

The Greeks had a word for it— 'DEMOCRACY'

ARREST THE QUEEN?

'There is a chance that the Queen may be arrested before she arrives in Trafalgar Square. If this happens a substitute will take her place.'
—(from a Committee of 100 leaflet).

THE UNCONSCIOUS HUMOUR of the above extract also indicates a new stage in the Authority/Protest Movement relationship.

Gone are the days of mass civil disobedience. Yet Authority is restless. Some explanation is needed to account for their 'jumpiness'.

The protest movement tries to hide its lack of numbers with a rousing theatrical performance.

Yet Authority has decided to clamp down with all its weight on the diminished Committee of 100. Why should this happen?

Is 'Authority' losing its nerve? If so, this is surprising, as no major challenge has been offered to it by any organised body in this country.

Not only in the semi-political field is this nervousness of the Establishment evident. There are a number of inexplicable prosecutions pending. We have mentioned these civil liberties issues before and have suggested that they had one connection: the possibility of youth revolt. In some cases the police arrest first and think of charges later. (They cannot make up their minds on poor IT—they thought of charging them with the Dick Gregory article but somebody must have realised what sensible opinions they were—now they have settled on an article by R. Dargnat—a factual description of strip-tease clubs!)

Now what they call 'juvenile swoops' are a regular event. Young boys and girls are searched and stripped (behind screens—hooray for decency) for suspected substances. Hundreds of police descend on these quite banal places and give young people their first taste of organised police violence.

They rarely find anything. But they must charge somebody with something. Four boys and a girl are charged with possessing drugs, another boy for 'possessing an offensive weapon'. What a victory for the law!

A squad of 100 police questioned 536 boys and girls. They took 25 boys and 167 girls to the police station. Then they re-captured three girls who ran away from remand homes. Then the parents of 150 young people were roused from their beds and asked to collect their children.

This 'nervousness' of Authority is really inexplicable. Political protest is tame in this country. Clive Jenkins recently called the trade unions 'a great cuddleable tabby cat'.

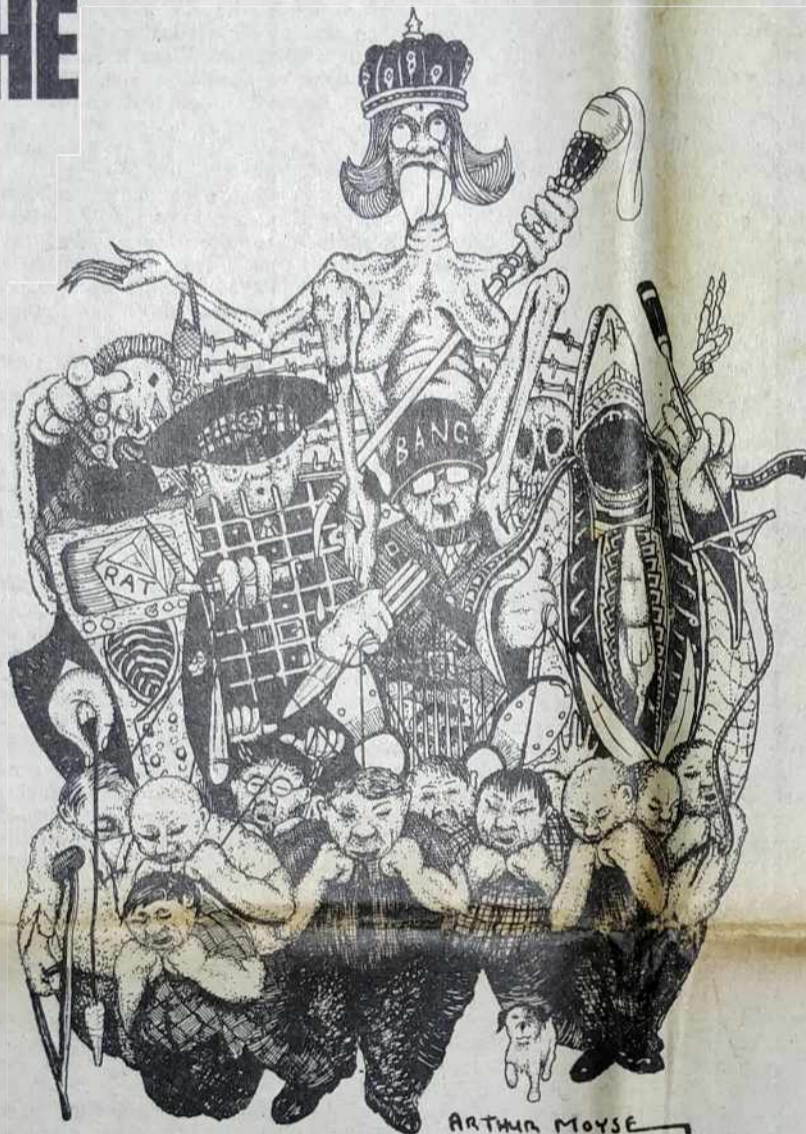
MAY DAY MEETING

Monday, May 1, 1967
from 3.30 p.m. to sunset

6.30 Public Meeting
7.30 March to Spanish Embassy

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Organised by the LFA and SWF

Distribute leaflets, sell anarchist literature, sell 8-page 'FREEDOM' on 'official' May Day meetings all over the country!



What is Authority afraid of? It has to be on its guard, one admits. But do they think that such desperate people and organisations as Tiles, the *Sunday Citizen*, Gustav Metzger; IT, the London Committee of 100 are conspiring together with Clive Jenkins to usher in the social revolution?

But the libertarian horizon is widening. At a 'be-in' in old Alley-Pally 10,000 people are expected. At the 'do-in' March of Shame about half that number.

There is also an important May Day demonstration on Monday, May 1. This is called by printworkers in protest against the wage freeze. They meet outside Natsopa House in Blackfriars Road

for their march to Fleet Street and a meeting in Memorial Hall (15 Farringdon Street, E.C.4) at about 1.15 p.m. Many libertarians will attend this march, which is not to be confused with the tabby cat variety on the following Sunday organised by the Labour Party, the Communist Party and the SLL so as to interfere least with capitalist production.

There is an increasing interest in libertarian ideas. The touchiness of Authority and its stupid persecutions can hardly fail to increase our numbers. When that happens a new situation will develop where a theatrical approach will be insufficient.

JOHN RETY.

There Ought to be a Law . . .

THE ISSUE, by Political and Economic Planning, of a report revealing a considerable measure of racial discrimination in Great Britain has revived a call for stronger legislation; as the *Morning Star* suggests 'the law should prevent people from acting in a way which discriminates against other people because of their colour. And that if such a practical step is taken, it would create favourable conditions for tolerance to grow, and discrimination to be stamped out'.

Many other newspapers have concurred with the PEP suggestion, some, more in the interest of not hurting their readers' feelings than anything else, have commented on the impossibility of making anyone tolerant by the threat of punishment.

It is easy to see the point of view put by Civil Libertarians and CARD as well as the *Morning Star* that, in theory, the penalties against racial discrimination will hold in check any expression of discrimination and provide a climate in which tolerance can thrive. At the moment Colin Jordan and John Tyndall are both out of circu-

lation, Jordan having been sentenced under the Race Relations Act but there has been no abatement of racial incitement. Indeed two leading organizations in this field, the League of Empire Loyalists and the British National Party have amalgamated (the Society for the Preservation of the Races declined to join), and, under the name of the National Front, have issued *Combat* for the first time for six months. Their votes in the municipal elections are by no means negligible compared with say, the Communists—or the SPGB. In theory the imprisonment of Jordan should have put a stop to such vicious propaganda. All it seems to have done is created Fascist martyrs.

In fact the existence of the law itself is a cue to the weaker-minded brethren that the sinister forces operating behind mass immigration are in a position to get laws on the statute book. The Race Relations Act is interpreted as an attack on free speech even by such non-Fascist types as Peter Simple.

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THE MILITARY COUP in Greece was not unexpected (according to the well-informed of which I am not), evidently it had been boiling up over the past two years.

In Greece everyone is seen to get into the political act, the King, the Church and the politicians, whereas in Britain only the politicians appear to take part.

Evidently the wood started to kindle in July 1965 when King Constantine would not allow the elected Prime Minister, Mr. Papandreu, to take over the Ministry of Defence. It appears that the PM wanted to clear out the right wing in the armed forces. Papandreu was forced to resign.

Since that date the King has been literally messing around in the political arena in an endeavour to prop up shaky coalitions.

Elections are scheduled for March, Left and Right both claiming potential victory. According to reports the Right Wing is carrying its pre-election tactics true to form, by either constitutional fiddling, imprisoning or shooting the Opposition, that way it has a better chance of winning the election.

As is usual in this type of situation every shade of vested interest blames the other, and for once I think they are probably right. The Greek people gain absolutely nothing. Greek prisons are full of political prisoners imprisoned without trial.

Outside interests also have their bloodstained fingers in the Greek tragedy, 'scheming and conniving

in the interests of Power Politics. Greece must be kept in NATO at any cost, America and Britain will do their utmost to ensure this even if it means supporting pseudo-fascism.

Greek politics are very involved, each group and party claiming they are the paragon of the bastardised word 'Democracy', when in fact what they mean, and want, is power for themselves.

We, as Anarchists, are often accused of sitting on a comfortable fence claiming 'plague on both your houses'. Our accusers who often have not been as far as Ealing Common, but claim to have knowledge of the situation, put the 'left' in the 'do no wrong' category.

As far as the Greek situation is concerned it smells of political corruption and intrigue led by the Monarchy. Can the Left politicians, including the communists, claim their hands are clean of political intrigue? Of course not, but meanwhile, the Greek peasants and industrial workers struggle on to eke out their existence. Who cares whether Constantine supported the coup or whether the former Queen Frederika is the rod up his back. What matters is, can the Greek people benefit? The answer is 'No'. And that goes for the rest of the world with its Governments and politicians. Until we, the people, desire a change, the same sordid picture will emerge in one form or another. Because it is not always seen, it does not mean it isn't being done.

BILL CHRISTOPHER.

GREECE: LONDON REACTIONS

REACTION to the news of the military occupation of Greece came swiftly from the London Greek community. Various left-wing Greek organisations, predominately CP, held a meeting in Manette Street on Saturday afternoon, and were addressed by various CP front organisations and David Kerr, MP.

They stressed the diabolical role of the King, the American influence and the pernicious effects of the Greek nation being in NATO. They wept for the Greeks and conducted an orderly demonstration outside the Greek embassy.

It must be said that a lot of the younger Greeks realise that this sort of thing doesn't make a damn of difference to the tanks in Constitution Square. Resolutions have never stopped fascism and are not likely to suddenly become effective now.

Solidarity and the Wooden Shoe groups put out a joint leaflet stressing the importance of immediate reaction and suggesting that since the embassy appears to be supporting an illegal regime, then the embassy should be occupied and its facilities denied to the Army regime. Many of the younger Greeks saw the logic of this attitude and the tremendous propaganda it would create.

At the same time as this demonstration there was another one which marched from a meeting in The Caxton Hall to the Foreign Office. This was well covered by the press. One comrade who was there was talking to one of the journalists who, rather bitterly, remarked that there would be no point in looking for the story in the Sunday papers as there 'was a "D" notice out on the London demos against the Greek Army coup'. It is doubtful that it could be a 'D' notice but it is a curious fact that there was no report in any Sunday paper about either of the two Saturday demonstrations.

On the Sunday there was another meeting and march this time organised by

the Greek section of the Healeyite Young Socialists. Approximately 100 YS members turned up and about 250 Greeks. Michael Banda of the SLL spoke from the platform and called for a united independent fight against the Greek military coup and the King, and Wilson and the Labour Party, under the independent banner of the SLL.

The joint leaflet that was put out on Saturday advocating direct action was condemned by Banda as 'adventurist' and against the policies of the YS.

The Greeks however seemed to think otherwise. Several asked Banda if the embassy was occupied by the London Greeks was he still against occupation? No reply was audible.

One of these asked to speak on behalf of the Greeks and pointed out that the Greeks were not marching in support of the YS, it had to be the other way around. The YS refused and asked the Greeks to join the end of the march. The Greeks refused and decamped leaving a disconsolate 100 YS leading the vanguard of the revolution up Oxford Street shouting their pre-arranged slogan, 'Labour must break with Greece—Wilson must

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THERE is a calculated viciousness in the rat world of individual advancement in that the very types that praised the sub-hero of yesteryear would appear to be of the same fraternity of evil that wields the paper knife that cuts the crooning throat. Let any idol of the entertainment world crash-land face down into an unswept gutter and those that sang their virtues clamber into print to reveal all that they knew of the human weaknesses of the prone body, and only good taste, a weekly pay packet, and the law of libel, stilled the voice of this week's truth. In politics we accept this as part of the game and even we, the active militants of the true faith, know that we must walk warily in our choice of friends, groups and demonstrations. There is but a single answer and that is to attempt to remain true to one's own quaint and individual conception of what is right and just and true, seek friends but never allies, reject praise and accept condemnation as a justification for one's own individual righteousness.

There was a time, so few short years ago, when this column was that only one to state that the works of Pierre Soulages was nought but pleasant and extremely unimportant trivia. Those large white canvases containing but half a dozen broad rough black strokes of paint graced many an *avant garde* gallery, Bondwise, and many a monied Philistine papered his walls with this sophisticated upper middle-class gear. To slash a brushful of black paint across a virgin canvas leaving behind a monster-size scribble of black lines is a noble, naughty and praise-worthy gesture, and I will willingly

AROUND THE GALLERIES

walk across London to see it done once, but not year after year, gallery after gallery, for gestures like Aldermaston marches become boring when repeated too often and with official approval. Yet this column protested and the captive audience of clowns screamed their tiny rages.

But now the paper dagger has been wielded and *Art and Artists* has dragged Soulages before their self-appointed tribunal of all the slob and, after a brief examination, have thrown him to the dogs with the statement that Soulages, showing at Gimpel Fils, 50 South Molton Street, W.1, was once looked upon as a major figure. In the past five years it has been hard to find anyone—outside the French civil service—to say a good word for him. Of my simplicity I will state that if Soulages was a major figure five years ago, then that work is still major work and if his work in the past . . . was often melodramatic and rhetorical then one is justified in asking for the names of those who elevated this harmless trivia into a major art form. But one does not name the rat-packs for, by their very nature, they can only live on carrion and their carrion, like that of the diet of the Bond Street Red Guards, is the second rate.

