

# FREEDOM

## Anarchist Weekly 6d

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# FLEET STREET UNDRESSED

THE Economist Intelligence Unit's report on Fleet Street's efficiency has stirred a stir, if nothing else. It has implicated chubby Wilson to pontificate on one more subject that he knows very well about. When that lad gets stirred he puts on his very best Churchillian and attempts to lay down the law. In presenting the awards for the 'What the Papers' programme, 'What the Papers' expounded his theories on the report, and on Fleet Street in general.

The only point that can be gleaned from the report so far is the fact that Fleet Street is caused by *Weak Management*. Whilst it is true that the report criticises management for their incompetence in some cases, the main criticism is on the weakness of the news-employers to stand up to the press. The report claims that the news-presses are overmanned to the extent of 40 to 60% making a saving of £100,000 for the *Daily Mirror* and £200,000 for the *Guardian*. Restrictive practices, claims the report, have only a comparatively small impact and are unable to have real influence on the success or failure of any individual newspaper.

In this respect the report was disappointing for very many people but it did not prevent Wilson from climbing on the bandwagon. Wilson in the great tradition of the working class movement called for *solidarity*, but don't let's get carried away. He was calling for *solidarity* of the employers against the printworkers. He thought the industry might consider an insurance or indemnity policy among themselves to cover the cost of unofficial hold-ups (official ones would be another matter). Too true, official stoppages *might* be another matter! Union affiliation fees come in very handy to the Labour Party funds. Even this will not worry the Labour Party for very much longer once the Labour Government has made unofficial stoppages illegal.

ITV decided to add its twopenny-worth to the attack on Fleet Street, such a programme probably worked out cheaper than the usual load of canned tripe imported from America. The star comic of the show was Wilson, even though his speech was used as an authority on the printing industry. Having one's ancestors connected with the *Guardian* does count for something I suppose. The programme itself was something of a rebash of contributions made some time ago, Mr. Eastwood's, Secretary of the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation, certainly was.

Peter Jenkins, *Guardian* Labour Cor-

respondent, made a charming contribution, at least it will ensure that he will not be one of the redundant reporters emptied out of the *Guardian*. He laid claim that the printing unions were protection rackets. He attacked the 'closed shop' principle and the overmanning of machines. If he had his way 4,000 men would be on the industrial scrap heap tomorrow.

Cecil King was tackled on the question of weak management in terms of the *Daily Mirror*. He accepted the fact that up to five years ago it could possibly be claimed that the *Mirror* management were weak, but not now. His maxim for dealing with the unions is to be firm, fair and, in not too much of a hurry—in other words 'let them sweat'.

Journalists were criticised for their complacent attitude towards news. What is news? It is anything the editors think you should read, and in some cases what the Government think you should not read (D Notices).

Where do we, as printworkers, go from here? Do we care if all the national papers go to the wall? Unfortunately at the moment we must, we have to work to eat, but we don't have to like the way they are managed or the unadulterated tripe they print. It has been pointed out that the plant at Printing House Square will now lie idle from Monday to Friday. Would anyone question the fact that printworkers could not run the plant themselves and produce a real newspaper?

Printing is in urgent demand not only in this country but all over the world. School text books are always in short supply because profit comes before need and, until that position is reversed, we will continue to drift from crisis to crisis.

BILL CHRISTOPHER.

## CAN YOU TAKE MORE FREEDOM?

FOLLOWING on an experiment, which was well received by old and new readers last September, **FREEDOM** will contain four extra pages once a month starting from the January 28 issue. This means that comrades who wish to help us to increase our circulation will have two weeks to organise a special sales drive. We hope that groups and individuals will co-operate with us as they did last September (when the extra effort by our comrades added 700 copies to our sales that week).

The extra pages also involve extra work. Comrades in London who wish to help should contact this office.

Editorially we also need help. We receive numerous foreign anarchist publications and we would dearly like to hear from comrades proficient in languages who would be willing to do short summaries and translations for **FREEDOM**. We also welcome contributions on industrial and local matters from our readers.

Groups are especially asked to send in reports of activities for the 'News from Anywhere' column which will appear each month in the 'meatier, bulkier, more comprehensive' **FREEDOM**.

# Chinese Workers' Puzzle

TO READ the present stream of hysterical reports coming from inside China at the moment you would think that the whole Red Guard affair is a complete and meaningless mess. The trouble with trying to make head or tail of what goes on is that a considerable part of the reporting is done in the spirit of sensation and the rest is preformed by a specialised group known as *Pekinologists*, *Marxicologists*, *Kremlinologists* or just plain *toxicologists*. These gentry, unable to understand the concepts of revolution and what it means, are busy playing chess with the fallen bureaucrats' names and trying to guess the holy lines of succession.

Of course the simple solution, and the true one, escapes them. The workers have had a gutful of non-stop poetical rubbish pumped down their throats morning, noon and night. It is no accident that Chairman Mao picked on the young student class to purge the party and the country and redirect the masses to revolutionary thought.

Of all the groups available he picked the cadres that would largely be absorbed by the bureaucracy. So who would be more keen? No work, a bit of excitement and all on the right side of the law.

The worker on the other hand has been battered into believing that industrial production is the most important thing for China today. Industrialisation must be carried out at a rapid pace for China and for the workers themselves to survive. The peasant working in his field and the bus driver and factory worker are now expected to stop work (at gun-

point) and listen for two or three hours to an harangue by a load of layabouts, who are never going to lift a heavy load in their lives, on why they should work harder, produce more and then go back to work and make the time up by unpaid overtime. The average Chinese industrial worker works a ten hour day (in the national interest) and is then expected to add a couple more at lunch time to listen to the platitudes expressing Mao Tse Tung's more recent and senile ideas.

### THE ARMY SHIFTS

Unfortunately for the Red Guard the factories are armed with militia units and it appears to be these units who are deliberately going out to processions and demonstrations and ordering them to take down their sacred slogans. The Red Guard appear to have been backed up by regular troops until recently but now it appears that as the Army itself is threatened by the lunacies of the Red Guards it is not lifting a finger in these clashes. In the Shanghai and Nanking street fights they were nowhere to be seen.

### NOT FOR BUREAUCRATS

The position is not quite as simple as presented by inference in some reports, that the workers and their armed militia are working with the old bureaucrats. Firstly it is because of the incidents and his inability to stop them that Mr. Tao, the former Mayor of Nanking and Propaganda and Trade Union Chief, was reported arrested. Even the party-controlled trade unions and their daily newspaper have been officially closed down. The workers have had

enough to put up with in China without the added frivolity of the Red Guard on the rampage.

Nor will the peasant tolerate it if they are wished on him. The great social and cultural revolution has nowhere to go. It will either disappear in a welter of blood and iron caused by a panicky and huge army, or the workers and peasants will follow up the logical consequences of their present actions and throw off the shackles of the monomaniac bureaucracy. The present impetus of the workers will lead them to seize the organs of production to hold, and attempt to convince the army to throw in its lot with them. None of this is impossible since we have already seen the election of two workers' committees who already appear to have gained control of Shanghai and partial control of Nanking.

Reports are only reaching us from places where foreign correspondents actually are. Much information appears to have been accepted verbatim from the Red Guard posters which hardly appear to be the most reliable source.

