

Freedom

DECEMBER 9 1972 Vol 33 No 50

THE JURY IS OUT...

After the longest Old Bailey trial in history today (Monday) the jury has retired to consider its verdicts in the matter of the so-called 'Angry Brigade' or the Stoke Newington Eight. Even though juries (particularly in the United States) have been known to produce surprisingly liberal verdicts—sometimes with no effect on the sentences—it is unlikely that in the present atmosphere harsh sentences and verdicts can be avoided. It is highly significant that Commander Ernest Bond, the legendary Commander X, has been given promotion, this augurs well for official opinion of how he marshalled his case against 'The Angry Brigade'. Despite defence appeals, none of the accusations of framing or planting seemed to have tarnished the former Commander's reputation.

It is inevitable that the left and the anarchists will and must protest against verdicts and sentences. We can still remember the savage fifteen-year sentence against Jake Prescott for 'conspiracy' which in proven essence was addressing three envelopes for the 'Angry Brigade'.

But, even in the most savage sentencing, in the most outrageous perversions of justice and fulfilments of vengeance, the radical movement has been able to extract some shred of hope that the gauntlet had once more been thrown down, that the giant monster of the State had been confronted and although we of the Left had been defeated we had emerged with honour, dignity and unity.

We cannot feel this in the present case. Perhaps the whole thing went on for too long. One always hopes in these civil liberty cases that one can unquestionably defend—or to use a phrase 'show solidarity' with—the total outlook of the defendants.

ANGER AND AFTER

One is past caring that means are used which are compatible with the ends. One is used to defendants who have views on Ireland and Vietnam which one cannot share. One also feels that the joint insistence or alternation between total innocence and highly justifiable guilt is a little wearing. But nevertheless we have tried to maintain a defence of these comrades in the same way that we have covered many other cases—giving them critical support and ventilating all infringements of their civil liberties—additionally we have maintained a continual running 'Contact' column advert for their literature and financial support. Perhaps we could have done more but it was not in our hands.

The key phrase which seems to have annoyed many comrades (and doubtless satisfied some) is 'critical support'. It is true that the editors of FREEDOM have never expressed an editorial viewpoint on this case (it is perhaps unnecessary to add that only unsigned articles, which are rare, represent an editorial viewpoint—frequently we print articles which are at variance with the individual or collective views of the editors!). But we have not felt that a collective viewpoint was necessary on this topic. Coverage was scant, information was scarce, and many viewpoints that could be expressed would have been harmful to the conduct of the case and doubtless would fall in the category 'contempt of court'.

From the start, possibly from defence

tactics the defendants have, in the main, with, of course, the exception of Stuart Christie, never affirmed their anarchism. John Barker in fact explicitly stated 'Personally, I am not an anarchist', and the affiliation standpoint and expressions used by the accused substantiate this viewpoint. We do not blame the accused for taking such a stand and we have never made it a condition of our support (for what it's worth) for any civil liberties case that the persecuted should have the same political views as we.

Criticism has been made of the exploits of the Angry Brigade—if such exists—from the political Left on the grounds

of 'elitism' and 'adventurism'. We anarchists cannot specifically criticise the series of incidents on such eclectic grounds. All these events so painstakingly pieced together by Commander Bond bear the stamp of romantic individual acts. Whether or not they were definitely planned to avoid loss of life we do not know—suffice it that they did—more by luck than judgement. Secondly, it is obvious that there was an almost total failure of publicity, which was ironical, considering that the thin threads that connected many of the defendants with the so-called 'Angry Brigade' were primarily concerned with

publicity. The utter failure of the exploits to capture working-class sympathy and the over-optimistic evaluation that the situation was potentially revolutionary are two more failures of interpretation of what was happening.