Yet let us carry this one step further by stating that the exhibition of paintings by Raquel Forner at the Drian

Galleries at 5 Porchester Place, W.2, is worthy of my condemnation. Not because of their shallow emotional content, amateur draftsmanship and crude use of var colours, but because of the fawning adulation that these second-rate works have aroused. Let it be recorded that Raquel Forner carries a roll call of individual shows and awards that Churchill the Painter would have envied and that her work occupies space in at least nine museums within the American continent, yet Soulages could have made the same claim as he reads his sour obituary in the cultural limbo that ART has sent him to.

Like the paintings of Karel Appel at the Redfern at 20 Cork Street, W.1, one feels that Miss Raquel Forner is concerned more with filling canvas space than working out a visual problem. The crudity of line and colour is excused by the term *expressionism* and, like the terms *action painting* and *abstraction*, they are but literary escapist clauses for much that is sheer bad workmanship. One could have dismissed this exhibition of Miss Forner's as part of the cultural rhubarb of any age, but when Sir Herbert Read in his catalogue introduction ties in Miss Raquel's artist power with the names of William Blake and Francis Thompson, then one must take a stand and publicly protest.

That Sir Herbert has long admired

Miss Raquel's work he publicly acknowledges, for he presided over the jury that unanimously awarded her the *Gran Premio de Honor* at the *Bienal Americana de Arte* and, though Sir Herbert states that in *expressionist art the intellect is subordinate to the emotions*, Sir Herbert would accept that emotive titles do not enhance the contents of a loosely and ill-painted canvas for, if one quotes but two titles from Miss Forner's catalogue, *Astronaut with Small Astro-being* and *Attack by Astro-beings*, then one is back to those unfortunate feminine water-colours that pleasant but sad women water-colourists love to produce for their spiritualist friends of their vision of the Other World painted while under the control of some Great White Daddy. Juries can hand out awards to whoever they choose, artists can paint to the full limitations of their competence or incompetence, galleries can, and do, exhibit last week's dirty washing if they so choose, but both I and Sir Herbert have a duty to record our true and honest opinion of any work that we view and I feel that on this occasion Sir Herbert has erred.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

A LAW . . .

Continued from page 1

But on the issue of discrimination everyone deceives themselves. The PEP report evinces such well-known answers as: 'The neighbours wouldn't like it', 'The other employees would object', 'Customers would object to being sold fresh food by coloured staff' or 'being fitted with corsets by coloured staff'. Racial prejudice is so highly irrational that it clearly shows in the two latter remarks. (Deep down psychologically, as any detergent advertiser will tell you, there exists a belief that whiteness means purity and blackness dirties everything it touches.) The imposition of penalties for discrimination implies, as it does in all branches of punishment, a *rationale*—'if you do what is forbidden (i.e. discriminate) you will be punished; therefore do not discriminate'. But quite often people do not believe that *their* type of discrimination is what the law is seeking to discourage, they have, they argue, the better interests of the community at heart—the neighbours, the employees, the customers; as for them 'some of their best friends, etcetera'.

The hypocrisy of pretending that one's reasons for discrimination are quite other than the fear of losing jobs when there is unemployment, the fear of not getting a house, or indeed the unspoken fear of sexual competition is a tribute to virtue. In a society where one is not worried about jobs, housing or sexual jealousy all men are equal. In present-day society 'some (the white ones in England) are more equal than others'.

If more legislation is passed without any improvement in the social conditions from which such prejudices arise it will not change the situation. Indeed the vast majority of us will feel that something has been done to stamp out discrimination which is in the minds of other people. This will give us a comfortable glow while we eat our Outspan oranges and watch the Black and White Minstrels on TV. JACK ROBINSON.

Through the Anarchist Press

USA
SUSTEN NUGGU MICCO, chief of the Creek Indian nation of Oklahoma, has sent a letter to Franco congratulating him on Spain's 30 years of peace, and has offered him the gift of a peace pipe 'to be smoked in freedom with his brothers all over the world'.

Does the chief really admire Franco so much? Does he really care that Spain has had 30 years of peace? Or is this just a gambit inspired by the US government, a move aimed at giving the Indian nations an exaggerated idea of their own importance and thus distracting them from their legitimate grievances?

FRANCE
In December 1964 Georges Pinet, a Parisian lawyer, informed the government that, although he had done his National Service, he could not, as a Christian, accept the possibility of having to serve in an army which aimed at possessing thermonuclear weapons. He stood trial and 'in the name of the French people' was given a suspended sentence of four months. On appeal the sentence was increased to four months (unsuspended) and a fine of 1,000 francs.

The case, and the subsequent agitation on behalf of Pinet, have been ignored by the French press, except for mentions in *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*. Pinet has been in gaol since February 27 of this year.

ITALY
L'Osservatore Romano, the official organ of the Vatican, feels that the general level of morality in Italy, especially of sexual morality, leaves

much to be desired. It feels that the situation can only be remedied by the establishment of an official Ministry of Moral Health.

ASTERISKS
Five men have been condemned to four years imprisonment each at Oviedo on February 25 ult. Their crime: on the occasion of the 'constitutional plebiscite campaign' by Franco, they distributed in the streets of Oviedo manifestos calling on the electorate to abstain from voting on the mock-constitution of Franco.

Yves Montand, the actor, was guest in the television programme 'Tonight' and he began to talk of the play in which he was acting at present. On the words 'The people of Europe have quite different ideas on Spain and Franco from the people of America . . .', the orchestra started to play a rather melodious tune, the compere announced a commercial item and the talk by Montand was not resumed. Here is what he would have said, according to the reporter Archer Winston in the *Post* of 27.2.67:

'You can't include Franco in the free world from the moment he was put in power by Hitler and Mussolini. I'm against Franco because he was put up like this (Montand squeezed his throat). If the Spanish people had voted him into power, okay. This is something anyone can understand. I don't want to give lessons to anyone. But the time's gone by when you can say to someone "You are against the government, then you are a communist". The Americans are sufficiently adult to be able to say this without being communists'.

ITALY
Alberto Toniello writes that, although

politics is taboo in Italian schools, teachers still manage to get away with telling their pupils that anarchists are assassins, and that anarchism is 'an absurd utopian philosophy'.

GERMANY
'Freedom for Spain' and 'Against the Solidarity of Church, State and Falange'—were the slogans in a protest demonstration of about 1,000 students and workers in Frankfurt's Paul Square. Previously the protesters had paraded through the city centre. In the demonstration for democratic rights in Spain the Trade Union Congress was conspicuous by its absence. Speakers included Professor Heydorn and Michael Baermann, speaker for the Socialist Union of German Students who said that 'for two long weeks we strove without success to find a West German trade unionist who would speak here today; who would declare his solidarity with the struggle of Spanish students and workers for democratic rights, who would not shirk in cowardice from speaking of the malicious tricks with which managers and entrepreneurs tried to set German and foreign working-men at each other's throats. Not one of 15 invited trade unionists could spare the time.' A photograph showed banners of the CNT.

(Sources: *Le Combat Syndicaliste*, *L'Adunara dei Reformatari*, New York, 18.3.67, *Umanita Nova*, 21.1.67, *Frankfurter Rundschau*, *Le Monde Liberaire*, *Défense de l'Homme*.)

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Anarchist Federation of Britain

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

- *Except in London—see below.
- LONDON FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS.** Temporary address c/o Wooden Shoe, 42 New Compton Street, London, W.C.2. Sunday evening meetings 8 p.m. Lamb & Flag, Rose Street, off Garrick Street, London, W.C.2 (Leicester Square tube). Apr. 30 Jim Duke 'Reform and Revolution' May 7 S. E. Parker Subject to be Announced
- ANARCHIST MEETINGS AT HYDE PARK EVERY SUNDAY AT 2 P.M.**
- HARLOW ANARCHIST GROUP.** Enquiries to Keith Nathan, 138 Pennymead, Harlow or John Barrick, 14 Centre Avenue, Epping.
- LEWISHAM, LONDON, S.E.13.** 2nd and 4th Thursdays. Meetings at Mike Malet's, 61 Granville Park, Lewisham, S.E.13.
- SOUTHWARK ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact Dave Burden, 45b Barry Road, East Dulwich, S.E.22. Proposed meetings to be held on first and third Thursday of each month.
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- REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND GROUPS**
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- PLYMOUTH ANARCHIST FEDERATION.** Contact J. Hill, 79 Underlane, Plymstock, Plymouth, Devon.
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- ROCHESTER ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact Eryl Davies, 22 St. Margaret's Street, Rochester. Fortnightly meetings.
- SHEFFIELD.** Contact Robin Lovell, c/o Students' Union, University, Sheffield, Tel. 24076.
- SOUTH WEST MIDDLESEX ANARCHIST GROUP.** Meetings every Saturday, Feltham High Street. Contact P. J. Goddy, 36 Norman Avenue, Hanworth, Middlesex.
- SWANSEA.** Please get in touch with Julian Ross, 11 Wellfield Close, Bishopston, Swansea.
- NORTH-WEST FEDERATION**
- Regional Secretary: Alistair Rattray, 35a Devonshire Road, Chorley.
- NORTH WEST ANARCHIST FEDERATION.** BUXTON ANARCHIST GROUP. Secretary: F. A. Gresty, Punchbowl, Manchester Road, Buxton.
- CHORLEY ANARCHIST GROUP.** Secretary: Anne Marie Fearon, 16 Devonshire Road, Chorley.
- LIVERPOOL ANARCHIST GROUP.** Brenda Mercer, 6 Breckside Park, Liverpool, 6.
- LIVERPOOL ANARCHIST PROPAGANDA GROUP.** Gerry Bree, 16 Faulkner Square, Liverpool, 8. Meetings weekly. 'Freedom' Sales-Pier Head, Saturdays, Sundays, Evenings.
- MANCHESTER ANARCHIST GROUP.** Secretary: Dave Poulson, Flat 9, 619 Wilbraham Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, 21.
- EAST LONDON FEDERATION**
- WEST HAM ANARCHISTS.** Contact Stephen Hines, 8 Westbury Road, Forest Gate, E.7.
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- PROPOSED GROUPS**
- WEST SUFFOLK.** Please write to Carl Pinel, c/o West Suffolk General Hospital, Hospital Road, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk.

- LEE, LONDON, S.E.12.** Anarchist-Radical Group. Contact Rodney Hodges, 2 Cambridge Drive, Lee, S.E.12.
- NORTH WALES:** Bangor. Contact Geoff Brown, 39 Caelepa, Bangor, Caerns.
- SOMERSET.** John and Jill Driver wish to contact local libertarians, 4 Obridge Road, Taunton, Somerset.
- ROCHDALE.** Please contact Richard Crawford, 4 Hargreaves Street, Sudden, Rochdale.
- SLOUGH.** Contact Sid Rawle, 4 Allerton Road, Slough, Bucks.
- NORTH EAST ESSEX.** Would readers interested in proposed group write to P. Newell, 'Maybush', Maypole Road, Tiptree, Essex.
- 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 4 389, 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 Mindevej, Soborg-Copenhagen, Denmark.
- VANCOUVER, B.C., CANADA.** Anyone interested in forming anarchist and/or direct action peace group contact Derek A. James, 1844 Grand Boulevard, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada. Tel.: 987-2693.
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- SWEDEN.** Stockholm Anarchist Federation. Contact Nadir, Box 19104, Stockholm 19, Sweden.
- CANADA:** Winnipeg. Anyone interested in Direct action/anarchy contact G. J. Nasir, 606 Matheson Avenue, Winnipeg, 17, Manitoba.
- BELGIUM: LIEGE.** Provos, c/o Jacques Charlier, 11 Avenue de la Laiterie, Sclécin-Liege, Belgium.
- EAST AFRICA.** George Matthews would like to make contact. Secondary school teacher from UK. PO Box 90, Kakamega, Kenya.
- USA: NORTH-EASTERN MINNESOTA.** Contact James W. Cain, 323 Fourth Street, Cloquet, Minn. 55720, USA.

THE FIRST MAY DAY

May 1889 was when the first May Day demonstration took place—long before the Labour Party and the TUC officials took it over as the occasion for pep talks and finger wagging. Hardly a May Day demonstration goes by, in fact, without some attempt to prevent the anarchists and syndicalists from taking part—which is ironic when one remembers that the May Day processions first began as a protest against the murder of five Chicago anarchists by the State. They had committed that heinous offence of taking part in a strike. The purpose of the May Day demonstrations is to remind us of the lesson taught by the Chicago martyrs—that there can be no real freedom without socialism, and no real socialism without freedom.

The verdict of the jury is directed against anarchism. Do you believe that by killing you can kill anarchism? You are greatly mistaken, because anarchists love their principles more than their lives. If I must be hung for my anarchist ideas, for my love of freedom and humanity, then I say to you: take away my life.

—Adolphe Fischer¹

THE STORY of how May Day became Labour Day, the day which unified Socialist struggle all over the world, is a good one, fortified with elements of conflict, violence, martyrdom, and the highest idealism. Regrettably, this same story which tells of some of the bitterest confrontations between the opposing forces of progress and reaction has been of late, particularly in England, either forgotten or concealed. And those to whom the word 'concealed' appears unwarranted are referred to a representative selection of the more common works of reference which yield little more than solemn dissertations on Maypoles and Morris dances, and fastidiously ignore the bloodshed or the lives lost in the last eighty years in pursuance of the emancipation of labour. May Day has its place in history but as yet it has not been awarded that place, and it is this unjustified neglect which prompts me to briefly elucidate the ideas and events which led to the adoption of May 1 as Labour Day all over the world.

