

Freedom

Anarchist Weekly

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Utopia Recanted

IN FREEDOM, 22.4.67, an article describing the Moore Park Road development scheme noted the brochure outlining the scheme as 'highly idealised pictures of the artist's conception of the architect's idea of the council's hopes of the minister's permission of the exchequer's purse-strings', and concluded on a note that perhaps the Greater London Council might recant from their part in the scheme since they became Tory-controlled.

At the moment the scheme seems effectively checkmated with the Moore Park Residents' Association (largely owner-occupiers) triumphing in their objection and a new grouping, The Moore Park Road Action Group, rallying to the defence of the scheme.

The Labour defeat on the GLC, as recorded in April, was one of the first blows, this was followed by some Labour defeats and defections on Hammersmith Council. The financial crisis of the Labour Government meant a tightening-up of purse-strings and an embargo upon expenditure such as the reconstruction of the school in Maxwell Road, or the widening of Harwood and King's Road, to which schemes Hammersmith Council had pinned hopes for subsidy.

Taking as his keynote the call for economy in social services, the Labour Minister of Housing put into reverse the objection to reconditioning of old houses and approved such schemes, which are thought of as being cheaper. Hammersmith Council (that is, the Fulham section) had a contrary experience with a scheme in Cedar Road.

This about-face by the Minister made a good talking-point at the public enquiry (held in December 1967). The delay in issuing the findings is highly significant.

At the local council elections in May the Tories gained 47 seats, Labour lost 46, this after, as the *Fulham Chronicle* puts it, 'the long road of power stretching back [for Labour] 34 years'. However the *Chronicle* also reveals that only 41% of the electorate in Fulham cast their votes which they chauvinistically say was higher than Hammersmith where only 36.82% voted. (Fulham is now amalgamated with Hammersmith.)

One of the supporters of the Residents' Association asserted that the newly-elected Tory councillors for the Sandford Ward (which includes Moore Park Road) promised that the scheme would be 'reconsidered' if they were elected. The next step seems to have been a statement by the Tory leader of the Council that the Council would stop buying property in the Moore Park Road area.

By now local residents had got the message, the architect of the scheme deplored the political parochialism, a supporter of the Residents' Association deplored the fact that Moore Park Road area tenants assumed they would move into flats now being constructed at Cedar-Waterford Road (she said 'they were jumping the queue'), one correspondent for the Residents' Association took refuge in the fact that, since the Ministry had not yet made a decision, the whole matter was *sub judice*, nevertheless he said it would be cheaper to recondition the houses.

Out of all this agitation there sprang a small group who set up a Moore Park Road Action Group whose function it is to agitate for the implementation of the housing scheme in its original form. To this end they intend to picket council meetings, demonstrate outside the Mayor's house at Hyde Park Gate (he is president of J. Lyons & Co. of Hammersmith and elsewhere) and to petition various Ministers and the local MP, a Mr. Michael Stewart. To this end they have rallied the support of Mr. Chapman, a retired councillor, who, as leader of the then Labour Council, launched the scheme at Fulham Town Hall in April 1967, and Mr. Gray, a defeated Labour councillor. It is difficult to assail the worthy members of the Action Com-

mittee or the Residents' Association or Mr. Chapman or Mr. Gray since the Committee and the Association are only working in defence of what they believe to be the public good and incidentally their own respective benefits. It just so happens that they clash.

The charming Box and Cox activities of the respective Labour and Tory Councils give eloquent tribute to the uselessness of political parties in practical matters. Either this area of Fulham needs reconstructing or it doesn't. The judgment of an architect as to how it could best be done seems to have had at one time the grudging support of the Council. However central government has found it expedient to cut this scheme, and the existence of a Tory Council at Hammersmith and at the GLC has relieved the Labour Government of the embarrassment of telling Labour Councils that they cannot subsidise social welfare schemes—and one must agree with Mr. Chapman that housing is a social welfare.

The Tories have always believed in a property-owning democracy and in non-subsidised housing (however Hammersmith has advanced about £5 million in housing loans) and want to keep down the rates. They see prospects of developing Fulham as a poor stockbrokers' Chelsea and know that if this housing goes on developing in the way it did before the scheme, the Moore Park Road area would be a speculator's paradise.

There is one flaw. The Ministry of Housing has ruled that councils may only sell twenty houses a year; even if Hammersmith does not go on with the Moore Park Road scheme, which seems likely, the Tories are willy-nilly involved in municipal housing.

The latest broadside from the Tory Council is in the form of what appears to be a referendum (demanding an answer within five days). This seems to be heavily loaded (the Action Group has advised tenants how to answer).

Question 1: 'Do you want the council to redevelop at the cost of £5,500,000? This is a higher figure than has ever been mentioned anywhere, it probably fails to deduct (with good reason) any GLC or Ministry of Housing contributions to the scheme. The figure is calculated to give any ratepayer fits, but show him (as a taxpayer) the arms budget and he will preen himself on our military might.'

Question 2: 'Are you prepared to pay ten guineas a week rent?' The frank answer should be that one shouldn't pay rent at all, Tories should believe in a property-using democracy.

Question 3: 'Do you want to stay in your present accommodation, if there is no general improvement in the area?' One of the facts of life that Tories don't seem to know is that very few people in London with the present housing position have very little alternative except to stay where they are. The failure of private enterprise to supply housing is one of the chief criticisms of capitalism. The failure of Labour-controlled local authorities to supply housing is one of the chief criticisms of municipal socialism.

Question 4 (a): 'Do you want bathrooms and indoor lavatories if you do not have them already?' Obviously we prefer the tub on the hearthrug and the cesspool—we're just peasants.

Question 4 (b): 'Are you prepared to pay towards the cost or an increased rent, as may be appropriate?' Frankly, no.

This shoddy attempt by the Tory Council to influence public opinion and give their long-held prejudices against municipal housing the air of a publicly accepted plebiscite is naive in the extreme. The Council has no need to carry on the scheme and quite obviously they have no intention of doing so but why insult public intelligence by pretending that they are consulting public opinion?

JACK ROBINSON.

OPPOSE RUSSIAN IMPERIALISM!

THE FAINT SMELL OF A LITTLE BIT OF FREEDOM IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA HAS BEEN TOO MUCH FOR THE RUSSIAN COMMUNISTS. LIKE THE IMPERIALIST DICTATORS THEY ARE THEY HAVE USED MILITARY FORCE TO CRUSH A TINY COUNTRY TRYING TO GET OUT FROM UNDER. TWENTY YEARS OF AUTHORITARIAN COMMUNIST RULE HAVE NOT MADE THE CZECH PEOPLE LIKE IT ANY MORE THAN THE HUNGARIANS DID—OR DO—AND IT CAN BE MAINTAINED ONLY BY FORCE.

THE DUBCEK REGIME IS CERTAINLY NOT ANARCHIST. ON THE CONTRARY, ANARCHISTS ARE IN GAOL THERE LIKE EVERYWHERE ELSE. NEVERTHELESS WE SAY THAT THE CZECH PEOPLE—LIKE THE PEOPLE OF BIAFRA AND VIETNAM—SHOULD BE LEFT ALONE TO WORK OUT THEIR OWN DESTINY IN THEIR OWN WAY. FOR KOSYGIN TO FOLLOW IN HITLER'S FOOTSTEPS ONLY PROVES THE ANARCHIST CONTENTION THAT ALL GOVERNMENTS ARE ESSENTIALLY THE SAME.

