

IN THE SORDID GAME of power politics certain rules have to be observed, but providing these are kept, there is a striking similarity between this game and that other spectacular, never-ending series for the suckers: all-in wrestling on the telly.

In the wrestling bit, the rules are, we suppose, written down somewhere, but the excitement comes when one player or another comes too close to breaking them. Better still is when he comes too close to breaking some part of his opponent's anatomy.

For the most part, the players go through a well-worn procedure of posturing, shamming agony, screaming and banging the canvas, simulated fury, interspersed with the very minimum of real skill and exertion of strength. It's all understandable if you simply remember that they are entertainers, not gladiators risking life or limb, and that the sense of excitement comes from the spectators, enjoying, not the finer points of a clean fight, but the vicarious exploitation of their own shameful aggressions and desires to hurt. It is the ring-side women and the sad little men who scream and shout for blood while The Vampire and Black Spider heave and grunt and roll around.

Sometimes, by accident or misjudgement, a contestant can go too far and tempers really get frayed and someone gets hurt, but it is very rare that this is serious. After all, they are all in the entertainment game together and they all have to pack in three or four nights a week. A player who regularly hurts other players so that they were out of the game for any time and thus lost earnings, would very soon be out of the game himself. The promoters just would not want to employ him.

The real difference between TV wrestling and power politics is that in the latter people do get hurt. But it is very rarely the professionals!

Struggles for power go on for several interlocking reasons, the most

important being the good old economic ones of access to raw materials and control of markets, which is being replaced in the 20th Century by more naked power considerations (the State emerging as an entity with interests of its own instead of simply 'the executive committee of the ruling class'), and continuing over it all the necessity to maintain a permanent state of tension, to keep the peoples governed by the various military-industrial-political complexes in a state of fear, needing Big Brother to protect them from the wolf at the door.

In this 'diplomatic' game it is for real, and so it is a good deal rougher, but, just as in TV wrestling, the promoters do not expose themselves to the rough stuff themselves, personally. The governments are the smooth operators who get the suckers to do the fighting while they operate the stage management, the lighting and the sound effects, the press hand-outs and the TV coverage.

Preferably, it is the nationals of other countries who provide the ground troops. Much more profit, and much less risk of internal dissension is involved if the state pulling the strings provides the machinery, the weapons and the training experts, but does not put a single soldier of her own in the field.

In this technique Russia has outpointed America in the post-World War II series. Both Russia and America, after all, emerged from this war as world powers for the first time, and both blundered along like two hammy heavyweights lashing out madly in all directions. Stalin, a psychopath of the old school, and Eisenhower, a militarist (same thing?) of the old school, practised brinkmanship in Europe, but came to grips in Korea, Stalin being the more experienced power politician being able to boast that not a single Russian soldier was involved there, while Ike threw in the GIs like confetti. The US still had not learned the lesson when the Vietnam thing blew up, and the American troops

## Grunt and Groan in the Middle East

rushed in to fill the 'vacuum' left by the French, who there and in Algeria finally shrugged their shoulders and practically gave up the empire thing altogether, the 'colons' settling for a fascist-type regime at home. America now, under all sorts of pressures, not least being the opposition to the war from her own military-aged generation, has learned the lesson at last: You not only fight the power game in other countries, you use other peoples to do it for you.

From the hot days of the Cold War, they are now playing it cool, real cool, man. Have you noticed that it is America which is taking the 'peace' initiative in the Middle East, while at the same time supplying massive arms equipment to Israel, while Russia is simply repeating the part she played in Cuba of making with the rockets? A smart piece of diplomatic timing

### FARNBOROUGH AIR SHOW

THIS MORNING the cloud was low so the aerobatic jets were having their practice session at little more than rooftop level. Living about three miles from the Royal Aircraft Establishment we seem to be at the focus of their noise circle as they curve in and fly upside down. The first came over as I was getting up at about 10.30 a.m. (shift worker!); he was low and the windows rattled. I rushed onto the balcony to deliver a time-honoured gesture which the pilot could not see, but I hoped could imagine. The children in the adjacent garden screamed and ran indoors. The noise of a low-flying jet fighter has got to be heard to be believed.

All this is just a warm-up session to the Farnborough Air Display to be held next month. All the enthusiasts will be there, and so will the international buyers. The latter will want to know about take-off capabilities and whether such-and-such an aircraft can strafe a village street. (I can think of no other reason why a fighter should scream over Farnborough's shopping centre so low that I could see the pilot's helmet as he banked off.) My neighbour, seeing the frightened children, complained at the police station. He was told that all complaints to the RAE were 'acknowledged' and, as he left, the sergeant added, 'This is nothing, wait until the show starts!'

The show has been going for a number of years now but, until recently, the only danger has been to those who are admirably paid for taking risks that they are aware of. Today Farnborough is a fair-sized town, including the new GLC Estate. Almost every time the show is held there is an accident, this year it could be a tragic one. I prefer not to imagine a fighter or bomber coming down in the middle of a housing estate, especially one of the fighters which zooms around displaying an admirable arsenal of under-wing rockets.

We are told that the RAE is our 'bread and butter', we are told that the show gives the town prestige; but the pilot in his cockpit, the fans on the grandstand, and the manufacturers counting their orders, will be too far away to hear the two little girls next door run indoors as the jets scream over their house.

from Washington has caught the Kremlin on its left foot and with its pants down, for not only are the Russians exposed as the more aggressive, but the Israelis have a fine excuse for throwing aside the 'truce' talks and attacking Egypt with the full backing of the USA.

No doubt the Western powers would like to see Israel occupy the whole of the Canal Zone and restore it to its proper commercial use—saving that long drag round the Cape—as well as securing Western oil interests. This would in fact mean the final and permanent occupation of Egypt by Israel—and there is not the slightest doubt that this is precisely what Israeli hawks like Dayan do have in mind. It is the knowledge that it could be done that has made Nasser more amenable to the 'Peace Talks', but it is rather late in the day for him to see sense.

The Egyptian Government has allowed itself to be used by the Russians—eager to get a foothold in the Middle East—to such an extent that it is now completely on the hook. The various 'Palestine Liberation' guerillas are, as guerillas always are, much more principled than the government which use them, and sooner or later are going to be left roasting. Meanwhile all the time the 'militant' left make noises in support of the Russian line, and the Right support the support given to Israel—even though the dangerous game they are all playing could destroy the Jewish

homeland for good.

America, having learned the Vietnam lesson, will not put troops into Israel—except perhaps as an absolutely last resort. But she does not have to, for the Israelis are not the South Vietnamese. Dayan can truthfully say, as Churchill only boasted: 'Give us the tools and we can finish the job', for, as we have said before, Israel is not a true Middle-Eastern country with a poor peasant population. It is virtually a Western country geographically situated there, peopled with aggressive, educated, technically capable workers and soldiers with modern knowledge and world backing. The Arab states are still struggling to turn semi-literate peasants into capable cannon-fodder.