It is impossible to say who first conceived the idea of selecting this particular date as the occasion for launching an international workers' assault on the props of capitalism, so for the sake of convenience I propose to go back only as far as 1886. In this year the workers of Chicago were determined and militant, deriving much of their belligerence and their organisation from the stimulus of the estimated 3,000² anarchists, many of them Germans or Czechs, who inhabited that city. In October of the previous year the Central Labour Union, which had been founded in 1883 under the influence of the International, passed the following resolution proposed by August Spies:

We urgently call upon the wage-class to arm itself in order to be able to put forth against their exploiters such an argument which alone can be effective—Violence!³

In fairness to Spies and the workers of Chicago it must be emphasised that they were forced to take such an intransigent, extremist position by the repeated brutality inflicted upon strikers and demonstrators by the police and hired Pinkerton gunmen. Consequently, violence was opposed to violence, and in the spring of 1886, when the tension was at its highest, the Eight-Hour movement was started and resulted in some 65,000 men either coming out on strike or being locked out. The bitterest feelings were displayed outside the McCormick Harvester Works, where 300 armed Pinkertons protected the blackleg labour which had been hired there. Meetings were regularly held outside the works and were repeatedly broken up, not in the most tactful manner, by the city police. Finally, on May 3, the police opened fire on the crowd, killing six men and wounding others.

Inevitably, a protest meeting was called by the angry anarchists at Haymarket Square on Randolph Street, between Desplaines and Halsted Street, and this was attended by an apprehensive Mayor Carter Harrison and numerous police reserves. Finding nothing alarming about the proceedings, the Mayor left and ordered the police home, but after his departure, an unnamed police officer decided to break up the meeting by repeating the lesson of the previous day.⁴ However, as the police prepared to fire, a bomb was thrown into their ranks followed by an interchange of shots between police and workmen which resulted in the deaths of seven or eight policemen and some twenty workmen.⁵ Since the actual bomb-thrower was never caught, a scapegoat had to be found and, predictably, there followed a general round-up of anarchists (at least a hundred are supposed to have been arrested), eight of whom were subsequently tried for murder. The trial was a disgrace, and the prosecution, without a shred of evidence to prove that any of the men were connected with the bomb-throwing, concentrated on establishing that the men in the dock held anarchist convictions, a task which was not exceptionally difficult since none of the men attempted to hide their beliefs but, on the contrary, expounded them at length. The verdict was a mere formality and seven of the men were sentenced to death. A sustained world-wide wave of protests, demonstrations, strikes and riots delayed the execution for over a year, but on November 11, 1887, four of the men were actually hanged while another committed suicide in his cell before the sentence could be carried out. The protests continued and several years later Governor Altgeld authorised an enquiry into the affair as a result of which it was publicly declared that there had been a flagrant breach of justice and the remaining prisoners were released. The

victims of the judicial murder were Adolphe Fischer, Albert Parsons (editor of *Alarm*), Louis Lingg, George Engel, and August Spies (editor of *Die Arbeiter Zeitung*).

Enraged at the treatment afforded the Chicago strikers, the American Federation of Labour, built up into a powerful body by Samuel Gompers, decided the following year (1888) to launch a new campaign for the eight-hour day, the strategy of which was as follows. Each year a national strike was to take place in one particular industry, the striking workers receiving financial assistance from those unions whose members were still at work. This tactic was to be maintained until an eight-hour day had been adopted all over the country.

It was this decision which influenced the 391 delegates of the 1889 Paris Congress of the International (The Salle Petrelle Congress), and prompted them to pass their famous resolution.

A great manifestation will be organised on a fixed date, in such a way that, simultaneously in all countries and all towns, on the same agreed day, the workers will call upon the public authorities to reduce the working day by law to eight hours, and to put the other resolutions of the Congress of Paris into effect.

In view of the fact that a similar manifestation has already been decided on for May 1, 1890, by the American Federation of Labour at its Congress held at St. Louis in December 1888, this date is adopted for the international manifestation.

The workers of the various countries will have to accomplish the manifestations under the conditions imposed on them by the particular situation in each country.

This procedure was put into effect the following year and, after several years of struggle, the eight-hour day was won. But the victory was neither cheap nor easy. In France, in 1890, there were serious clashes with the police, resulting in injury and arrest for many workers. In the following year, an eighteen-year-old girl was shot dead by soldiers hired by the management of a factory at Fourmies. In the same year there were widespread riots in Italy which were violently and brutally suppressed, and the Belgian miners, lacking the support of the rest of the country, slumped to a bitter and costly defeat. In 1892, there were great strikes in Russia and Poland, especially at Warsaw, and at Lodz, where the strikers were shot down in large numbers by Cossacks. And so the fight continued, with incident following incident. It would take too long to enumerate fully the blows inflicted on the Labour movement before their ultimate victory. And even then for many it was a hollow victory, more of a failure than a success. To be sure the eight-hour day



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was won, but there had been many who saw in the General Strike a much greater potential than was ever realized, and whose greatest hopes were never fulfilled.

The general strike must become the supreme weapon. Not a strike of folded arms, expecting the capitulation of our enemies, but an active strike, preceding the expropriation of the capitalist class. The proletariat, when this task is achieved, will no longer be weakened by the expectation of peaceful solutions, which were always grievous for it. It will take possession of the collective wealth produced by the workers before they are robbed.

The land, houses, factories, mines,

means of communication, transport systems, all the works of the creative force of the proletariat will become common property for the satisfaction of the needs of all. Rising internationally in revolt, the workers of every country will organise with their brothers in other countries the ex-

quotations from the works of no less a person than Lenin which suggest that he was convinced that an international proletarian revolution was about to come to the support of the struggling Bolsheviks at any moment.⁷

In the minds of many people, the General Strike, commencing on May 1, was not intended merely as a means of increasing wages or reducing working hours, but was to be the prelude to a vast, proletarian uprising resulting in the ultimate emancipation of mankind. However, the workers of the world have shown themselves for the most part to be quite content with a 40-hour week and a reasonable wage at the end of it, and the idea of a strike being used to topple governments and win freedom has been forgotten by all but the anarchists and syndicalists, for whom material gains are not sufficient. Also, the two World Wars, the various 'ideological' wars, and the nerve-racking confrontations between the so-called democratic powers and the so-called communist bloc have resulted in the steady increase of nationalism and patriotic tendencies which has eroded the former solidarity between the international proletariat. Indeed, it is hardly appropriate to talk in terms of class in our current age, when increased standards of living have begun the process of merging the working-class into the middle-class, and both classes into the new aristocracy, the meritocracy. Even the solidarity between the trade unions of one country is at a low ebb, as these institutions become increasingly more conservative and detached.

Does this mean then that the story of May Day is at an end? Have we seen the last of simultaneous, concerted attacks on capitalism, oppression and privilege? Perhaps, and yet the workers of the world, irrespective of the class to which they belong, will do well to remember that their comparative affluence and temporary security has not been granted, but had to be fought for and won, and any relaxation in their struggle for equality and a socialist society will surely result in the loss of those benefits bought with the persistence, courage and sacrifice of those who fought and died to win them.

DAVE PAULSON

NOTES:

¹These are probably not quite the exact words used by Fischer as they are my own translation of part of his speech which appeared in *Germinal*, an Italian newspaper, on May 1, 1958.

²The actual number of people directly influenced by anarchists was, of course, considerably greater.

³Quoted by G. Woodcock in his book *Anarchism*, Penguin, 1963, p. 437.

⁴At least this is the official explanation, the authenticity of which I do not vouch for.

⁵The actual figures of dead and wounded vary from source to source, but what I have quoted seems to be a fair average.

⁶*Le Reveil*, May 31, 1905. Translation mine.

⁷The trials of a revolution are well known. Having commenced with brilliant success in one country it will perhaps live through times of torment, for it is possible to succeed definitely only on a world scale and only by the joint efforts of the working-men of all countries. Quoted in Fischer's book, *The Life of Lenin*, 1965, p. 234.

CENSORS STILL IN SPAIN

ON APRIL 9, 1966, a new censorship law was passed in Spain to replace the old one of 1938. The official bulletin of the Cortes stated that the new law 'crowned a quarter of a century of peace': Fraga Iribarne, the instigator of the new law, presented it as 'a new chapter in the history of Spain', 'a compromise between complete freedom and complete State control'.

The new law does little more than dress up the old authoritarian approach to censorship in pretentiously liberal terms. The increased liberty it claims to afford the writer must be met with an increased sense of responsibility, 'especially in connection with the principles of the Movement, and with the requirements of State security, national defence, and public morality'. Indeed, the authorities seem reluctant to use the word censorship: Article 3 clearly states that 'the Administration cannot apply the former censorship nor impose obligatory consultation'—but it adds, 'except in cases specifically mentioned in the laws'.

What are the changes the new law makes? Previously, it was obligatory to submit two copies of the text for censorship. If this was not passed, within a maximum period of one year the manuscript would be returned with the parts to be omitted marked out. An appeal could be made against this judgement to the Director of the Ministry of Information and Tourism, and if this failed, as a last resort, to the Minister himself.

Under the new law, the manuscript may be submitted to the 'Service of Bibliographic Orientation'. It is usually read by one censor—most of them are Dominicans, and a few are men who fought on Franco's side in the Civil War.

change of necessary products, without making such an exchange a means of domination and monopolisation.

After having achieved expropriation, it will defend its conquests.⁶

That fiery prophecy emanated from peaceful Geneva in 1905, where it appeared in a bi-lingual newspaper called *Le Reveil/Il Risveglio*, and it is notable for the way in which it reveals at once the extent of the supposed consequences of a General Strike, and the intention of the extreme left to be contented with nothing less than a world-wide revolution, to establish a free world. Similar hopes were expressed in many radical journals of the time, and even as late as 1918 it is possible to find innumerable

press is still very difficult under the new laws. Even if a paper obtained authorisation to form a legal company, registered the property and the name of the publication, the Ministry could delay the printing of the first copy for several years by complicated red-tape. However, two papers with left-wing sympathies do exist—the syndicalist daily *El Alcazar*, and *El Pueblo* whose attacks on monopolies and American imperialism are combined with interviews with famous footballers and pin-ups.

SERGIO DANIEL (tr. by D.W.)

THE FIREMAN

RED LIGHTS tend to corrupt but sirens corrupt absolutely. A couple of blocks down the street from our apartment in New York City is a combination police and fire station, which means, among other things, that we're continually subjected to shrieking sirens and revolving domelights as squad cars and/or fire engines career off on various missions licit or otherwise. Recently a fellow who lives across the street was pulling his parked car away from the curb when the Deputy Fire Chief's car came screaming down the street with full audio-visual effects. Naturally the fellow whipped his car back to the curb rather than lose a fender, but he was quite indignant so he decided to follow this vehicle and find out just exactly what the big emergency was. He didn't give a damn if he got fifty traffic tickets, he got on their tail and stuck. Ignoring all traffic lights they wailed north for twenty-five blocks and then shot east over to Lexington Avenue where the car stopped and the Deputy Chief got out and went into the subway while his driver turned the car around and headed straight back to the stationhouse.

R.C.

Manchester Profile

FREEDOM'S editors asked me to write about the background to the problems of the movement in Manchester, the excuse being that I have spent over 20 years in contact with it, and may have some of the answers.

Well, I don't know about the answers, but I think I know some of the questions. Here are a few: Are there any problems peculiar to a Manchester group, as distinct from one in London, or Bristol, or wherever? Or (as I think likely) are they the same problems facing all groups? Do these problems arise from the nature of our beliefs? That is, is there something about anarchism and Anarchists that causes certain difficulties to occur? Why are we less numerous and well organised than the Flat Earth Society (10,000 members and a B.Sc. full-time secretary)? Should we be organised? What do Anarchists DO when they ARE organised?

Anarchism never made any great impact in Britain compared with

Spain, Italy, or France. This may explain the fact that we have no large body of experienced and (therefore) middle-aged comrades to guide the new generations.

It helps to explain, I think, why our communications are so poor, as can be seen from Brian's remark that 'There is believed to be a very active group in Bredbury.' (Bredbury is a shilling bus-ride from Manchester.)

(As you see, I am going to be talking about organisation. Those who don't believe in it can skip the rest of this article and get on with their hobbies.)

LACK OF CO-ORDINATION

One of the reasons, I think, for this lack of co-ordination is the feeling that organisation doesn't fit in with our beliefs.

What are those beliefs? The bewildering number of points of view expressed in FREEDOM make anarchism seem as vague and imprecise a term as, say, fascism.

All I can do is assume that we are a social movement aiming to in-

fluence society in favour of our anti-State ideas. Whether the method is to be syndicalism, anarchist-communism, or individualism, I leave open (although those inclined to the last-named will no doubt think this discussion a waste of time).

Taking the need for some organisation as granted, what does Manchester need?

My suggestion, with apologies to those who have heard it before, is some corporate undertaking that will compel us to meet and discuss BUSINESS and not split into little groups cut off from all other little groups by some difference of doctrine.

If we had to be responsible for running a Malatesta club, the need to serve the coffee, paint the place, wash up, pay the rent, would give the Individualists, Syndicalists, Reichians, something to unite about. And, of course, if we met more often in a social way, we might find our agreements were more important than our differences. I hope it would turn out that way, for the sectarian spirit is, unhappily, as strong in the Anarchist movement as it is among the Trotskyists, and all the other groups that the world hasn't heard of.

APPRENTICES IN ACTION 1960-67

EVERY FEW YEARS usually sees the apprentices involved in some action or other concerning their wages and conditions. Engineering apprentices especially are always having a do; and ever since the thirties, during the war and right up to the present day there have been recurring apprentice disputes in the engineering industry.

In September, 1964, after holding a successful one-day strike at Manchester, the apprentices at a number of local engineering firms decided to press for a National Strike. This situation was brought on after delegates at the AEU Junior Workers Conference had called for industrial action as a way to satisfy the lads' demands on wages and negotiating rights. Following this conference, the unofficial 'Apprentice Direct Action Committee' was set up in Manchester and national support was sought.

Unfortunately in October of that year, unity on the DA Committee was broken when elements failed to agree on when to call the national strike. The very able young communist Joe Bush, along with almost all the other apprentices of all political and non-political tendencies, broke away to form the Manchester Apprentice Wages and Conditions Committee, which intended to fight for the industrial demands of the apprentices. This left the young socialists (mostly SLL and Keep Left supporters) in control of the DA Committee, and they went on to organise a number of demonstrations and meetings of young workers.

But it was never clear how much influence they had amongst apprentices and much of their support seemed to come from students. Their attempt to turn the apprentice fight into a political struggle failed and there was no response to their own strike call in May 1965.

THOUSANDS COME OUT

On the other hand, the 'Apprentice Wages and Conditions Committee', with its influence in the AEU, gained access to contacts throughout the country.