HANDS OFF CZECHOSLOVAKIA!

ANARCHIST DEMONSTRATIONS will be held at the Russian Exhibition at Earl's Court, London, at 3 p.m. today (Saturday 24th) and at Hyde Park at 3 p.m. tomorrow (Sunday 25th), proceeding to the Russian Embassy (Kensington Palace Gardens). All possible support is needed. Bring banners!

Too Much Police Power!

DURING the same week that brought the news that the British police force have been issued with anti-riot gas grenades and cartridges, a letter also appeared in *The Times* from a Mrs. Gillian Hughes, who complained that she, her son and his friend were stopped and searched by the police in the street near their home in Notting Hill Gate. The letter has produced a storm of indignant letters in *The Times* and a sudden realization by many people that the Dangerous Drugs Act, 1967, which allows police to conduct a search for drugs, can also be used by the police to search people under any pretext. Therefore it is not surprising that the news story of the police being given gas grenades has not produced the same protest of indignation; the protests will only come after these grenades have been used.

It is also a possibility that people care more for individual liberty than for collective security. Nobody likes to be pounced upon when out walking with 'my son and a friend of his, to be accosted within a quarter of a mile of my own home by three men and a policewoman, who asked us where we were going, took my bag, opened my purse, examined the lining of my cigarette packet, emptied the boys' pockets and patted their trouser legs—all this in view of passers-by and without the slightest ground for suspicion'.

The final irritation was the young policewoman saying to Mrs. Hughes, a teacher of English in a grammar school, after taking her name and address: 'And how old are you, Gillian?'

Her letter concluded: 'Having recovered from my initial indignation, I am now wondering whether

this is likely to happen again. I am told that I was lucky not to be punished for my incivility: must one, then, prepare oneself to submit meekly to such outrages, accepting them as a normal feature of London life? Is there no way of signalling to passing policemen one's unsuitability as a subject for their searches? Should I, perhaps, give up the pleasure of walking and buy myself a Rolls-Royce? Or is no one immune from this kind of affront?'

The letters in *The Times* were, with the exception of one, all sympathetic, mentioning similar experiences and advising 'possible safeguards'. But the truth is there is no safeguard. The police, having been given the power to search, will not relinquish it.

Similarly, now that the police have been issued with a total of 645 anti-riot grenades and cartridges for use in serious civil disturbances, who knows what they are going to use them for? The London police have the largest number followed by Sussex (why Sussex?) and there is no mention of what stocks they hold in Wales or Scotland.

Are the authorities expecting large-scale rioting or looting? Are they worried about a possible uprising? And if 'Chief officers have been given guidance on the use of CS devices, and on precautions to be taken to ensure that innocent bystanders are not inconvenienced', then should not the details be published also to the entire population? If the authorities are not revealing such information, then it becomes our duty to do so. The State is beginning drastically to increase its measures to ensure docility and conformity. Many well-meaning people would like to hold on to the belief that this is still a free country. It is a genuine regret to many, even within the Establishment, that this is no longer the case. The harsh inequalities in our society, the growing number of unemployed, the lack of possibilities to answer back to the State, has produced a clear-cut division of Us and Them. And Them can fool so many people, but those they cannot they will try to control by force.

The difficulty is that whereas people instinctively sympathise with individuals, when it comes to a political demonstration, people's sympathies are divided. After all Mrs. Hughes was only taking an evening stroll, but demonstrators are 'out to make trouble' anyway. This is, of course, true. There is no love lost

between the police and demonstrators. Had the police not used horses and violence in Grosvenor Square, the crowd would have stormed the American Embassy. As it happened the demonstrators were neither prepared nor inclined for violent methods and the battle was lost.

What will happen in October is anybody's guess. The organisers of the demonstration told the crime (!) correspondent of the *Sunday Telegraph* that they expected 80,000 people to take part. The VSC may be wrong in their estimate, but there will be many people there nevertheless.

Are they then going to be slaughtered by the police? Will the demonstrators be armed or shout and run? One thing is certain, that the press will be able to manipulate the public like the last time so that even the use of gas grenades will be condoned. The task is made simpler for the authorities that the Vietnam War is no longer a clear-cut issue. As long as Hanoi is negotiating with Washington, it is stupid and illogical to demonstrate in favour of a Vietcong victory. It becomes a mere exercise, a political suspension of disbelief. Nevertheless, many anarchists will be there, to put our uncompromising point of view, not shirking whatever confrontation there may be with the authorities.

But if the police do use gas in October, with little or no outcry from the public, then they can use it against the Unemployed Marchers, the GLC tenants, or against whom-ever they please—and the outcry will be too late. Because what happened to Mrs. Hughes has been happening to 'drug addicts' as well and nobody is worried about them. M.H.

Student Anarchy discussed in ANARCHY 90

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IT HAS LONG BEEN a romantic affectation of the literati to deny all claim to mechanical knowledge and to affirm that, within that baby blue heaven of their being, the electric shaver and the space travelling rocket are awesome beasts living out lives of their own. Alien mentalities brooding and communicating, plotting and planning for *The Day* when they will take over the King's Road, Chelsea, as the Town's coffeehouse resistance movement loses the last battle before an army of smoking valves and the lash of GPO copper wire. Yet, in truth, it is a social affectation of a metropolitan leisure class who know that there is always the workman or the wife to change their fuse or mend their car. For the middle-class literati the moment in time has arrived when a complete and absolute divorce between the producer and the consumer has become a reality. Cowless milk, wrapped bread, television communication and tinned beer are delivered by unseen agents, and the well-heeled poet killing the butterfly hours seeking a non-rhyme for his weekly protest poem can self-justify his mayfly way of life by shrilling that not only is God dead but that the Ghost in the supplying Machine exists within its own right as a thinking and self-perpetuating physical and intellectual being, therefore there is no longer any reason for social guilt for a way of life that does not contribute to the material stockpile of the community. And they play their sweet and innocent games with the same simpleminded artlessness as the courtiers of the Court of Louis did when, in silks and ribbons, they acted out their own mythology of ploughboy and shepherdess, while in the fields beyond the gates the verminous peasants worked and waited.

Yet who is deluding who? Not the workwomen at the conveyor belt who assemble the repeated circuits or the mechanic fault-finding within the electronic maze. Not the labourers emptying the back door dustbins or the West Indian girl checking the pheasant that drops into the seemingly endless flow of game pies, for they know that there is no Ghost to aid their labour. Not the old woman dropping her pennies in the Arcade gambling machines or the young woman seated in the automatic laundry for they live within the factory areas that build the Machine and there is no romantic Ghost operating the assembly lines from eight till five, only the employer, the time and motion expert and the rate-fixer.

But for the romantic literati there is the Machine with its ulcerated gut of flashing valves, erotic hum and all those beautiful little red lights that go on and off, signalling mysteries that only the poet and the mystic dare try to comprehend. So who would dare to doubt that, when the Institute of Contemporary Arts at Nash House, The Mall, S.W.1, mounted an Exhibition of Cybernetic Arts it would not draw an audience weaned on Frankenstein, Roy

AROUND THE GALLERIES

Bradbury and the mechanical masturbations of Cape Canaveral? Here then is the computer, not as an art in itself, but as a creator of various forms of human art and yet in the end it is less than the whole for all it can offer us back is a distortion, a permutation or a glorious balls up of what we feed into it.