A comrade has criticised the viewpoint (given in FREEDOM, 22.4.72, by N.W.) that a *Conspiracy Notes* claim that the Angry Brigade represents the Left-wing revolutionary movement is questionable. 'It can be argued,' says N.W., 'that the AB has actually alienated itself from the movement by its methods and has indeed injured the movement by opening it up to internal distrust and division and to external pressure and persecution. If the Angry Brigade are really sensitive to the needs and desires of the people, they should consider how they have helped to fulfil those needs and satisfy those desires. If the Angry Brigade is really part of the revolution, they should consider how they have helped to advance or retard it. And even if in the final analysis the Angry Brigade can be shown to have done more good than harm, it is still up to each one of us to decide whether we really feel that we are part of the same movement.' There is nothing to quarrel with in such a statement given a position of critical support. Our comrade remarks—from where we don't know—'I learned they [these remarks] actually did serve the state—to use in discrediting the accused.' He further expected editorial protest against such a viewpoint—we cannot really see anything incompatible with anarchism in such a view, indeed we can see more flaws in the AB viewpoint as publicised in *Conspiracy Notes* and *Anarchy* No. 9 (New Series).

Our comrade goes on with his protests of this 'counter-revolutionary stab-in-the-back' to an article by Dennis Gould under his standing title 'Riff Raff', July 29, 1972. Dennis Gould wrote, 'Political militants eager to do anything to stir up "the people" are quite happy to see bombs planted and violence done so long as it creates publicity and gets attention. (Although this rarely gains long-term support of any revolutionary nature.) The only way to create more and more individualists... is to present anarchist ideas and activities in an open and friendly way, which doesn't go down at all well with the sneering, suspicious, hidden-identity revolutionaries who are always on the brink of revolution but somehow never quite get there.'... 'I know from experience with the Committee of 100 that there are plainclothes police and paid informers that will always be eager to pick up information freely available.' One of our criticisms of the AB case has been that it has created a conspiratorial atmosphere, with accusation and counter-accusations flying about. Dennis Gould's viewpoint would at least eliminate this.

It has been a sad business. Perhaps one could sum up the AB as confused in its aim, uncertain and unwise in its allies, foredoomed to disappointment (even in achievement) and employing means inconsistent with its ends.

JACK ROBINSON.

RAILWAYS AND ROADS

THE MOTOR INDUSTRY forms an important section of most of the industrialised countries' economies. In this country it makes up 11% of the total industrial production. As such, and with the support of the other industries connected with vehicle manufacture and transport, they form a very powerful political influence on the policies of the Government. This was very evident with the return of the Tories in 1951 when they returned the profitable road haulage side of transport to their private owners.

Since then the road transportation of both goods and people has flourished. However, the car which once made the countryside accessible to many is now not only choking up the roads but also our lungs. Equally the transportation of goods has moved away from the railways and onto the roads. Not only are the railways losing freight, the increases in the productive capacity of this country are being transported by our already overloaded network of motorways and trunk roads. Indeed if one looks at the network of motorways it is clear that they were located primarily to serve industry in moving goods from their place of manufacture to the most convenient port for their export.

As with other industrialised countries our one-time all-embracing railway system has declined nearly out of all recognition. The Beeching Axe of the early sixties was only the start of a continuing eroding of lines, services and stations. An idea of how enormous this cut-back has been shows in the decline in the membership of two of the trade unions catering for railwaymen. In the 1950s, the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen had over 80,000 members, now it is down to 29,000. The largest union, the

National Union of Railwaymen, had 600,000 and is now down to 200,000. The yardstick of what is profitable has slashed a tolerably efficient service into a system of fast inter-city travel for business men and football supporters.

But slowly a reaction against the railway cuts and our noisy congested roads is gaining momentum. People are becoming aware of their real needs and that of the community at large. They are concerned about the environmental effects of both pollution from exhausts and the destruction of towns and villages and the waste caused by the steady encroachment on agricultural land.

The outcry over the police raid on the offices of the *Railway Gazette* in search of the missing documents on further railway cuts and the opposition forced on the Government over the weight limits for lorries, highlights people's growing anxiety about the deteriorating quality of life. These decisions will greatly affect the lives of the people of this country and yet we are not consulted. We would not even be allowed access to some of this information, except for the community-spirited gesture of those who leaked the document to the *Sunday Times*. The document was a series of studies drawn up by British Rail and the Department of the Environment and recommended the axing of 11,600 miles of railway.