But what it all provides is a wonderful playground for the power game. The present situation is explosive. It could become another Cuba, with a confrontation and a climbdown with bargains all round; or it could become another Vietnam-like situation where the fighting forces dig in for the power and profit of the world powers behind them.

If it comes to it the politics of Left and Right will line up and make the proper crowd noises, like the ring-side women and the little men at the wrestling. The heavy-weight diplomats will huff and puff and grunt and strain—but there will be this difference: real blood will flow, and the 'Phantoms' and the

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## 'An Englishman's Home ...'

THE PRINCIPLES of English law that both sides be heard and that an accused man is innocent until proved guilty received another kick in the teeth at Grays, Essex, court a week or two back.

A young family of three was evicted from its council house by due process of law without the husband being given the opportunity to defend himself—either in court or to Thurrock council, his landlords.

Under an 1838 Act of Parliament all the council had to do was to prove that the house was needed. Not hard to do when there are thousands on the waiting list in the urban district.

So the court—with obvious reluctance—granted the eviction order.

Even the Chairman of the Bench, Charles Noad, called the situation unsatisfactory and one-sided. The council prosecutor himself told the court that the action might seem heavy-handed. He added that the law was going to be changed anyway in the near future.

The council claimed—out of court—that the husband—steel erector Rob Holmes—applied for a council house when he in fact had an unfurnished flat.

When Mr. Holmes applied for the house he stated he was living with his mother-in-law. He claims that a council official told him he stood more chance of getting a house if he moved in with his mother-in-law.

Rob Holmes went to court with a bunch of witnesses to help him put his case. They were told that whatever

they said would make no difference.

Then the council called a special meeting of the housing committee to discuss the case. It was in camera and the Holmes were not allowed in to speak to the councillors and explain their case.

Then Tilbury Labour Party—Thurrock has a Labour Council—called a special public meeting to explain council action to the people of Tilbury. The constituency MP, Hugh Delargy, was on the platform with Labour councillors and the case was ineffectually discussed before an audience of 200.

But the Holmes weren't even invited to this meeting. At no time have they had the opportunity to explain to the owners of the house from which they were forcibly evicted—the ratepayers of Thurrock—why they still feel entitled to live in the house.

The family was supported by an army of about 70 workers and housewives in passively resisting the eviction.

They formed a human barrier in front of the door but the police eventually pulled them out by the hair and ears until the last line parted. Some violent pushing of demonstrators also went on—particularly by P.c. 182 (see picture).

It is typical that this case where a young family, including a 5-year-old girl, was chucked out in the street was not given any publicity in the national press—yet the case of a landlady being jailed for illegally evicting her tenants was lapped up in the papers which sympathised with the landlady.

M.P./D.J.

## DOING A DEAL?

FOR SOME TIME NOW, we've heard rumours of a 'silent agreement' under which oil installations in the Gulf of Suez have remained unscathed in the Egyptian-Israeli conflict.

Now comes word from Paris that such an agreement actually does exist, and that it was arranged through the good offices of Italy's ENI, half-owner of the Sinai Peninsula oil fields now in Israeli hands.

Terms of the agreement are spelled out for the first time in an exclusive story filed by the Middle-East correspondent of the Paris newspaper *Nouvel Observateur*. According to the story, ENI approached President Nasser of Egypt and obtained his consent to produce Sinai crude under Israeli management 'for the duration'. The reasoning was that the Israelis would no doubt produce the fields, consent or no, and not pay anyone for the oil. Also, should they withdraw from the peninsula, they'd probably destroy the fields and producing installations. So why not make a deal?

A deal it was, according to *Nouvel Observateur*. Nasser demanded a guarantee that Israel would keep hands off Egyptian fields on the western shore of the gulf, would not tamper with the submarine pipelines from offshore El Morgan field to the Egyptian shore, and would refrain from drilling in the gulf. In return, Israel could proceed with production and development of the Sinai fields on the eastern shore.

FRANK J. GARDNER.

—From *Oil and Gas Journal*, USA.

LARRY.



TEN YEARS AGO a group called Socialism Reaffirmed was formed and began producing a paper called *Agitator*. After a few issues the paper became *Solidarity*, and after a few years the group took the same name. It is one of the best of the groups which emerged from the Communists and Trotskyists after 1956. Its main achievement has been the production of more than sixty issues of an excellent paper and also more than thirty excellent pamphlets (by the original group alone—good papers and pamphlets have also been produced by offshoots in various parts of London and in Manchester, Glasgow and Aberdeen); and it has just brought out its third and best book, a detailed exposure of the Bolshevik destruction of the workers' control movement in the Russian Revolution which will be properly reviewed in a future issue of *FREEDOM*.

*Solidarity* has always been very small and has had little direct impact on events, but it has exerted a considerable influence in the left, especially on the many people who have found themselves in the no-man's-land between Marxism and anarchism. This has been one of its problems. Moving from Marxism towards anarchism, in many ways it still remains much closer to the former than to the latter. It pursues a tough libertarian line which has meant that

# LISTEN, SOLIDARIST!

several anarchists at various times have found it rewarding to work with the group, but it remains strongly anti-anarchist. Moreover, in order to prove its revolutionary socialist respectability to its competitors—especially to the Trotskyists—it feels obliged to print sneers at anarchism in all relevant (and in many irrelevant) contexts, at the same time as the sneers it prints at the various brands of Marxism it is so inordinately proud of growing out of.

This has been found necessary even in their new book, which relies to a considerable extent on anarchist sources and which triumphantly reaches the same interpretation of events that the anarchists established half a century ago. Readers of *FREEDOM* may remember a rather undignified dispute I had with the 'Solidarity' group two-and-a-half years ago over their misrepresentation of the anarchist position in the Russian Revolution. There have been plenty of other cases, as anarchist readers of their publications will know. Now there is another interesting example of

their apparent inability to discuss anarchism rationally or responsibly, however hard they try.

In the current issue of *Solidarity* (Vol. 6, No. 5), the pamphlet *Listen, Anarchist* by Ian Mitchell, no quarrel with most of the article, which is an intelligent criticism of Murray Bookchin's intelligent criticism of Marxism, published in the United States last year and reprinted by the Libertarian Students Federation of New York University. But at the end of the article Mitchell switches to an attack on Bookchin's defence of anarchism which is much more intelligent and which includes several mentions of which I shall mention just two.

One of these is the remarkable claim that Kropotkin was 'a consistent supporter of French Imperialism', which will be news to most students of Kropotkin's writings and which I challenge with proper reference to the sources. The other is a revealing passage which runs as follows: 'So great is the attachment of most anarchists to

the romance of their past, and to their label of "anarchist" that they will side with anyone who shares the label, even though he shares none of their ideas. Semantics thus becomes a substitute for politics. There is no need to think, only to use the right incantations. The absolute refusal of the anarchists to split their movement means that it remains forever paralysed by contradictory tendencies and that it will never develop a dynamic of its own.'