All of this pseudo-technocratic art has been the common knowledge of bored workshop workers these many years and the mystique that it is now given by housing it in the royal Mall and tarring the whole with an impressive jargonised catalogue and a surfeit of valves, condensers and resistances should not blind one to the historical fact that 25 years ago young army girls were consciously playing the same games on the faces of primitive radar tubes.

Today the 'artist' passes a magnet across the tube to create his abstract pattern from the transmitted picture while 25 years ago those army girls rubbed the face of the tube with newspapers to produce the static electricity that would drag the transmitted picture into distorted patterns. And the computerised music? How many times have bored mechanics twisted their oscillator knob to create an automatic rendering of *God Save the King*? But no one was impressed, for on those primitive sets one was back at first principles in which every man in the room was not only conscious of the effect but knew that the cause was a product of his own mechanical ability and that with one single turn of a screwdriver he could end the life of the machine. *Danny Boy*, tapped out on partly-filled beer glasses, may surely look more impressive when played on glass tubes containing different amounts of liquid chemicals and the latest pin-table machine programmed to give out philosophical questions and unrelated answers might replace the entrails of the priest killed cock, but in the end it is the same shallow approach of the non-creative mind to the creative arts and the belief of any parasitical group that somewhere there is a switch to be touched that not only will feed, clothe and house them, but that the Ghost in the Machine will think for them, for this Exhibition of Cybernetic Serendipity at the ICA is the middle-class version of that *Big Rock Candy Mountain*.

Beyond the doors of Nash House lies that world that will seek to put into practice this pseudo-science and for the strong-willed clowns there is the barmy quest for flying saucers and the documenting of interplanetary hardware. But for the simple-minded, neurotic and the weak-willed there is the sad and futile belief that somewhere there is a small black box, ignored by the Scientific Establishment, that will solve all their headache problems and restore them to

wealth and mental and physical well-being by the simple act of giving the Man the cash and holding on to two wires operating the wavering needle.

On the day that I attended the ICA's Exhibition of Cybernetic Art, I accepted a street invitation for a 'free personality testing' at the Hubbard Scientology Organization at an address near the GPO Tower. I entered the House as a cynic and left in an atmosphere of mutual dislike. Three times I clearly explained that I did not intend to buy anything or join anything, yet they continually gave me a high pressure sales sell to buy their books and take their courses and all within a price range of a few shillings to £125 and all the time that note of weary contempt and boredom increased as one refused to buy, buy, buy.

Even the information that William Burroughs, the author of *The Naked Lunch*, had attained a state of Clear and had received his Release Grades 0-IV and his Level 0 and Level 1 at the Hubbard Guidance Centre failed to shake my faith in my own cynical disbelief. I was seated at a desk and in less than ten minutes filled in the 100 personality testing questions and waited for the practitioner to equate my 'Oxford capacity analysis' while the young woman seated at a desk gave me the hard sell for Ron's books but I stood and pointedly read the copies of letters pasted on the wall beneath the recurring ££££££££ signs that told of grateful believers who had increased their wealth, found better jobs and were now getting more wages than the rest of the workstiffs

DO-GOODERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

HELP, number one, by subscription only, £3 3s. per annum, from 2 Arundel Street. **HELP** is a beautifully produced magazine covering a wide territory; autistic children, Oxfam, adventure playgrounds, civil liberties, protest movements, Risinghill, Ernest Bader, wild life preservation, race relations, health foods, life in S.W.11.

Perhaps the very width of its coverage is a snag. Although *Help* is for the kind of society all humane and progressive people want, it is rather vague as to details. Is it to be an anarchist or more or less non-authoritarian society, or a benevolently paternalistic one? Lord Arran wants to conscript youth into a sort of Peace Corps, while Bader is an enlightened autocrat.

Are we to proceed to Utopia via voluntary social work? Is this enough? Won't the authorities move in to crush such work if it ever looks as if it is going to do more than mitigate the evils of society, and lead to genuine social

change? Even within existing society people who seek to help their fellows seem often to accept the standards of that society. They try to help the social misfit to fit in, and are sometimes inclined to regard you as 'weak' or almost wicked if you can't conform.

However, there can be no doubt that if even only one person is aided to a more comfortable and enjoyable and creative life than he would be able to achieve on his own, the effort made is worth it. And although bringing many causes together tends to create a certain air of vagueness, rather like an Aldermaston March with its innumerable banners, all representing different groups from the Mothers' Union to the Revolutionary Syndicalists, on the other hand it does make a common meeting place, where ideas can be exchanged and people can contact one another.

So let us hope that *Help* is a success, and give it all the support we can.

A.W.U.

This year's AFB conference is to be held in Liverpool on September 21 and 22.—All enquiries about accommodation and proposals for the agenda to John B. Cowan, Merseyside Anarchists, 16 Devonshire Road, Liverpool, 8.

Anarchist Federation of Britain

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

- LEWISHAM.** Contact Mike Malet, 61B Granville Park, Lewisham, London, S.E.13. Phone: 01-852 8879.
- EALING ANARCHIST GROUP.** Get into touch with Ken King, 54 Norwood Road, Southall.
- FINCH'S (PORTOBELLO ROAD) ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact Pamela Pearce, 271 Portobello Road, W.11. Meetings every Wednesday evening at Finch's.
- S.W. LONDON LIBERTARIANS.** Contact: 14 Clapham Court, King's Avenue (Acre Lane end), S.W.4.
- WEST HAM ANARCHISTS.** Contact Stephen Higgs, 8 Westbury Road, Forest Gate, London, E.7. GRA 9848. Regular activities. Meetings every Wednesday, 7.30 p.m., at Tony Gay's, 109 East Road, Plaistow, London, E.13 (2 mins. Plaistow Station).

OFF-CENTRE LONDON DISCUSSION MEETINGS

Every Wednesday at Jack Robinson's and Mary Campa's, 21 Rumbold Road, S.W.6 (off King's Road), 8 p.m.
Meetings at Donald and Irene Room's are suspended until September.
3rd Friday of each month at Dennis Fen's, 314 St. Paul's Road, Highbury Corner, N.1 (above Roundabout Self-Service).

REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND GROUPS

- BEXLEY PEACE ACTION GROUP.** Enquiries to 150 Rydal Drive, Bexleyheath, Kent.
- BIRMINGHAM LIBERTARIAN AND ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact Geoff and Caroline Charlton at Flat One, 69 Sandon Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham 17. (Entrance side of house.) Regular discussions being held on Tuesdays, 7.30 p.m., Crown, Corporation Street (upper room).
- BOLTON.** Get in touch with John Hayes, 51 Rydal Road, Bolton.
- BOURNEMOUTH AND EAST DORSET ANARCHISTS.** Please contact John McCain, 65 Norton Road, Winton, Bournemouth (B'm'th 59509) or Tim Deane, Juliet, West Moors, Wimbome, Dorset (Ferndown 3588).
- BRISTOL ANARCHISTS.** Contact Susie Fisher and Adam Nicholson at 15 The Paragon, Bristol, 8.
- CORNWALL ANARCHISTS.** Contact Arthur Jacobs, 76 East Hill, St. Austell. Discussion meetings on the second Friday of each month at Brian and Hazel McGee's, 42 Pendarves Street, Beacon, Camborne. 7.30 p.m. Visiting comrades very welcome.
- CROYDON LIBERTARIANS.** Meetings every 2nd Friday of each month. Laurens and Celia Otter, 35 Natal Road, Thornton Heath (LIV 7546).
- EDGWARE PEACE ACTION GROUP.** Contact: Melvyn Estrin, 84 Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middx.
- HERTS.** Contact either Stuart Mitchell at South View, Potters Heath Lane, Potters Heath,

FULL DETAILS NEXT WEEK!

MERSEYSIDE ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Alex Howie, 16 Devonshire Road, Liverpool 8. Meetings 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month, 8 p.m.

SUSSEX FEDERATION

Groups and individuals invited to associate: c/o Eddie Poole, 5 Tilsbury, Finden Road, Whitebank, Brighton.
BRIGHTON & HOVE ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Nick Heath, Flat 3, 26 Clifton Road, Brighton, BN1 3HN. Poetry readings, Fish Market Hard, every Sunday 2 p.m. Meetings every Thursday, Combination, 76 West Street, 8.30 p.m.

SUSSEX UNIVERSITY ANARCHIST GROUP. Information from Francis Jarman, 39 Harefield, Harlow, Essex.

WELSH ANARCHIST FEDERATION

CARDIFF ANARCHIST GROUP. All correspondence to—Pete Raymond, 18 Marion Street, Splott, Cardiff.
MERTHYR TYDFIL ANARCHIST GROUP. Correspondence to Huw Rowlands, 16 Cromwell Street, Methyr Tydfil.

SWANSEA ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact J. Ross, 111 King Edward's Road, Brynmill, Swansea. Weekly meetings, 'Freedom' sales and action projects.

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

EAST LONDON LIBERTARIAN FEDERATION

Support wanted for numerous activities in area. Secretary: Anthony Matthews, 35 Mayville Road, London, E.11. Meetings fortnightly on Sundays at Ron Bailey's, 128 Hainault Road, E.11 (LEY 8059). Ten minutes from Leytonstone Underground.
LEYTONSTONE GROUP. Get in touch with Anthony Matthews or Ron Bailey (address as above).
STEPNEY. Trevor Jackales, 10 St. Vincent de Paul House, Dempsey Street, Clity Estate, E.1.
NEWHAM. F. Lowe, 100 Henderson Road, E.7.
ILFORD. Del Rowland, 12 Hamilton Avenue, Ilford.
DAGENHAM. Alan Elliot, 98 Hatfield Road, Dagenham.
WOODFORD. Douglas Hawkes, 123 Hermon Hill, E.18.
WALTHAMSTOW. Desmond MacDonald, 80 Martin Road, E.17.
LIMEHOUSE. M. Solof, 202 East Ferry Road, E.14.

STUDENT GROUPS

There are groups at East Anglia University, Liverpool University, LSE, Oxford University, Sheffield University, Southwark College, Sussex University and College of St. Mark & St. John, Chelsea. For reasons of space we are leaving these out during the vacation.

SCOTTISH ANARCHIST FEDERATION

Secretary: Dave Coull (see Montrose). Groups and Proposed Groups—

ABERDEEN ANARCHIST FEDERATION. Contact Bob Comrie, 288 Hardgate or Liz Smith, 3 Sinclair Road.

GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Robert Lynn, 16 Ross Street, C.1.
HAMILTON DISTRICT FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS. Contact Ronnie Anderson, 100 Union Street, New Stevenston.
MONTROSE. Contact Dave Coull, 3 Eskview Terrace, Ferryden.

LIBERTARIAN TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Meetings—discussions—activities. Contact Peter Ford, 36 Devonshire Road, Mill Hill, London, N.W.7.

ABROAD

- AUSTRALIA.** Federation of Australian Anarchists, P.O. Box A 389, Sydney South. Public meetings every Sunday in the Domain, 2 p.m. and Mondays, 72 Oxford Street, Paddington, Sydney, 8 p.m.
- EAST AFRICA.** George Matthews would like to make contact. Secondary school teacher from UK. PO Box 90, Kakamega, Kenya.
- USA.** James W. Cain, secretary, the Anarchist Committee of Correspondence, 323 Fourth Street, Cloquet, Minnesota 55720.
- GROUP-TORONTO.** Australian Anarchist, c/o Melbourne University Union or Paddy Evans, c/o the same.
- MELBOURNE.** Get in touch with Bob Hopkins and Margie Rojo, P.O. Box 192, Carlton South 3053. Public meetings at Yarra Bank, Melbourne.
- DANISH ANARCHIST FEDERATION.** Gøthersgade, 27, Viborg, Denmark.
- VANCOUVER, B.C., CANADA.** Anyone interested in forming anarchist and/or direct action peace group contact Derek A. James, 184 Grand Boulevard, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada. Tel: 987-2693.
- USA: VERMONT.** New Hampshire Anarchist Group. Discussion meetings. Actions. Contact Ed. Strauss, RFD 2, Woodstock, Vermont 05091, USA.
- SWEDEN.** Stockholm Anarchist Federation. Contact Nadir, Box 19104, Stockholm 19, Sweden.
- SWEDEN:** Libertad, Allmänna Vägen 6, Gothenburg V.
- TORONTO ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact R. Campbell, 219 TorYork Drive, Weston, Ontario, Canada. Weekly meetings.
- BELGIUM: LIEGE.** Provos, c/o Jacques Charlier, 11 Avenue de la Laiterie, Sclessini-Liege, Belgium.

PROPOSED GROUPS

- TUNBRIDGE WELLS & PENBURY.** Please contact Mr. R. E. Williams, 13 Belfield Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.
- MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY.** Contact Mike Don or Bill Jamieson, 14 Victoria Road, Manchester 14.
- SELBY, W. YORKSHIRE.** Group in process of formation. All those interested contact C. Beadle c/o 45 Gowthorpe, Selby, W. Yorkshire.

THOSE POWER-GROUPINGS who manipulate and exploit both man and environment are motivated by selfishness and personal greed. Their existence and activity engenders deprivation and suffering in those so abused and consequently causes long-term destruction. Capitalism (State and private) and Managerial Bureaucracy are by nature self-perpetuating organisms and will not be persuaded to relinquish power by argument. It cannot be presupposed that merely to convince them that they function as corrupt institutions, in a cruel and wicked way, will necessarily generate a change or transformation; that they will willingly disband or activate their own obsolescence. Nevertheless they are dangerous parasitical organisms and must be rendered harmless. These ruling organisations exercise almost total control over mass-media communications. Furthermore, they have armed thugs, scientific and technological mercenaries and weapons of mass destruction at their disposal. As entities such groupings seem generally paranoid, unethical and ruthless. Component parts or individual representatives appearing psychotic or brutally stupid. They will thus repress actual or imagined revolt and dissent in such degree as it seemingly threatens their privileged positions. Methods and techniques of suppression and reprisal are and will be determined by the effectiveness of critical and revolutionary opposition. We can therefore safely assume that the continuing libertarian revolution cannot be realistically furthered, in complex industrial societies, by deliberately induced or contrived violent confrontation. To struggle with, in the hope of defeating, the forces of oppression at their own level and on their own terms is utterly useless and possibly suicidal.