While the Government is so concerned about the financial deficit made by the railways, they never hesitate to spend more public money on 'improving' or building new motorways. What profit does the Government get from a new motorway? Obviously none directly, but the interests of those connected with road transportation and the revenue

Continued on page 2

TOO MANY MARTYRS

SEAN MACSTIOFAIN'S apparent reluctance to starve himself to a quick death confirms the cynicism of those of us who always believed that the 'patriots', Catholic and Protestant, who have been prepared to see children blown to pieces in N. Ireland are not so eager to seek their own martyrdom. After all, the indiscriminate slaughter of innocent people 'for the cause' is the mark of the cowardly bully who is prepared to sacrifice anyone—except himself—on the altar of his lust for power. Undoubtedly, MacStiofain was the main architect of the Provisionals' callous and politically disastrous policy. Repeated calls from Provisional units in the North for an end to the bombing of civilian targets have been angrily rejected by MacStiofain who seems intent on drowning the people of Ireland in their own blood. If MacStiofain lives he may not now be able to recapture the leadership of the Provisionals which may pass into more politically-aware (if no less authoritarian) hands, but it remains to be seen.

At a time when there was widespread popular support for opposition to the Lynch Government's proposed repressive legislation which can be used to suppress any opposition (see last week's FREEDOM), two bombs exploded in the centre of Dublin killing two people and injuring over 70 others. It is not known who was responsible for these bombings or their motives, and denials have come from all quarters. One bomb exploded near Liberty Hall which is the home of the Irish TUC and the scene of the recent Provisional Sinn Fein conference. The other bomb in Sackville Street killed a bus driver and a conductor who were apparently on their way to a busmen's social club. As news of the explosions reached the Dail (the Irish

Parliament) where the new legislation was being debated, the Opposition MPs of Fine Gael—showing the typical integrity and courage of politicians—immediately withdrew their amendment to the Bill which went through on a large majority. (For the record it must be said that Labour, Independent and a few Fine Gael MPs voted against.)

The bombings could have been the work of Protestants from the North or of agents provocateurs intent on discrediting opposition to the Bill, but it is also a measure of the lunacy and political ineptitude of the Provisionals that they could also have been responsible. In fact, whoever was responsible, no one could have made it easier for the Government to pass its legislation. People in the South are bound to be numbed for a time by the unaccustomed death and injury on their doorsteps and will shut their eyes to the repression in their midst. However, as the realisation dawns on people of the way a government with almost unlimited powers suppresses any opposition to stay in power, then there may be renewed support for the Provisionals' tactics.

For too long the people of Ireland, North and South, have been betrayed, bamboozled and bombed by the politicians, priests and 'patriots'. And yet in their collective strength as workers they have the power to resist the repression of any government—the strike of RTE workers showed the way—and also to build a new, free Ireland. As in this country factories and workshops are yours of right, my Irish brothers. Take them, hold them and build a truly free Ireland without capitalists, politicians and priests. That would be a worthwhile memorial to Ireland's real martyrs.

TERRY PHILLIPS.

Have you sent
your Guarantee (see p.3)
towards our £2000
needed for next year?

Protesting too much?

I HOPE WE are not expected to take too literally the concluding paragraph of the article 'Some More Equal Than Others'—'women must get together and support each other in finding their own identity before they can contribute to that (the) revolution—we cannot work effectively alongside men until they are willing to honestly examine and change their role as oppressors'. One can imagine these words being written at the time of the Suffragette struggle when indeed women had no opportunity to work alongside men because almost the entire male population was either contemptuous of or bitterly hostile to the fight of women for the vote. Of course women have still not achieved equality of rights with men, but the transformation of their situation in the last fifty years has been considerable. They are still exploited and in some ways discriminated against, but society is full of exploitation and discrimination. The chief victims are the poor as always, and most of all the poor who are also black.

I cannot believe that women are so oppressed and disoriented as to be unable to play their part in the fight to end the horrible society we all live in. Their problems are not so intractable as to be incapable of solution, most of them I would think even within the existing framework.

