

Blind Justice and Africa

IT HAS TAKEN the International Court of Justice five-and-a-half years to make a negative decision. It took 28,000 words to say it, and the whole jamboree in total cost, must have run into the million pound mark.

The case of South West Africa was brought to the Court in 1960 by Ethiopia and Liberia. They wanted a ruling on: (a) Whether South Africa was answerable to the United Nations for its treatment of the mandated territory and (b) whether it was in order for South Africa to apply her policy of apartheid in South West Africa. This territory is a former German colony administered by South Africa under a League of Nations Class 'C' mandate permitting it to administer South West Africa as an integral part of the Union. The mandate also includes the principle that the well-being and development of the people formed 'a sacred trust of civilisation'. Obviously it is impossible for South Africa to comply with such a mandate, for as far as she is concerned the two clauses are contradictory. They are now, and they were to a smaller extent in 1920. The mandate of South West Africa was given to South Africa as a part of the 'spoils of war' at Versailles on the instigation of General Smuts. In 1946 the General Assembly of the UN recommended that South West Africa be placed under the UN Trusteeship Council and since that date South Africa's policy of apartheid has insidiously engulfed the territory.

In December, 1959, Africans in the area demonstrated in protest against plans to move them forcibly to new areas. Police opened fire on the demonstrators killing some and wounding many others. The South African Government issued an order banning all public meetings. Armed police posts were set up round the Windhoek location.

The removal of the African families meant, apart from dislocation of their lives, an increase of rent from 3s. 6d. per month to £2, plus higher fares which had to be found out of starvation wages. In the same year the United Nations Trusteeship Committee granted a hearing to three petitioners on South West Africa. One of the petitioners stated that the South African Government was butchering his people in Windhoek. The United Nations Assembly invited South Africa to enter into discussions to place the territory under United Nations trusteeship, but as usual with anything concerning South Africa it was 'got round'.

In 1950, 1955 and 1956 the International Court attributed supervisory authority of South West Africa to the United Nations Assembly. So in fact as far back as 1950, genocide could have been prevented or stopped by the UN, but as the Africans know to their cost, it wasn't.

In 1962 the South African Government took the position that the mandate expired with the League of Nations and that the court had no jurisdiction in the matter. The court by 8 votes to 7 overruled its objections and the case proceeded. In 1950, 1955 and 1956 according to the court the mandate had ended and South West Africa was under the protection of the UN Assembly, but in 1962 the court ruled that in fact the mandate had not ended. Who was it who said 'the law was an ass'?

Even to the most ardent supporters of international law, the International Court of Justice must appear just a shade better than the Mad Hatter's tea party, but only because the Mad Hatter wore a top hat. The whole procedure was so ludicrous that the judgment turned on two factors, the death of one judge and the illness of another, the

judge that died supported the Ethiopian and Liberian claim in 1962, so that it was more 'ban likely the decision would have gone the other way.

Arising out of the chaos comes the court's decision by the chairman's casting vote 'that Ethiopia and Liberia have not established any legal right or interest in the subject matter of their complaint'. In fact a complete reversal of the 1962 decision.

South Africa is highly pleased with the decision. This means that she can legally (*pro tem*) proceed with her policies in South West Africa. Politically and economically the territory is already part of the republic, the only pleasure that the Africans in the territory do not yet enjoy is the infamous 180 day detention law, that can and will be remedied.

South West Africa is a rough territory, suffering from droughts, floods, extreme heat and cold. But it is the world's second largest producer of gem diamonds. Also included in its mineral wealth are lead, zinc, copper and silver, which are mainly American-owned. South Africa is pumping capital into the area, to make it a land fit for Europeans to live in. The Africans will be allowed to exist in their appointed areas.

Supposing the court decision had gone in fact against South Africa what difference would it have made? Positively and absolutely no difference at all. The world's moralists might have screamed a bit louder—flouting international law and all that jazz, but as for taking any action 'not bloody likely'. If the truth be known Britain and America are sighing with relief, they are both rather tied up at the moment, Britain at home and with Rhodesia, and America with Vietnam, they are far too busy to concern themselves with the crimes of South Africa, it's a full-time job committing their own.

We have seen international law in action, proving quite conclusively that it has nothing at all to do with justice, to quote an anarchist cliché, the two are incompatible.

BILL CHRISTOPHER.

The More Fool They

FRANCE HAS ATTACKED the United States and the Soviet Union for conducting nuclear tests near densely populated areas and has claimed that her tests are much safer.

The charge and the claim are contained in a 12-page booklet issued through the French Press and Information Service in New York.

At the same time the booklet stresses that 'the construction of a French deterrent force... is in no way designed to serve aggressive or expansionist purposes.' The booklet further adds that 'all precautions have been taken so that the French tests will in no way affect the health of the populations close to or far from the test sites (in French Polynesia) and will disturb their normal activities as little as possible. Compared to the measures taken during the hundreds of tests conducted by other countries, which have not significantly raised the level of radiation in man's environment, these precautions appear especially strict.'

The booklet points out that the total number of atmospheric explosions carried out to date by countries building a nuclear arsenal is as follows: 195 for the US, 141 for the USSR, 21 for Britain, 4 for France, and 3 for China.