The unconscious humour of this splendid piece of dialectical spittism is heightened when it is realised that last year the *Solidarity* group set out to split the International Socialist movement, and only succeeded in splitting itself. Thus splinter groups in South and West London began publishing their own

papers, and forced the original group and paper to call itself '*Solidarity, North London*' although it includes people all over the London area and is actually published in Bromley (Kent)! One significant little fact is that, of the five Solidarists who signed the letters against me in *FREEDOM* during our last controversy, no less than three have left the group—two of them to join International Socialism! As *Solidarity* might put it, is there no lesson to be learnt from all this? Isn't one of the virtues of the British anarchist movement possibly to be found in the fact that so long as we can agree on basic principles we see no point in letting disagreements on other points come between us.

To adapt the last paragraph of Bookchin's excellent pamphlet: 'Listen, Solidarist: the organisation we try to build is the kind of society our revolution will create. Either we will shed the past—in ourselves, as well as in our groups—or there will simply be no future to win.'

N.W.

## A Doomsday Story of Country Folk

Fade-in music.

Mrs. A.: I know we have to keep up the suspense for the BBC but why do I have to wait twenty-four hours after you say 'I've got a piece of news for you' before you tell me?

Dan Archer: After all it's our living. You don't think we'd go on doing all these daft things day after day—and repeating them on Sunday, if it wasn't for the money. Farming doesn't pay my girl.

Mrs. A.: Anyhow what was it? We've only got a quarter of an hour before the next crisis.

Dan A.: What I was going to say when I was so rudely interrupted by the BBC—is that we'll probably have to abandon arable farming altogether.

Mrs. A.: Thank goodness there's always broadcasting! How do you make that out?

Dan A.: Remember we had a poor harvest in 1968?

Mrs. A.: Yes.

Dan A.: And a poor one in 1969?

Mrs. A.: Yes, but I thought it was the weather . . . or the BBC script.

Dan A.: Well . . . we've had a poor one this year.

Mrs. A.: What do you think it is? The government?

Dan A.: Well you know we bought a mechanical planter, an automatic hoer, a helicopter to spray fertilizer and pesticide, and then we had to get a rotary harvester with a built-in toilet since they said it was an industrial plant . . . damn it, here comes Walter Gabriel.

Walter: Hullo me dears. Just come in from a hard day at Broadcasting House understudying Fred Streeter.

Dan A.: I was just talking about the bad harvests.

Walter: Oh aye, we haven't had a good harvest since last muckspreading.

Dan A.: Muckspreading? What's that?

Walter: Don't be filthy, Walter, or you'll find yourself off the air.

Dan A.: I don't know. My father used to say you wanted humorous in the soil to keep up the filth. He didn't hold with all these chemicals. He said a little night soil never did

nobody no harm.

Mrs. A.: Now then, Walter, we've had too much of your loose talk.

Dan A.: Anyhow as I was saying these ministry men said we'd have to rotate the crops. Means getting another machine I suppose.

Walter: Bah machines! I don't hold with these machines. If the Lord had meant us to lift vegetables with machines, potatoes 'ud be grown with wheels on. I knew a man once, Joad were his name, used to farm in Oklahoma—in Amerikky. He said on some days the dust got that bad that you could stand at the window and watch the farms of Oklahoma going by. I wonder what happened to him?

Mrs. A.: There was a Mr. Joad on the Brains Trust once.

Dan A.: Don't seem right somehow when we've put all this machinery in to be told we need new soil. What about my contract to sell the crop to the brewery and the other contract with the sweet factory? I can't tell them the soil's no good. After all, I put in all the chemicals they sell me, spray everything in sight, I've got rid of all the hedges, burned all the waste after the harvest, they can't say I'm not a tidy farmer. I've got more capital and machinery invested in this plant than anybody else on the BBC.

Walter: Yes, Joad was his name. Used to suffer from erosion. Cruel hard it was. Great cracks used to come across his fields. He tried irrigation but it weren't no good. Humorous—that's what he wanted. He never had a chance to put back into the soil what he took out of it. Knew another man once. Went to China selling fertilizers. Before the war this was. Didn't do no good at it. Firm asked him why. He wrote back—No business, six hundred million competitors.

Mrs. A.: Walter Gabriel! [General laughter in which all discreetly join. Walter cackles so hard that Mrs. A. rushes out with an egg-basket.] She soon returns.

Mrs. A.: Dan! Dan!

Dan A.: What's the matter. Can't it wait till tomorrow?

Mrs. A.: No Dan. Cow just walked away with impacted lower meadow it came up with a bunch of grass.

And Dan . . .

Dan A.: I knew you would not leave me without continuity lines. What is it?

Mrs. A.: There's a Mr. Steinbeck outside. Wants to write a script about the farm. Called 'Grapes of Wrath' or something!

JACK SPRATT.

THE FLOODS in the six counties brought a momentary truce between soldiers, 'Prods' and 'Teagues'. It was of the type one sees during a drought in Africa when only one smart water-hoer is left, and the lion permits the zebra to drink without an attack even if the lion is hungry. Meanwhile as one Belfast woman said bitterly, 'Last year we were burned out. This year flooded. Next I suppose it will be plague and famine'. If and when Ireland goes into the EEC there will be plenty of famine. As it is only too many people including growing children live on tea and bread and marg and potatoes.

Fires and explosions both sides of the border are too frequent to retell. Several every night and some in the day. Bitter fury has been aroused all through Ireland by the British soldiers sealing off all side roads into Armagh and Derry with steel spikes, thus preventing citizens from travelling freely in their own country.

The forming of a new political party in the six counties, the so-called Social Democratic and Labour Party, arouses little enthusiasm in the 26 counties except by the government, who are hand-in-glove with Stormont and Westminster and see how they can drag these erstwhile fighters for Civil Rights further and further into their net.

A great many people in the 26 counties are seething with the 'Seven Days' enquiry. This was a programme about illegal money lending which aroused the Fianna Fail Government to such wrath that they ordered an enquiry, NOT into the extent of this evil but into the way it was filmed. The end result is that though the team are accused of exaggerating and giving insufficient care to some of the scenes they filmed it HAS transpired that in point of fact it is a very grave evil that should have been highlighted and stopped by the gardai long ago. The Government refuse to accept these findings and desire only to have RTE muzzled and only able to show programmes that they censor and approve of first. We grow more fascist every single day. COST OF THE ENQUIRY—£250,000 FOR THE RATEPAYERS TO FIND.

More fury in the six counties that the RUC man appointed to investigate the booby-trap murders at Crossmaglen is Meburg, the very same man who was in charge the time of the Bogside atrocities by the RUC and a well-known Paisleyite bigot. The TRUTH will scarcely matter to such a man if he can find any excuse however nebulous to plant the guilt on a Catholic or Nationalist.