To take an example—contraception and abortion. In this field taboos are falling fast. In some London boroughs they are starting to give free contraception to all who need it, including girls still at school. There is no sound reason why capitalism should not yield liberty to the individual in these areas—after all it does not threaten rent, interest and profit. It is not granted or withheld (as the article states) because of the system's need for a large docile work force. Technology has already assured that there are several men for any job and the ratio will inevitably increase. The only block to progress that I can see is religion—take Southern Ireland with its huge unemployment but no legal contraception.

But looking at Britain itself one has to agree that progress is being made, and I do not think it has much to do with the agitation by women's liberation groups, but rather is due to middle class 'family planners', a few enlightened doctors, social workers and so on, plus the fact that social attitudes do change. After all it would have been unthinkable even twenty years ago for an unmarried girl to have a baby, suffer no social stigma and be supported by the state until the child was of school age—however miserably inadequate you might think that support is.

In the field of work, progress will be much harder. Arthur Moysie is quite right in saying that trade union organisation is the best way to achieve this. However the question of work for women is itself a little more complex. Many women are secondary not primary wage-earners—they only want to work part-time and do not have the same incentive as men to organise and to fight for better pay and conditions. The question of monotonous, repetitive work is not too simple either. Some women I imagine do not mind doing something monotonous with their hands if their minds are left free to enjoy the company of their fellow workers. It can be an escape from the modern disease of isolation.

Perhaps there will always be monotonous work, whatever the society—certainly domestic jobs like cooking, washing, bed-making and so on can be terribly monotonous but worthwhile in human terms.

Of course employers must be stopped from getting away with murder where cheap female labour is concerned. Women can and are doing this as the recent battle of the night office cleaners in London showed—and I believe Women's Lib. did help there as well as postmen and dustmen. However there is a shrinking demand for labour in all manual jobs and we could reach a situation where employers will sack women and take on men rather than pay the women a comparable rate. So we cannot really isolate the struggle of women for equality from the general struggle of all against the system. Then again I think one has to be a bit careful about demanding the right of women to work—which is not for one moment detracting from the desperate plight of the many who have to work to survive. As far as I know, under Communism women do not have the right not to work—which I think is incomparably worse than anything which faces us here. In Russia, for instance, there are no bars to women in any profession—but they are just as much prisoners of the state as anyone else—and as far as I know their domestic burdens are just as heavy if not more so than here.

I must confess that the professional women who seem to predominate in the Women's Lib. movement do put me off it a bit. They shout about the right of single women to fulfil themselves by having a child, for married women not to have them, or if they do to shove them off at the earliest possible moment for less cerebral types to care for—much as Victorian ladies used to hand over their babies to working class women to be breast-fed. They meantime want to go out and earn good money doing whatever they have been trained at university to do, which, unless they are doctors, I would guess is largely useless work.

Any single girl with any sense, left with a baby, would like to meet a man she likes, and whom the child likes—and most difficult of all who likes the child. Bringing up a child on your own is likely to end in neurosis for both mother and child. I can't shed too many tears over those women who think their brains are going rusty because they have to cook the dinner. Let them look around. They will find plenty of local problems to get stuck into—or perhaps they could write a regular column for FREEDOM?

On all counts working-class women have more right to complain of oppression at work and at home. The old contemptuous attitude does undoubtedly persist in working class communities, particularly in the north. It stems from various historical factors, and I imagine that women going to work and thereby getting a certain measure of independence will in time bring it to an end. The fact that there are many thousands of women who do not know what their husbands earn or when they get a rise, is disgraceful and Women's Lib. should say so loud and long.

Taken all in all though, the situation for women, bad as it is, is not incurable. There is a lot we can do and unlike our Suffragette sisters we can expect to get quite a lot of help from men.

JANET ALEXANDER.

to meet for discussions with Comrade Shelepin, Head of Trade Union Affairs in Russia. No doubt our Vic will find the experience very useful next year for rooting out 'subversives' and 'extremists' in the unions who are opposed to a Government-TUC wages control deal. Comrade Shelepin used to be head of the secret police!