It would appear then that the best way of weakening the Capitalist Machine, and the economies, wars and conflicts based upon that machine, is to ignore it. To occupy and operate our factories and universities free from the meddlesome tentacles of the monster. To instigate alternative networks of communication and initiate fluid, interacting, interchangeable, self-dispersing council structures. Yet it cannot be imagined that an essentially violent Establishment will tolerate any such conceivable situation. Non-violent revolutionaries will certainly be subjected to physical and psychological violence and forced incarceration. Propaganda and apologetics for supposed liberal and reformist tendencies inherent in Tolerant Authoritarianism must be ignored for Capitalism and State Oppression are actual realities inasmuch as they still exist. Yet what is

THE SECRET REVOLUTION

and what is not non-violent resistance is entirely dependent upon a correct evaluation of all factors concerned in any particular circumstances. Non-violence cannot be rigidly defined and dogmatised. To defend oneself or others from attack or arrest or to restrain a bailiff is perfectly pacifistic in that the most injury and hurt has been avoided; albeit a certain amount of physical force is used in the process. Future causality must always be fully taken into account and the greatest amount of possible violence prevented. To sit crosslegged in front of a tank, immolate oneself, sign a public statement, in the certain knowledge that vengeance will be wreaked upon others, constitutes violent activity. To destroy a rifle, sabotage machinery in a munition works, smash the doors of a jail, explode a submarine; all these things are basically non-violent in intention and total effect.

Rebellion generates rebellion but it also generates reprisal from those rebelled against. Today in England it is comparatively safe to stand up and be counted but it seems as if this will become decreasingly so. To have considerably more success the struggle must also be waged underground, in secret. *The Spies for Peace* were a successful example of this. It is useless being martyred in order to overflow the jails. They will build more jails and force the prisoners to construct them if they choose to do so. Non-co-operation, sabotage, adequate dissemination of essential information, sporadic strikes and national and international solidarity are basic requisites for the eventual attainment of peace and liberation. To be a relatively low consumer in a consumer orientated society is to hit Capitalism in a weak spot. To be a pacifist it is not enough to simply avoid physical or mental violence. Nor is it sufficient for the anarchist just to refrain from exploiting or being exploited. Philosophies to be truly effective must be activated in a positive rather than purely negative way.

It is a mistake to imagine that each act of rebellion can be isolated and analysed and then judged as to whether it has been a success or failure by some predetermined artificial yardstick. An act of rebellion is in itself a success, in wider terms, whatever its immediate results. Also it is far healthier, and

more constructive, if frustration and resentment are returned to those that initially caused them. It is better to smash a window than to vent dissatisfaction on the innocent by turning displeasure in on oneself. Returning incomplete prepaid business cards, deflating police car tyres, disrupting assembly-lines, rifling supermarkets, demonstrating outside embassies, invading tax offices and destroying records, discovering and publicising State secrets, taking over colleges and universities, circulating revolutionary literature, building barricades, marching, sitting, protesting are all but pin-pricks, but such pin-pricks are of the nature of a continuing revolution which does not effect in a single day. A revolution which may yet avoid replacing one external oppressor by another.

DAVE CUNLIFFE.

A Test of Integrity

The current issue of the *London Magazine* contains twenty-five writers' replies to the question whether writers should become involved in political protest. Most of them said no. Adrian Mitchell's reply took the following form:

SCENE: An alley.
(A MAN is being beaten up by TWO SECRET POLICEMEN. AN ENGLISH WRITER approaches.)
MAN: Help!
ENGLISH WRITER: Well, that may be what you think you want. But I've got to work on my own terms.
MAN: Help!
(TWO SECRET POLICEMEN put the boot in.)
ENGLISH WRITER: Look, I don't like this any more than you do. But I've got to follow my own instinct as an artist.
MAN (spitting teeth): Yes, well that's ultimately the real test of your integrity. (The beating up continues. ENGLISH WRITER pisses off to write a poem about ants.)
CURTAIN.

ON THE NEW LEFT

A CONTRIBUTORY FACTOR IN the assessment of potential violence in our society is the rise of a student movement called The New Left, with its basic attitudes of bitter hostility, hatred and opposition to democratic values and the principles of free government. The New Left actually is difficult to define. Chiefly student oriented, it is not so much an organization as a point of view, an attitude, a way of viewing society. Its mood is not one of support for America and its values; rather it is one of hostility, defiance and opposition to our government.

The New Left's chief passion is to destroy—our government, our democratic values, our American way of life. In a nauseating air of self-righteousness, it criticizes, belittles, mocks. Contemporary society (contemptuously called the 'Establishment') is treated with disdain. New Leftist heroes are Castro, Che Guevara, Mao Tse-Tung, Ho Chi Minh. It counsels evasion of the draft, attempts to disrupt the legitimate operations of Universities, and catcalls at government officials on campus. Some New Leftists are 'beatniks', with sandals, long hair, and old clothes. Others are hippies living in a drug-induced world to evade the problems of life. Still others are sincere idealists who are badly misguided.

Our nation needs young people who ask questions, who probe into the questions of life. But strict negativism, cynicism, and pessimism are self-defeating. The New Left, though disliking our society, offers nothing constructive in return. Its aim is to destroy, not to build. A key word of New Leftism is resistance. In recent months, the movement has been from protest to resistance. Vague talk is heard about 'revolution' creating a 'revolutionary movement and socialist political party able to take power in America'.

Inevitably this mood of anarchism and nihilism moves toward violence. In their distorted view of society, feeling personally frustrated and alienated, some of these young people are talking about violence. 'We are working to build a guerilla force in an urban environment,' said one top New Leftist. 'We are actively organizing sedition.' 'I think violence is necessary, and it frightens me,' are other comments.

What if this mood spreads? What if

Nerve Gas Victim

Dear Comrades,

I was kind of hurt to notice that in your front page story 'Nerve Gas Victim' of August 17, 1968, you referred readers to the story on Flight Lt. Bill (Retd.), who was gassed at Porton Down in 1954, which appeared in the *Sunday Times*. That was directly copied from a much longer and (I'd like to think) better story the *Observer* ran on the same day written by myself and Colin Smith.

Vanity aside, the story has been an almost incredible one to work on. For four years Bill Cockayne has been talking to journalists; trying to convince them of his plight. Everybody thought he was mad except for one or two of us here, and we were pretty sceptical.

In 1964 the Ministry of Defence denied that Bill had ever been in the RAF. Later they denied he'd got a commission (he was given a Permanent Commission in 1948—important this, because it means that as far as the RAF was concerned he was going places; perhaps even headed for 'Air' rank). Then they denied he was at Porton; simultaneously they claimed that even if he had been at Porton he would have been working on nothing more dangerous than a cure for the common cold or some such universal boon. Then they denied he'd been gassed at Porton.

Horribly, in their letter to James Dickens admitting that Bill had been gassed (I suppose they thought to make matters better) they said, 'It was not unknown for members of Porton staff at the time to suffer mild myosis (contraction of the pupils) as a result of small accidental exposures to agents; recovery was normally complete within a few hours without any treatment at all.'