Then on November 2, 1964, they launched a national strike. This helped draw attention to the lads' cause, but failed to get mass participation because we hadn't the organisation to fetch enough lads out on the first day. Consequently, the day after the dispute began, the press described it as a flop, before we had a chance to make it snowball.

Despite this, many thousands of lads did come out. In Manchester many stayed out up to three weeks and Stockport supported the strike 100%. Glasgow and the Clyde had 5,000 out during the stoppage and in Dundee 500 answered the strike call in the first week. In London and Liverpool the lads stuck it for about a week, and factories at Sheffield, Oldham, Rochdale, Bury, Huddersfield, and many other towns were all affected by the lads' action. The Sun reported that between 20,000 and 30,000 apprentices had struck, all the lads had returned to work by November 30, in accordance with the call of the National Apprentice Wages and Conditions Committee.

The employers then met the unions on the lads' demands on December 2, when they agreed to give the engineering apprentices a rise from July 1965, under the Package Deal and now they receive 30% of a tradesman's rate at 15, to 80%

at 20. Whereas previously they got 25% at 15 years and 75% at 20, little else was achieved.

Very different was the apprentice dispute of 1960! This first broke out at Glasgow on April 20, when a meeting on the long-standing engineering apprentice pay claim for 60% of a craftsman's rate at 15 years to 90% at 20, was held. Five hundred apprentices demonstrated, and later, some of these were suspended by their employers. Then the battle began, 4,400 tradesmen backed up the lads by striking, and just over a week later there were 35,930 apprentices on strike in support of their own demands in Scotland.

In less than a month it had gone through the country like a dose of salts, affecting every industrial centre. Many union leaders urged the lads to go back and the president of the AEU, W. J. Carron, refused either to meet a deputation of striking apprentices or accept a motion supporting the strike at the Union's conference at Blackpool, which was in progress at the time.

By now there were 13,000 out in England and more were joining them every day as young militants moved to neighbouring towns and factories. They covered miles by bus, bike or on foot. Few apprentices failed to respond when the army of apprentices approached their factory in our area, and at meetings support was always strongly in favour of action. It was only later, when the influence of certain trade union leaders opposing the strike was brought to bear, that the support of both the men and lads seemed to weaken. Despite this, on May 12 the strike had spread to Belfast and the West Riding, and 60,000 apprentices were now out. Then, on May 20, the employers who had previously refused to discuss the lads' demands decided to start negotiations, and guaranteed no victimisation of the strikers. A return to work on May 17 was then recommended at a conference of apprentice delegates at Liverpool. The lads eventually received a wage increase of from 4/- at 15 years to 16/- at 20.

Apprentices' pay and conditions have always been a sore point. Since 1964, there has been several small apprentice strikes, e.g. at Belfast where 400 struck on May 11, 1965, for more money, and the successful strike of 130 apprentice boilermakers at Fairfields Shipyard, Glasgow, earlier this year after the management had refused to pay the lads a rise which had already been paid to the tradesmen. Keeping apprentices on poor pay, as if it were in itself part of their basic training, is obviously a bad thing. At a time when there is a shortage of industrial skills it may be necessary to make the apprenticeship more attractive, and the whole system of industrial training will have to be tackled shortly. With this in mind, the Rochdale Apprentice Committee asked all local lads to stay away from work on February 7, this year, and put the following proposals to the employers' association:

DEMANDS
1. Wages. We request that the employers and trade unions look into the sad plight of apprentice pay immediately. Increasing wage rates of apprentices to something approaching attractive, as even a weekly general rise of £1

would still leave apprentices well within the category of low-paid workers.

2. Training and Negotiating Rights. We demand that apprentices be represented on all local training committees, etc., which might exist at any time in the town. Provision should be made for the creation of a truly industrial apprenticeship in this town by promoting co-operation between firms, and plans should be made to move apprentices from factory to factory throughout the town, in order to gain more experience.

3. Shorter Apprenticeship. That consideration be given to the possibility of shortening the apprenticeship.

This, of course, is not proper procedure and seems to have annoyed the bosses—two firms ordered their lads to turn in for work and another called the police to move one lad who was distributing leaflets inside their factory.

In the North-West the young libertarians have taken an active interest in the apprentice problem and from the November 1964 strike until January 1966, they loudly supported the apprentices' cause in their paper *Industrial Youth*. In both strikes they helped and in one local town a libertarian apprentice led the 1960 strike and another the 1964 one. Now we have also assisted in the formation of an AEU Junior Workers' Committee at Rochdale. Not much, admitted, but it seems somebody must do something to help the underpaid apprentice.

YOUTH CONFERENCE

Delegates at this year's AEU Youth Conference emphasised this and were particularly vocal against the Government's wage freeze. Bro. Harrison (Manchester) said that with increased prices, the wage freeze was in fact a wage cut.

'As trade unionists we have been trodden on and stamped on by the Labour Government,' said Bro. Tomlinson, 'and the Government is trying to extend the wage freeze until kingdom come.' While the adult engineers' policy supports the Government, apprentices voted against any freezing under any Government.

The miserable 3% package deal, part of which is frozen, was also attacked by delegates, not only for its size, but also because of the clause which prevents local agreements. Apprentices felt that their wages were low and that insufficient time was provided for study. With an eye on the forthcoming union executive elections, Bro. Simpson said that he hoped the new officials 'will tackle the demands of our Youth Charter in a more aggressive manner'.

Apprentices and young workers have shown how capable they have been in organising themselves in an effort to improve their wages and conditions. They are fully aware that in the past they have served as a means of cheap labour for the employers and they are not prepared to remain in this position. They are also not prepared to remain as mere card-holders in their union, but want to play their part, forming their own policies and taking their own decisions. They want their full rights and not those of second-class citizens.

Brian rightly says that we lack people settled in the district to make contact with people outside the movement. One reason for this is the brain drain to London of young Anarchists who think 'there's nothing doing up here'.

Every few years a new generation of Anarchists crops up. They get active for a year or two in the way described in Brian's concise history. Then they marry off and become respectable citizens (like me). Occasionally they write to FREEDOM, and that is all we hear from them.

So it looks as though we have a circular problem: no strong tradition = lack of experience = no place to go for the new Anarchists. So the house has always to be built by apprentices who have only their own experience and a few dated manuals of instruction to help them, and they also have to make their own tools. Do we always have to face this problem?

AN ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

One difficulty of this situation, as I see it, is that the young people who come into the movement are thereby led to think that any other state of affairs would be wrong, anti-anarchist, anti-libertarian. Committees and chairmen are vaguely thought to be rather tainted by authoritarian politics. How do they think the Spanish movement worked?

My impression is that we need an organisational structure to give us a grounding in basic anarchism. Then we can rebel against it and draw up our own training manual. At present we have too much freedom.

These difficulties are probably nationwide and not confined to Manchester. London, because it is the capital and seat of Government is the scene of most 'activity' and so tends to attract the militants. Just now Brian has left Rochdale (not for London, though) and the impetus he gave to the apprentice movement has been lost. Personalities ARE important.

But don't be too gloomy, young anarchists of Britain! I have the answer to the problem that has baffled so many mighty minds!

What we need is a corps of full-time organisers. We want to know who can be relied on to do what, and when. Only after this has been ascertained can we undertake anything a bit more ambitious than a protest march or a leaflet raid. The next meeting of the North Western Anarchist Federation might consider some way of finding out just how much talent we have.

I believe there is a lot of support running to waste in Manchester and the North West. Our principal problem is to find out what our real strength is.

JIM PINKERTON.

GROUPS' REPORT

AFTER THE ARREST of Stuart Christie in Spain, the Manchester Anarchist Group did not feel strong enough to launch a local demonstration against his arrest. However, some comrades did distribute leaflets in Manchester, calling on people not to holiday in Spain. A local Spanish tourist office was believed to have been broken into on several occasions.—Autumn, 1964.

In Manchester and Rochdale, industrial comrades gave out leaflets to busmen during their dispute with the City Council, calling on them to take over the buses and run them free, instead of striking.—December, 1964 to January, 1965.

Some comrades were also active in the apprentice strike in November, 1964. These comrades also produced *Industrial Youth*, both during and after the dispute. *IY* was a Libertarian young workers' paper.

Easter Peace March, 1965 and 1966: Strong anarchist contingent from Manchester on each occasion, and always in the midst of the action.

May Day 1965: Anarchists out in force, once more in Manchester on march organised by Labour Party. Later at meeting they gave Paul Rose, MP, a bad time.

Summer 1965: Anarchists and Committee of 100 take part in demonstration against a Civil Defence exercise at Shaw, near Oldham.

Autumn 1965: At this time the Industrial Libertarians were busy organising their paper *Industrial Youth* which had a sale of some 600 among young workers locally. Those comrades not in industry ran the fortnightly anarchist meetings, and all the comrades co-operated in running our socials which we had at least once every couple of months.

On the Vietnam Demo on November 27, 1965, the local anarchists and Committee of 100 led a breakaway knowing the CND leadership to be too frightened to challenge the Manchester City Council and police, who had previously refused to allow them a meeting in central Manchester. At Albert Square, well over 100 of us started a meeting, but as soon as the CND leaders had ushered their followers past us, the police moved in. At first the speaker was arrested, then the rest of us linked arms and surrounded the police who were taking him off. Immediately the police became violent and tried to arrest more of us. But they failed to make many arrests, due to the determination of most of us to resist arrest. It was only later when some comrades went to protest at the police station that more arrests were made, and a total of eleven came up for trial.

In the trials that followed our comrades came off better than had been expected, and their fines were partly paid off by a fund raised on their behalf, and partly by the profits from a social.—January, 1966.

In April, 1966, three anarchists took documents from a local Labour Exchange and walked away in broad daylight. The documents contained detrimental references to a comrade who had been militant in some local factories. The

police later visited our comrade but did not press the matter further, even though they did threaten to make a search of this comrade's house and serve a summons.

May Day, 1966: Forty anarchists from the Manchester region marched in the procession organised by local left wing groups. The Labour Party had decided not to hold a May Day march this year and just held an indoor meeting to which about a dozen turned up. All groups were allowed one speaker at the outdoor meeting of left-wing groups.

July, 1966: Anarchists participated in council tenants' demo against rent rises at Rochdale and we distributed a leaflet against the proposed rises.

Autumn, 1966: Liaison between groups is poor and the state of the groups at this time in the Manchester area is believed to be as follows:—

Manchester Central. Industrial comrades meeting weekly around the group 'Workers' Forum'. These comrades later aided workers locked out at the Roberts-Arundel factory at Stockport.

Chorley. A large and very active group believed to exist.

Altrincham. This group is active in YCND and the schools.

Rochdale. Concentrating completely on the apprentice problem.

Bredbury (Cheshire). Comrades were having some influence in the steel factories.

With Bolton, Buxton, and other groups, we have little or no contact. There seems to be a definite need here for some sort of organisation, perhaps a regional committee.

February, 1967: Apprentices in connection with local libertarians advised lads to stay away from work on February 7, Pancake Tuesday, and instead of the usual fooling that generally occurs in the North West on this day, to press their demands for pay and conditions.

Over 3,000 leaflets were distributed (and letters put in local papers to this effect) at technical colleges and in the factories. As a result many lads stayed away from work altogether at some firms, and at others the managers had to threaten their lads to come in 'or else'. At Rochdale the apprentices handed some proposals in at their local Employers Association, demanding more pay and better conditions.

At the end of February there was the trial of the lads at Bolton (for setting a recruiting office on fire), and the regional conference of North West Anarchists on February 25.

CONCLUSION:

The trouble in Manchester, as elsewhere, seems to be that too many comrades aren't permanently settled in the area and don't have the necessary good contact and relations with the local people. Also no real regional organisation has taken place and we have failed to deal with problems as they arise. With the decline of the peace movement we must move into other fields of activity. Perhaps, though not necessarily, the trade unions, and industrial workers, who are becoming more anti-state than before, will provide us with the opportunity.

BRIAN BAMFORD

MORE THAN ONE MAGNIFICENCE

IF YOU WANTED to concentrate and condense into one man's work and into one man's life the whole sacred and beautiful attempt of the poor to put an end once and for all to oppression, the man to choose is not Karl Marx or even Frederick Engels, not Leon Trotsky or Rosa Luxemburg, nor Abraham Lincoln or Jim Larkin or Eugene Debs or Peter Kropotkin, because all these men and this woman, and a few others, some of whose names I don't even know and perhaps could not pronounce let alone spell if I did, because there must have been men like these in Persia, Java and Japan, and perhaps even among the subjects of an Aztec king, who would be worthy of being considered on an occasion like this, were leaders.

But the man who probably came nearest to expressing the souls of the poor when politically concerned with ending human oppression by means of radical activities and social revolution

was Bartolomeo Vanzetti, an Italian peasant from the foothills of the Alps, a Piedmont farm labourer from just outside Turin in Savoy who became, on emigrating, not only a fish pedlar in the back streets of Boston and an anarchist agitator, but also one of the great Americans of history. This last statement may surprise many students on several campuses, but it would not surprise the founder of the University of Virginia. His hands were smelly with the smell of fish he peddled but his mind was as beautiful in its own very original way as that of his fellow countryman, that great Florentine sire, of the house of Alighieri. Bartolomeo Vanzetti, who was as humble as Spinoza, was to the social revolutionary period of his century what St. Francis of Assisi was to the religious revolution of the 13th century and the Pope behaved better towards the poor man of Umbria than Stalin would have done to the poor man

in Massachusetts. His thinking, expressed in his behaviour, in his pamphlets, and especially in his letters and speeches from street corners and the dock, was a map of the way human beings should behave on this earth. Because of him Piedmont can stand unashamed in the presence of Tuscany.

Nicolo Sacco, a southern Italian from what was the old Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, whose name is perpetually linked with Vanzetti's, was an honourable, decent, brave, working-class agitator. He made his living and that of his family (Vanzetti was a bachelor with a beautiful face, he was far too kind to be attractive to women) as a shoemaker. His trade was anarchist propaganda. He was above the average of his kind and the average is high. He would have had his place in the struggle of the poor to be free, even if he had not been rocketed into the history of the world by being executed after a series of trials lasting seven years, in the company of one of the truly great men of history, for a crime neither of them committed. As Eugene Debs said at the time, there was not enough evidence to shoot a dog for killing chickens.