In French Polynesia, the site of the French tests, the booklet went on: 'the populated islands are so dispersed and the meteorological conditions are such that nuclear test explosions can be conducted under security conditions satisfactory for both the testers and the populations.'

But the booklet stresses, the US test site at the Nevada firing grounds is located 75 miles from Las Vegas and 250 miles from Los Angeles, which has more than four million inhabitants.

In the Soviet Union there are 1,216,000 people living within a radius of 310 miles of its test centre at Semipalatinsky and 4,195,000 people within a radius of 620 miles.

The booklet says that 'the site for the (nuclear) explosion should be chosen in sparsely populated (areas)... and comparison of test sites shows that the French nuclear firing grounds, at Reggane in the Sahara, and in French Polynesia fully meet this condition.'

France's first testing ground at Reggane was 'situated quite far from inhabited areas. Only 62,000 people lived within a radius of 310 miles of the firing points, and 385,000 people within a 620-mile radius.'

The booklet goes on to point out that several studies of the wind system in French Polynesia were made before the tests were carried out. The information needed was collected over a three-year period by a network of about 15 meteorological, wind and temperature observation stations.

'The order to fire,' emphasises the booklet, 'will be given only if the predicted fallout zone coincides with uninhabited places.'

The booklet claims that: '... because radioactivity is diluted considerably in seawater, it is practically impossible for the food chain of the inhabited islands to be contaminated by fish. Special supervisory measures (are) taken during the firings by systematic inspection of fishing banks and examination of fish sold on the local markets.'

'Fallout location is fixed through a network of 22 automatic measurement stations throughout French Polynesia and broader control of radioactivity is achieved through a network of 17 radiological control posts that continuously measure the radioactivity in the atmosphere, rainwater and seawater.'

JOHN MOORE.

The French have a proverb, 'to excuse is to accuse'. These excuses are in themselves accusations. Firstly, the radioactivity is not completely diluted in seawater. The case of the 'Lucky Dragon' is well remembered. Also radioactivity can be carried in currents and molluscs (oyster-catching is done in the region) absorb high radioactivity. Secondly, the very purpose of the test ban agreement which up to now has confined tests underground was because of the danger of fallout to the populations of America and Russia. Thirdly, the French have now increased the level of contamination in the Southern hemisphere.

Following their first test on Muroroa, the French authorities boasted that within 10 hours military personnel were walking about in their ordinary clothes. Fallout tends to drift and there is also a delay but as one scientist remarked to us, 'The more fool they'—Eds.

DEATH & TAXES

ONCE UPON a time we used to have good old-fashioned budgets, once a year that is, that used to tax the odd commodity like hair-powder, windows or coffins. Now budgets come thick and fast and are not used, as in the good old days for meeting expenses by means of taxes but are used to promote some esoteric philosophy of finance like 'saving the pound'.

The latest batch of budgetings include an increase of 10% in purchase tax (not 10% of the tax). Mr. Wilson hastened to add but 10% on the tax (it will be remembered—or will it—that purchase tax was a temporary measure). There is also a surcharge (Question: when is a tax not a tax? Answer: when it's a surcharge) on beer, petrol, wines and spirits. Taxes are always with us, and the curious thing is that it is socially acceptable to avoid tax, it is not entirely frowned upon (except by the law) to evade tax but resistance to tax is not felt to be quite the thing even in anarchist and pacifist circles. 'Death and taxes' are felt to be the unavoidable.

Tax avoidance is always good for a laugh, tax evasion is penalized (if found out) whilst tax resistance is treasonable and punishable—as Thoreau found out. Thoreau once wrote to his town clerk 'know all men by these presents, that I, Henry Thoreau, do not wish to be regarded as a member of any incorporated society which I have not joined'. Brave words, and they carried their penalty in those days but today, the penalties for non-conformity are even higher and the chances of opting out of that 'incorporated society', the State, grow steadily fewer. The story is told of an individual who received a form from the Inland Revenue and sent it back saying he did not wish

to join.

However, with pay-as-your-earn deducted at source and indirect taxation on scores of articles and pleasures it is impossible for many of us to opt out. This does not mean that because we have to compromise to some extent with the State we should compromise with the State 100%. Whatever the State takes in the way of taxes it takes by force, like a brigand therefore this is no reason why we should hand over any more loot to it, voluntarily.

This position is fully recognised by businessmen who employ accountants (legally and tax deductible) to advise on tax avoidance. Indeed, courts have sat to advise on the legality or otherwise of arrangements to minimize death duties.

In the same way that the black marketeers made food-rationing work, that draft exemptions make the draft work, and legal aid makes the law work, so tax avoidance makes the tax system work. Were it not possible that some could avoid the tax, the ration or the call-up the system would not work, it would be wrecked by the amount of law-breaking which would have to be punished. There is an old legal adage, 'Hard cases make bad law' and bad laws are, in the main, unworkable.

An example of this is seen in the recent Selective Employment Tax, which is not due to come into force until September which gives time for its various hardships to be eliminated from the enforcement of the tax. However this tax marks a departure from the usual course of taxes. It combines a form of vocational conscription with taxation, which is, as the Marxists say, 'a change in quantity sufficient to be a change in

quality'.