A 'Release Bernadette Devlin, and all Political Prisoners' meeting in the Mansion House on Thursday only drew an audience of about 250 and was con-

## Apartheid and the Tory Government

IT WOULD BE UNJUST (and, more to the point, libellous) to suggest that the Cabinet and leading Tory MPs will consider their own business interests when discussing relations with South Africa and the trade sanctions against Rhodesia. However, as the list below shows, when it comes to apartheid trade our rulers really know their stuff.

Anthony Barber, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Director of British Ropes Ltd. Parent company of African Wire Ropes of South Africa.

Quintin Hogg, MP, Director of Wellman Engineering Corporation Ltd. (capital £5.5 million). Parent company of Wellman Incandescent Pty., South Africa. Duncan Sandys, MP, Director of Ashanti Goldfields Corp. Owned by Lonrho Ltd. with 22 associate companies in Rhodesia and 11 in South Africa.

Reginald Maudling, Home Secretary, Director of AEI/GEC and Dunlop Rubber Company. (3 Rhodesian subsidiaries, 7 South African.)

Edward Du Cann, MP, Director of

Barclays Bank Trust (and Cammell Laird's come to that!).

Lord Carrington, Secretary of State for Defence, Director of Barclays Bank, Amalgamated Metal Corporation with 1 subsidiary in South Africa and 3 in Rhodesia.

Geoffrey Rippon, Minister of Technology, Director of Drake, Gorman and Scull with 7 South African subsidiaries and 1 Rhodesian. Director of Fairey Ltd., associate company of British Aircraft Corporation and owner of Fairey Air Surveys of Rhodesia.

Lord Jellicoe, Lord Privy Seal, Director of Smiths Industries. Parent company of South African Spark Plug Company.

Peter Walker, Minister for Housing & Local Government, Director of Adwest Group. Parent company of Adwest (South Africa) Pty. Ltd. and two other South African subsidiaries.

Michael Noble, Board of Trade, Director of Gengevon Farms. Associated with Imperial Tobacco Company of Rhodesia. LARRY.

## This Fortnight in Ireland

stantly interrupted by that crack-pot group, the Maoists, who will not go to the expense of hiring a hall and having their own meeting, but make it impossible for anyone else to hold a meeting by their catcalls about 'Chairman Mao is Our Chairman'. They are so abysmally stupid and do not even understand their own professed ideology. My sad conclusion at the end of this week is that Ireland just becomes more and more Fascist every day in every way, and far far far too many people are just too apathetic to get up and FIGHT.

To be exact this 6½ days in Ireland, as duty calls from 8 this evening till late tomorrow, and possibly shades of the prison house, etc.

Oh gosh it has been a week. We no longer take much notice of explosions and fires. They are part of our daily life, so soon does one get used to these things. One hundred explosions in Belfast alone since January 1 (I take my figures from a six county paper).

Meanwhile we have had the forming of the new Social Democratic and Labour Party received with growing distrust by all true left-wingers, as being political opportunism on the part of Messrs. Gerry Fitt, Austin Currie and Ivan Cooper, from all of whom we expected better things. It tries to make the opposition 'respectable' and acceptable to Stormont and Westminster alike. A political gimmick of bringing together half-baked socialists and Green Tories, gomben men, Irishmen and McCarthyites to work for the federation longed for by Fianna Fail, Stormont 'Middle-of-the-Roaders', and Westminster, and abhorred by all real socialists and Irish men and women.

The resignation of the Stormont Minister for Home Affairs, Mr. Porter, on Thursday came as a shock, but even greater was Major Chichester-Clark's immediate upgrading to ministerial level of John Taylor, a man who out-Craigs Craig in his 'Law-and-Order' ideas. This appointment was a sop to the right and a very dangerous one indeed.

Meanwhile Craig himself thunders on and on about elections in the six counties

and the fall of C-C and his government and the re-arming of the RUC and (call it what he likes) what is virtually the recall of a huge, armed B Special branch. I doubt whether people in England realise we are, to all intents and purposes, at civil war already in Ireland. No one feels really safe either side of the border and Branch men are having busy days.

Last Saturday a meeting of about 100 people was held in O'Connell Street to demand the release of all political prisoners, and in the evening there was a march from Pearse Street Station to O'Connell Street followed by a meeting of emigrants and the families of those whose children were forced to emigrate. This was well attended and speakers represented many ex-Irish from America, Canada, Australia, etc.

On the same Saturday in Derry a meeting to protest against the use of the Special Powers Act for internment was called by the NICRA. It was attended by some 500 people and passed off peacefully in spite of an effort by Ivan Cooper to sabotage it by begging people not to attend as he professed that he had information that individuals who had no political loyalties were going to use it to start major riots. He had originally promised to be one of the speakers, but evidently decided this was the way to uplift his newly-formed party. Among other things demanded by the speakers was one from Mrs. Stewart, secretary to the NICRA for a Bill of Human Rights in the six counties.

Minor incidents both sides of the border are too numerous to report them all. The former home of the Dean of Belfast in Windsor Avenue is to become a home for 'unsupported mothers' in spite of violent objections from the local Christian residents. One little candle in a dark world.

Four children in the six counties were sentenced to prison for riotous behaviour. They threw stones. (I well remember throwing stones at a traction engine when an eight-year-old. The matter was settled on the spot by a clout from the driver.) In the heel of the hunt these

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All correspondence to  
Peter Le Mare, 5 Hannaford Road,  
Rotton Park, Birmingham 16

**ANARCHIST  
FEDERATION  
of BRITAIN**

The AFB information office will produce an internal bulletin. Comrades interested in its production are to meet in Birmingham on the second Sunday in September. All groups will be informed in detail. Address all letters to:

Peter Le Mare, 5 Hannaford Road, Rotton Park, Birmingham, 16. Tel. 021-454 6871. Material that cannot wait for the bulletin to be sent to R. Atkins, Vanbrugh College, Heslington, York. The Contact Column in *Freedom* is also available for urgent information.

Groups should send latest addresses to Birmingham. New inquirers should

write direct to them or to the AFB information office in Birmingham.

### AFB REGIONAL GROUPS

There are now anarchist groups in almost every part of the country. To find your nearest group write to:

North West Federation: Secretary, Tom Howard, 163 Ryelands Road, Lancaster.

Coventry: A. Jacobs, 13 Ledrah Road, St. Austell. (M. Ms. B.)

East & E. Heris: P. Newell, 'Aggean', Spring Lane, Eight Ash Green, Colchester. (QM, FL.)

Surveys: G. Wright, 47 College Road, Epsom.

Yorkshire: Martin Watkins, 3 Marlborough Grove, Leeds 2.

Scotland: Tony Hughes, Top Flat, 40 Anglepark Terrace, Edinburgh 11.

Wales: c/o P. L. Mare (address above).