Bartolomeo Vanzetti was indeed a truly great poet. Anyone who reads his letters will agree with Maxim Gorki in his preface to them. Vanzetti was indeed very beautiful both physically and morally, socially and politically. He was indeed one of the truly great gentlemen of history, this sidewalk orator, this peddler of fish—I'm sure the poor working class housewives in the back streets of Boston got awfully good weight. But to the unemployed among them he did not give credit, he just gave them the fish. This foreign emigrant, this shy bachelor who loved children, and who did not have the right to vote, was one of the greatest of all Americans. This 'wop' or 'dago', who could not speak English properly and who certainly could not spell it, was one of the truly great American writers. As a political thinker he rates with Jefferson and Paine, as a writer he is the equal of Whitman and Melville.

The most desperate thing about the case was that it happened in Massachusetts and not in Tennessee or Arkansas, only a long generation before Emerson and Thoreau, Melville and Prescott and Lowell were making the name of New England and particularly Massachusetts something to be reckoned with in the minds of men. There was a Lowell, who was also president of Harvard on the final Tribunal which found them guilty. It was Nicolo Sacco and not Vanzetti who said, if he is rich he will be against us, however learned and uncrackety he



SACCO & VANZETTI IN JAIL

THE STALINISTS

TWO RECENT EVENTS should add to the confusion within the Communist Party and its derivatives, the French elections, and Svetlana's request for political asylum, following as they do a denunciation of Kremlin policies in South America by Castro (who, not long ago, switched from Maoism to Kosyginism)—this should cause some chaos; and when thieves.

The French elections have put the Communist Party in France in sight of a share in Government for the first time since 1947, and a bigger share than they had immediately after the war. It is of course absolutely in line with the whole movement of Russian-oriented Communism that the French CP should be seeking ever broader measures of co-operation with the social democrats; and that a vision of a united French Labour Party should be drawing the PCF. It is of course also true that unlike the pre-war Popular Front all the parties to a left unity government in France in the near future would be nominally socialist, and so the traditional left opposition from an United Front standpoint would not today hold water. But nevertheless there are significant differences.

The PCF, like the Italian CP before it, has indicated its willingness to drop its opposition to the Common Market and play down opposition to Nato in return for its share of the loot. However much this is to be expected, it is unlikely that the ordinary member of the British CP would like this; and I am talking here of the Moscow-oriented ordinary member. The division between Maoist and Kosyginist in this country has not been in terms of debating whether they should work with Wilson (as Wilson doesn't need them and they have little to offer the question doesn't arise), but in terms of unity with the labour Left (although in practice the fellow travellers are generally only slightly left of centre), or whether to form an independent 'socialist' force. If the French Kosyginists and also the Italians succeed in merging their parties into a Labour Party as a potential government and if, moreover, impending British entry into the Common Market

makes it probable that these will co-operate with Wilson to bring Britain into the Market and govern thereafter, King Street is going to be in uproar.

It would obviously be natural to a Maoist that Stalin's daughter should wish to get away from the 'bourgeois corruption' infesting Moscow, but that she should apply for sanctuary to the United States can hardly be so reassuring. She cannot but know that the powers that be in China would feel themselves enormously strengthened if she had sought refuge in the Chinese Embassy in Delhi. She would have been assured of a welcome, would have been in a secure position, as the daughter of the idol and a propaganda asset, none would have considered purging her, whatever faction fights there might have been in the Chinese party, and yet she went to the Americans! Indeed and indeed the bitterness thereof must be great. They cannot even invent, for Svetlana, racist prejudices since she was married to an Indian. They have to admit that the daughter of 'the great Proletarian leader' grew up with such bourgeois predilections that she wittingly and willingly fled to the most powerful capitalist state in preference to the new home of revolutionary Marxist-Leninism. Yea wormwood.

Given Pavlov's theories on conditioning, or even given anyone else's theories on heredity, the defection will be very hard to explain away, even allowing for the fact that Stalin's daughter was herself largely apolitical. It must be hard for an hard line Stalinist to admit that Stalin lived in such luxury while those he ruled starved, that his daughter when deprived of this pined for the capitalist fleshpots. True her mother was purged, 35 years ago, when Svetlana was seven, but could 'Stalin's great revolutionary influence' in truth not counteract this stain on her character? No doubt there will be a perfectly simple reason given and no doubt Peking is busily working it out as I write.

Castro has objected to the financial aid given by Moscow to the Governments, particularly the Social-reformist Governments of South America, aid which bolsters up such regimes against Castroite attack. He is in an awkward

position. Eighteen months ago he broke with Mao, largely because he didn't like rivals promoting revolution on his own doorstep, and a little later denounced the Trots at the Tri-Continental Conference for roughly the same reasons; his position is a little too near Florida to be conducive to doing a Tito (though of course this would be in the Batista tradition and since many of Castro's ministers were Batista's they could no doubt tell him how the job is done); he desperately needs money himself both for internal Cuban economic reasons and because his position is such that he depends in large support he commands among the South American Left. He is therefore forced to be far more active than other Communist States in promoting external socialist movements, and in order to prevent these turning to rivals for support, he has to provide the spondulicks. He hasn't got them, Peking hasn't either, wouldn't give if she had, and if she did, wouldn't be desperate for Castro to get the credit. I am not advocating taking a collection.

Add to this the fact that China's cultural revolution has had roughly the same effect on her agrarian economy as the liquidation of the Kulaks had, and that she is therefore being forced to move rapidly away from her Third Period policies (she has anyway already succeeded in isolating the Chinese economy in the same way that Stalin isolated the Russian in the early 'thirties, and so like Stalin's Russia is at liberty now to pursue ultra-reformist policies while still maintaining trade walls to prevent more developed industrial economies flooding her own markets and undermining her nascent industry); and one can predict that the splits that one has seen in the last few years in the CP will be as nothing as those that are to come. Honest men come into their own.

JELFE ROSSE.

**DON'T FORGET
THE
PRESS FUND!**

is, and it was Sacco and not Vanzetti who was right. Vanzetti could never bring himself to believe that a man of learning, a University President, could let himself become the tool of corrupt politicians and equally corrupt policemen. It was as if Frank Lloyd Wright had done a deal with McCarthy. This Lowell, however, besides being the head of a great university was also an industrial capitalist employing thousands of the very foreign workers that Sacco and Vanzetti preached anarchism to. So he let his name, made great by another, sign their death warrant. He may not have known that they were completely innocent of the murder charge, but he could not possibly have been ignorant that there was considerable doubt, not least among members of his own faculty. Obviously, as in the Dreyfus case, the state prosecution and its allies really did believe in the beginning in their guilt. Then, having gotten themselves committed to this view, their loyalty to their class was stronger than their loyalty to the truth. If you want to be kind to them, although on this

occasion kindness does not seem to be kind, their loyalty to their conception of the community was stronger than their loyalty to the individual. Perhaps it is nearer to the truth to say that hysteria and prejudice and fear prevented them from seeing the truth. But there is evidence which suggests, if it does not prove, that they knew Nicolo Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were innocent of the crime for which they were executed. Loyalties cut across barriers in both directions. The Pope pleaded for them to the United States Government although they were atheists, and Mussolini pleaded for them although they were anarchists. Then both Pius XI and Mussolini were Italians, themselves.

For generations yet to come the name of Bartolomeo Vanzetti will spell working class revolutionary decency in every language on earth. And the letters he wrote during his seven-year imprisonment have taken their place with the little bit of truly great literature there is in the world.

PAUL POTTS.

ZAPATA and VILLA

THE LAST eight-page FREEDOM carried a report announcing that Pancho Villa was to become a Mexican National Hero and claimed that he was one of the most active of the Mexican Revolutionaries, along with Zapata. The phrasing of the report gives an erroneous, one-sided impression of Villa's actual role in the bloody and chaotic years which followed the fall of the Diaz dictatorship in 1910. One of the most remarkable factors in the Mexican Revolution was the enormous degeneracy and corruption which speedily overtook all those aspiring to be its leaders, and to this rule Villa was certainly no exception.

With Diaz removed, after some confusion, a moderate régime under Modero was established, and promised political reform and restoration to the peasants of village lands. But, as usual in these cases, nothing was done, apart from sending an army under Huerta, a most despicable character, to crush the insurgent peons in the sugar-growing area of Morelos (to the south of Mexico City). These, under Zapata, were carrying out the social revolution and seizing the land without the aid of politicians, in whom they had no trust. Huerta failed to crush the rising as he also failed to account for what he had done with one million pesos of war funds. He then took power using his control of the army and American backing (the Americans were enraged at Modero's refusal to guarantee the safety of the huge amounts of American capital—in 1910 this totalled £200 million, i.e. more than the total capital owned by the Mexicans themselves—in Mexico and were determined to remove him). This began what was to be the most corrupt and depraved régime in the whole of Mexican history.

The Mexico which this Huerta inherited was one of misery and severe oppression for most of its inhabitants. The real wages of the rural peons, who made up about 75% of the population, had fallen by 1910 to 25% of their 1890 levels. They lived in crude huts, ate atrocious food and were consequently racked by terrible diseases, they owned no land and were in effect serfs on the great haciendas. There also existed an urban proletariat, created largely by foreign investment. Various privileges had been offered to foreigners in Mexico—cheap land, negligible taxation, a free hand to exploit cheap labour (many Mexican workers were shot down by their own government in the interests of the foreign capitalists), all these combined to ensure huge profits. These workers, exploited to a degree almost equal to that of the peasants, were receptive to the doctrines of various socialists, including the anarcho-syndicalism of the Magen brothers. This was especially true after the legalising of trade union activity under Modero.

It is clear that, given this general background, the best way to power for the aspiring politician was to indulge in left talk and to denounce the Huerta régime as a betrayal of the Revolution. But once in power he was confronted by a dilemma. For, if the new régime acted in a revolutionary manner, it would almost certainly bring swift intervention by American capitalism, e.g. Huerta tried to gain popularity in 1914 by going anti-American. This was stopped by seizure of Mexican shipping and of part of Vera Cruz. Pershing's famous expedition in 1917 in pursuit of Villa is another example of the aggressive dollar diplomacy which began long before Vietnam; on the other hand, if he turned counter-revolutionary and installed a military dictatorship, the masses would desert him and rise again under some other Saviour.

Generally the new uprisings became progressively less socialistic as they approached the capital and power, and this was certainly true of Pancho Villa.

In the north of Mexico in 1913 there began a movement which, in a limited way, assumed the characteristics of a social revolution, with Villa as one of its leaders; even though carrying out a little reform in the way of building schools, breaking up estates, etc., he was driven on by little more than greed and lust for power, becoming more apparent as he advanced southwards. His army was composed of bandits and the lumpen-elements of the mining-camps and cattle-ranches who saw the Revolution as a chance for gain. This is not to deny that many sincere men joined his movement in the hope of taming his excesses, but more numerous were those who oppressed the peasants and workers instead of delivering them, who shot prisoners for 'fun', who raped and looted like every army Mexico had hitherto known.

Meanwhile Zapata's army, called 'The Liberating Army of the South', was extending its influence and operations. Coming down from the mountains of Morelos they invaded the Federal District, burnt the haciendas, killed government officials and divided up the estates. Zapata, as is well known, was the only leader in the Mexican Revolution to remain uncorrupted, and the movement which bears his name was truly egalitarian. Of it H. B. Parkes has said it was 'a party whose aims were most genuinely revolutionary and who one day would be recognized as having been the purest embodiment of the aspirations of the Mexican masses.'

When Huerta's régime disintegrated in 1914, they entered Mexico City with Villa's army and gained respect for being the best-behaved army Mexico had ever seen.

A confused period now began. While his rank-and-file looted, Villa gave up all pretensions of being revolutionary, swung to the right and began to receive support from America (American businessmen could be found at his headquarters during this period). Carranza, the other leader of the northern uprising, as a tactical move swung left and gained much of Villa's last support. At this period the working-class also supported Carranza since he courted its leaders with various promises. In 1915 Carranza took power in the capital and Pancho Villa fled north where he returned to the banditry from which he had come, to be assassinated in 1923.

Zapata, whose army was smaller, retreated to Morelos telling the peons to 'Trust to your guns only', pursued by Carranza, who for all his revolutionary pretensions slaughtered peons and laid Morelos waste. Carranza now turned on the labour movement, shot and imprisoned its leaders and violently crushed all strikes; by 1916 almost all of Mexico was in his hands, although Zapata remained invincible in the mountains until 1919 when he was captured by treachery. A colonel in Carranza's army attacked and killed some of his own men, offering this to Zapata as proof that he wanted to join him.

When they met to discuss, the peon was assassinated. Small comfort this was to Carranza for next year he was overthrown in a coup led by a certain Olérgan. But with Zapata's death the heroic phase of the Revolution ended. It should cause no surprise to anarchists that the present rulers of Mexico proclaim Villa a national hero, for after all they have much in common with him.

I. R. MITCHELL.

Kropotkin—The Lyon Trial 1883

FROM January 8 to 19, 1883, the magistrates court in Lyon tried 65 anarchists on a charge that they belonged to the First International, which had been banned in France after the Paris Commune of 1871. This was one of the big show trials of anarchists in France, coming between the Trial of 29 in Lyon (1874) and the Trial of 30 in Paris (1894). It was called 'The Trial of Sixty-six' because Berlioz Archaud, who was one of the accused, was thought to be two.

During 1882, there had been serious disturbances in central France, leading to insurrection at the mining town of Montceau-les-Mines; at the same time, there had been a revival of anarchism in south-east France, leading to terrorism in Lyon. The trial was intended to divert attention from the real nature of the social problems in France to an unreal bogey of an international anarchist conspiracy. It would have been difficult to convince a jury in a higher court that the anarchist leaders were involved in any 'criminal' activities, so it was found preferable to 'prove' to magistrates in a lower court that they belonged to the International.

By that time the International had virtually ceased to exist in France, and only one of the accused had ever belonged to it. This was Peter Kropotkin, who was also the best known of them. He had recently taken refuge in France, after being expelled from Switzerland, where he had previously taken refuge after escaping from prison in Russia. Of the 65 accused, 14 were in hiding, and the remaining 51 were all sent to prison. Kropotkin and Emile Gautier, as the leading anarchist intellectuals in south-east France, and Joseph Bernard and Toussaint Bordat, as the leading anarchist militants in Lyon, got five years each. Kropotkin was then 40 years old, and the other three were between 26 and 30. He was released by an amnesty after three years, and then took refuge in England, where he lived for more than forty years.