One item which was 'D' noticed out of our story was that Bill was working on a device to maximise the spread of the gas, a form of disc bomb. This fairly thoroughly sabotages all notions of the 'defensive' nature of Porton.

Readers of my earlier article on Industrial Injury Tribunals will know it's no easy task to convince doctors,

leaders tomorrow) become motivated by this anarchism, negativism, and nihilism? Will disrespect for law be enhanced? What about the potentialities for violence in the years ahead?

J. EDGAR HOOVER,
Director of the
Federal Bureau of Investigation.

(From an article entitled 'Violence in American Society', appearing in the *George Washington University Law Review*.)

Unite and Fight

THEY SAY 'truth is stranger than fiction' and this was proved last Thursday, August 15. A thousand nurses marched in protest against their lousy pay and bad conditions. It is to the everlasting shame of the trade union movement that they marched alone.

It has always been argued that nurses are unable to fight 'because of a duty to their patients, theirs is not a job but a vocation', but these are excuses to enable us to get our nursing staff on the cheap. The two unions alleged to represent the nurses are the Confederation of Health Service Employees (COHSE) and the National Union of Public Employees (NUPE) but as the sister who organised the march explained, 'The unions who are meant to represent us are so detached.' She suggests an association run by nurses for nurses from pupils to matrons, an industrial union no less.

Whilst I do not profess to know details down to the last dot and comma about the nurses' conditions, there is one thing I do know for sure, any self-respecting trade unionist would not stand for half of what nurses stand for, and if we as trade unionists are honest we know this to be bloody well true. What trade unionist would tolerate interference in his private life? And yet, in some cases, nurses are criticised for their make-up, their hair style, and their time of going to bed.

To all intents and purposes the nursing service is run like the army, 'all bullshit and no brains'. The aim of the protesting nurses is far from fantastic, £20 per week for a staff nurse, Blimey! we have layabouts in the House of Commons getting twice that money and doing an eighth of the amount of work.

The usual reply forthcoming against an increase in nurses' wages is the cost, but that can be shot down at once, drugs appear to be rather expensive according

especially after 14 years, that Bill's brainstorms are due to the fact that he was gassed. James Dickens (Cockayne's MP—Lewisham) has written to Judith Hart asking that he be examined by a nerve gas specialist. Cockayne believes that the RAF have kept him down in the gutter (5 years in 'short-stay' accommodation Drake Buildings in Lewisham for instance) by labelling him an alcoholic.

We hope that John Williams, the leading lawyer in this field will handle Cockayne's case. It's going to be expensive. No legal aid is available for tribunals and money will be needed to trip this fund. And it's going to take a pretty impressive barrage of medical and psychiatric evidence to persuade the Ministry that a man was driven mad by poison gas produced in Britain in 1954.

MONICA FOOT.

We regret that the article in the *'Observer'* by Monica Foot and Colin Smith has escaped our attention and to have culled our information from a press cutting that a reader sent us in. We apologise to Mrs. Foot and Mr. Smith for this unintentional discourtesy on our part. But we are glad to be given this opportunity to break the 'D' notice on the real work done at Porton.—Editors.

I Said It

Dear Comrades,

I fear the passage of those 100 years since his death have added poor Ferdinand Lassalle's brains. Alas, he was always a case. He will find, if he re-reads his own writings, that the Iron Law of Wages stated that a Capitalist must always pay the very least that a worker will accept. As he states, Marx argued against this theory—though I should be interested to know where Bakunin expressed an opinion on the matter. In my time William Morris agreed with Lassalle.

The thesis to which Lassalle somewhat inaccurately refers was, I must point out, my own, of considerably later date than his death, and as I was (a) always a most orthodox Marxist, and (b) responsible for the expulsion (from the Socialist Labour Party of America) of all Herr Lassalle's disciples, I resent his claim to authorship. Nor do I know of any work refuting my thesis—even my Wobbly opponents paid tribute to it.

Briefly my thesis was that the growth of monopolies since Marx means that the leading Capitalists so control the economy that they can lower the value of money at will, so any gain by a single section of the working class in terms of a wages rise is offset by a lowering of the purchasing power of the working class as a whole.

THE LATE DANIEL DE LEON.
The Cemetery,
New York.

ORGANISED FREEDOM IN EAST LONDON

FREEDOM PRESS has moved to Aldgate East at a time when encouraging sparks of initiative are about to make fundamental changes in the traditionally lethargic acceptance of the status quo in what is officially twilight zone pigeon-holed Stepney. Local people are getting organised into residents' associations that are to form a network of self-help and

MOVING FUND

Target is £500.
Received to Date—£417 5s. 7d.

PREMISES FUND

Target is £1,000 per year.
Pledges honoured to date and donations—£434 17s. 2d.

Falling Behind

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Estimated Expenses:
33 weeks at £90: £2,970
Income: Sales and Subs.: £2,452
DEFICIT: £518

PRESS FUND

Oxford: Anon* 5/-; Liverpool: D.H. 5/-; Glasgow: A.J. 2/3; Oregon: J.C. £5/6/6; Cambridge: M.D. 4/-; W. Australia: B.S. 10/-; Woodstock: E.S. £2; Wolverhampton: J.K.* 3/-; J.K.W.* 2/-; Tiptree: P.N. 6/10; Los Angeles: Corona Del Mare Group Proceeds of Picnic £20.

TOTAL: £29 4 7
Previously Acknowledged: £483 4 5

1968 Total to Date: £512 9 0
Deficit B/F: £518 0 0

TOTAL DEFICIT: £5 11 0

*Denotes Regular Contributor
Gifts of Books—London: M.K.; London: J.H.

to unite as a ginger group within the local council. The Spitalfields Advisory Group, consisting of social and community workers meets regularly to find ways of involving the local community in neighbourhood project work and this August they have embarked on a major venture: the AUGUST PROJECT that is to bring holiday enjoyment to the children of the area, most of whom never leave the borough and are normally nagged and pushed around during a summer recess of boredom in which they are considered a nuisance if not a menace by the adult community.

This month they are in play-centres, group activities, on outings to the local museums, to the zoo, on the river. Every weekend a group is taken camping. The doors of the Brady Club are open and as many children as want to come can take part in the programmes. There is an open-air section on a temporary adventure playground on the bomb site in Buxton Street, but there are long-term arrangements under way to use part of Christchurch Garden (commonly known as 'Ithy Park' because tramps and meths drinkers seek a little respite there) as a permanent adventure playground.

A UNA work camp is housed in the Bernhard Baron Settlement and volunteers from 14 countries help look after the children in a creative programme. They certainly extend the children's horizon to great distances overseas during the national afternoon tea-parties (one every day) during which the children are given a taste for travel. The accent is on spontaneity as this is a pioneering project and the response is always unexpected. Yesterday a party was planned for potential adult helpers, but instead crowds of children gratefully accepted. Some of the volunteers who are accustomed to methodical planning are finding this kind of improvisation a little disconcerting, but in-depth group discussion and evaluation is increasing the social awareness of all the people involved in the August Project. It will have far-reaching effect and influence.

HELEN MAYER.

