters began to stink, for the unfortunate Brother Cord found himself being judged by the very men who had conspired to keep him out of office and though Brother Cord pleaded ignorance for his inane behaviour, Brother Richardson, the winner of the toss to stand for office, moved the resolution that Brother Cord should be barred from holding union office for a term of five years. After the meeting a small group leaned on the bar and openly and honestly discussed the matter and one continued to air one's useless protests at the savage sentence, but as the beer flowed and the talk became more maudlin, principles became less important.

If the matter had finished there it would have been a vicious act of injustice perpetrated by a group of local union politicians against a not-too-competent fellow official for invading their territory. It was the evening meeting that found a last-minute reprieve for Brother Cord, for thirty members of the rank and file, led by the resident blackleg and overtime jackal, turned up in force and in an emotionally-charged atmosphere of obscene language and near tears reversed the morning resolution and in effect gave a vote of confidence to the bemused Brother Cord.

Today saw Brother Cord back at the union counter with his union dues book open at the ready, his cockney smile and his air of cheerful and confident incompetence. Next week will see the belated election carried out and what started out as high drama has ended as low farce with the chance of the present committee being voted out of office and Brother Cord heading the poll.

What concerns all union card holders is the irresponsible way that Brother Cord's behaviour was dealt with. At the morning meeting nine men decided that a man could be barred from union office for five years and it was left to the branch jackal acting out of pure vindictive hate for the union to clear up this sorry mess. Too often we pontificate about the corruption of power without realizing what it means. These men in a battle for a minor office have brought the union into contempt and destroyed the faith one should have in their integrity. They are the elected spokesmen for the brotherhood of the workers and they fouled the principles for the bitter fruit of office and by their actions they lined up their own rank and file behind the local blackleg.

Next time we may not be this lucky, for beyond the branch lies the right-wing press always ready to attack and we are vulnerable, brothers, we are vulnerable. Meanwhile Brother Cord, ill-cast as Oedipus, smiles and methodically enters the union dues in his nice big cash book while Brother Shore and Brother Richardson wait in the wings with a rule book for a dagger.

LUMPENPROLETARIAT.