The dual function of taxation (firstly to obtain money and secondly to divert labour power into approvable channels) is not unknown. The taxes upon what may loosely be called 'vices' are examples of what seem to be attempts to divert labour and spending power away from consumption of drink, tobacco and gambling—they are, in fact, a form of prohibition. However they only serve to prohibit to a limited extent and create in the Chancellor of the Exchequer a vested interest in vice so that, for example, the connection between smoking and lung-cancer may be overlooked for the sake of the revenue. It is almost as if the Chancellor said, 'Well, if I can't stop 'em doing it, I'll get the money anyhow.'

Purchase tax was originally a wartime device to syphon labour from the 'luxury' to the 'necessity' trades. Apart from the fact that no one, certainly not governments, can define what is a luxury, it worked so well in bringing in revenue, that it has been retained into the post-war era.

The purchase tax recalls an aspect of all taxation, indeed of much legislation, its 'temporary' nature. It may be recalled that income tax was a temporary measure introduced perhaps to get us over the Crimean War. A cynic observed 'only the temporary is permanent' and this indeed may be true of the Selective Employment Tax.

The Selective Employment Tax bids fair to mark another stage in taxes, from the mere raising of revenue, through the marking of social status, the penalizing of luxuries and 'vices', the direction of labour for war purposes and now with this tax, the direction of labour for peace-time-economy purposes. It may be that in a small community, which still retains a money system, the voluntary contribution to approved community projects could be justified. Viewed in this perspective, at one time, even the payment of rates could be approved of, but

in comparison with taxes, rates pale into insignificance. They have become so huge and the purposes for which they are used are so far from human life and so involved with the business of death-dealing that resistance to tax-paying is admirable and tax-avoidance is worth while but tax evasion does not question the State's right to collect tax, nor the purposes for which it is spent.

Taxation as an institution has been with us so long that it has been accepted, not only as inevitable but as right. Such is the development of institutions. Perhaps we have lost our sense of perspective on taxation and that eminent Victorian, Herbert Spencer, should, for now, have the last word.

'If justice asserts the liberty of each

Continued on page 2

EMERGENCY

A FIRE has just taken place (late evening of the 19th) in the offices of the Committee of 100. Arson is suspected. Of the two rooms the back one has been gutted and the duplicator, filing cabinets, materials and archives destroyed. The Fire Brigade was on the spot very quickly and the fire was prevented from spreading to the rest of the building.

The set-back to the Committee is considerable—all the more so as it comes at a time when calls on the office are increasing and the movement is picking up. Whereas the fabric of the building is insured our own contents are not.

Any help that readers can give will be much appreciated.

ANDREW PAPWORTH,
London Secretary,
PETER CADOGAN,
National Secretary.

13 Goodwin Street, London, N.4

ANARCHY 66



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THE POSTERS for 'It Happened Here' show German troops marching past Big Ben and advertise the film as 'the story of the German occupation of Britain'. Like much film publicity this misses the point. Admittedly, the film deals with the possible aftermath of a German invasion in 1940, admittedly German soldiers are seen buying coffee for tramps in Parliament Square and squeezing into rush-hour tubes. But this is only the background to the film (in fact in the whole film the German troops only get about five lines of dialogue between them). What is far more important is that the film depicts a fully-fledged Fascist apparatus, manned by the British themselves, as governing the country. There are British SS divisions that evoke the names of Richard the Lionheart and the Black Prince. Public buildings are hung, not with swastika flags, but with the lightning

COULD IT HAPPEN HERE?

flash of our home-grown Blackshirts. German propaganda films recall to their audiences the number of Englishmen who cheered Hitler on in the 30's. (Although names are not mentioned it is pretty clearly implied that Sir Oswald Mosley has become our national leader.) Meanwhile what is happening to the British people as a whole? Well, really very little. Just as today people go about their daily lives not unduly perturbed by press photos depicting our allies torturing their prisoners in Vietnam or that at Porton our scientists are working out the best ways to give the enemy's kids the pox, so the people of

German-occupied Britain do not seem over-worried by any reports that the Germans are shooting down villagers on Salisbury Plain, or employing slave labour. There is, it is true, a resistance movement. But the man-in-the-street regards the resistance much as his real-life counterpart regarded CND in its heyday: all 'thugs' and 'communists'. By contrast the members of the Fascist para-military Immediate Action Organisation are depicted as essentially ordinary. True they stage torchlight Nazi funerals and talk of racial purity, but in between the women share jokes with each other and the men rummage for

documents in drawers full of string. And anyway just what are the resistance really like? The final sequence shows partisans mowing down captured Nazis. (This is incidentally a rather puzzling end. Does it imply that Nazi and partisan have become indistinguishable? Or does it mean that, if one wants to defeat the Fascists, one cannot be over-fussy about one's methods? In any case it is welcome to see the film recognise that in a war nobody's hands are clean.)

Significantly this film was made by a group of amateurs. It is all too easy to imagine how this theme would have fared in the hands of a film company. Stupid German soldiers engaging in ach-so-herr-general-type dialogue would be staunchly resisted by public school types as played by Jack Hawkins, cheery cockneys as played by Jack Warner (and possibly an American hero for the international market). Instead of this the makers have made a sombre and gripping study of public indifference to evil. Their reward has been that, for over two years since it has been finished, the film tycoons have been handling it gingerly and have only just released it (possibly to compete with 'The War Game'). And now it has been released the same tycoons who have sat on it for years have the nerve to proclaim 'at last your chance to see it'. Even this belated release has incurred some displeasure. The *Sunday Express* apparently does not believe that the British people would have collaborated (a belief shared, oddly enough, by the allegedly 'left' *Tribune* which asks 'Is this film anti-British?').