N. Ireland: c/o Freedom Press.

University and Student Groups: c/o P. L. Mare. (Abbreviations: M—meeting; Ms—magazine; B—badge; Q—Quarterly; FL—free leaflets.)



# 'Ours is a Nice House, ours is'

LAST TIME I wrote about a Squat I was merely a casual visitor so to speak. I'm referring to the Squat in Arbour Square, as some may recall. This time, however, I'm writing as a fair-dinkum bona-fide tenant of a flat in the Burrell House Squat. I found myself without a roof over my head just over a week back and the primary reason I moved in here was because I preferred being a Squatter to being a homeless person—it's uncanny how these no-hoping politicians who have instituted Hostels for any poor bastard they care to classify as a homeless person have caused the expression 'homeless person' to have an aura of shame and degradation around it these days. And whereas a hostel is or was a place where one could expect hospitality, these Hostels for Homeless Persons operate in reverse. A better name for them would be Concentration Camps where the inmates have the unusual distinction of paying rent.

It's now 25 years since I won the war, and I'm still not on a housing-list anywhere, meaning that I have Buckley's chance of getting a place of my own for another 25 years at the least. As I cannot wait that long, having only two changes of underwear, and as the empty dwelling-places in Burrell House, Arbour Square and so on, are only going to waste, a burden on the ratepayers, I see no harm in occupying one of the aforesaid dwelling-places and doing what the politicians are self-admittedly incapable of doing, i.e. providing myself with a home. I'm not 'jumping a housing-queue', and I'm not making myself a nuisance to Housing Committees to get put on their housing list . . . and if the GLC would only allow me to bung them the rent for this flat I'm occupying, which same I'd be delighted to do, my flat would benefit the ratepayers instead of being a bloody liability the way it is now. . . .

Burrell House, which isn't very far from Arbour Square, in fact it's only a stone's-throw if you're a bloody good stonethrower, comprises nineteen flats in all. Of these, eleven are being lived in by families; four are unusable pro tem due to vandalism, and the other four, being on the ground floor, are too vulnerable to invasion by goon-squads masquerading as bailiffs. Quatermain's 'bailiffs' in Ilford last year dished out broken and fractured limbs to all and sundry, their piece de resistance being giving a pregnant woman a miscarriage by belting her in the belly with an iron bar. . . .

The other day was the kind of day that shows the impossibility of running things like Squats, rent-strikes, and other terrible activities out of a Book of Rules; there is always the unexpected and/or unforeseen happening. I'd been out picking up a typewriter which has been loaned to me so as I can finish a book I'm writing. Shortly before eleven I'd rounded the turn and was in the last stretch for home and the welcome cuppa, with the borrowed typewriter in my right mitt getting a bit heavy by then,

when Tommy and Billy, our present spokesmen, blew down my ear that the Gas Board was trying to cut the gas off and that the barricades were up at Burrell House, and would I give a hand to hold the fort until they got back from their scheduled meeting with the GLC?

It was a very makeshift barricade when I first saw it; the firm doing the Gas Board's dirty work had begun operations about 9 a.m., and there were very few of our people at home bar some of the wives. Four holes were being dug in the courtyard, but as soon as the non-union guys digging the holes went for their tea break the Burrell House women began to build a barricade to stop the Gas Board's hirelings getting back in again. Shortly after, they saw welcome reinforcements arriving from Arbour House responding to the emergency call sent them earlier in the piece. Half-a-dozen extra hands from Arbour Square lifted morale and also the barricade by the time I arrived. I had to climb over it . . . but it wasn't too strong and needed another half

hour's labour by all concerned before it became a real barricade. I then hiked to the third floor of Burrell House, to Flat No. 12 which is my drum, and proceeded to boil the billy.

The fuzz showed up about then. An inspector and two other, I drank a second cuppa during the preliminary friendly all-mates-together ritual used by the fuzz in these circumstances, and hurried down when I saw that bit was over. When I got back to the barricade, I was just in time to hear Inspector Grest doing his best even though an uninvited guest.

The inspector made a remarkable statement to the Burrell House people who want only one thing; a rent-book for the places they live in, something which would harm no one and benefit the ratepayer. The inspector's grave and sweeping generalisation about Something for Nothing . . . the Welfare State . . . the World owes me a Living . . . and so on, etc., and so on . . . almost, but not quite, had me dumbstruck. . . . After he'd ended his peroration, I asked him whether what he had been saying

was a quotation from the editorial column of the Daily Telegraph.

Who was I? Inside a minute or so, 'Don't you shove me!' said the inspector, not because of any shoving by me or anyone else but the next instant

'Don't you shove me either!' said the cop on his right, giving me a hard shove and grabbing my left thumb like lightning as I shoved back in self-defence. Our tactics being the reverse of aggressive, I was soon freed. If the fuzz's idea was to warn us against free speech in their presence, they were of course not in the race.

Nodding at the cop responsible for the thumb-bending lark, I asked Inspector Grest:

'Where do you recruit these mongrels?'

Being a man who likes to keep a good thing for himself, perhaps, the Inspector did not disclose his source of good-material, beginning instead a homily to me in person as to various places for someone like me to live, such as seamen's missions, bedsitters. The way Inspector Grest's harangue was leading, it seemed I wasn't even a bona-fide Squatter, I was nothing more than an imposter, because (1) I am single, (2) I am a merchant seaman by profession. He had the grace to dry up, however, after I stated that I was entitled to a home of my own on the grounds of my wartime services alone.

The upshot of all this was, the paddy-wagon disgorged another ten or so peeces, and they took the barricade down during the nonners' dinner hour. This was of course preceded by yet another stirring call to us tenants by Inspector Grest (for indeed it was he) bidding us to be British and take our own barricades down and not force him, the inspector, to shame us by ordering the fuzz generally to demolish the Burrell House tenants' defences. Alas! Our hearts were hardened; I'm sorry to say it, but we need these homes we have too badly to take notice of Old Mother Hubbard from officialdom of any kind.

Once the barricade was away the fuzz present grouped themselves protectively around the non-union labour which had returned from its dinner, and those guys carried on under supervision by a dozen fuzz until the big cheese was satisfied that not a tendril of gas would reach the cooker of one Burrell House housewife. He then remarked damned good show chaps or words to that effect, and that was that. . . .

That's about all at the moment. We'll see how we go, and I'll let you know how we are progressing in a further article if there's space for it. May I close by emphasising the good you can do if you have a spare electric cooker one of our families can use as right now; some of the cooking methods we are forced to use are really primitive. . . . What sort of legality forces people with families of young children to prepare their food on the open fire of their livingroom in the City of London, A.D. 1970?

GEORGE FOULSER.

## OPEN LETTER TO TRADE UNIONISTS

AS THE technological complexity of modern industrial society increases, so does the problems which confront the worker. Therefore it is vital that his form of industrial organisation keeps pace with the social changes and is efficiently adaptable to meet the demands of each situation in his interest.