"During the trial, Kropotkin wrote a defence declaration, which was signed by 47 of the accused and read to the court by Alexandre Tressaud on January 12, and he also made a defence speech on January 15." These were included in the report of the trial which was printed in *Le Révolté* (special double issue, January 20-February 3, 1883) and was later reprinted as a pamphlet. The text of the declaration has recently been reprinted in the historical anthology of anarchism, *Ni Dieu ni Maître* (Paris, 1965, p. 343). Both the declaration and the speech are mentioned in the accounts of the Lyon trial in George Woodcock's and Ivan Avakumovic's biography of Kropotkin, *The Anarchist Prince* (London, 1950) and in George Woodcock's history, *Anarchism* (Cleveland, 1962; Harmondsworth, 1963), and about half of the declaration is given in *The Anarchist Prince* (p. 190), but neither of them has been published in full in this country before.

N.W.

DEFENCE SPEECH

I THINK, gentlemen, that like me you must have been struck by the weakness of the case brought against us. Are you in the presence of an international organisation? I may be excused from giving a reply, for the hearing is already well advanced, and the proof for this is still lacking. Anyway, it seems to me that the case fell at the same time that these words fell from the lips of the public prosecutor: 'As long as there is a single anarchist in Lyon, I shall proceed against him with every law at my disposal.' These words are enough to show that the trial brought against us is a political trial, a class trial.

I said this trial was a class trial. I shall add that the people of a single country are divided by the establishment of the side of the bourgeoisie and the side of the workers. For the former—all rights, all privileges. For the latter—no freedom, no justice. The Law of 1872 indeed divides society into two classes, since it is aimed only at the International Working Men's Association. Is this not proved further by the right of the bourgeoisie to associate freely with foreigners without being prevented by law? Thus a number of French Deputies were recently present at the unveiling of a monument raised to the Italian revolutionary Mazzini, who spent his whole life plotting against Austrian, French and Italian rulers. Have they been prosecuted? Have there not been meetings of Italian and French republicans in Paris for some time?

I have hesitated to defend myself before this trial which serves the interests of politics, of the moment, of a class. But there is someone above us who judges us: public opinion. That is who I am speaking to.

It would really be a very good thing if we could come and tell you that we belonged to the International. But we cannot, for that great workers' organisation has not existed in France since it was destroyed by the iniquitous Law of 1872. For my part, I should have been proud to tell you that I had joined this organisation, and I should have said so if this would have led to the release of the other accused. I shall never consider it a crime to say to the workers of two continents: 'Workers, when the bourgeoisie drive you to poverty, put aside hatred, hold your hands out across the frontiers, be brothers!'

Ah, says the public prosecutor, we have no patriotism. Do you think my heart does not beat more quickly when a Russian song comes to my ears than when I hear a French one? But I love France, because I see this beautiful country as the home of revolutions, because I know that when it is conquered it is reaction which raises its head and freedom which is driven out. The public prosecutor has spoken to you of his patriotic sorrow when he saw his country invaded by the Prussian army. Let me



remind him that at the time when France was devastated by war, there were some people who protested—they were German socialists.

(Comrade Kropotkin said he was obliged to correct the inaccurate account which had been given of his life.)

As the son of an owner of serfs—or rather slaves—I saw from my earliest childhood things happening like those described in the American novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. At the age of 16, I entered the Corps of Pages, and if in the peasants' but I learnt to love the people, at the Court I learnt to despise the great.

Then came 1862. At that time a liberal wind was blowing through Russia—people were beginning to talk of reform. I had the choice of the regiment I was to serve in, and I had no hesitation in choosing a Cossack regiment in Siberia, thinking that in that unhappy land I should be able to work for the reforms which were desired so much. I was naive to believe that the Government had any intention of carrying out reforms. The Polish rising broke out, and a terrible reaction followed it. Seeing the stupidity of the Government, I turned to science and explored Siberia. On my return to St. Petersburg, I went to study at the Faculty of Mathematics. A few years later, a socialist movement, whose beginnings had been apparent for a long time, came into the open.

In 1873, the Government had my brother and me arrested, and I spent two and a half years in prison. In that prison I could hear above me the cries of the unfortunate people who were overcome by madness, and my sufferings were doubled. Nine of my comrades went mad, and eleven committed suicide. At the end of two years, scurvy and stomach trouble laid me low. I was transferred to a hospital, from which I escaped. My comrades remained in pre-

ventive detention for four years, and were condemned at the famous Trial of 193.

In Switzerland, where I came under the name of Levashev, I discovered the miserable condition of the workers. Everywhere I saw the same poverty. I saw large manufacturing towns in which children had only nasty dirty stinking courtyards to play in. I saw women looking through refuse heaps for the remains of vegetables to eat. I saw the poverty in London, and I set myself the task of working with all my strength for a transformation of society.

In 1881, I was expelled from Switzerland, and I went to Thonon, where I remained for two months. It was on the way to England that I stayed at Vienne, St. Etienne and Lyon; this is the journey which has been held against me. I returned to Thonon on October 12, and I need not tell you that I had nothing to do with what happened at Montceau-les-Mines, since I was in London at the time.

An attempt has been made to identify me as the leader of the nihilist party, as a great dynamite! After hearing the other accused, you can see that they do not want a leader. I am continually receiving letters in which I am offered dynamite. My wife, who is in Lyon, herself receives offers of infernal machines. It was the same at Thonon, where individuals used to present themselves at my house, asking for work as gardeners or servants, actually to spy on me. I used to give them ten sous, commiserating with them for following such a wretched occupation. On the next day, the paper *Lyon Républicain* would dare to print: 'Our correspondent has seen Prince Kropotkin, who said he was the leader of the anarchist movement.' (Prolonged laughter.)

(Our friend Kropotkin declared firmly that he was a socialist.)

A society (he said) which is divided into two distinct classes, one which produces but possesses nothing, the other which does not produce but possesses everything, is a society without morality, which is condemned by itself. A worker's labour represents an average of several thousand francs a year, but his annual wage is often not a thousand francs. Next to this poverty is displayed the unbridled luxury, the mad wastefulness, the shameful depravity of the bourgeois class. In what way can this shameful injustice of society be reformed? Science is powerless, and its work always benefits the leisure class. It was after all as a result of a violent expropriation that the bourgeoisie stripped land and wealth from the nobility and clergy.

I have been accused of being the father of anarchism. That is too much of an honour. It was Proudhon who first stated it in 1848, and Bakunin and other socialists who popularised it. We never stop working and studying in our groups, but instead of coming and arguing with us you imprison and condemn us, because we defend those utopias—as you call our ideas—which will be realities tomorrow. The idea of anarchism has been stated and has grown despite everything, despite the persecutions, and has developed with astonishing speed. You can be sure that our conviction and imprisonment will bring us many more converts.

(Comrade Kropotkin then discussed the charges made against him. He could hardly refute the whole list of the public prosecutor! He continued as follows.)

As a foreigner, I am indispensable to this trial. I was arrested on December 21, when the hearing was to begin on December 29. When it was put back to January 8, it was because the public prosecutor wished to exploit the French people's feelings of hatred. And he treated Herzog as a Prussian, though he is a Genevan and doesn't know a word of German.

I believe the workers of two continents have their eyes on you, waiting with as much emotion as impatience for the judgement you are going to pronounce. If it is a conviction, they will say that the International was just an excuse, and that what you wanted to attack was the freedom to think and say what one thinks.

Do not stir up hatred (our friend said in conclusion). Repression has never achieved anything. Twice persecuted under the Empire, the International rose again in 1870, more glorious and more powerful than before. Crushed in the streets of Paris beneath 35,000 corpses, after the Commune, socialism drew new life from the blood of its followers. Its ideas about property have been given an enormous circulation.

Believe me, gentlemen, the social revolution is near. It will break out within ten years. I live among the workers, and I am sure of it. Take inspiration from their ideas, join their ranks, and you

will see that I am right. Let me tell you what I think. Do not stir up the hatred of the workers, for you will bring new misfortunes. You know that persecution is the best way to spread an idea. Is that what you want? Do you want a future of massacres for France? For, I repeat, ten years will not pass without a social revolution. What should you do in the presence of this revolution? Should you shrink from it and close your eyes, not wishing to hear or know anything about it? No, you should study the movement fairly, and look fairly to see whether by any chance we might be right.

I tell you, all of you who are listening, that the question is serious and inescap-

able. Perhaps you think it is rather bold to use such language in court. But if only two or three people are struck by the truth of my words and consider them as a salutary warning, I shall not have paid too much with a few years in prison for the satisfaction of having done my duty. If, by advising you to consider the certainty of a social revolution, I may prevent a few drops of blood from being spilt, I could die in prison and die happy.

However, if you persist in not listening, and if the bourgeoisie continues to subjugate, persecute and oppress the workers, the duty of every man of feeling is laid down in advance. I shall not fail in mine.

DEFENCE DECLARATION

What anarchism is, and what anarchists are, we shall try to explain: Anarchists, gentlemen, are citizens who, in an age when freedom of opinion is preached everywhere, have believed it to be their duty to call for UNLIMITED freedom.

Yes, gentlemen, we are some thousands, some millions of workers, all over the world, who demand absolute freedom, nothing but freedom, the whole of freedom!

We want freedom—that is to say, we claim for every human being the right and the means to do whatever he pleases and only what he pleases, and to satisfy all his needs completely, without any limit other than natural impossibilities and the needs of his neighbours, to be respected equally.

We want freedom, and we believe its existence to be incompatible with the existence of any kind of authority, whatever its origin and form may be, whether it is elected or imposed, monarchist or republican, whether it is inspired by divine right or by popular right, by holy oil or by universal suffrage.

History is there to teach us that all governments are alike and equal. The best are the worst. There is more cynicism in some, more hypocrisy in others. In the end there is always the same behaviour, always the same intolerance. Even the most apparently liberal have in reserve, beneath the dust of legislative files, some nice little law on the International for use against awkward opponents.

The evil, in other words, in the eyes of anarchists does not lie in one form of government rather than another. It lies in the governmental idea itself, it lies in the principle of authority.

In short, the substitution in human relationships of a free contract which can be revised or cancelled in perpetuity, for administrative and legal tutelage, for imposed discipline—that is our ideal.

Anarchists therefore intend to teach the people to do without government, just as they are beginning to learn to do without God.

The people will similarly learn to do without property owners. The worst of tyrants, after all, is not the one who imprisons you but the one who starves you, not the one who holds on to your collar but the one who tightens up your belt.

There can be no liberty without equality. There is no liberty in a society where capital is monopolised in the hands of a minority which is growing smaller every day, and where nothing is shared equally—not even public education, although it is paid for by the contributions of all.

We believe that capital—the common inheritance of mankind, since it is the fruit of the co-operation of past and present generations—must be at the disposal of all in such a way that none may be excluded, and that in turn no one may get possession of a part to the detriment of the rest.

In a word, we want equality—REAL equality, as a corollary or rather as a prior condition of liberty. From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs—that is what we sincerely and strenuously desire. That is what will come about, for no regulation can prevail against claims which are at the same time legitimate and necessary. This is why you want to condemn us to all kinds of hardship.

Scoundrels that we are, we demand bread for everyone, work for everyone, and for everyone independence and justice too!

(Translation by Nicolas Walter.)

Out of the mouths . . .

THE NEW YORK TIMES INTERNATIONAL EDITION welcomes the US Federal Court (First Circuit) Court of Appeals ruling that the amendment to the Selective Service Act forbidding the destruction or mutilation of draft cards was unconstitutional, at the same time (but not in the same editorial) it deplores the filing of a civil suit by Air Force Captain Dale E. Noyd to prevent the Air Force ordering him to combat duty since he regards the Vietnam war as 'unnecessary and unjust'. It concludes, 'If Captain Noyd lived in a totalitarian state like Nazi Ger-

many, his situation would, as a practical matter, be much worse but his moral claim would be stronger. . . . Not even the most liberal government can abdicate the responsibility of defending itself to the private judgement of its citizens. And a fortiori no armed force would function in this way. If the claims of individual conscience have no recognisable limit, the political result is anarchy. No member of the armed forces may pick and choose among the orders he will obey.' . . .

Introduce Your Friends to FREEDOM

SIX SHILLINGS EACH WILL BRING THEM 'FREEDOM' AND 'ANARCHY' FOR TWO MONTHS WITH YOUR COMPLIMENTS.

NEWS FROM ELSEWHERE

THE MEETINGS at the 'Lamb and Flag' have been re-started, but it is the old shambles again. The old hecklers are back. 'It's a disgrace. It will give us a bad name', 'It's useless for introducing people to anarchism', 'Something should be done—but what?'

A GENUINE MEETING

L. Gulotta writes: Recently I was able to obtain an anarchist speaker to address one of our school clubs. There was much discussion before his arrival, and I had everyone going to the library looking up Bakunin and Malatesta.

The speaker, Alen Rausnitz (NY Fed. of Anarchists), gave an involved discussion concerned more with cultural anthropology than the anarchist movement and libertarian philosophy—but everyone was able to follow along.

After the talk, the question and answer period was fantastic—every hand in the study hall was raised. The questions ran from, 'What's wrong with the profit system?' to 'What does anarchism mean today?' The meeting lasted longer than any we have had. Finally it was decided to continue at a neighbourhood cafe.

In the militaristic atmosphere created in a large technical school (Brooklyn—6,000 boys) where the seniors are forced to attend military assemblies—and there is a special counsellor appointed to advise us on our obligation to the government's armed forces—it was indeed gratifying to see the genuine interest that was created by the libertarian ideas.

DEMONSTRATION IN SYDNEY

Bill Dwyer writes: Work continues steadily but unrespectably here. Our group took a prominent part in a recent demonstration organised by the Spanish Left against recent student and worker repression in Spain. Our contingent marched under a banner prepared by local Spanish anarchists with the words, 'Los Amigos de Durruti'. The march was to the local Spanish consulate through an upper middle class area whose inhabitants were somewhat bemused by our appearance.

JAPANESE ANARCHISTS

We have received a copy of the month 1967 issue of *Jiyu Rengo*. Here is a summary of its first page:

Do your best to replenish and extend your organization! The Anarchist Federation of Japan has been established 20 years ago, May 1946. It was a thorny history literally, splitting, dwindling and fading. Aged comrades died one after one in obscurity. Our organization has become as good as nothing.