### THE ONLY CHOICE

Ten years ago, when the press reports came in from middle Europe, everyone was cheered on against the Russian oppressors. Fleet Street certainly never mentioned—unless it was unavoidable—that the workers' committees were the backbone of the revolution. And so in China today (as in Hungary), the workers and peasants driven by despair have taken the world in their hands.

SPARKS.

# THE GREAT AMERICAN LIE

DR. BENJAMIN SPOCK, the child-care expert, has endorsed an article in the January issue of the Catholic magazine *Ramparts* which charges the US and South Vietnamese governments of gross neglect of hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese children burned by napalm. The writer of the article, William Pepper, spent six months in South Vietnam and estimates that 250,000 children have been killed since 1961 and 750,000 burned or otherwise wounded. Dr. Spock, in his preface, accuses the US government of callously refusing to assist the Swiss relief organisation, *Terre des Hommes*, by flying wounded children to Europe for treatment. He writes: 'With crocodile tears, they explain that children are unhappy when separated from their families. The fact is that a third of all Vietnamese children in institutions have already lost both parents or been abandoned.' He adds that few wounded Vietnamese receive hospital care while American troops receive elaborate medical attention.

This is yet another refutation of the US administration's big lie that American troops are in Vietnam to protect and defend its people. Not only the disregard for the welfare of civilian wounded and refugees, but the methods of warfare employed by US troops reveals the general callousness of Americans towards the Vietnamese. Troops of most armies, when encountering fire from a village they are approaching, especially if it is in a land they are supposed to be freeing, would go in and take the village by ordinary infantry methods, risking a few casualties to themselves. It is not so in the US army. If only a couple of pot-shots are fired at them from a village, the pampered, idolised soldiers lie low and call in the tactical bombers and artillery. Obviously as soon as communist snipers in the village hear the planes and shells coming, they sneak out the back way leaving the old men, women and children to face the holocaust. This is as much an indictment of the communist guerillas as the US troops and is the reason why the non-combatant

casualty rate is so high. The US is not, however, as communists claim, practising genocide in Vietnam for genocide means that the extermination of a people must be an end in itself. But the US must be coming close to exterminating the people in some areas of Vietnam whatever the technical name for it. On today's TV newsreel there are shots of US troops in action. They are standing up, in the open, blazing away at an enemy not shown. I asked an ex-serviceman with battle experience if he could possibly imagine any situation in which troops in combat fire without first taking cover. He could think of none. What was the defenceless target these troops were firing at?

Not only is the US not fighting for the people of Vietnam, it is not fighting for a democratic government in Vietnam either. All the governments the US have toppled or attacked in the cause of 'democracy' have been leftist governments (such as the Guatemalan and Dominican) on whom the US could not rely to protect American financial interests. All the dictatorial governments the US *doesn't* topple in the cause of 'democracy' (and they abound in Asia and Latin America) are right-wing governments that the US *can* rely on to protect American financial interests. However, I don't think the US is putting up such a massive military effort in Vietnam to protect its interests there, for the country is small, and quite poor, and much of its wealth has been destroyed in the fighting. It is a different sort of financial interest that motivates the US administration. War is such a marvellous boon to the economy of a highly industrialised, advanced capitalist nation. While war lasts production soars, share prices rise and there is prosperity. Does any American reader know of firm evidence (perhaps in the form of general directives to field commanders) that the US administration encourages US troops to use as many bombs and shells as they can? It is not only American capitalism that gains from war and the economic domination of Asia and Latin America

but the American man in the street, and many of them must realise it although doubtless publicly they ease their consciences by prattling about 'democracy' and the need to defend it. L. B. Johnson, when he visited his men in Vietnam after the recent Manila conference, did not bore them with all the fine-sounding spiel about 'freedom' that he had come out with at the conference. Instead he talked much about American living standards and the need to safeguard them. He received an enthusiastic response from the troops, Australians and New Zealanders, too, are fighting in Vietnam because these countries feel that the high living standards they enjoy are threatened by the turbulent demands of Asia. To many US servicemen, and especially to the brash, extrovert Australians, a Vietnamese is someone who cleans your kit, waits at table, provides sex and gets in the way of the fighting.

A second reason why the US is in Vietnam is that it wants an early showdown with China. The US administration hopes to escalate the war to such an extent that China is drawn in. Why else should US tacticians now be proposing an attack on North Vietnam just north of the border with the south in order to drive a wedge across the country to prevent supplies from the north reaching the south? Could not such a wedge equally well be made just south of the border, i.e. on South Vietnamese territory? Why was something like a minor Maginot line not built along the border seven or ten years ago, before the NLF was formed? The border is only about 70 miles long. It's all very odd!

A third reason for the war is the vanity of L. B. Johnson. Like all nonentities he dreams of ever more power and glory. What worse background can there be for the most powerful man in the most powerful country in the world than vulgar, cultureless Texas, with its private swimming pools, folksy barbecues and cult of bigness?

As for the communists, they seem to have sadly miscalculated when they de-

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## ANARCHY 71

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AFTER THE MAXIMUM in advanced publicity, due to certain novel departures from the much-loved original, *Alice in Wonderland* was shown on BBC-1 shortly after Christmas, to a television audience which was massive enough to have filled every cinema in London to capacity. In these times, when budget considerations are closely allied to artistic strivings, nobody can be forgiven for not knowing that 'Alice' cost £25,000 while in the making. Further regaling us with facts, the agents of publicity could display a cast of talent and culture—a blending of satirists and Shakespearean actors. Parents had also been advised to tuck the under-10's snugly into bed before nine, so the curious and the sceptical alike waited to see if Jonathan Miller had made a horror story as a salutary aftermath to the long weekend of manufactured dreams.

The film was far from being a wash-out, which is the risk which is always run by too big an advance build-up. 'Alice' was worth seeing for certain parts rather than the whole. Miller used the abundant visual possibilities which the story offered: a sprawling house, perhaps the prototype of Xanadu or Marienbad, surrounded on all sides by croquet lawns of fabled smoothness, and impeccably kept flower beds. One of the few scenes outside the dream showed Alice and her elder sister walking through a painterly landscape of meadows and tall grass, their cocooned and corseted figures thrown into relief by the shafts of sunlight, as they took what the Victorians liked to call 'an afternoon constitutional'. Alice, overcome by the heat and the stillness of summer and time itself, when only the distant growl of thunder was in any way disturbing, lapsed into sleep and the workings of her sub-conscious. Throughout the dream Miller used depth, light and angle with discreet inventiveness, as Alice tries to regain her identity in that awkward gulf between girlhood and womanhood. The tea-party gives us time to explore the faces of well-known actors seen unflatteringly in a variety of comic postures, while the Duchess and the Queen of Hearts symbolize the Victorian matron and governess respectively.

In an age when children weren't supposed to think for themselves; or even if they could, the parents pretended otherwise, frustration in Alice's case gave way to fantasy—with the mind overstimulated and too free with a fantasy world, full of word-play contradictions, and the collapse of logic, which if it ever surfaced into reality in present times would be diagnosed as schizophrenia by the head-shrinkers, no doubt. Alice was looking for order, but found only chaos when probing beneath the surface (the caucus race was yesterday's rat-race, which ends in a grovelling free-for-all just like a parliamentary debate in fact; the trial where Alice is ordered to be beheaded, which becomes a symptom of a society mad enough to dispose of a person who menaced their self-interests—a collective insanity madder than the caperings of the Mad Hatter), a surface full of wasteful pomposity, in which adults wore disguises of voice, carriage and manner, which precluded love or respect, though sermons of course were two-a-penny in pulpit and home. These writers who wrote for our parents and grandparents (which is why we grow rather mawkish discussing them),

could entertain the children without baffling them too much, while perceptive adults could delve more deeply if they wanted to, though it does seem awful to think our forebears couldn't call a spade a spade, but an animal instead.