But the trade union movement has become an integral part of capitalist society which has deflected workers into channels of class collaboration, interjecting into its own form of structure the very paternalistic principles which it is organised to combat.

The rank and file trade unionist is forced to fight on two fronts—one to maintain his standard of living in a society designed to impoverish him—the other to resist the encroachment on the democracy of the organisation by which alone he can effectively fight.

In recent years there has been a new awakening in the struggle for workers' control, the only and final answer to capitalism. This struggle has been paralleled in the struggle for workers' control over their own industrial organisation. A spectre is haunting TUC bureaucracy . . . the spectre of Tom Mann.

Productivity deals with the bosses and political commitments are enmeshing the militant trade unionist who will not passively stand by while his fellow workers

are betrayed or misled into the belief that the workers and employers have 'interests' in common.

As James Connolly once said:—

'The function of industrial organisation . . . is to build an industrial republic within the shell of a political state in order that when the industrial republic is fully organised it may crack the shell of the political state . . . every fresh shop or factory organised . . . is a fort wrenched from the capitalist class and manned with soldiers of the revolution. On the day . . . (we, the working class) proclaim the workers' republic, these shops and factories will be taken charge of by the workers there . . . the new society will spring into existence ready equipped to perform all the functions of its predecessor.'

The Syndicalist Workers' Federation calls all militants who, by industrial organisation, would build the structure of that industrial workers' republic within the decaying shell of capitalist society. It affords a system of democratic organisation and communication controlled from below which will uncompromisingly fight for the rebuilding of a socially just society where man neither exploits nor dominates his fellow man.

18 Scoredale, SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION, 13 Beulah Hill, London, S.E.19

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### BANK OVERDRAFT OF £300!!!

And we still need to double our income at the very least. Rubbing shoulders with £800 worth of debt is no happy feeling, and unless it can be substantially reduced, times will be even harder than now. The response over the last month has been quite good, but certainly needs to get better. As reported in this issue, we managed to distribute 450 copies of FREEDOM at the Isle of Wight, and with not a massive amount of assistance, but many thanks to those who did find time to help. But more can be done, as ever. So if you haven't found at least one newsagent to stock FREEDOM yet, please keep trying!

G.M.



### PRESS FUND

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## This Fortnight in Ireland

Continued from page 2  
children have been sent for six months to an approved school, but as the law stands at present there is nothing to prevent an eight-year-old being sent to prison up there.

In a magazine, journalist John Feeney has rather offensively said of the Dublin Housing Action Committee that they are 'as helpless and impotent as the left in Dublin always has been'. A snide remark which, I think, owes its being to the fact he was not elected to the executive committee, and because we DID NOT throw CS Gas, inflammable material which did not ignite, or other

dangerous weapons about, as the sensational Press tried to make out we did (or were going to do), ignoring the fact that our constitution categorically lays down we are a non-violent organisation. There are more ways of killing a cat than by choking it with cream.

At 8 p.m. this evening a protest starts, lasting until after a public meeting at 3 tomorrow afternoon, in front of the GPO against the EEC.

Meanwhile the country is enveloped in a thick smog which seems symbolically appropriate.

H.

## MIDDLE EAST

Continued from page 1  
'Vampires' will not be masked middle-weights, they will be screaming jets pouring down the napalm on villages and cities. The promoters in the Pentagon and the Kremlin will weigh up the pros and cons while down on the ground Arab and Israeli men, women and children tear each other to pieces.

Come to think of it, compared with politics, all-in wrestling is just good clean harmless fun.

JUSTIN.

## Books

### Secondhand

We have a large stock of second-hand books. Please let us know what you want. This week's selection.

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'Freedom' Pamphlets — 1/- each, inc. post

1. Makhno and Durruti.
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3. Zapata and The Mexican Revolution.

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## RESPECTABILITY UNVEILED

NAPLES.  
CARLA FERRI, of Naples, student but also high-priced prostitute, was brought before an examining magistrate and asked to identify her clients. All were 'respectable'—politicians, bankers, a professor of Latin; all rich and mostly grandfathers.

But Carla could not recognise them she explained because when she joined her clients they were already in bed and naked and she didn't waste time looking at their faces because she had to return at once to her college. But if naked she could recognise their skin blemishes.

So the accused were stripped and thus identified.

Those who have not yet appeared before the 'striptease judge' are likely to pay Carla through fear of her redoubtable powers of observation.

Ici Paris, August 11-17, 1970.

## 'NO MAN IS GOOD ENOUGH TO BE ANOTHER MAN'S MASTER'

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# The Embryonic Revolution

ACCORDINGLY, around ten this morning a force composed mainly of Angels and French Anarchists attacked a fifty yard section of the south perimeter and after a brief battle with security guards in which London Angel President "Buttons" was injured, both sets of fences were breached in a number of places. Thus did the festival underground paper FREEK PRESS report on part of the struggle which occurred between those who advocated a people's free festival and the organisers, Fiery Creations, who hoped for a fat dividend.

As a modern phenomenon the mammoth music festival is in its infancy but already is at a cross roads. Part of its growth derives from the great anti-war and ban-the-bomb movements, part from the growth of the hippy and psychedelic culture and part from the popularity of the various musical groups such as Jefferson Airplane, Jimi Hendrix, Sly and the Family Stone. The groups have become highly professional with managers ever angling for higher rewards. But the movement also contains dedicated revolutionaries ranging from pacifists and anarchists to Che Guevara fans and White Panthers. Obviously the stage was set for conflict at some point.

Fiery Creations created a miniature state at Freshwater. They attempted to use the mystique of the festival culture to cloak their security forces and dogs. The microphone was consciously used in the way Dr. Goebbels used it—to whip up hatred for the rulers' enemies and generally manipulate the audience. An alliance with the Church was forged with somewhat unhappy results as we shall see.

For the people generally the festival is more than attending a show. Certainly hedonistic, it is also an event of real living for several days. It is a rebuff to the established society and an attempt to build a new one. The warmth and generosity of communal living exists, if only for a limited time. It may inspire some to develop it further immediately but for all it is a great departure from the world of straights.

We saw people, with the most primitive tools, dig terraces on the side of the hill to provide a foundation for their nests. The hill became a great ant throng as the people scurried about collecting grass to line their nests. Corrugated iron wrenched from the fences of authority provided wind shields and cover from the heavy night dew. Down on Desolation Row a small town arose demonstrating the remarkable ingenuity and co-operation of the true-blue hippies—a town built virtually in the centre of a

long hedge with an amazing variety of dwellings according to the varying shapes and opportunities offered by each bush or marriage of them. If Kropotkin had seen it he would surely have devoted a chapter of his classic, *Mutual Aid*, to it.