Still, now it is out, don't miss it. In spite of its amateur status, direction, plot, dialogue, characterisation and general intelligence all compare favourably with the average Hollywood assembly line product. It will probably be a long time before another such breach in the strongholds of the commercial film market is made.

ROGER SANDELL

The Bunny Club

THE CULT of childhood is a sad and beautiful thing woven from unfulfilled dreams and artificial memories. We treasure the false image and of our innocence try to hand it on to those children that we know or love. Yet age is a barrier that we can never surmount and we shall never know whether the small rooms of the nascent imagination are peopled with the ghosts plucked from the graveyard of our own manufactured past or whether we have touched the string of the heart's music. We treasure and we handle, all too openly, the alleged documents of that forlorn age and we tell ourselves that this was the literature that we loved and these illustrations in soft pastel washes and gentle outlines pictured the galleries of our virgin mind. True or false I know not for the world is ever eager to bruise the young and questing mind and the growing web of scars become but a mirror to justify the black humours that dank age and the companions of the left hand have fashioned us into. So, for one tender moment of god's grace, let us delude ourselves—for the past is ever with us and the future but one minute away.

In the quiet backwaters off Piccadilly, at 7 Albemarle Street, the National Book League have laid out the work and the life of Beatrix Potter and from case to case and from wall to wall the white-haired elderly women wander back

and forth seeking and finding that true, or that false, dawn when the world was very sweet and very fair. And here are the paintings and the books of Beatrix Potter that it is said all the world knows and loves and they are very lovely these tiny books of Tom Kitten, Jemima Puddleduck, Squirrel Nutkin and the Tailor of Gloucester. And here are the paintings of that world with Peter Rabbit, Mrs. Tittlemouse and Mrs. Tiggy Winkle living eternally within Beatrix's own world of middle-class comfort and established and everlasting solidarity.

Beatrix was no gifted child when she wrote and illustrated her myths but a spinster fashioned by the solitude of her

LETTER

Picnics

Dear Comrades, As a reader of FREEDOM for many years I am always fascinated by these American picnics which seem to keep the paper going financially year after year.

Could someone please write an article telling us what happens at these affairs, preferably someone who has been to one, who organises them, how are they organised and how they manage to raise such enormous sums of money?

Yours fraternally, London, N.W.3 IRENE ROOM.

DEATH & TAXES

Continued from page 1

limited only by the like liberties of all, then the imposing of any further limit, no matter whether the power of imposing it be one man or a million of men. . . . In our time the tying of men to the lands they were born on, and the forbidding any other occupations than the prescribed ones, would be considered as intolerable aggressions on their liberties. But if these larger inroads on their rights are wrong, then also are smaller inroads. As we hold that a theft is a theft whether the amount stolen be a pound or a penny, so we must hold that an aggression is an aggression whether it be great or small. . . . We do not commonly see in a tax a diminution of freedom, and yet it clearly is one. The money taken represents so much labour gone through, and the product of that labour being taken

away, either leaves the individual to go without such benefit as was achieved by it or else to go through more labour. In feudal days, when the subject classes had, under the name of *corvees*, to render services to their lords, specified in time or work, the partial slavery was manifest enough; and when the services were commuted for money, the relation remained the same in substance though changed in form. So is it now. Tax-payers are subject to a state *corvee*, which is nonetheless decided because, instead of giving their special kinds of work, they give equivalent sums; and if the *corvee* in the original undisguised form was a deprivation of freedom, so is it in its modern disguised form. "Thus much of your work shall be devoted not to your purposes but to our purposes" say the authorities to the citizens: and to whatever extent this is carried, to that extent the citizens become slaves of the government.'

Taxation is slavery.

JACK ROBINSON.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

Anarchist Federation of Britain

c/o Freedom Press, 17a Maxwell Road, London, S.W.6.

London Anarchist Group 1&2

'Lamb and Flag', Rose Street, off Garrick Street, London, W.C.2. (Leicester Square tube) 7.45 p.m. All welcome, Sundays.

Public Meetings every Sunday Hyde Park, 3 p.m.

JULY 31 John Palmer Prices and Incomes Pamphlet AUG. 7 Paul Pawlowski Subject to be announced AUG. 14 Dave Coull Anarchism in Scotland

OFF-CENTRE LONDON DISCUSSION MEETINGS

3rd Wednesday of each month at Jack Robinson and Mary Canipa's, 21 Kumbold Road, S.W.6 (off King's Road), 8 p.m.
3rd Friday of each month at 8 p.m. at Donald and Irene Room's, 148a Fellows Road, Swiss Cottage, N.W.3.

REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND GROUPS

ALTRINCHAM ANARCHIST YOUTH GROUP. Get in touch with Stephen Richards, 25 North Vale Road, Timperley, Cheshire.
ABERDEEN GROUP. Meets at the Adelphi 2.30 p.m. every Sunday. Correspondence to M. Day, 29 Springhill Crescent, Aberdeen.
ARLSEY GROUP (N. Herts., 3 Beds.). Meetings on first Friday of month. Correspondence to Peter and Maureen Ford, 102 Stotfold Road, Arlsey, Beds.
BELFAST. Contact Peter Stringer, 7 Duffy

ROUND THE GALLERIES

youth into the accepted creature of the Victorian household, the unmarried daughter, forbidden by custom and economics to participate in the workings of her society yet allowed to observe and record it, and Beatrix accepted her role and never sought to intrude into the masculine world of substance and achievement. As with all solitary people she turned, of necessity, inwards for her emotional fulfilment and against a literal rendering of her father's hearth and home she painted her world as she would have wished it. She was in her thirties when, through the good offices of Canon Rawnsley, she finally managed to find a publisher willing to publish the *Tale of Peter Rabbit*.

From this beginning this quiet and solitary woman became an established children's author and her writings joined that small list of classics for children. But if she excelled in this small and gallant company it was by virtue of the fact that she was a competent water-colourist who loved the subjects that flowed from her brush. Her gentle use of her colour and her knowledge of the local flora gave a depth and a sense of reality to the small creatures she peopled her world with and when she wove them into the background of her own kitchen and fireside she bridged the world of fantasy and reality. One knows that Peter Rabbit is a father figure and that the clothed mice are child substitutes for we have read our *Penguin Specials* but for Beatrix they were but the joyful creations of silent and useless hours and in their fashion they belonged to the world of the *Wind in the Willows* and the warm and everlasting snows of our first remembered Christmas card.

It is a world without pain, economics or hatred, full of fire-flung dancing shadows, yellow sunshine upon green grass and a leaf-strewn road that forever ends at the edge of the page and in the world of harsh realities and publicly attested ugliness it can whisper the golden lie that once there was such a world of eternal summer afternoons when laughter was so very easy. But we know there is not—for we are very wise in the evils of our age—and the white-haired, brittle-boned, old ladies of Albemarle Street move slowly from case to case, and from wall to wall, seeking those framed opiates to dull the protesting mind against the world that lies beyond those walls in Albemarle Street. I move with them, for I have less and less liking for the conditioned realities of the world. But for me the drug no longer works and I must knowingly take my place in the ranks of the dispossessed beyond the walls of Albemarle Street.

WHO WANTS MORE 'FREEDOM?'

WE INTEND to add four more pages to FREEDOM for one issue only in September. We shall not be increasing the price. Our aim is to find out what are the possibilities for enlarged distribution given a 'meatier, bulkier, more comprehensive' FREEDOM. We shall have space to include longer articles and use a different lay-out incorporating illustrations. We hope that groups and individual comrades will co-operate with us by sending their orders well in advance and by organising a special sales-week of FREEDOM for the September 17 issue and then sending us detailed reports of their experiences in selling it, their criticism and suggestions for the further improvement of the paper.

If all goes well financially we shall be able to enlarge FREEDOM as from next year. EDITORS.

Changes of Address

Owing to holidays, *Anarchy* 66 envelopes and wrappers for FREEDOM of September 10 will be prepared well in advance. Please notify changes of address to apply to those issues by August 24.

NOTTING HILL PROVOS. Correspondence to Brian Joseph, 1st Floor, 27 Arundel Gardens, London, W.11. Meeting every first Thursday of the month at 7 p.m., at Flat 3, 5 Colville Houses, London, W.11.

NORTH-WEST ESSEX. Meetings on the first Saturday of each month at 7.30 p.m. at Robert Barltrop's, The Old Vicarage, Radwinter, near Saffron Walden.

ORPINGTON ANARCHIST GROUP. Knockholt, Nr. Sevenoaks, Kent. Every six weeks at Greenways, Knockholt. Phone: Knockholt 2316. Brian and Maureen Richardson. Next meeting August 14 at 5 p.m.

OXFORD ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact H. G. Mellor, Merton College, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH ANARCHIST FEDERATION. Contact J. Hill, 79 Underlane, Plymouth, Devon.

READING ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Alan Ross, 116 Belmont Road, Reading, Berks.

NORTH-WEST FEDERATION. NORTH WEST ANARCHIST FEDERATION. Regional Secretary: J. Bromley, 44 Doncaster Avenue, Manchester, 20. Buxton: Chris Berrisford, 10 Byron Street, Buxton. Chorley: Alintair Rattray, 35a Devonshire Road, Chorley, Manchester. Mike Mitchell, 3 Bakewell Road, Droylesden, Manchester. Merseyside: Barbara Renshaw, 4 Clarence Road, Devonshire Park, Birkenhead. Rochdale: Ian Heywood, 16 Mansfield Road, Bamford, Rochdale. Stoke-on-Trent: Bob Blakeman, 52 Weldon Avenue, Weston Coyney, Stoke-on-Trent.

EAST LONDON FEDERATION. WALTHAM FOREST ANARCHISTS. Contact Lionel Donnelly, 322a Hoe Street, Walthamstow, E.17. Meetings every Thursday at above address.

WEST HAM ANARCHISTS. Contact Stephen Higgs, 8 Westbury Road, Forest Gate, E.7.

WEST LONDON FEDERATION. WANDSWORTH LIBERTARIANS. Correspondence to Christine Hutton, 15 Broughton Street, London, S.W.8.

ence to Christine Hutton, 15 Broughton Street, London, S.W.8.