Jean Vigo's 35-year-old masterpiece *Zéro de Conduite* is similar in some ways to 'Alice'; one thinks of the way the adults are seen through a child's eyes, and the way certain figures and set-pieces are reminders of the less savoury aspects of the personality. Lewis Carroll's 'Alice' arose from his friendship with a friend's daughter, and her Lolita-ish self-independent quality found Carroll playing a discreet Humbert. He became fascinated by her mind, and since their relationship was perforce platonic, he did the next best thing by writing a book to and about her, which helped Carroll to get 'inside' her mind, though by the time he'd finished the book, 'Alice' had made friends with a boy her parents thought well of, though Carroll was possibly the only really human adult she'd met up till then, though Carroll was always extra careful to be at his kindest in case 'Alice' fled.

Collectively, the Victorians were an

## ROUND THE GALLERIES

THE ENGLISH DEARLY love a line.

Not for us the pale ethereal and metaphysical washes of the introspective East, of the voluminal plasticity of the European heartland. We reject the Mediterranean elevation of colour into the visual manifestation of the Godhead and the Nordic obsession with shadowed whites and muddy blacks. We are the creatures of the illustrated *Punch* joke and our visual art lies in the pages of Dickens. Forever rejecting our national genius for watercolour as but a pastime for women, we have paid our native compliments to the artist of the pen, the National Gallery to the contrary, and our native sons are Boz and Beardsley, Rowlandson, Hogarth and Gillray.

Yet we are a tolerant people, give or take a hanging, and we have accepted the tinted print though only as long as its colouring does not seek to influence the actual drawing. The Memorial Exhibition of the work of Robin Ironside is a classic example of work that cries its nationality to the observer. Yet Ironside has been ill-served so many times that it is probably sad but fitting that despite this well-mounted exhibition at the New Art Centre, at 41 Sloane Street, S.W.1, his death should reflect the failure of his life.

Even the article by his friend, Sir John Rothenstein, contains little information concerning the man himself and neither Rothenstein or the gallery catalogue bother to even give the date, cause or manner of Ironside's death. The four paintings reproduced in the *London Magazine* give a completely false impression of the intimate and childish charm of this work for, by giving a false impression of the scale of the work, Ironside's small canvases appear like massive backcloths for the Royal Court Theatre.

He is, by virtue of the slipshod workmanship of his friends, a shadow of a

known shadow and it is doubtful if anyone will ever again consider it worth their while to reassemble this slight and charming work (for slight and charming it is). Ironside's theme would appear to reflect his own sad and gentle way of life in that it is the loneliness of alienation against an English literary surrealist background. Despite his play with colour he used it always as a backcloth for a lined drawing and that the line is white instead of black does not invalidate the proceeding point for picture after picture gives one the feeling that one could peel off the surface drawing to leave a pleasant but meaningless puddle of colours behind.

A loyal satrap of Sir John Rothenstein, when that boy was shaping up in the punch-happy days of the Tate Gallery Battle of Succession, he was found, Rothenstein states, in an office where he had been abandoned by a previous Director with the injunction not to show his face around the gallery. So, for a year, Ironside sat in a silent office and drew his weekly pay-packet.

A sweet and pallid creature full of hypochondriac phobias, he gently failed his way through life. The publisher for his collected essays went bankrupt, commissions for portraits were abandoned and theatrical productions were cancelled after he had worked so long on the décor. If he is to be remembered it will always be by oversight for, with his brother, he designed the *space frame* that formed the centrepiece of Whitehall's contribution to the Coronation decorations.

Like the newspaper seller within the newspaper photograph whose placard proclaims the outbreak of some war he must, by an accident of time, always be a part of the history of that period but, like the newspaper seller, he will never be noticed for he is but the dumb agent announcing an event that cancels out

his own individual importance. Ironside is the English familiar, the gentle, pleasant English middle-class male, with a modicum of good talent and a desire to only serve in a secondary capacity in life, in politics and in art and there are always those who will accept that service. It is left to Elizabeth Lablache to flex her muscles in defence of English nationality in the arts. Her single painting in last year's Royal Academy was worthy of attention and with her current exhibition at the Leicester Galleries, 21 Audley Street, W.1, one feared that the painting of the *crucifixion* may have been but a single good but accidental painting. In this exhibition, however, she proved her worth, for her work has explosive qualities of Turner's studies in light and she handles her difficult subject with a craftsman's confidence. In *encroachment* she gives her black mass the monumental feeling contained within Piranesi's prison etchings, but when she seeks to lighten her canvases we are reminded with the coyness of the bad amateur. But for all that she is a painter worthy of future note who still seeks a major subject for her brush and a discipline for her formidable talent.

ARTHUR MOYSE

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## Anarchist Federation of Britain

(As there is no national secretariat for enquiries, speakers, etc., please contact local groups.)

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### OFF-CENTRE LONDON DISCUSSION MEETINGS

3rd Wednesday of each month at Jack Robinson and Mary Canipa's, 21 Rumbold Road, S.W.6 (off King's Road), 8 p.m.  
 3rd Friday of each month at 8 p.m. at Donald and Irene Rooum's, now at 13 Savernake Road, London, N.W.3.

### REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND GROUPS

**ALTRINCHAM ANARCHIST YOUTH GROUP.** Get in touch with Stephen Richards, 25 North Vale Road, Timperley, Cheshire.  
**ABERDEEN GROUP.** Correspondence to M. Dey, 29 Springhill Crescent, Aberdeen.  
**BEXLEY ANARCHIST GROUP.** Correspondence to Paul Wildish, 2 Cumbrian Avenue, Barnehurst, Kent.  
**BELFAST.** Contact: Roy McLoughlin, 46 Mooreland Park, Belfast 11, Ireland.  
**BIRMINGHAM ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact: Dave Massey, 138 Church Road, Erdington, Birmingham, 24.  
**UNIVERSITY OF ASTON GROUP.** Contact: D. J. Austin, 5 Kingsbury Road, Erdington, Birmingham.  
**BRIGHTON.** All those interested in activities and action should contact Richard Miller, 1/2 Percival Terrace, Brighton, 7.  
**BRISTOL.** Contact: Dave Thorne, 49 Cotham Brow, Bristol, 6.  
**CARDIFF ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact: Mike Crowley, 36 Whitaker Road, Tremorfa, Cardiff.  
**PLYMOUTH ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact: Bob and Urs Turnbull, c/o Doctors' Residence, Stavasthorpe