ANOTHER POLICE RAID

While we were still laughing at the abortive raid on the highly respectable *Railway Gazette* by police searching for a secret Government report on the intention to destroy our railway system, some nameless MP came on the radio to flaunt his civil liberties conscience. Of course, said he, it was quite understandable that police should raid 'other publications' but not the respectable *Railway Gazette*. So much for the guardians of our non-existent civil liberties.

T.P.

WANTED— GUARANTORS

THE RESPONSE to our proposals for a better FREEDOM next year has not been so swift and sure as to guarantee FREEDOM's continuation. But a number of people have asked us to make clear what it is we are asking for. We are NOT asking at this point for cash donations up to £2,000. Our project is to make a FREEDOM that will reach a wider circulation and be viable from sales. What we are asking is, that if we undertake this and if as the year goes on the best efforts we make to increase income to the necessary amount fail to reach that figure, that we can call on you to honour a pledge up to a given amount. We do not intend to let FREEDOM die. If you feel concerned to take part in its life and can commit yourself to helping with money, please fill in the form below and return it to us NOW.

IF WE DO NOT GET THESE GUARANTEES 'FREEDOM' WILL NOT APPEAR IN 1973!

If necessary for the continuation of FREEDOM in 1973 you may call on me for a sum not exceeding £..... which I hereby guarantee. (Please say if pledge can be honoured only after a certain date which is

Name
Address

If you cannot help with money can you SELL FREEDOM? For example, six copies sold and paid for each week in every college in Britain would probably solve our problem.

INDIANS ON STRIKE AGAIN

FURTHER TO OUR REPORT in last week's FREEDOM concerning the strike of 500 Indian workers at Mansfield Hosiery Mills, Loughborough, the last week has seen further developments. After a four-week strike the men returned to work on Monday, November 27, to find that, far from carrying out their promise to train Indian workers for the better paid knitting jobs, the management had engaged new employees during the strike to train for jobs as knitters.

The Indians also found themselves on short-time working, a three-day week, with the additional fear that the company intends to install new machinery which will endanger their jobs and thus be a threat to their livelihoods. The management claimed that the arrangements for short-time working had been advised by the union, but the union denied any knowledge of this, and again the Indian strikers found themselves being cynically pushed about by two equally untrust-

worthy and indifferent white institutions. With this renewal of the strike the men are even more determined to wrest some real concessions and safeguards from the management.

PETER MILLER.

LATER:

Following the intervention of an official of the Department of Employment in an attempt to get the men back to work, a meeting of strikers has decided to stay on strike and have adopted the further demand that the 41 men set in as trainee knitters during the strike, whose employment had been a bone of contention with the strikers, should not be dismissed but found alternative work. The strike meeting was told of a new management offer of full-time working and the setting on of six to eight Indians to be trained as knitters. The mood of the meeting was so opposed to a return to work that no vote was taken. The struggle continues.

Gartree Ignites

AFTER THE WIDESPREAD protests by prisoners all over Britain a few months ago, the uneasy calm was again broken last week by an outbreak of rioting and an attempted escape at Gartree Prison.

Prison officers at Gartree were incensed at the flouting of authority by the prisoners who climbed onto the roof some time ago, and they threatened a work-to-rule and strike action if the authorities did not clamp down on 'soft' conditions in the prison. It seems highly likely that the riot last week was the result of the way the prison officers have been taking their revenge on the prisoners. Dick Pooley of PROP wrote to the Home Office warning them of the worsening situation at Gartree after receiving a letter from a prisoner's wife two months ago, but the Home Office officials would not meet him to discuss conditions at Gartree.

The reaction of the press was typical: local residents were terrified with scare stories of homicidal maniacs wandering the countryside, Mafia conspiracies and all. (In fact, despite press reports to the contrary, no prisoners did get outside the perimeter fence.) As on previous occa-

sions the press has done its best to present the prisoners' protests as being instigated for their own purposes by a few notoriously violent men, and the protest by hundreds of prisoners is represented as being simply a cover for the escape attempt by 13 prisoners which was reported as a 'mass' break-out attempt. Frederick Sewell and Frankie Fraser were obvious choices for 'ring-leaders'. Unfortunately for the journalists who had not done their homework Fraser had been transferred to Hull Prison two weeks previously!