FULHAM ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact top floor, 31 Ongar Road, S.W.6.

NORTHOLT ANARCHISTS. Contact: Jim Huggon, 173 Kingshill Avenue, Northolt, Middlesex. Meetings first and third Wednesday of the month at Jeannie's, 6 Epsom Close, Northolt Park, Middlesex, at 7.30 p.m.

SOUTHALL ANARCHIST GROUP. Get in touch with Roger Sandell, 58 Burns Avenue, Southall, Middlesex.

PROPOSED GROUPS

FELTHAM, MIDDLESEX. Anyone interested get in touch with P. J. Goody, 36 Norman Avenue, Hanworth, Middlesex.

SOUTH WARWICKSHIRE. Get in touch with Eric Harrison, 2 Cottage Aylesmore Farm, Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire.

TYNESIDE SYNDICALISTS. Address c/o Michael Renwick, 122 Mowbray Street, Heaton, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 6.

KEIGHLEY ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Robert Halstead, 27 Woodlands Rise, Haworth, Keighley, Yorks.

ABROAD

U.S.A., NEW YORK CITY. N.Y. Federation of Anarchists, c/o Torch Bookshop, 641 East 9th Street, N.Y., 10009. Meets every Thursday evening.

AUSTRALIA. Sydney Anarchist Group. Public meetings every Sunday in the Domain at 2 p.m. Group meetings every Monday at 8 p.m. in the Cellar, 72 Oxford St., Sydney.

DANISH ANARCHIST FEDERATION. 52 Mindevej, Soborg-Copenhagen, Denmark.

VANCOUVER, B.C., CANADA. Anyone interested in forming anarchist and/or direct action peace group contact Derek A. James, 1844 Grand Boulevard, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada. Tel.: 987-2693.

U.S.A., VERMONT/NEW HAMPSHIRE. Discussion/Action Group anyone? Contact T. R. Jackson, Corinth, Vermont.

Again - the Provos

Dear Comrades,

Peter Cadogan's naivety and ability to change course in mid-thought have already achieved mythological status in certain quarters of the libertarian movement; to these must now be added an ability to misread, which offers him hitherto unprecedented status. Considering that Cadogan's disapproval is the *sine qua non* of effective politics I am pleased that he should have reacted as he did to my piece on the provos. Nevertheless the facts must be clarified. What Cadogan calls my arrogance I would call experience. His own ability to remain unaffected by experience is perhaps enviable but not very useful.

As anyone who has read my various pieces on the provos will know, I do approach them in a spirit of inquiry. In *Heatwave* I published their 'Appeal to the International Provotariat' because, although I think it far from being a definitive statement on the youth revolt, I find it far more relevant than anything anyone here is doing on this front. I visited Amsterdam and interviewed both provos and members of the provotariat. I am still unable to accept that a spirit of genuine inquiry rules out intelligent criticism arising from one's own experience. Readers of *FREEDOM* can conclude for themselves whether the provos are better served by Cadogan's elevation of them into a *frisson nouveau* of tired Liberals or my rather more critical judgments and my final conclusion, in *FREEDOM*, that 'There is in the long run perhaps rather more to be envying about them than criticising'.

To answer Cadogan's 'critique' point by point:

- I actually stated my approval of the white bicycle and other similar schemes, concluding that it was a plan which was 'convincing, imaginative and practical'.
- In a short article I had little space to reiterate previous statements made by myself (though I referred to them for those with a genuine spirit of inquiry) but in *Heatwave* I refer to 'the acute environmental consciousness' of the provos and praise their concern with the depopulation of city centres, though I also mention that we in London have tolerated far more advanced decay.
- I am afraid I am enough of an anarchist to be unconvinced by plans to change police into social workers. The subtler the authority, the more difficult it is to deal with. I don't care a damn whether police are called social aid advisers, citizen action programmists or what the hell. They remain to me, suffering doubtless from archaic illusions about the nature of society, an enemy and that is why I was entirely pleased by the Amsterdam youth riots and very worried by the provo reaction to them.
- I know the provos have got through to 'mods and rockers' (despite De Vries' Mahatma Gandhi Hall dismissal of the rockers as a rebel group) and that we have not. In case my concern with this problem looks as new-found as Cadogan's I first made just this point in *FREEDOM*, 16.11.63: 'The beatlefans, the mods, the rockers, the ton-up kids are people with ideas of their own. If anarchism has nothing to say to them it has nothing to say at all'. I still believe it and I made the same point again when I talked about the provos 'getting through'.
- Whether belief in the marginal relevance of representative institutions is a new idea I would not, of course, know, but in one way or another it has been responsible for the decay



of a lot of consciences and consciences over the years.

- Don't the provos actually drop the notion of class war by accepting a new version, youth against the amalgamated proletariat and bourgeoisie. I entirely agree that this has some relevance and that the old 'class analysis' needs adapting to modern society, but have the workers really gone? What happens to Cadogan within the provo analysis?

The fact that these ideas have got through to me, that I have taken the trouble to visit the provos, talk to them, write to them, discuss ideas with them is obviously not good enough for Cadogan. I am glad to say that at least two provos have reacted in an extremely friendly way to my articles in *Heatwave*. But then perhaps they are rather more interested in genuine inquiry than Cadogan whose immediate reaction to an idea is to sterilise it.