The whole festival—including the authoritarians on stage—comprised a giant display of civil disobedience. Aldous Huxley, in *Doors of Perception*, has graphically contrasted the vomiting, violence and nauseous hangover of the alcohol party with the quiet, peaceful meditation and innocent enjoyment of the hallucinogenic scene. The moralist may condemn all drugs—a consistent line—and the ignorant may condemn only those which are illegal while hypocritically refusing to acknowledge that anything legal is a drug (as, for example, nicotine and alcohol) but the fact remains that almost all civilisations have found relaxation and pleasure in one drug or another. A huge minority today has decided to risk imprisonment in asserting their right to smoke cannabis or trip on mescaline and LSD. That minority was in a vast majority on Freshwater. Mr. Mark Woodnutt, MP for the Isle of Wight, said:

**'You see fornication, people taking pot. . . . There has been very little trouble because the police have exercised their discretion and not enforced the law.'**

A candid admission that the law is a troublemaker. But the people organised speedily where the law struck. Their organisation RELEASE gathered sufficient funds to bail out or pay the fines of those struck down. The Chief Constable of Hampshire, in criticising RELEASE, said, 'It cuts across everything we are trying to do'—namely, putting people in gaol and generally harassing them.

Probably for the first time ever a vast audience beheld a vast audience closed up in an arena for a spectacular entertainment. But they also beheld a state in action. Security thugs with Alsatian dogs patrolled not merely the double ring of corrugated ten foot high fences but were also used to protect the VIP enclosure. Like all states this one, too, felt compelled to have a privileged class. Thunderous boeing broke out within the walls when moves were made to enforce segregation and there were violent incidents. This was one occasion when the seemingly almighty power of the microphone manipulator failed. Another time, too, when he pathetically referred to the hideous corrugated iron fencing as 'our walls'

he was greeted with a stony silence. Yet, such is the power of the state, the dictator of the microphone usually had his way. But only with the crowd within. The crowd without lived in a different world.

By an ironic twist of circumstance the people on East Afton Down—christened 'Devastation Hill' (the delightful further irony was that the devastation represented only a vast cut in profits) by the organisers—had the best positions. Below, the vast arena resembled nothing so much as an enormous sardine can where movement anywhere—for a drink or a visit to the toilet—was virtually impossible. If you stood up someone threw an empty can at you and hustled you to resume your seat. No wonder many became exhausted to the point of collapse. On the great hill above the arena the other audience spread out at their ease, many sprawled out luxuriantly beside their tents or in clusters of bushes that shaded them from the sweltering heat of the sun. The view could not be surpassed and from the top of the hill you were also blessed with a panoramic view of cliffs and open sea lying on the far side. The contrast was so striking between the sardine can and the open parkland that no one could doubt which setting was right for a festival and that for once the revolutionaries for a better world—such were many on the outside—had infinitely the best of what society had to offer. Impecunious youths who came to the hill to sell tickets could not give them away and were quick to appreciate the position. When the festival organisers, on the last day, declared the event 'free' there were few takers. They seemed pained when much of their fencing was then destroyed, not realising that to some it was a matter of principle, to others the facility of further building equipment and wooden logs for the camp fires.

To those critics who say the event is in no way revolutionary we do not merely point to the legendary Joan Baez and her fight for freedom and justice. Listen to the beautiful words of Joni Mitchell:

**'I dreamed I saw the bombers riding shotgun in the sky, and they were turning into butterflies above our nation.'**

There may have been many there who had little understanding of the nobler aspect of the festival but there were many who had. The outside audience remained completely indifferent to the manipulations of the stage director (on one occasion when he sentimentally

called on all to rise and join hands, everyone below responded but without, where most were fully conscious of the dialectic which existed, no more than five per cent—probably a lot less—followed suit). But they joined in most fully when the heroic aspects of the revolutionary message were proclaimed—as they were repeatedly by many of the artists—and also of course when the music was particularly beautiful, witness the ecstasy which followed John Sebastian's brilliant performance. A meretricious if talented showman like Tiny Tim may have beguiled those most easily manipulated—the audience within—but he was more coldly received without. The appeal to the most vulgar chauvinism by this artist recalled the Nazi rallies and was, to a degree, frightening.

If the crowd without did not actively support the wall-destroyers it was simply a matter of pragmatism—their position as an audience was plainly superior in every way. They could view the 'changing of the guard' by the police—occurring between the two rings of corrugation—they could join in the boeing then, when initiated by the revolutionaries, they could witness such battles as occurred with the security forces, they could see how a festival should be run, namely, in the freedom they were enjoying and how it should not be run—as within. When the stage tried to bolster their position of authority by getting a local cleric on the stage he was met with thunderous boeing from the militants which none of the counter-applause aroused by the crocodile tears of compere Rikki Farr could efface. In an odd moment of clarity Fiery Creations mastermind Ron Fould declared:

**'This free music scene makes me sick. But in a way I suppose it's inevitable. It may be that the spirit that created the festival—a defiance of convention—is now about to destroy the festival.'** Of course, the Festival was in no danger—only his profits were in jeopardy.

It was a great occasion for anarchists. We two went with some five hundred copies of FREEDOM. We had such a ball that we were somewhat slow in doing the routine work of selling. But with the help of other comrades we were left with only 50. From our viewpoint the displays of mutual aid and general fraternity were exhilarating. But the greatest joy, perhaps, was the meeting with fellow anarchists from several countries. A lesson for future occasions: we anarchists have little access to the mass media but at a festival, which itself is a mass media, anarchists have tremendous scope for action and impact.

The Red and Black flag made a fine impression on the Isle of Wight. With more preparation this can be greatly increased.

GRAHAM MOSS.  
BILL DWYER.

## Contact

Contact Column is for making contact! Use is free, but donations towards typesetting costs are welcome

### Elephant and Castle Project Junior Club.

Saturday morning play project for boys and girls, urgently needs reliable helpers. New ideas and cast-off toys, etc., welcome. Contact: Club Leader, Valerie E. Bickers, 26 Bromyard Avenue, London, W.3.

**Complete set of 'Anarchy'.** Offers to: T. Reeder, 44 Upper Orwell Street, Ipswich, Suffolk.

**Biographies of Italian Anarchists.** Documents on the following: Italian anarchists in the Resistance 1939-45; Biographic and bibliographic material on the following—E. Malatesta, P. Gori, L. Galleani, C. Berneri, L. Pertoni, A. Borghi, G. Damiani, L. Meschi, U. Fedeli. All material returned, postage refunded. Send to: Rene Bianco, B.P. 40 Marseille, St. Just 13, France.

**Very urgent.** There are several families at Burrell House who need an electric cooker, especially since the gas was cut off last week. Anyone able to help meet our urgent cooker crisis please notify us via Freedom Press, phone 247 9249—The Tenants of Burrell House, The Highway, Stepney, E.1.

**Mass Psychology of Fascism.** Does any one have a copy of Reich's book to loan us; we have vague plans to reprint. Alan Ross, Black Flag Bookshop, 1 Wilna Street, Leicester.