Now the time has come! We have been successful enough to re-establish our status step by step. We have to

make every effort to replenish our organization.

Editorial: Paris Commune and People's Commune of Shanghai. Mao and his followers say: 'Learn by the Paris Commune'. How learn? They organized their People's Commune of Shanghai by their agitation to do it and to use it as a tool of their communist state. A man-made organization is completely different from that of Paris Commune. Paris Commune was spontaneously organized by people, an upheaval of people who opposed the centralisation of state.

POLICE BALL

Following the events described in *FREEDOM* (15.4.67), when two comrades were arrested after leafletting a police ball, Eryl Davies and Howard Young were found guilty at Rochester Magistrates Court and were fined the incredible sum of £45 each. Any donations towards this and the legal expenses would be gratefully accepted and should be sent to Eryl Davies, 22 Margaret's Street, Rochester, Kent.

REPORT FROM HARLOW:

Here are the details of our recent activities. We have had two successful open forums with Jack Robinson speaking on 'Anarchism' and Laurens Otter on 'The Peace Movement'. Further public meetings are planned for many months ahead.

Our presence is well known—we've used the Lewisham leaflet with back copies of *FREEDOM* in 1,000 homes and given free flowers and leaflets at party political meetings.

We are producing a leaflet for the coming local elections and preparing a stand for the Town Show.

Comments

We were disgusted with Easter and are not too happy with the March of Shame. We are ashamed of the Committee of 100 for considering that Wilson is important enough to dissociate themselves from.

There should be more anarchist activity as such, more than one basic leaflet (only 5,000 of the Lewisham ones were produced), printed posters for *FREEDOM*.

It is vital that there be an anarchist conference as soon as possible—on this we would be interested to hear from other groups.

Don't forget the badges which finance us!

We had a discussion arranged with the YCL of Chigwell, however when we turned up, they didn't. In a slightly angry mood we are going to make as much capital as possible out of this, the YCL will be 'withered'.

R.

Christian Anarchism

Dear Comrades,

In attempting to give a satisfactory answer to Robin Lovell's open letter to Christian Anarchists I am placed in a difficult position. This is partly because, in terms of Christian worship, the atheist is speaking in purely hypothetical terms, having already denied the existence of God. The other difficulty is that of removing the barrier of prejudice which exists on both sides, although comrade Lovell manages to avoid being prejudiced in his well-written letter.

The philosophy of Anarchism, as has been suggested, denies the wielding of authority and the use of coercive laws. However while Anarchism rejects the use of power, it does not, as has been erroneously suggested, deny the existence of power. For example I protest at the attempt of the state to wield its power in influencing my life, but I can hardly deny its existence.

It has also been suggested that 'Love Thy Neighbour' is a moral theme which should be accepted on rational Anarchist/Humanist grounds. How then do many Humanists, by being rational, choose Marxism or Liberalism instead of Anarchism? Why is Anarchism professed by such a tiny minority of Christians instead of Socialism, Liberalism, Capitalism or Social Democracy? It would appear that the distinction between the

rational and the superstitious is difficult to define.

The idea of rejecting Christ because of the hypocrisy of the established churches is surely as erroneous as rejecting Anarchism because there have been authoritarian people who have claimed to be Anarchists.

In terms of Anarchist practice, the consistent struggles of Dorothy Day, Ammon Hennacy, Martin Corbin and Karl Mayer of the American Catholic Worker Group surely leave no doubt that Christians are in fact active Anarchists and not armchair theoreticians.

To conclude with the words of Gregory Beardall, a Christian, who has spent the last 18 months in prison in the USA for refusing to serve in the army:

'I believe in Anarchism, that every person has the absolute right to live as he should in voluntary co-operation with other men with his conscience as the only authority.'

Yours against the state,

Suffolk

CARL PINEL.

I am not Ashamed

Dear Friends,

I am not going on the March of Shame. It is not necessary for me to publicly affirm my disassociation from Harold Wilson. I did not vote for him, I did not even vote for Michael Stewart, my local Member who was at one time, I believe (and he believed) Foreign Secretary. The assumption by Harold Wilson and George Brown that they speak or act in my name is entirely erroneous.

In this I feel I can speak for most anarchists, for what is anarchism but an affirmation that we have not chosen sides as between governments? With anarchists there has never been any delegation of responsibility and we have no disenchantment with Harold Wilson's government. We were never enchanted.

I do not feel there is any special significance in dragging national flags along the ground. For me they have always been there in the mud. The addition of a swastika to the stars and stripes seems superfluous. Neither does the public confession of well-known facts by irrespon-

'Women Are Different from Men'—Police Review

A ROMAN CATHOLIC WRITER, the editor of *Twentieth Century Catholicism*, made an appeal for the removal from the Roman Catholic calendar of the names of fictitious saints; he mentioned St. Margaret, St. Catherine and St. Barbara 'who had no existence outside the imagination of those who wrote their lives'.

THE COMPANY OF SAINTS was joined by Dr. Konrad Adenauer. Lives were published of Ernest Bevin, and of John F. Kennedy by a certain William Manchester. Study of the obituaries of Konrad Adenauer failed to reveal how he lived between 1933 and 1945; but indubitably he survived.

A KANSAS CITY NEWSPAPER, *The National Catholic Reporter*, leaked the news that the majority of priests and lay experts on the Papal commission on birth control favoured an end to the ban on contraceptives. The Vatican claimed that a recent Papal encyclical which said, 'If it is certain that public authorities can intervene [on the population/food question] within the limit of their competence, by favouring the availability of appropriate information and by adopting suitable measures, provided that these be in conformity with the moral law that they respect the rightful freedom of married couples' was misunderstood. This, says *L'Osservatore Romano*, must not be taken as sanctioning contraceptives and adds, 'Governments must work to raise the level of (food) production. They must inform [the Pope's italics] the country of its population problem, in order to incite it to produce more and better'. The Vatican had no comment on the Kansas City report, the statement of the majority says, 'There are objective criteria as to the means to be chosen for responsibly determining the size of a family; if they are rightly applied the couple themselves will find and determine the way of proceeding'.

EX-NUN Sister (Sourire) Dominique recorded a song in praise of the birth control pill, 'Glory be to God for the Golden Pill'. A priest who advocated the right of Roman Catholics to use contraceptives was married at a registry office, and by this act, was automatically excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church.

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE for Safeguarding Human Dignity alleges that though post-mortem surgery is a viola-

tion of Jewish religious law, thousands of autopsies are conducted compulsorily in Israeli hospitals each year. Mr. James Dempsey (a Labour MP), who has previously complained about sexy girls on posters, and four-letter words and nudes on TV, will ask Mr. Kenneth Robinson, the Health Minister, to prohibit topless dresses (on waitresses presumably) in restaurants in the interests of hygiene. Miss Jayne Mansfield's appearance at a club in Tralee (Ireland) was banned by the intervention of the local Dean who said she was a 'Goddess of Lust'. A fund is being started to aid those who are victims of 'irresponsible or vindictive censorship'. Its immediate aim is to help John Calder with *The Last Exit* to Brooklyn trial expenses.

DR. P. A. L. CHAPPIE of Chelsea, who runs a clinic for drug addicts, said that the haste in which the Dangerous Drugs Bill was being rushed through Parliament was 'a political manoeuvre to gain popularity in a field where it is known to be difficult to legislate satisfactorily'. The Bill would be more effective if centres were first set up to gather experience on treatment of drug addicts. Dr. Chappie said, 'I believe there is pseudo-unanimity [about treatment] which is dangerous. If we do not know the solution to the problem of treatment we should say so, and if we do not know, then the way is clear for carefully supervised experiments, such as the one we are trying to carry out'.

POLICE RAIDED A PARTY in an old quarry near Bath. They interviewed seventeen young people. The police superintendent said that inquiries were proceeding and certain articles had been taken away for forensic examination. Four young people were arrested following a police raid on The Tiles, an Oxford Street jazz club. The doorman at The Tiles club was detained three hours at West Central police station a week before, when he intervened in a fight where a 'drunk' was attacked by six youths. He broke up the *melee*. The 'drunk' claimed to be a policeman, but being scruffily dressed nobody believed him. Later he returned with six uniformed policemen and the 'drunk' detained the doorman for assault on the police. The doorman was later discharged and disciplinary proceedings against the policeman are promised 'if an inquiry finds it necessary'.

THE COMMITTEE OF 100 'March of Shame' demonstration was warned by Scotland Yard that if they did not withdraw the proposed impersonation of the Queen, action might be taken against them. According to a front-page paragraph in the *Daily Telegraph*, Princess Margaret (who is, of course, sister to the Queen) lost her purse during a visit to the theatre. 'It was found [thank goodness] by a member of the public after a scramble under the stalls seats in which Lord Snowdon joined'. We were also informed by the *Guardian* that Lady Cromer, wife of the former Governor of the Bank of England, and Lady Fairfax of Cameron, a former fashion model, have been appointed 'Queen's Ladies of the Bedchamber'. The *Sunday Mirror* (p. 16) (Quentin Crewe) writes, 'The most boring speculation of the week was about the girl Prince Charles took to the theatre', and speculates on the activities of gossip columnists in speculating on the Prince's romances. 'I was hoping,' writes Crewe, 'my generation would be spared such nonsense. But we do not progress very much.' How very, very true! *Mirror* (p. 17) *Private Life of Freshman Charles* by Victor Sims, an interview with his tutors at Cambridge opening with the classical phrase, 'He will be treated just like any other student' and containing the 'boring speculation' 'Girls? Entertaining them in his own room is permitted, and he can also take them to lunch in the Hall'.

THE SOCIALIST LEADER further confounds the confusion by adding the addendum to its anti-parliamentary resolution which was omitted from its April 1 issue. It goes on, 'Parliament is historically the instrument used by the bourgeoisie for the overthrow of the feudal aristocracy. It will not be the main instrument in the next revolutionary change, from capitalism to socialism, which necessitates the capture of the realities of power by the working class'.

AND HERE COMES the pay-off line, 'Nevertheless, the ILP will use Parliament for what it is worth; and the election of revolutionary socialist MPs to the House of Commons will help to provide a platform for real socialist propaganda and give other advantages to the revolutionary socialist party.' For a while, you fooled us!

JON QUIXOTE.

Letters

sible public figures give me any kick. It is no official secret that Britain is financially indebted to support America.

The suggested slogan 'Britain once stood alone against Fascism' reeks of tub-thumping insincerity, Britain once stood for Fascism in Spain, in Abyssinia, in China, in Czechoslovakia. Anyhow what is 'Britain'? What is 'Fascism'? It comes in all sizes and colours—black and red. This insistence that Britain is something to be ashamed of is a crypto-patriotism akin to the old CND slogan 'Britain should give a lead'.

I could in fact be ashamed of Ho Chi Minh. If I were picking sides I might feel that Ho Chi Minh, by rejecting U Thant's proposals, might be robbing his people of a chance of peace in exchange for a chance of victory. And I am ashamed of Ho Chi Minh's terrorization of villagers in South Vietnam who have chosen to work with the Americans; but then I am a pacifist.

Sometimes I am ashamed of being a member of the human race. Sometimes I realize that we're all guilty of whatever monstrosities are committed. We are all part of the human race. 'No man is an island' and links of guilt connect our lives with every shameful act that is committed.

But we anarchists are not aiming for guiltlessness in this society. Most of us, I know I do, compromise at some point or other (it is where we place the point that marks our progress) and this is the reason why we must replace a society where so many of us must 'swallow a small toad each day'.

I know that a widening of the area of guilt by a choice of lesser evils such as is taking place in Vietnam today is no way to a free society.

Parallels with Spain have been freely quoted. I cannot feel that the situation in Vietnam equals that of Spain. I could have gone to the Spanish war but I did not; why I do not know, perhaps I was a pacifist even then. If I had been a Spaniard? ... the hypothetical question is always unanswerable.

I know that the Vietnam war is being fought with idealism, heroism, self-sacrifice and patriotism on both sides. It is my conviction that all of these minor virtues (quite capable of being transformed into vices) are utterly wasted on what is going on now in Vietnam. As the war goes on, each side becomes like the other.

It is not that I am uncommitted or unattached. I am committed to the people of Vietnam and not to either of the masters who are haggling and fighting over them.

I am proud to be a member of the human race which can be so courageous and so co-operative in war, and ashamed to be a member of that same race which does not realize the futility of war and patriotism and the waste of perverted idealism which supports them.

London, S.W.6 JACK ROBINSON.

News for the Leader

Dear Comrade,

It is difficult to discover what Bill Christopher is getting at in his remarks concerning the ILP's declaration of no confidence in the parliamentary system, at its annual conference this year (see *FREEDOM*, 15.4.67).

In fact, it seems as though he has no policy of his own but enjoys making stupid remarks about an organisation that does, and is not afraid to put it forward.

He says: 'We take it that the ILP believe parliament cannot be used for propaganda, storing manure or anything else.'

What has manure to do with it?—Unless, of course, Bill Christopher's mind is so full of excrement that he cannot think of anything else!

Fraternally,

JOHN DOWNING,

Editor, *Socialist Leader*.

For the information of the Editor of the *Socialist Leader*, the manure or excrement is not in Bill Christopher's mind. It was in the mind of William Morris, a libertarian-socialist (of whom the *SL* may not have heard) who in *News from Nowhere*, chap. 5, p. 85, in which he suggests a use to which the palace of Westminster (H of P) may be put, viz. a storage place for manure. Is Mr. Downing a prospective candidate? —Eds.

REACTIONS

Continued from page 1

Go'.

The Greeks quite rightly have refused to be used by any political group to give any of the English groups political propaganda. They are also understanding that words do not stop tanks.

Wooden Shoe Group, Solidarity, Irish Militant and other groups have arranged a joint meeting to help the London Greek community in action, etc., against the military regime. The meeting is at the 'Lucas Arms', 8.30 p.m. this Friday (April 28). Everyone who wants to help is welcome. The 'Save Greece Now' is calling a demonstration this Sunday, 3.30 p.m. in Trafalgar Square.

DIGGER.

THANKS!