The logical reaction to the provos, as I see it, is to explode in our own way, and according to the peculiarities of our own environment, our own consciousness of our own total alienation and unfreedom. Let's attempt to change our cities for the better as the provos do. But let's attempt to work out some of our ideas for ourselves, instead of taking over the provos' en bloc. In this respect it may interest Cadogan to know that the idea of the youth revolt is not new—the Internationale Situationniste, the Chicago Rebel Worker group, to some extent Solidarity and, particularly the New York Resurgence Youth Movement have all pushed youth revolt ideas. The idea of urban depopulation is not new: *Anarchy* has published articles on the subject, many people are deeply concerned by the problem, and it is a commonplace of Situationniste thought. The idea of non-class revolt is not new either; hundreds of Liberals, Anarchists even, have pushed it. The idea of transforming police into social workers is not new either: the police in the USA are already carrying out experiments in this direction.

What is new is the provos. It is a depressing thought that anyone passing on advice, criticising some ideas and attempting to start, within an anarchist periodical, a genuine exchange of ideas and argument with other anarchists is subjected to Cadogan's wilful misunderstanding.

Fraternally,
London, S.W.10 CHARLES RADCLIFFE.

Another Personal Statement

Dear Editors,

For the record. . . . My paper *Into Europe* was written not 'some months' but some years ago. It was circulated as a discussion document over my own name and later published likewise in *Resistance* and in the Netherlands and Germany. It was never moved, agreed or rejected as Committee of 100 policy.

A document on similar lines—produced by the Offenbach Summer School of the WRI in 1964—was endorsed by the National Committee of 100 without much interest or enthusiasm.

It is plain that the kind of Europeanism that we prefer to produce in the Committee is highly practical, e.g. the Anglo-Greek and Anglo-French actions of recent weeks.

Character assassination is the hallmark of the sectarian and sectarianism

'Extreme Want of Money'—

BY PROVING AN ALIBI, Mr. George Brown, Deputy Prime Minister, entered the lists as a candidate for leadership of the Labour Party's 'left'. Mrs. Lena Jeger, MP, writing about 'The Conscience of an MP' in the *New Statesman*, says, 'Politics is still about power. And power should be where politics is. Unless this happens the authority of Parliament is bound to decline, and this may well be something to do with the malaise of contemporary frustration at Westminster, and beyond. The cabinet, the civil service, foreign bankers, the Stock Exchange—the new MP feels that all these and many other rivals dwell in the citadel of power which he thought to find at Westminster.'

MR. JOHN TYNDALL, of the Greater Britain Movement, called in *Spearhead* for a United Front of the Right headlined 'Never has opportunity beckoned us so strongly'.

PLAID CYMRU REPORTED an increase in membership but 'Evans the Parliament' was not allowed to take the oath in Welsh despite Mr. Speaker's sympathy, and Welsh parents. He took it in English. The National Secular Society commemorated its 100th anniversary at Northampton where its founder was MP, in spite of having been expelled four times for not being allowed to take the oath because of his declared atheism. *The Guardian* swallowed the myth that he refused to take the oath. In fact he was quite prepared to take the oath when he realized he was not allowed to affirm. *The Guardian's* headline is 'Hero rescued from Myth'.

MR. NORMAN ATKINSON, Labour MP for Tottenham, said he was ashamed of Parliament. He had been elected to do a serious job 'not to be part of an idiotic circus'. It was beyond comprehension, said Mr. Atkinson, that Parliament should spend thirteen hours debating whether or not an additional six

is the graveyard of the revolution. May I commend a simple formula when one reads or hears any personal attack? It is to suspend all judgement until you have had time to telephone or write to the person concerned and to other first-hand witnesses.

It is of course the business of a secretary to make statements on behalf of the organisation of which he is secretary. It is partly for that purpose that he is taken on in the first place. It is his job to do it responsibly in the light of agreed policies and in the context of continuing consultation. Last weekend the International Sub-Committee had a double session and the leaflet circulated at the Trafalgar Square rally the next day was the product of those meetings. But if an urgent situation calls for a statement within hours—as is often the case in these days of chronic crises—then the secretary has to take a certain amount of personal responsibility in his official capacity. He would be falling down on his job if he did not so do.

Since writing his personal attack Paul Pawlowski has written to register for the Summer School organised by the national secretary whose office and organisation he would like to see abolished. It must be marvellous to be able to have everything both ways!

Yours,
PETER CADOGAN,
Secretary,
Committee of 100,
National Committee.

Little Meaning by Itself

Dear Comrades,

The report 'European Meeting of Young Anarchists' made gloomy reading. Why only 'young anarchists'? While most anarchists at present are young, medical science has extended life expectancy. Surely we are not a party with 'adult' and 'youth' sections?

Anarchists in other countries turned out to be as woolly-minded as those in this country. The 'Provos' of Holland have leaders and help political parties. Like the 'Revos' of Belgium they are 'non-violent' but include 'Mods and Rockers'. This sounds as much like a revolutionary movement as a church youth club. The French are 'mostly individualists'. The implication in the use of this word is that other anarchists are not individualists—a false implication. In Goteborg, Sweden, are about 50 'young anarchists' and an expanding, 22.00 strong syndicalist movement, with which the young people have little contact. Why? The Italian comrades seem more in touch with reality. I will

hours should be given to discussion of the Selective Employment Tax. What logician could explain the logic of that. 'British people everywhere must be disgusted, and people abroad must be disgusted that Parliament can sit up all night talking irrelevant nonsense, yet allow backbenchers only two and a half hours seriously to debate the most important Prices and Incomes Bill.'