Hospital, by Brechin, Angus.  
**GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP ONE.** Correspondence to Robert Lynn, 2b Saracen Head Lane, Glasgow, C.1.  
**HARLOW ANARCHIST GROUP.** Enquiries to Keith Nathan, 138 Pennymead, Harlow or John Barrick, 14 Centre Avenue, Epping.  
**HULL ANARCHIST GROUP.** J. Tempast, 89 Fountain Road, Hull, Tel. 212526. Meetings 8 p.m. 1st and 3rd Fridays of month at above address.  
**IPSWICH ANARCHISTS.** Contact Neil Dean, 74 Cemetery Road, Ipswich, Suffolk.  
**LEWISHAM, LONDON, S.E.13.** 2nd and 4th Thursdays. Meetings at Mike Malet's, 61 Granville Park, Lewisham, S.E.13.  
**NEW HAM LIBERTARIANS.** Contact Mick Shenker, 122 Hampton Road, Forest Gate, NOTTING HILL ANARCHIST GROUP. Correspondence to Brian Joseph, 1st floor, 27 Arundel Gardens, London, W.11. Meeting every first Thursday of the month at 8 p.m., Flat 3, 8 Colville House, W.11.  
**NORTH-WEST ESSEX.** Meetings on the first Saturday of each month at 7.30 p.m. at Robert Barltrop's, The Old Vicarage, Radwinter, near Saffron Walden.  
**ORPINGTON ANARCHIST GROUP.** Knockholt, Nr. Sevenoaks, Kent. Every six weeks at Greenways, Knockholt. Phone: Knockholt 2316. Brian and Maureen Richardson.  
**OXFORD ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact H. G. Mellor, Merleto College, Oxford.  
**PLYMOUTH ANARCHIST FEDERATION.** Contact J. Hill, 79 Underlane, Plymstock, Plymouth, Devon.  
**READING ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact Alan Ross, 116 Belmont Road, Reading, Berks.  
**SHEFFIELD.** Contact Robin Lovell, c/o Students' Union, University, Sheffield, Tel. 24076.  
**NORTH LONDON ANARCHIST DISCUSSION GROUP.** 'Dolphin' (back of St. Pancras Town Hall). Every Sunday 8 p.m. Next meeting: January 15. Subject: A Certain Visit.

Admission by copy of this paper.

### NORTH-WEST FEDERATION

**NORTH WEST ANARCHIST FEDERATION.** Regional Secretary: J. Bromley, 44 Doncaster Avenue, Manchester, 20. Buxton: Chris Berrisford, 10 Byron Street, Buxton. Chorley: Alistair Rattray, 35a Devonshire Road, Chorley. Manchester: Mike Mitchell, 3 Bakewell Road, Droylesden, Manchester. Brenda Mercer, 6 Breckside Park, Liverpool, 6. Rochdale: Ian Heywood, 16 Mansfield Road, Bamford, Rochdale. Stoke-on-Trent: Bob Blakeman, 52 Weldon Avenue, Weston Coyney, Stoke-on-Trent.

### EAST LONDON FEDERATION

**WALTHAM FOREST ANARCHISTS.** Contact Lionel Donnelly, 322a Hoe Street, Walthamstow, E.17. Regular meetings.  
**WEST HAM ANARCHISTS.** Contact Stephen Higgs, 8 Westbury Road, Forest Gate, E.7.

### WEST LONDON FEDERATION

**NORTHOLT ANARCHISTS.** Contact: Jim Huggon, 173 Kingshill Avenue, Northolt, Middlesex. Meetings first and third Wednesday of the month at Jeannie's, 6 Epsom Close, Northolt Park, Middlesex, at 7.30 p.m.  
**EALING ANARCHIST GROUP.** Get into touch with Adrian Derbyshire, 2 Oakley House, Oakley Avenue, London, W.5.  
**LIBERTARIAN TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.** Meetings—discussions—activities. Contact Peter Ford, 82 North Road, Highgate, N.6. (Tel.: MOU 5702.)

### PROPOSED GROUPS

**SWANSEA.** Any interested in Anarchist group please contact Ian Bone via the University, Swansea.  
**HERTFORDSHIRE.** Contact Stuart Mitchell, South View, Potters Heath, Welwyn.  
**CAMBRIDGE.** Contact Wallyjohn Illingworth, c/o Richmond House, Devon Road, Cambridge.  
**SOUTH COAST, BRIGHTON, ETC.** Eastbourne.

Hastings, Lewes area contact Alan Albon, The Stable, Glynligh Farm, Pevensey, Sussex. Phone Hailsham 358.

**WATFORD.** Anyone interested please contact Alan Pritchard, 8 Bedford Street, Watford, Herts. **MEDWAY TOWNS AREA.** Proposed Group. Erroll Davies, 22 St. Margaret's Street, Rochester, Kent.

**WISBECH.** Anyone interested write Albert Community, Chapter House, Leverington, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire.

**CAMDEN (LONDON).** Provos. Anarchist/Provo/C.100/Action group—anyone interested please contact Chris Davis at 56 Chalk Farm Road, N.W.1.

**WEST SUFFOLK.** Please write to Carl Pinel, c/o West Suffolk General Hospital, Hospital Road, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk.

**S.W. MIDLANDS.** Kate, Bill and baby Jane Beveridge wish to contact libertarians in S.W. Midlands. Phone Mickleton 275 or write to Myrtle House, Mickleton, Chipping Camden, Gloucestershire.

### ABROAD

**U.S.A. NEW YORK CITY.** N.Y. Federation of Anarchists, c/o Torch Bookshop, 641 East 9th Street, N.Y., 10009. Meets every Thursday evening.  
**AUSTRALIA.** Anarchist Group, PO Box A 389, Sydney South. Public meetings every Sunday in the Domain, 2 p.m. and Mondays, 72 Oxford Street, Paddington, Sydney, 8 p.m.  
**DANISH ANARCHIST FEDERATION.** 52 Månedevej, Soborg-Copenhagen, Denmark.  
**VANCOUVER, B.C., CANADA.** Anyone interested in forming anarchist and/or direct action peace group contact Derek A. James, 1644 Grand Boulevard, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada. Tel.: 987-2693.  
**U.S.A. VERMONT/NEW HAMPSHIRE.** Discussion group meets weekly. Contact Ed Strauss at RID 2, Woodstock, Vermont 05091, USA.  
**SWEDEN.** Stockholm Anarchist Federation. Contact Nadir, Box 19104, Stockholm 19, Sweden.  
**CANADA: WISNAP.** Anybody interested in Direct action/anarchy contact G. J. Naar, 606 Matheson Avenue, Winnipeg, 17, Manitoba.  
**BELGIUM: LIEGE.** Provos, c/o Jacques Charlier, 11 Avenue de la Laiterie, Sclécin-Liege, Belgium.

RON PEARL

# WIDEN THE AREA OF 'FREEDOM'

ANY assessment of anarchist failures or successes can easily be bogged down by a discussion on the meaning of words. Leaving semantics safely in the lap of individualist 'philosophers' we hope that readers will know what we mean when we say that our guiding line is still those three Graces: Mutual Aid, Direct Action and Voluntary Co-operation.

Even a cursory look at last year's FREEDOMS and our bulging file of newspaper cuttings will show that anarchists have come in for a certain amount of attention last year. Tentative efforts to make a stand against encroaching Authority are however counter-balanced by lack of quality and quantity. But the fight at King Hill, the anti-election campaign, the formation of a Libertarian Teachers' Association, the solidarity given to comrades in their hour of need (whether at Aberdeen on a Civil Defence arson charge, or at Blackburn on a censorship charge), all these and many others show that comrades will help those who help themselves.