PRESS FUND

WEEK 16, APRIL 22, 1967:
Income: Sales and Subs. £1052
Expenses: 16 weeks at £90: £1440

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Belfast: M.F. 2/-; Los Angeles: T.I. £2/16/-; Wolverhampton: J.K.W.* 2/-; J.L.* 3/-; Northolt: Anarchist Group* 4/-; London, S.E.17: D.S. 2/6; New York: S.G. £2/5/6; Grays: M.P. £1/7/-; Reading: J.R. 3/3; Vancouver: N.E. 6/6; Dagenham: C.H. 4/-; Stockton-on-Tees: I.G. 10/-; Pevensey: A.A. 8/-; Hereford: J.M. 10/-; Bedford: M.T. £1/3/-; Bushey: W.P. 10/-; Stockport: C.G. 10/6; Cheltenham: L.G.W.* 10/-; Aberdeen: E.S. 8/9; Chicago: J.C. 17/6; Buffalo: E.P. 17/6; San Francisco: C.S. 17/6; Beckenham: J.R. 7/6; Heanor: P.M. 5/-; London, S.E.9: K.W. 5/-; New York: S.K. 17/6; Ohio: E.M. 17/6; Middlesex: South West Group 10/-; Cardiff: S.W. 5/-; Glasgow: A.J. 1/6.

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Myton's Dispute Continues

WITH THEIR FAILURE to move in 'scabs' to work their site on the London Barbican scheme, Myton's decided to go to the Ministry of Labour. In the circumstances there was little else they could do since the management have already got an agreement with the National Federation of Building Trades Operatives to open the site without the six stewards. However, despite this agreement, building workers have voted not to return to work without these six men.

The very length of this dispute, over six months now, is posing problems for the Barbican Committee, part of the City Corporation, which is responsible for the development of the whole Barbican scheme. With the next stage of the development due to start later this year, the Corporation is worried by the reluctance of contractors to tender their estimates.

At a meeting of the Court of Common Council, Alderman Raymond Mais, Chairman of Trollope

& Colls, the building contractors, said that new sites might be affected by disputes. 'Contractors might also be reluctant to tender,' he declared. 'This is not a normal strike.' Whether Trollope & Colls are thinking of tendering, I do not know, but Mr. Mais and other contractors are worried by the Myton's dispute. When he says that it is not a normal strike, he means that the men have not given up the fight.

It is interesting to know that men like Mr. Mais are on the Corporation. With his connections he is hardly likely to view the dispute with an unprejudiced eye. He and other contractors are beginning to realise that these contracts will not necessarily be the 'plums' they thought.

UNION ATTACK ON MEMBERS

The lads still picketing are getting financial support from building sites, union branches and other industries, many of the sites having collected more than once. Union branches have sent resolutions deploring their executives' actions during the dispute. This applies particularly to the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, whose executive is doing its utmost to defeat its own members who are still on the picket line. Two members, Lou Lewis, who was the Federation steward, and Rolf Langdon, have previously answered charges concerning the issuing of circulars. This could not be proved, but now the men are being called before the executive committee on May 2 to answer charges by George Smith, the General Secretary. There is the possibility that their union cards will be taken away, but even if this happens, they can still continue to picket and I am certain they will receive the same support and solidarity they have had up till now.

Resolutions for next month's ASW Conference calling for support for members have been rejected by the Standing Orders Committee on the grounds of being an administrative matter.

The ASW Executive has severely reprimanded Jack Rusca, the London District Secretary, and suspended three members of the Management Committee for supporting their Myton members. So far no other union involved has gone to the lengths of the ASW

Executive. Being the biggest union in the building industry I suppose they think their authority is threatened.

The General Secretary has attacked 'unofficial activities' in the ASW *Journal*. Following two paragraphs concerning labour-only sub-contracting, he says 'It is, perhaps, not surprising that this near-anarchy in working practices (meaning chaos of labour only) is accompanied by anarchy on the part of a small minority of trade unionists. Claiming to be militants, they set themselves up as self-appointed leaders of the rank and file and through their small groups and committees they try to cause the maximum chaos possible.'

He goes on to call this activity 'anti-trade union', and then blames the drop in membership in London and the Midlands to these 'groups and committees'. If George Smith really wants to know why the membership has dropped, he ought to consider the actions of his executive, with their unwillingness to combat labour-only and their gerrymandering of policy on the question of the wage freeze.

INQUIRY WELCOMED

These committees, like the London Joint Sites Committee, represent the rank and file, with stewards from the sites who are elected, and not 'self-appointed leaders' as Mr. Smith makes out. Of course he is worried by these unofficial committees for they are undermining his authority. The fact that the Minister of Labour has decided to set up a Court of Inquiry into the Myton and Sunley disputes proves this. The inquiry, which will be welcomed by the Myton pickets, will 'look into the causes of disputes which have led to protracted stoppages of work', but at the time of writing, its members and terms of reference have not been announced.

Both these disputes have been run and controlled, as they should, by the lads involved. They have decided what to do and have carried it out, refusing to accept decisions made by employers and union bureaucrats who seek industrial peace at any price. If union leaders do not represent the members then it is inevitable that these same members will form committees to defend their interests.

It is vital that those in dispute continue to keep control and that they receive as much support as possible from other building workers. I am certain other building employers will think twice before they try what Sunleys and Mytons have done. P.T.

ELECTRICIANS DEFY WAGE FREEZE

ON JULY 21 last year—the day after the Government's wage freeze began—an agreement was signed by the Electrical Trades Union, private contracting firms and Local Authorities in Scotland. It was identical to the one for England and Wales, which was signed before the wage freeze. Both the agreements stated that the increases should be paid from March, this year, and in the case of the English one, there was no difficulty as the agreement was pre-wage freeze.

In Scotland, however, the private employers, against Government advice, started to pay the increase of 1/- per hour, but it was only after Glasgow Corporation's electricians took strike action that their increase was given. Similar action had to be taken at Greenock before the local bureaucrats would pay up there.

Even though this was an official agreement, these men received no backing from their union and when a Scottish Executive member, William Blainford, told the strikers to go back to work, he was pelted with eggs. This happened during the campaigning for the Pollok by-elections and it was only after the results of this election, the Government gave notice of its intention to freeze the award.

The anomaly of this dispute had led to considerable nationalistic feeling among the Scottish electricians. Many pickets started to wear the Scottish Nationalist Party badges and leaflets had the slogan 'Help us to help Scotland' on them.

Following the Government's warning, Glasgow Corporation stopped paying the increase and the electricians have been on strike for the last six weeks. Mr. Stewart then issued a wage-freeze order cancelling the shilling increase, and the Glasgow Corporation electricians decided to go back to work. The electricians working for private contractors, on hearing that their increase, which was already being paid, was to be stopped, downed tools and left the building sites 'until the Government changes its mind about stopping our increase'.

STRIKE COMMITTEE

Employers issued a notice in the pay packets explaining the penalties for defying the Prices and Incomes Act. So far this has not deterred the electricians for the strike is spreading and 92 sites are affected. An unofficial strike committee of 15 shop stewards said that about 1,700 men had downed tools so far and almost all the jobs in Glasgow were affected, with the stoppage spread-

Freedom For Workers' Control

APRIL 29 1967 Vol 28 No 13

NOTHING NOW AND LESS TO COME

THE TUC is continuing its master's bidding through its wage vetting policy. It has advised two major unions not to press the employers for a further wage increase in the near future.

The two unions concerned are the National Union of Agricultural Workers (NUAW) and the NUR. Both unions cater for lower-paid workers. The present minimum rate for farmworkers is £10 16s. 0d. for men, £8 2s. 0d. for women, for a 44-hour week. Farm workers received a bonanza of an increase last February, 2.9 per cent. The TUC is sympathetic to the NUAW proposal for a £14 minimum but suggests that the union modify its demand at this time, because not only was it exorbitant but followed too soon after the last settlement. As has been pointed out on this page so very often, if the lower-paid workers do not submit one claim after another, they can never hope to maintain pace with the cost of living.

The NUR claim is for a substantial rise for its 250,000 members. They received a large increase last month of 3.5 per cent, which, in fact, was a deferred payment. Their claim was referred back with the request for more information.

The TUC productivity count at the last session of wage vetting was 43 pay claims considered and one settlement. Eight claims were found to be incompatible with the incomes policy (congratulations from Wilson are awaited), 15 compatible in some respects needed modification, and for three more information was needed. So all in all only 13 claims scrambled by unscathed—the PIB itself couldn't have done better. It bears out the old saying if you want the workers throats cut, get their own organisations to do it, they tend not to spill so much blood, and the victims are less likely to scream.

The TUC has done its job well. By holding up the NUAW claim it has implied that £10 16s. 0d. is not a low wage, so therefore the mythical 'lower-paid worker' must be below that. The PIB can call off their search, this should set Aubrey Jones' mind at rest. He had visions of the exorbitant sum of £11 per week being classified as 'low pay'.

The old confidence trick of the minimum wage has again been brought out of mothballs, the substantial sum of £15 per week is the latest figure being hawked around. Surely it must be

realised that a national minimum wage could become a maximum particularly at the time of creeping unemployment.

Fred Lee, Duchy of Lancaster, who is responsible for enforcing pay policy, expounds pearls of wisdom at Birkenhead. He attacked the policy of free collective bargaining. He claimed that the protesters about low-paid workers were the people who did not favour the change in the bargaining system, which brought about the position of lower-paid workers. He went on to comment about prices and claimed there had not been a 'free for all' on prices and that the Index of Retail Prices rose by less than 14%. On your salary, Mr. Lee, increased prices do not matter, but to the railwayman and agricultural worker they matter a lot. Mr. Stewart has admitted that the Government would not attempt to control prices.

The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) has problems, the most urgent one is the Government's decision to allow back-dating of some pay settlements. Mr. John Davies, Director General, claimed that any widespread adoption of this would make nonsense of the Government's attempts to prevent wage inflation.

Back-dating of a wage increase is very handy. Not only does it allow unions to swing a small increase on their members because they are swayed by a lump sum to be paid, it also is persuasive against employers who go in for long protracted wage negotiations. Mr. Davies did make the point that the CBI did not wish to make an issue of it, maybe because the operative word is *some*.

Ray Gunter has at least been forced to make a decision on Wages Council awards. He has confirmed the drapers' award contrary to PIB recommendations, he had very little option. Under Part IV of Prices and Incomes he could have delayed the award until August, instead they are to be paid in May.

If this is the way the Government and the TUC are concerned about the lower-paid workers, then God protect them from their friends. Although to be perfectly frank the higher-paid workers are not too bothered about the lads down the scale, but until they are bothered, and support them in their struggles to rise, the gap between them will remain, the dividing weapon is in the hands of the Government Employers and TUC.

BILL CHRISTOPHER.

ing to Edinburgh and the East of Scotland. This freeze order affects 8,000 workers and the strike-committee said that: 'The only weapon we have is the right to strike and even that is in danger.' A mass meeting is to be held on Tuesday, meanwhile they are making every effort to spread the stoppage. Their statement continues: 'We feel we are taking over where the employers (having paid it for seven weeks) left off.'

With this unofficial strike action, the Government faces a direct challenge to its wage freeze policies. Unlike the car delivery workers' action, there is no possible way of dodging this one. This is open defiance, with no legal wangling by union officials, and bears out what has been said in these columns before, that the main struggle will come from the rank and file.

The men's union, the ETU, stands full square behind the wage freeze and has been very vocal in its attacks on those who are against the Government's policies.

Those on strike are now open to

prosecution, but with so many out on strike it would be difficult for the Government to prosecute everyone. However, if they do decide to enforce the law, then, no doubt, they will bring proceedings against the unofficial shop stewards' committee. Then, only solidarity action from other sections of the working class could defeat the plans of the Government.

If this happened, I am certain that the Government would soon admit defeat and support would show that no Government can defeat workers who are determined to defend their interests with the strike weapon. All success to the Scottish 'sparks'!

P.T.

8-pages EVERY week costs money—HELP!

Contact Column

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

Unfurnished Accommodation Wanted. Responsible gentleman, thirties, exemplary tenant, requires spacious self-contained flat/house, minimum three bedrooms, central London, quiet surroundings. Maximum seven guineas inclusive. No premium. Could decorate. Reciprocal references. Box 52.

Duplicator, Anybody? Needed for important Vietnam project. Few months loan or hire, or would buy if very cheap. 106 Regents Park Road, London, N.W.1 or phone 01-272 7200 (Brian McGee).

House or Apartment wanted for July. American comrades (4) need house or flat to rent for month of July. Box 50.

Former Junkie. Wants job and accommodation in London. Box 54.

Civil Liberties Social. Bar, music, entertainment (performers wanted). 7-11.30 p.m. Saturday, April 29, Camden Studios, Camden Street, N.W.1, in aid of NCCL. Tickets 5/- at door.

Accommodation Available — London. Medium sized room in unfurnished s/c flat Camden Town, about £3 p.w. Whole flat (2 large/2 medium rooms, k. & b.) on three year lease from mid-May, £500 p.a. Box 53.

Accommodation Wanted. Cheap sleeping accommodation/dry floor. Anywhere in London for seven days June-September. No cooking. Write Alan Murgatroyd, 28 Sun Street, Haworth, Keighley, Yorks.

Elizabeth Windsor. Hull Anarchist Group require any anti-royalist information or literature. Particularly about the Queen. H.A.G., 89 Fountain Road, Hull.

Unaligned in Vietnam? Easter Pamphlet. 'Neither Washington nor Hanoi but Libertarian Socialism.' Duplicated pamphlet for sale, price 3d. Write Laurens Otter, Tolstoi, New Yatt Road, North Leigh, Witney, Oxon. **Oxfam Walk** 6-7 May. Purley to Hampstead. Details—Tony Eaton, 12 Crane Court EC4

Floor space/Accommodation — London. Wanted July 15-30, for participant in *Dialectics of Liberation* Congress. Write Gordon Causser, Childs Hall, Upper Redlands Road, Reading.

USA — Seminar. 'Practical Paths to Peace'. Heathcote Centre, Rte. 1, Freeland, Maryland, USA. May 26-28. Herber, Krimmerman, Roseman etc. \$12. Registration to Heathcote School of Living Centre by May 15.

International Camp. Lake Como, Italy. Travelling companions or would contribute car expenses. Early August. Alan Albon, The Stable, Glynleigh Farm, Povensey, Sussex.

If you wish to make contact let us know.