(Volunteers can contact Stephen Chelms at the Brady Clubs, 192 Hanbury Street, E.1. Tel.: 247 5331.)

Bodies for Sale

SENIOR MANAGERS in British Railways are having to undergo intensive training to learn how to implement the new rail productivity pact. They have to convince railwaymen that the 'sack' is in their own interest, so that their mates who remain employed can earn more money. 5,300 jobs are to be lost in the next twelve months, that's over and above the 20,000 a year natural wastage.

The new agreement is expected to cost £13 million in a full year, with an estimated saving of £13.3 million a year, in other words the railwaymen are paying for their own wage increase. The 40-hour week is to be rostered by four 10-hour shifts to save overtime and rest day working, so that the lowest-paid worker will come out with an all-time high basic

of £13 per week. The building societies will be pleased, railwaymen will be clamouring for a mortgage, no, not to buy a house, just to live from week to week.

As a matter of academic interest, the two deputy chairmen of the Prices and Incomes Board are to receive £9,500 a year each, which is £3,000 a year more than their present board salaries. Also in passing, these gentlemen are the bods who turn down wage demands of an 1/4d. an hour extra, as not in keeping with the nation's interests.

Sidney Greene, NUR general secretary, said, 'This deal conforms to all the incomes policy criteria of the Trades Union Congress, the Prices and Incomes Board and the Government and the Salvation

Army too.' If I were a Salvationist I would take exception to that statement. The Salvation Army are noted for their charity, there is certainly no charity about this deal: it's plain highway robbery. The whole deal smells to high heaven, the passengers are to do well out of it, the fares are bound to increase, the god Profit has to be appeased and the human sacrifices have to be live.

Railwaymen have had their backs to the wall for years, they have had promises from the highest to the lowest, but unfortunately promises do not pay bills. The only people who can make this deal work are the rank and file railwaymen. If they choose not to, then the deal is not worth the paper it is written on.

B.C.

Contact Column

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

Nancekuke Action. Nancekuke, Cornwall, August 31-September 2. Working meeting, August 26, 7.30 p.m., 13 Goodwin Street, N.4 (ARC 5524).

Flat wanted. Anywhere in the country (not in cities) for 2 adults and small baby. Brian Shuttleworth, 9 Boland Street, Fallowfield, Manchester 14.

Help out. Mother and young child wanted to help out in West Country for same. Box 16.

Exhibition in support of Hornsey students. Battersea Gallery, 19 York Road, Battersea, from August 22. Artists taking part include David Hockney, Dereck Boshier, Christopher Logue, Joe Tilson and many others (plus local children who use attic as 'free' creative area).

Debate and discussion between editors of 'Peace News', 'Black Dwarf', 'International Times', 'The Hustler', and 'Freedom'. Tuesday, August 27, 9.30 p.m., Arts Laboratory, 182 Drury Lane, W.C.2.

London Anarchists (business meeting) Sunday, August 25, p.m. Telephone Saturday 580 7991 for address.

Let's get out of the Wood! Discussion meeting on how to build a libertarian movement with a real basis. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1, on Sunday, September 8 (11 a.m.-6 p.m.). Ad hoc Meeting Group, c/o Freedom Press.

3 Day Polaris Demo. Glasgow-Faslane-Coullport. March starts in Glasgow Green, Saturday, August 31, at 2 p.m. Accommodation available. Correspondence to John McCrystal, 33 Gairbraid Avenue, Maryhill, Glasgow, N.W.

Red Paper produced to evoke radical response in those parts of East Anglia not subject to that gravitational pull towards London which deprives an area of any identity of its own. 6d.: from Tony Reeder, 44 Upper Orwell Street, Ipswich.

Anarchist and girl need two in transport to any point here and Tangier—leave August, share petrol expenses. Box 15.

Birmingham Discussion Meetings: Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. at The Crown, Corporation Street. August 27: Peter Neville 'The Demonstration'. September 3: no meeting. September 10: 'The October Demonstration' Mike Sheridan.

Anarchist Black Cross Bulletin No. 1 now available. 6d. (plus postage) from 7 Coptic Street, London, W.C.1.

Nancekuke: Groups are urged to send a representative to St. Ives, Cornwall, on Sunday, September 1 (Bank Holiday). Planning meeting for ambitious autumn campaign against Nancekuke and CBW. Contact Graham Hewitt, 24 Back Road West, St. Ives, Cornwall.

Anarchist camp in Shropshire August 31-September 2. Contact B. Shuttleworth, 9 Boland Street, Fallowfield, Manchester 14.

Peace News—Weekly, price 1/- from 5 Caledonian Road, London, N.1, or ordered from newagents. Trial sub. 5/- for six issues (post free).

If you wish to make contact let us know.

Appointment of Officials

AT THE RECENT conference of the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives, Bro. Mills, the President, denied that the unions had been negotiating the new wage agreement 'under a veil of secrecy'. The employers are offering craftsmen £16 for a 40-hour guaranteed week in November, £16 12s. 6d. a year later, and £17 5s. in November 1970, but this is tied to productivity improvements, which will probably include a centrally controlled bonus scheme, which will not give the shop stewards on the site very much chance to negotiate improvements for the members.

Changes in the wage structure are also mentioned and it is these issues that have been covered by a 'veil of secrecy'. It seems obvious that the employers will want concessions on productivity and would like a system of grading introduced in our industry, similar to that for electricians. So far the Federation have not said anything about this issue and certainly have not consulted the members. Resolutions passed at conferences have not mentioned grading, bonus schemes or productivity deals, yet our national officers are trading these for an increase of less than £2 spread over three years. The offer is not worth these concessions—ask any electrician.

Our national officers, rather than consulting and acting on the wishes of the membership, dominate from the top. They make the decisions and then hand them down. This is true of both national questions affecting the whole membership and issues affecting local area members.

THAMESMEAD SITE

This same high-handed, we-know-what's-best attitude has been taken by the London region of the NFBTO. It appears that Bro. Eaton, the Regional Secretary, has been appointed to a Thamesmead Construction Consultative Group, which consists of representatives of the various Local Authorities in the area, the contractors and Bro. Eaton.

Minutes of a General Purposes Committee meeting of the London Region of the NFBTO record that Bro. Johnson, of the Transport and General Workers' Union, was completely opposed to such a committee because it would usurp the functions of the unions and of the Working Rule Agreement. Bro. Johnson had the support of Bro. Roots, of the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Operatives, when he moved, 'We protest at the representation of the Regional Secretary on this body without prior discussion at the GPC or Regional Council'. (No mention about consulting the membership, you will notice.)

LIAISON OFFICERS

The appointment of Liaison Officers

was also discussed and a resolution was submitted to the Annual Conference regarding these officers on large sites. The Secretary of the GPC asked permission to appoint such an officer to the Thamesmead site. Bro. Johnson was again in opposition to such an appointment. He wanted nothing to do with it and would not accept that a Liaison Officer had any authority to act for them or their members.

Surely members of the union are entitled to know what is going on and should be asking what are the functions and purpose of the Groups and the Liaison Officers. No mention of these appointments are made in the NFBTO's 'builders standard' report of the conference. As it is, there are far too many officials appointed in the trade union movement, without the membership having any chance of changing them. Any democracy that is left will be further eroded if these appointments go through. Who is going to finance the Groups and pay the wages of their members? What exactly do officials mean when they go along with these appointments? Some members might criticise Bro. Johnson on other occasions, but his stand on this issue is a correct one and it is a pity that other officials did not follow suit.