On a cultural and educational level we are glad to welcome the emergence of film and theatrical co-operatives and attempts towards the establishment of free schools.

There have been many complimentary articles last year on anarchism or anarchist activities.

Here is a typical phrase from the *New Zealand Herald* (!) (30.3.66): 'The most vociferous, most consistent voice of dissent in the general election campaign has been that of British Anarchists'.

Another journalist described us as the 'fastest-growing political movement' (some exaggeration here, what?).

But before we discuss the reverse side of the coin, it may be important to quote from an interview given by Herbert Read, who was once in the forefront of anarchist struggle and thinking. He said to the *Sun*: 'I have done my best to make the movement respectable. I think it is a serious philosophy, and a serious political theory, and one should try to give it that dignity.'

The movement today is more numerous, but I don't think it has the intellectual strength it used to have.'

This, of course, is regrettable. It is true to say that the anarchist movement in this country receives very little help at the moment by such luminaries as Herbert Read, who perhaps want to become 'respectable' first and anarchist second.

Where else did we fail? On organisational basis: the AFB now only exists in name. Does anybody know when and where is the next annual conference? There is also an international anarchist conference to which anarchists in this country are not sending delegates. Why not?

Our imprisoned comrade Stuart Christie is still languishing in the Carabanchel. What can we do to get him out? Or help our Spanish comrades recently arrested?

## £57 SHORT!

WEEKS 51 & 52, DECEMBER 31, 1966:  
Expenses: 52 weeks at £80: £4160  
Income: Sales and Subs.: £2960

DEFICIT: £1200

London, S.W.15: R.P. 2/6; Harlow: J.G. 3/10; London, N.6: P.F. 10/-; Northolt: Anarchist Group 4/-; California: J.F. 3/6; Oxford: Anon\* 5/-; Chicago: J.K. £8/3/7; London, N.10: R.W. £1/1/2; Pennington: F.K. £2/15/-; Aylesbury: H.B. 17/2; Goteborg: D.W. 2/-; London, S.E.13: M.M. 4/-; Plymouth: D.L. 10/-; New York: B. & D.L. 10/6; Vermont: E.S. £3/10/-; Shropshire: J.P. £11/-; Brooklyn: O.A. £4/10/-; Utopia: M.K.W.\* 10/-; Kirkby Mallory: P.C. 1/-; Nottingham: H.T. £1/10/-; Northolt: Anarchist Group\* 3/6; Cheltenham: L.G.W.\* £11/-; Manchester: R.C. 2/6; Rugby: C.F. 6/-; Ruislip: L.B. 10/-; London, S.W.8: B.L. £5/-; New York: W.S. 7/-; Detroit: Grupo Libertad £3/11/-; Vermont: E.L. £11/-; Wolverhampton: J.K.W.\* 8/-; J.L.\* 12/-; California: F.A. 3/9; London, N.1: N.L.A. Disc. Group 1/5; London: Anon. 3/6; London, N.1: P.D. 10/-; London, W.11: M.G. 10/-; London, S.W.17: R.R. 3/4.

TOTAL: £42 4 3

Previously Acknowledged: £1101 1 7

1966 Total to Date: £1143 5 10

\*Denotes Regular Contributor.

Gift of Badges — Harlow: Anarchist Group.

## Whatever happened to Frank Mitchell & Ian Smith?

SOME BEFUZZLED WITH ALCOHOL, some intoxicated by speed, some just confused by power, were among causers and affected of 158 deaths on the road over Christmas. Not unexpectedly there died a man whose life (and that of his father before him) was dedicated to the achievement of that same speed, power and recklessness with the accompanying intoxication of fame and publicity, qualities which are to be deplored in the individual motorist but which found plaudits of honour in the obituary columns for Donald Campbell; a few government figures died of departmental euthanasia (including Fred Lee, Arthur Bottomley), and Mr. Walter Padley (formerly of the ILP who died in Aden).

YOUNG CONSERVATIVES in Bournemouth discovered that only half of 160 people interviewed in the street knew the name of their MP. Only 65% believed Britain to have a future.

THE EDITOR of the West German *Der Spiegel*, Conrad Ahlers, has joined the Bonn Government, a member of which, Herr Franz Josef Strauss ordered the editor's arrest four years ago. Herr Ahlers' task will be to explain government policies. The new Chancellor, Kurt Kiesinger, is stated by the *Democratic German Report* (East Germany) to have been William Joyce's (Lord Haw-Haw) departmental head. It also reprints from *Der Spiegel* a memorandum from a member of the Radio Political Department of the Foreign Office to the SS stating that 'Kiesinger, former liaison man with the Propaganda Ministry and Reich Radio, and present deputy department head, is demonstrably responsible for placing obstacles in the way of anti-Jewish actions. For instance he prevented the implementation of a diversionary action'.

AN ITALIAN MP has given up his proposed backing of a Bill to legalise new tax exemptions for the Vatican. It is calculated that the Vatican owes the Italian State £3 million in taxes but some put the figure at £23 million. The Bill is partly the work of Signor Saragat who,

according to the *Guardian*, owes the acceptance by the Vatican of his Presidential candidacy to his sponsorship of this Bill. Now, with the Italian flood disaster, the MP says that it does not make sense that the Vatican should be exempted from taxes which others must pay.

CARDINAL SPELLMAN, Roman Catholic Vicar to the United States Armed Forces, told American fighting men who had seen Vietnam action that without their sacrifices 'we would soon be overwhelmed and be the victims of tyranny'... 'I believe that in these circumstances, you are not only serving your country but you are serving God because you are defending the cause of righteousness, and the cause of civilization and God's cause.'

MR. HARRISON E. SALISBURY, of the *New York Times*, reported that 'block after block of ordinary housing, particularly surrounding a textile plant' in Namdinh in North Vietnam had been 'smashed to rubble' by repeated attacks. Commander Robert C. Mandeville, of a naval attack squadron which carried out such raids, said, 'I'm not questioning Mr. Salisbury's honesty, but I found his story about Namdinh simply unbelievable. He's describing what he's seen on the ground. I guess we're looking at it from different points of view.'

A CHINESE EXPORTER in Hong Kong admitted in court that he had falsified documents in order to ship to Thailand £23,000 worth of steel bars made in China. Thailand has agreed to send troops to South Vietnam.

MILITARY OPERATIONS have commenced in the Mekong Delta, which is a great rice-growing area, containing one-third of the population of Vietnam and is controlled by the NLF-Vietcong. The former Vietnamese commander of the area, General Quang, who was opposed to large-scale operations in this area, has now been removed—into the Government. In the Delta, states the *Guardian*

correspondent, 5% are for the Americans, 5%, against, and 90% have no opinion. In areas where the Americans are based 20% do not like them, 40% say they do and the rest (40%) have no opinion.

THE SECRETARY to the Governor of Macao has had conversations in China and is said to have agreed to settlement of a dispute which led to pro-Chinese riots. Macao has handed over to China seven Chinese Nationalists.

THE RUSSIANS and the Americans each carried out underground nuclear tests. The Americans have found a method of making underground tests detection-proof and are now accordingly suspicious that further undetected Soviet tests have taken place. The Japanese are taking measures against fall-out from Chinese weapon tests. A pact has been signed at the United Nations against using the moon for atomic tests. On the Montebello Islands descendants of the rats which survived British nuclear explosions are still a menace and are to be killed off with poisoned Frankfurter sausages.