**Behaviourism & Revolution.** Libertarian Study Group forming to consider the kind of question recently occupying the attention of FREEDOM correspondents. Contact J. Millenson, 111 Westbourne Terrace, London, W.2. 01-723 1587.

**Los Amigos de Durruti.** A group of active campaigners in London dedicated to the propagation of Anarchy (society organized without authority) and the defence of brothers in need. Write to Bill Dwyer, c/o Freedom Press.

**Holiday** for family from September 14-18 (if they can provide own food). Write: Six Chimneys, Bolerow, Troon, Camborne, Cornwall.

**Proposed Bristol Group.** Alex Bird, 23 Rosewell Court, Kingsmead, Bath.

**Frank Roach Personal Appeal.** Frank Roach at present will be held in Brixton it seems until September. Comrades need not be reminded of the stirring deeds of this gentleman, but money for cigarettes, etc., would be very much appreciated. c/o Freedom Press, Box No. 02.

**Free Citizen.** Newspaper of People's Democracy. Available to FREEDOM subscribers for 1/- or 1/4 by separate post. Write to P.G. at Freedom Bookshop.

**Anarchists in Enfield area** please contact Leroy Evans 01-360 4324.

**Please help.** Union of American Exiles in Britain: c/o WRI, 3 Caledonian Road, London, N.1.

**Proposed Group.** Alex Bird, 23 Rosewell Court, Kingsmead, Bath.

**Lowestoft Libertarians** contact Ann & Gordon Collins, 9 Ontario Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, Tuesday evenings. Comrades welcome for short stay by the sea.

**Notting Hill Libertarian Society.** Meetings every Monday at 7.30 p.m., upstairs room of 'The Ladbroke', Ladbroke Crescent, Ladbroke Grove, W.11. Nearest tube station Ladbroke Grove. Correspondence to Sebastian Scragg, 10 Bassett Road, W.10.

**Oxford Anarchists.** New group being formed, contact Dave Archard, Corpus Christi College, or John Humphries, Balliol.

**Wednesday discussion meetings** at Freedom Meeting Hall from 8 p.m.

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

## MARX: The Gospel According

(MARX IN HIS OWN WORDS by Ernst Fischer in collaboration with Franz Marek. Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 187 pages, £1.50.)

PUBLISHERS HAVE MADE fortunes out of the writings of that arch-opponent of the profit motive, Karl Marx; and it looks as though the latest addition to the collections and selections of the works of The Master is also likely to be a winner, profit-wise.

*Marx In His Own Words* is, of course, Marx according to Ernst Fischer, an Austrian Communist Party 'intellectual'. It does, however, abound in quotations from most of the major, and some of the lesser-known, writings of Marx, strung together with commentaries and explanations of what he meant or didn't mean by what he wrote. Fischer admits that with the exception of a few texts, Marx is not an easy author to read.

Fischer introduces us to Marx, 'In His Own Words', by emphasising first the totality, the wholeness, the universality, of Man; then the uniqueness of Man as a creative animal, as a producer of tools and the products of those tools and means of production, of productive labour. His following chapter on the division of labour and the inevitable alienation of the worker is of interest, if only because the concept of alienation has been largely ignored by the more 'orthodox' Communists, except for a few Hungarian Communist philosophers around 1966 or so. Nevertheless, Fischer comments: 'The problem of alienation was for Marx a central problem and not, as is frequently asserted nowadays, a romantic humanist notion of the young Marx. "Marx in his anti-Marxist and

pre-Marxist phase." . . . 'From alienation, Fischer quotes Marx at length on the subject of commodity-production and what Marx termed the 'fetish character' of commodities within capitalism. Although not new to those who have read their *Capital* (Volume I), this chapter—with its inevitable quotation from Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*—is also of interest.

The chapter, 'Classes and the Class Struggle', preceded by the world-famous, and over-simplified, first sentence ('The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle') from the *Communist Manifesto*, is considerably longer than the previous ones, but must be more than familiar not only to Marxists, but also to anarchists and syndicalists as well. As Fischer says: 'Marx was not the discoverer, still less the "inventor" of classes and the class struggle.' What Marx did do, claims Fischer, was to attempt to determine the characteristics of a social class; analyse the origin of classes; recognise that the interests of one class at any given time coincide with the development of the productive forces, and their impulse towards new social structures, whilst the other class or classes defend the established and the traditional because these correspond to their interests; and, lastly, asserts that the proletariat is the last class to achieve emancipation—which would result in a classless, rulerless, society.

In his chapter on 'Historical Materialism', Fischer quotes Marx's much-repeated extract from the preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, and attempts—not very satisfactorily in my view—to explain what Marx meant, or didn't mean, by

his use of the words 'foundation' and 'superstructure' as well as the statement, also much-quoted, that 'It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness.'

The following two chapters deal fairly adequately with 'Value and Surplus Value' and 'Profit and Capital'. However, the shortness of the next chapter on 'The Problem of Increasing Misery' perhaps explains why, after the usual quotations from Marx on the accumulation of misery, agony, toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality and mental degradation of the workers, Fischer writes: ' . . . Marx has been proved wrong, at least so far as workers in the advanced capitalist countries are concerned. But in the global sense his broad historical vision proved correct when he pointed out that in assessing the situation of workers, it was necessary to consider the world market as a whole, and that the wages of some could rise only because others were starving.'

'The Theory of Revolution' is fairly straightforward Marxism, although there is one typically Leninist piece of nonsense where Fischer asserts: ' . . . it is natural that Marx should have expected the social revolution to occur more or less simultaneously in the developed countries of Western Europe, and most probably in the most industrially developed country—England. Superb diagnostician though Marx was, history failed to confirm this prognosis. The means of production were first socialised in backward countries—a historical fact which accounts for the central problems of Marxism and the labour movement

today.' Of course, what the 'backward' countries *did* establish was 'socialised production' with State ownership (not social or common ownership)—that is State capitalism, as has been built up over the last fifty years in Russia. Like all good Communists (but not all Marxists) Fischer gives prominence to Marx's few passages on the 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat'; and also favourably quotes Marx's assertion that the Paris Commune 'was essentially a working-class government. . . . He then repeats, from the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Marx's claims of a 'first phase' and a 'higher phase' of communist society, where in the former there would—inevitably!—be a repressive State (so-called Dictatorship of the Proletariat), and in the latter (which never seems to come about in the Communist order of things) a condition where society inscribes on its banners: 'From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!' In the next chapter, 'Labour Movement and International', both Marx and Fischer have a little dig at Bakunin, particularly because he refused any activity that did not lead directly and immediately to the triumph of the working-class. . . . Because Bakunin rejected the notion of any power being exercised by men over other men.

Fischer's last two chapters deal with Marx's various *Theses on Feuerbach* and a rather poor statement on 'Marxism Today'. All the same, Fischer's *Marx In His Own Words* is a better 'Marx Made Easy' or 'Companion Marx' than many I have read, and a definite advance on previous Stalinist versions.

P.