LORD DONOVAN'S REPORT

If this Group is going to set a pattern for all large sites, members should question its function, remembering that co-operation on such committees in the past has not brought benefits to the rank and file. It will not be the first time that union officials have joined the employers in hunting out militant trade unionists.

If one studies the report of Lord Donovan's Royal Commission on Trade Unions, it will be seen that it emphasises such co-operation, that local agreements should be worked out with union officials which would thereby usurp the functions and power of the elected shop stewards.

These are trends that occur not only in our, but throughout all industries and they should be resisted. All members should insist on knowing the full facts about the Thamesmead Group and the appointment of Liaison Officers, for more and more decisions are being made without reference to the membership. Conference decisions are ignored by executives and our unions are fast becoming bureaucracies, who submit to the wishes of the employers and the Government. Elected officers should carry out the wishes of the members.

These measures at Thamesmead are detrimental to our interests and the officers should be told so. After all, the membership is the union and, as such, we should show our officers that we will not stand for any of these appointments.

BUILDING WORKER.

THE SCAB

AFTER GOD had finished the rattlesnake, the toad and the vampire, He had some awful substance left with which He made a SCAB. A SCAB is a two-legged animal with a corkscrew soul, a waterlogged brain, and a combination backbone made of jelly and glue. Where others have hearts he carries a tumour of rotten principles.

When a SCAB comes down the street men turn their backs and angels weep in heaven, and the devil shuts the gates of hell to keep him out. No man has a

right to SCAB as long as there is a pool of water deep enough to drown his body in, or a rope long enough to hang his carcass with. Judas Iscariot was a gentleman compared with a SCAB. For betraying his Master, he had character enough to hang himself. A SCAB HASN'T.

Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Judas Iscariot sold his Saviour for thirty pieces of silver. Benedict Arnold sold his country for a promise of a commission in the British Army. The modern strikebreaker sells his birthright,

Freedom For Workers' Control

AUGUST 24 1968 Vol 29 No 26

ELECTRICIANS STILL OUT AT EUSTON

NOWADAYS WE HEAR so much about mergers of companies and the resulting unemployment of workers, but another sort of merger is bringing the same result. 'Management-Union Merger' is on one of the placards that is nailed to the hoarding at the Euston Station reconstruction site, where electricians are still on strike. This placard refers to the Joint Industry Board which has been set up to police the new agreement.

Electricians in the contracting industry have fought this agreement, but have been handicapped because the full details were withheld from members until shortly before it was signed. The leadership of Les Cannon and Frank Chapple did not consult the members, but just went ahead and signed it. So much for democracy! These two ex-communists, who fought the old communist executive and won a court action over ballot rigging, are now taking the totalitarian measures they accused their predecessors of. They have been expelling members who opposed the JIB agreement and organised action committees to continue the struggle against it.

Last week, the London Action Committee organised a demonstration at the headquarters of the Electrical Trades Union at Hayes Common. They were protesting against the 'trial' of Fred Morpheus, who recently stood against Mr. Cannon for the union presidency, but as he was on holiday, the 'trial' was postponed.

WORE MASKS

However, the demonstrators took no chances, for they all wore masks so that they would not be recognised and victimised. It was just as well because someone in the grounds of the headquarters was filming the demonstrators. Mr. Chapple denied that cine film was used as evidence against members who took part in similar demonstrations. However, he later admitted that photographs had been used as evidence at 'trials' of members.

This is the position that trade unionists have reached in this centenary year of the foundation of the TUC. Police protect union executives from their membership and they stand protecting the property that in fact belongs collectively to that membership. One hundred years ago, trade unionists might have approached the management, wearing masks, now they wear them for protection against their executives.

If an electrician loses his union card, he has great difficulty in finding another job. Militants who have recently been expelled have, however, been working on sites where stewards have turned a sympathetic blind eye to the lack of a union card. A number of members have regained their union cards through the appeals committee.

With the strike of the Euston Station electricians in its fifth week, it is quite possible that the JIB will expel some of these members from the union. The union-management merger is that complete and it would be ironic, because these men were sacked for carrying out the JIB agreement. They did this when they refused to do unloading, which is a labourer's job under the new grading system. But of course the employers want it both ways and so they sacked electricians

who refused to unload a lorry. They later sacked the stewards' shop committee.

PICKET 7 DAYS A WEEK

One cannot but be impressed by the cheerfulness and good humour of the electricians who for seven days a week have picketed the half dozen entrances to this huge site. They have done a good job in organising themselves. Every day different sites are visited to gain support. The response for 'finance has been good, especially from the Sunleys job in Horseferry Road, Turriffs at Isleworth and from electricians employed by Electrical Installations, the same company as at Euston, at London Airport.

The real boost to morale came last Friday when pickets were reinforced by electricians from the Midland Bank Computer job at Oxgate House, Cricklewood. The day before, the Euston electricians had visited the job and explained their case. They received a collection, but after they had left, a meeting took place on the job and token strike action in support was moved and accepted. This support might inspire further action from other electricians.

REMAIN AT WORK DECISION

Although about 80 electricians are on strike, who have since been dismissed by Electrical Installations, the police meet about 12 'scabs' on Euston Station and escort them onto the site. Last week, two of these 'scabs' stabbed two of the pickets, who needed stitches for their injuries. The stewards' works committee received a mandate to get those 'scabs' who stabbed the two pickets with screwdrivers, off the job. At a site meeting on Friday, the works committee reported that this had been achieved. Following this, there was a long debate on whether to take industrial action in support of the electricians. Motions for and against were made, but the site decided to remain at work, asking the works committee to appeal to the management to settle the dispute. Of course, the chances of this are nil.

This decision is a great disappointment to the electricians, although not unexpected. The electricians' duty steward was not allowed to attend the meeting and when he tried to, he was led off the site by the security men. The full case for the electricians was not put by the Federation steward either and the whole thing was played down. A great pity, but this site has never been known for any militant stand, despite its being fully organised. For instance, the Federation steward is full time on the site and has his own office. Operatives receive good bonus rates, but this is not because of a struggle over bonus targets, rates, etc., but because Taylor Woodrow have the contract on a day work basis. Whatever they charge British Railways is paid up, so the contractor does not mind giving a good bonus, when the public is paying for it.

It is very important that the electricians win this dispute, because a precedent would be made over the interpretation of the JIB agreement about doing labourers' work. Recognition of a shop steward committee, able to negotiate for the members is also an important aspect of the agreement in this dispute. Pressure will soon be on EI to get their work done so as not to hold up other work. 'Scabs' will have to be kept out and support from other EI jobs is vital, even more so now that the rest of the site have failed to support the electricians. Electricians might have different agreements and negotiations to other building workers, but their interests are the same and a united stand would have been better.

Readers can help by raising the issue in their branches and at work, or by sending money to M. C. Herbert, 110 Victoria Road, Kilburn, London, N.W.6. Collection sheets can be obtained from the same address.

JACK LONDON.
(To be seen on the hoardings round Euston Station.—Eds.)

P.T.