AN AUTHOR is trying to get an injunction against the BBC to prevent them from screening his TV play with the line (explaining how a girl got pregnant), 'My friend Sylv told me it was safe standing up', cut out. Peregrine Worsthorne, of the *Sunday Telegraph*, commenting on Lord Harewood's impending divorce says, 'To the Christian moralists the most scandalous feature of the Harewood affair must surely be that it has caused no scandal at all.'

THE NEWS of the world deplores the gloom in Fleet Street and says of itself, '... will continue to give its readers the unrivalled service of fearless opinion, news, entertainment and sport which has made the *News of the World* a national institution'. Among its stories on January 8 are: 'Strippers at a Working Men's Club', 'Bedroom Party in Girls' Home', 'Vicar Chased me over Pews says Choir-boy' and '400 Girls in Stamp Forger's Life'.  
JON QUIXOTE.

## Too Gentle Comrade?

Comrades,

In commenting on Ernie Tate's letter you were far too gentle with him. Not merely is the thuggery of the SLL consistent with Trotsky's actions when in power, but Comrade Tate belongs to the American SWP which for years countenanced Healy's disciplinary measures against dissidents, Fryer, Cadogan, Pennington, Grainger, to name but four—though four who have since been in contact with the anarchist movement (it was for no lack of attempts that Brian Behan is not numbered with these). It is almost certainly true to say that if from 1953 on Healy had not been able to shelter behind the international reputation of the American Trotskyists, there would now be no SLL. They would not, in 1956, have been the principal beneficiaries of the breakdown in the Communist Party, and would not have been able to build themselves within the Forum Movement and the New Left groupings in 1957, would not then have been able, as they did, to exploit the rise of CND or the formation of the Young Socialists.

Nor can the SWP leaders plead ignorance of the matter; not only did, on many occasions, dissident members of the SLL write to the SWP leadership, but also, as far back as 1959, a group of ex-Trotskyists of varying present political complexion wrote a letter personally to Cannon, to plead with him to break his ties with England's miniature Stalin; they were dismissed as mere petit bourgeois liberals whose stomach turned at the harsh realities of revolutionary action. So it is sheer dishonesty for the SWP now to claim that it did not know that the SLL was in no sense a Socialist grouping but merely an unpleasant residue of Stalin-type thuggery. Their bleats now about democratic rights, the brotherhood of all Socialists of whatever tradition, is only so much eyewash. It would, for instance, be an interesting though probably dangerous experience to sell anti-Vietcong pamphlets at a VSC meeting (I will tell you how it goes when I've managed to produce a sufficiently good one).

However this is not the only objection to Tate's letter; you will note that Healy is referred to as Ultra-Leftist and the suggestion is made that his behaviour emanates from this leftism. Apart from the fact that Healy was behaving in this way at a time when he was whitewashing Nye Bevan, the people who are normally referred to as Ultra-Leftists in Trotskyist circles are anarchists and a few dissident Leninist groups. So the letter-writer is making the inference that Healy behaves

## Letters

in this way because he is three-parts anarchist. Lest anyone thinks this is a mere mistake, reference to the pamphlet in question, *Healy 'Reconstructs'*, reference to Geoff Coggan's recent article in *The Week*, reference to comments on Healy in the *International Socialist Review* ever since the split, have all attempted to equate a revolutionary non-entrist and anti-Castro position with thuggery. As early as 1963 an aside in an *ISR* article coupled Healy with the anarchists. This is what is known by Marxists as the Amalgam, more widely known as Guilt by Association. Just as Healy is resurrecting Stalinist lies about the anarchists in Spain (regardless of the fact that the charge would rebound on the Trotskyists and POUM), so the Fourth International ('Unified' Secretariat) is doing what the 'left' Social-Democrats did in the thirties, recording the crimes of Stalinism and implying that these emanate from lack of commitment to parliamentary democracy, claiming that anarchists like all other anti-parliamentarians wish to impose a one-party police state.

I believe that this is the sort of basis on which we should ground anarchist refusal to be greatly worried by Tate's misadventure. For all Trotsky's actions in power—which were after all what anarchists would expect of anyone in power, and Archimov makes comparable accusations (on a smaller scale) about Makhno—he wasn't, when not in power, in any sense a vicious little petty dictator. I think there is room for profound anarchist regret that of the four organizations claiming to be the Fourth International and Trotsky's successors, one is the private preserve of a megalomaniac, one is led by a psychotic who believes that socialism will come out of a nuclear war, and the remaining two manage in a curious way to combine abject betrayal to not merely the reformist labour (or in America liberal Democrat) leadership but also on an international plane to conflicting sections of the Stalinist bureaucracy, so that at one and the same time they support Mao and Castro although these are in basic rivalry throughout South America. There are a few—a very few—other Trotskyists, with whom we disagree on many fundamental issues but whom nevertheless it is possible to see as part of a broader socialist, libertarian and anti-militarist movement—our differences with these are on the

level of differences with the ILP, Solidarity or within our own movement; but all four Fourth's are like the Stalinists, right outside the boundaries of libertarianism, and we are no more concerned with their internecine feuds than we are with those of the fascists.

Yours fraternally,

Witney, Oxon. LAURENS OTTER.  
13.12.66

## Revolution by Writs

Dear Friends,

Having failed with physical violence to suppress my views, Gerry Healy is now trying legal threats. I circulated a letter to the Labour and Socialist press, describing a beating I received outside a Socialist Labour League meeting on the Hungarian Revolution at Caxton Hall on November 17, 1966. The beating occurred while I was trying to distribute Socialist literature to SLL members and supporters.

This letter included the following paragraphs (FREEDOM, December 10, 1966):

'At 7.50 Gerry Healy and Michael Banda entered the hall. A few seconds later Healy came to the entrance and indicated to his followers that I should be removed from the front of the hall.'

'I was immediately set upon and physically assaulted by six or seven Socialist Labour League supporters. My literature was knocked from my hands—I was punched and thrown to the ground, my glasses were smashed, and as I lay on the ground I was kicked repeatedly in the groin and stomach.'

It is these paragraphs which I assume Gerry Healy does not like. They vividly show the lengths to which Healy is prepared to go to suppress criticisms and differences with which he is not able to cope. When I refused to be intimidated by these strong-arm methods, and made an appeal through the Left-wing press, Healy took the next logical step in his campaign of suppression. He invoked the power of the State against the Left press, instructing his solicitors to threaten with libel action both *Peace News* and the *Socialist Leader*, who had printed my original letter. Healy calculated that the hard-pressed Left papers would yield to his intimidation rather than go to court and pay the expenses of a legal dispute. A shrewd judge of how to kick fellow-Left-wing militants where it hurts, Healy was rewarded with apologies and 10 guineas costs from each paper.