Thanks to the distortions of the press the prisoners' protests have evoked little sympathetic response, even from the politicians of the Left. The initial protest which should have resulted in widespread action outside prison has merely resulted in a repressive backlash from the prison officers. If the long-overdue sympathy and solidarity is not expressed now, who can doubt that we will soon have an Attica in Britain?

TERRY PHILLIPS.

PUBLICATION DATES

FREEDOM will be published on Saturday, December 23. The following week, the typesetters will not be working on Monday 25th and Tuesday 26th, the days on which it is necessary to have FREEDOM set. The issue of December 23 is No. 52 of Volume 33, and will complete Volume 33.

WE NEED YOUR GUARANTEE!



Any book not in stock, but in print can be promptly supplied. Please add postage & cash with order helps.

- The Philosophy of Egoism
James L. Walker £0.60 (2½p)
- The False Principle of Our Education
Max Stirner £0.30 (2½p)
- Slaves to Duty
John Badcock Jr. £0.40 (2½p)
- State Socialism and Anarchism and other essays
Benjamin R. Tucker £0.50 (2½p)
- The Black Flag of Anarchy
Corinne Jucker £2.50 (15p)
- The Book of Ceremony
Clem Gorman £0.50 (3½p)
(author of 'Making Communes')
- The Slavery of Our Times
Leo Tolstoy £0.25 (3½p)
- Revisionist Viewpoints—
Essays in a Dissident Historical Tradition
James J. Martin £1.50 (15p)
- Communitas
Paul & Percival Goodman £0.85 (7p)
- Bibliography on Peace, Freedom and non-violence for use in Schools
(ed.) Jas. Huggon £0.10 (2½p)

BOOK OF THE WEEK:

The Case that will not die—Commonwealth vs. Sacco & Vanzetti—Herbert B. Ehrman (Junior Defense Counsel at the trial). 580 pp.
Reduced from £4.20 to £1.00 only (+ 25p postage) Limited supply
Please send foolscap (9" x 4") S.A.E. if you would like to receive booklists.

Freedom Press

publish
FREEDOM weekly
and distribute
ANARCHY monthly

84b Whitechapel High Street
London E1 01-247 9249
Entrance Angel Alley,
Whitechapel Art Gallery exit,
Aldgate East Underground Stn.
SPECIMEN COPIES ON REQUEST

Bookshop

Open Afternoons
Tuesday to Friday
2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Open Evenings
Thursday close at 8.30 p.m.
Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES, 1972

FREEDOM	
Inland, and Surface Mail abroad	
for one year	£3.00 (\$7.50)
six months	£1.50 (\$3.75)
three months	£0.80 (\$2.00)
Airmail	
Europe & Middle East	1 year £4.00
The Americas	6 months £2.00
	1 year \$12.50
	6 months \$6.25
India, Africa, &c.	1 year £4.50
	6 months £2.25
Australasia & Far East	1 year £5.00
	6 months £2.50

ANARCHY	
Inland, and Surface Mail abroad	
12 issues	£2.25 (\$6.00)
6 issues	£1.13 (\$3.00)
Airmail	
USA & Canada	12 issues \$11.00
	6 issues \$6.00
Australasia & Far East	12 issues £4.50
	6 issues £2.25

In Brief

ARMY EPIDEMIC IN SWEDEN

CONSCRIPTS in the Swedish Army recently demonstrated a tactic which we hope will be copied by soldiers everywhere. 862 out of 1,056 men in one regiment reported themselves ill after the CO had refused their demand that every man who wanted night leave from the barracks should get it. (Make love not war!) The Defence Minister stated in the Swedish Parliament that 'small groups were trying to sabotage military training and ultimately society'.

BROTHER JAILERS

It is reported that Victor Feather, General Secretary of the TUC, is soon