The apologies he made them print were instructive in themselves. Whereas shortly after the original incident, he maintained that I had provoked members of the Socialist Labour League into attacking me, now he suggests that he

only wanted the front of the hall cleared to let passengers from the bus enter. He may fool some people who do not know the real background to these events with this story, but not many who are familiar with recent issues of the *Newsletter* can fail to see the incident as a logical outcome of the hysteria, hostility and abuse being whipped up by the SLL leadership against its opponents on the Left. This itself is a reflection of the political weakness of these leaders, of their inability to deal with criticism and consequently of their need to prevent a discussion at all costs. Thus, on the night when I was attacked I was selling the pamphlet *Healy 'Reconstructs' the Fourth International* describing Healy's high-handed, bureaucratic methods in dealing with opposing political tendencies at a recent conference. On August 22, the *Newsletter* had noted the early sales of the pamphlet and warned: 'We shall not hesitate to deal appropriately with the handful of United Secretariat agents who hawk it around the cynical fake-Left in England.' At the time, this seemed like a thinly veiled threat to prevent the views expressed in this pamphlet from reaching the rank-and-file members of the Socialist Labour League. The beating I received on the night of November 17 indicates just what the *Newsletter* meant by this threat.

Until now there has been no public comment from the SLL on the beating. A month has passed. Is the SLL leadership too embarrassed? Is it too much to hope that the other leaders of the SLL find Healy's methods indefensible? Or are they calculating that time is on their side and that if I can be intimidated by the threat of a court action into remaining silent, the incident will be quickly forgotten?

If so they have calculated wrongly, for I refuse to be intimidated. I still believe that the most effective way to deal with the actions of Gerry Healy and to prevent this kind of conduct from recurring, is to expose his methods to the working-class movement. Therefore, I plan to keep on distributing the letter which Gerry Healy finds so offensive. This is consistent with the democratic tradition of socialism. If Healy wishes to attempt to stifle this tradition with the power of the courts, I am prepared to fight him.

I am asking all those who receive this letter, who believe in the importance of full and open political discussion on the Left, to send a financial 'onation' so that the letters I am sending out will receive even wider circulation.

Fraternally,

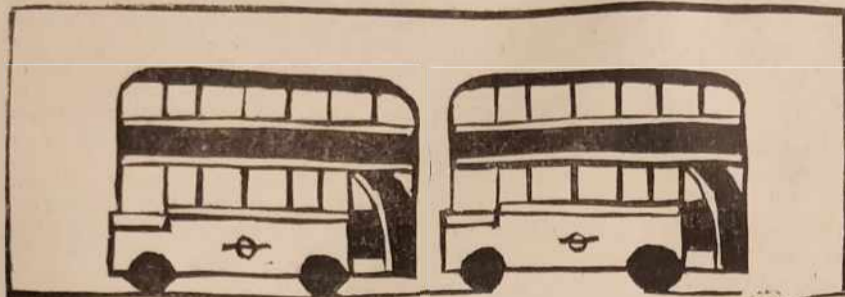
8 Toynbee Street, ERNEST TATE.  
London, E.3  
15.12.66

# Strike for Safe Service

THE SOLIDARITY of the bus men and women at Fulwell and Southall garages have won the sympathy and unofficial support of the delegates at the special conference called to discuss the strike action that is, at the time of writing, going into its second week and which has every chance, should the London Transport Board refuse to give way over the savage schedule cuts that they have imposed, of involving other garages.

For 15 years there has been a chronic shortage of men and women to man the London buses and the Transport Board has used this fact as a cynical excuse to cut services in the name of labour shortage. With a shortage of 4,000 working staff the Board had already stated that they intended to make drastic cuts in bus duties in January 1967, but with the Government freeze driving a flow of fresh labour into the bus industry this excuse became a sour joke.

It had been stated that the new schedules would contain a further 4½% cut in bus duties involving the loss of 1,333 men. Fulwell and Southall garages found themselves carrying the can not with the ex-



pected 4½% cut in duties but 16% and they have point-blank refused to operate these vicious schedules while all the other London garages have agreed not to cover any bus route served by these two garages.

If one examines Highgate's new schedules one finds that there are 33 duties cut from Monday to Friday, 18 from the Saturday schedules and 13 from the Sunday schedules, giving a total daily cut of 196 duties. This means that in place of the present 306 crews there will only be 268 crews operating from Highgate garage, an elimination of 80 men and women or, as the London School of Economics would say, 13% duties.

Collections are being taken up in all garages still working and the delegates have pledged their unofficial support. But the Board are reported to be standing firm as a matter of principle in that they will not negotiate until the men have trailed back, cap in hand.

This rubbish would be acceptable if it were not that this same Board casually, and without any attempt to save face, gave in over a threatened one-day protest strike that was to have called out the whole of the London bus fleet on January 9. This was a situation in which the Board had a legitimate case on which to stand fast but a broad streak of yellow glowed in the darkness of the boardroom.

Some twelve months ago the Board decided to make modifications to the gearboxes of the Routemaster buses. Instead of the buses automatically dropping back into second gear each time the bus stopped they were modified to save fuel in that they were made to automatically fall back into neutral gear. The drivers claimed that this was a public danger for the buses drifted backwards at stops and in traffic and with a duff handbrake one could unwittingly cause an accident to some elderly person or find oneself smashing in the radiator of the vehicle behind.

Mortlake garage went through all the constitutional motions in their negotiation with the Board to have these buses altered back to the second gear stopping but the Board

though negotiating would not give way. Finally after unrest at a number of garages the Board slung in the towel and ended the modification to the gearboxes and agreed to change the other gearboxes to the original second gear stopping. *Except for one single garage and that was the Mortlake garage the only garage that went through the official machinery of negotiation.*

While the Board accepted that the rest of the bus fleet had won their point they insisted that the Mortlake men should still work those buses. One could argue, and I have within the garage, that the Board could claim that as they were in official negotiation with Mortlake garage they could not, for fear of a legal backlash, admit that the men were right without accepting that these buses might conceivably be a public danger, as the men claimed. Yet when the whole of the London bus fleet threatened to strike for a SINGLE day as a protest the Board caved in and agreed that Mortlake should also be included in the anti-modification programme.

This of course makes nonsense of their present stand on principle. Let us understand where we, the workers, stand in this matter. What the Board feared was a complete strike of the whole of their working staff. Isolated pockets of protest they can deal with but one single day of mass defiance and the top brass bled milk.

We, the working class, have only one weapon and that is the strike weapon. We should use it sparingly, but use it wisely and, having decided to use it, use it ruthlessly and fearlessly. For if we are prepared to use it again and again in our own defence then, win or lose, no strike is ever lost. For if we are prepared to attack whenever the time demands, then a single lost strike is but the losing of a single battle in our endless war against those who wield, and attempt to wield, their authority over us, the men and women of the world, who have naught to sell but their labour in return for that small portion of the harvests of the world that they alone brought forth.

LUMPENPROLETARIAT.

## THE GREAT AMERICAN LIE

Continued from page 1

cided to take over South Vietnam by force. They no longer have the slightest chance of a military victory and if they could find some way of withdrawing without losing too much face, they would—America being willing. And as for the Chinese government, in spite of all its big talk, the last thing it wants is war with the US. It knows full well that if that happens it is China and not the US that will be shown to be the paper tiger.

Meanwhile there doesn't seem much that anyone else can do to stop the fighting and its escalation. All the warring parties have shown themselves to be quite indifferent to appeals to reason, moderation and decency. Much of the public concern about Vietnam that has existed has been caused by, not the

existing fighting, but by fear that it will escalate into all-out nuclear war. This danger has receded now that the Russian government is sitting on the fence and hence public concern has diminished too. In Britain, the lying, hate-sodden, fascist dirt of the communist party discredits all genuine anti-war campaigns with its hypocrisy and its inane chanting of rubbish like 'Hey, hey, LBJ—How many kids have you killed today?'—shouted by people whose blatant insincerity is shown by their pleasure-filled, smirking faces.

The only argument these intellectual and emotional perverts present that has validity is that *before* the fighting started a majority of South Vietnamese would have preferred union under Ho Chi Minh to rule by odious American puppets like

# Freedom For Workers' Control

JANUARY 14 1967 Vol 28 No 1

## Led All the Way

A YEAR AGO Mr. Wilson, the Prime Minister, said that 1966 would be a 'make or break' year for the British economy. It was in fact a period when the Government put into operation measures which were intended to put British capitalism on a more competitive footing with its rivals.

These measures are working, the trade gap has narrowed and the figures have even shown a surplus. A Labour Government has brought about an economic recovery and in so doing have moved further to the right in the political spectrum than the Tories ever did during their 13 years of rule. This fact is worth considerable thought by those between-election anarchists and the different shades of left-wing Socialists who at every General Election tell us to vote Labour.

This is not to say that the Tories would not have liked to try the same measures as the present Government. They would have, but no doubt fear of the trade unions stopped them. However, Mr. Wilson has done all the things the Tories used to be accused of doing. Since Labour came to power there has been a slower advance in social services than when the Tories were in. It has used the old weapon of unemployment to weaken the bargaining power of the unions and to make them acquiesce to the Governmental policies and has used the monetary policies of 'stop-go'. Not only in its dealings with the economy has this reactionary trend been noticeable, its handling of the Rhodesian crisis is another example.

### FOR THE FIRST TIME

The economic measures already taken are the basis for a healthy economy, that is a profitable one. For many workers, it has meant that for the first time in their lives they have been really unemployed. Although the unemployment figures show that there is a levelling out, there is no doubt that more workers are going to be out of work before very long.

Many still unemployed after the 'shake-out' are the 'big-money workers' in the car industry. They might have earned big money, but a lot of this was made up of overtime earnings. Graham Turner, in his book *The Car Makers* wrote concerning the scramble for extra earnings: 'And beneath all this furious scramble there is the old desperate desire for security, and the failure to find it. The cloud on the horizon for the young men who cannot remember the despair of pre-war slumps is a cut in overtime.'

Now young men are facing unemployment and, although they perhaps bought houses for their wives and families and had all the modern conveniences, the security they sought was an illusion. For any worker with a wife and children, a

few weeks out of work really shows his position in this society. Perhaps it was a myth that the trade unions would buck against the Tories if they had carried out what Wilson is now doing. But traditional working-class opposition to the Tories would have meant widespread unofficial action. However, this has not happened except in isolated cases when a Labour Government carries out what have been Tory policies.

### STREAMLINING LABOUR

The unofficial Joint Shop Stewards Committee at BMC, for all its lobbying, talks and a chat with Wilson, achieved precious little, while BMC achieved their 'shake-out'. This term, first used by Mr. Wilson, does not mean that you will have your old job back later on. This is just not a recession, but goes much deeper and is aimed at a long term reorganisation. Already this process has begun at BMC, for this week they announced their increased production target of 15,500 units per week. This will mean less workers on short time, but their long term aim for 1970 is 'to produce, with a streamlined labour force, 1,250,000 cars a year—without overtime'.

The long term aim for British capitalism, which both the employers and the Government want, is less men doing the same amount or more work. This will be accompanied by unemployment. Mr. Wilson said on July 20: 'If the figure of unemployment were, after all re-absorption, after all the re-deployment and after all the measures for regional distribution, to rise to a figure between 1½% and 2% (470,000) I do not believe that the House as a whole would consider that unacceptable.' The Chancellor in a New Year's message said to the *Financial Times* readers that 'the Government's long term objectives continue to be based on a viable balance of payments, full employment (my italics) and an expanding economy'. However a month previously, he echoed Mr. Wilson when he said—'We do not aim to return to a position where there is a constant collision between pressure on our resources and the capacity available to meet that pressure. It was that situation, the collision which we constantly had, which has been responsible, more responsible than anything else I would say, for the continuing inflation'. So to prevent this 'constant collision', nearly half a million men will be unemployed, not as bad as the Thirties, but when you are out of a job, it is not much consolation to know there is only half a million like you.

### 'SEVERE RESTRAINT'

However, even now that the 'wage freeze' is over and we are entering the period of 'severe restraint', one wonders whose claims are going to be passed. The Incomes Policy would, we were told, benefit the lower-paid worker, but so far the Government has not made up its mind who or what it means by this definition. The TUC has already let ten pay claims through its own wage vetting committee because they apply to workers earning about £10 to £12 per week.

The Prices and Incomes Board criteria for productivity bargains are such that even the General & Municipal Workers' Union have said that they are 'not worth a candle'. So not much is going to get through there. The only way to force wage or any other demands is to take action. In the main workers and their shop stewards have gone along with the unions and the constitutional procedure, and this has got them nowhere. The 'shake-out' has gone on and wages have been frozen. Let us face it, the Government and the employers have led all the way in the last six months. What about the next six months?

JEFF ROBINSON.

P.T.

## Contact Column

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

**Furnished Accommodation.** Available £2-£3 per week in semi-community house near Crystal Palace. Box 46.

**Accommodation.** Accommodation wanted anywhere for unmarried mother and baby girl victimised by Birmingham City Council in their divide and rule policy while acting as militant spokesman in Birmingham Homeless Hostels Struggle. At present on NAB. Hopes to return to trade as paint sprayer as soon as day nursery found. Prefers own door key for change. Contact through Peter Neville, 12 South Grove, Erdington, Birmingham, 23. Urgently.

**Accommodation Wanted.** Girl wants flat in London sharing with 2/3 others. Lesley Owen, 24 Crawshaw Drive, Emmer Green, Reading.

**Work.** Urgent; young couple, both graduates, seek any work in which they can be together (for personal reasons this is more important than the money). John Tittensor, 103a Camden Road, London, N.W.1.

**Accommodation.** Young couple (with two small sons) urgently need 3-room s.c. flat at reasonable rent. Willing to decorate, baby mind, help in house, garden, etc. Box 42.

**Whisper and Shout.** Poet and Ballad Group touring England 1967. Want recruits (poets and singers) and bookings. Contact Travelling Poets, 56 Jackson Avenue, Mickleover, Derby.

**A Certain Visit.** Anarchist Welcoming Committee meets outside Intourist (Moscow) Ltd., 314 Regent Street, W.1, February 4 at 11 a.m. Then march to another place. Bring your own posters.

**Accommodation wanted.** Tourist accommodation wanted. Australian woman, travelling in Europe needs CHEAP accommodation in London for approximately four weeks in February, 1967. Prefer relatively central location. Would also like companion for travels in March. Box 43.

**Accommodation:** Bristol anarchist sympathiser, studious, responsible, teetotaler, needs bedsitter in Bristol. Clifton, Rodlands, Hotwell area preferred. Large house. Box No. 44.

**Work Wanted in France.** Long shot. Can anyone help married couple (30's) find permanent work—France/Switz. Box 47.

If you wish to make contact let us know.