AN ACCOUNTANT, employed in a machinery manufacturing company, charged with fraud, gave big orders to sales representatives who came to see him because 'he got a sense of power out of it'. Answering a question in the House of Commons the Minister for the Army said there are 124 bands in the regular forces costing £6.5 millions a year, and 140 bands in the Territorial Army costing £1 million. At present 52 bands are overseas, and nine more are due to go abroad before the end of the year. The Minister said the Minister of Defence believed the bands were 'an integral part of Service life and a valuable link with the public'. David Mercer, in a letter to the *Guardian* defending his film 'Morgan: a Suitable Case for Treatment' from attack by John Grigg, says, 'Our film is about the fate of a human being under stress, and about the manner in which he ultimately preserves his integrity against society. As Mr. Grigg rightly points out "Mental illness is not a fringe condition, nor is there any clear-cut distinction between sanity and insanity". Dr. R. D. Laing, Mr. Mercer writes, "has forcefully argued that the diagnosis of schizophrenia is "a political act". It may be that thousands of people are in mental hospitals and prisons only because they live in a world which is utterly disastrous in its consequences for the human personality.'

POLICE IN CLEVELAND, OHIO, fired during a riot on a car carrying a young Negro mother and her children and hit them all. The car had failed to stop when

This meeting represented some anarchists in part of the western section of the continent of Europe. A sense of proportion was provided by the Dutch comrades who proposed a study of 'our position towards insurrectional movements of the Third World'. That is, Africa, South America, and South Asia. There is, of course, only one world.

The meeting included harmless pacifists and violent revolutionaries, supporters of political parties and people with little knowledge of politics, people aware of a world struggle going on and others wrapped up in themselves. Once again we see how little meaning the word 'anarchist' by itself has. Editors of *FREEDOM*, please note.

Yours fraternally,
London, S.E.12 DAVE COULL.

Spanish Aid

Dear Friend,

Thanks to you and many other interested contributors, Spanish Refugee Aid has raised over one million dollars for the Spanish Civil War refugees during the past 13 years. Of course we could use that much in one year, but we are thankful that each year we can increase our help for the 10,000 who need it so badly.

As always, those who are most urgently in want are the aged and chronically ill. Francisco S. falls in both categories. He is a bachelor of 67 and has tuberculosis. A recent visit by one of our workers describes vividly how he lives:

PRESS FUND

PLEASE NO FREEZE-UP!

FINANCIAL STATEMENT
WEEK 29, JULY 23, 1966:

Expenses: 29 weeks at £80:	£2320
Income: Sales and Subs.:	£1751
DEFICIT:	£569

London, W.10: B.G. 1/10; London, S.E.17: D.S. 4/-; Accrington: C.R. 6d.; Peterborough: F.W. 4/3; Leeds, 8; D.S. 3/6; Wolverhampton: J.K.W.* 2/-; J.L.* 3/-; London, W.6: G.W. £2/18/-; Bangor, N.I.: J.T. £5; San Francisco: D.D. £1/5/-; Aberdeen: I.R.M. 4/6; Lincoln: J.W. 1/-; Cheltenham: L.G.W.* £2; Ipswich: A.R. 6/3; Tunbridge Wells: In memory Francisco Ascaso and Enrique Obregon (20/7/36) 10/-; Belfast: W.G. 7/6.

TOTAL: £13 11 4
Previously Acknowledged: £632 4 8

1966 Total to Date: £645 16 0

the mala-City lawsuit against 30 demonstrators outside the US Embassy said the PC pushed him violently, and called him an obscene epithet and later tried to drag him out of the march. Whilst quietly dispersing he was seized by the neck from behind, dragged backwards and beaten before being taken to a police coach. He was fined £10 with £5 5s. costs. Dogs are reported to be used as live targets at the John F. Kennedy centre for special warfare at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. A dog is put under anaesthetic and then hung in a sling at a shooting gallery where an army instructor shoots it. It is then taken to an operating theatre where it is operated on for three hours. It is then nursed back to health. When it is fully recovered it is returned to the operating theatre where a leg is amputated. After this operation the animal is destroyed. The Commanding Officer says the experiments are carried out to save human lives.

THE ANIMAL LOVERS and Protection Society of Mexico have nominated Walt Disney for the Nobel Peace Prize. . . . IT IS REPORTED FROM New York (via the *New Statesman*) that gang rumbles and playground murders are now rare having given way to drug-taking which merely necessitates robberies to finance. Legislation is to be introduced to regulate LSD (the drug). On the other hand the ban has been lifted on 'Morning Glory' seeds. A West Indian accused of having Indian hemp in his possession, spent four days in custody before it was analysed and found to be lavender seed. He explained at Marlborough Street Court that he used the seed as a relief for his stomach complaint. Discharging him the magistrate said, 'You appear to have been unfortunate, but you haven't anything more to worry about.'

JON QUIXOTE.

'I found him in the attic of a barn. There is an old bed full of rags and clothes (no sheets), a table, chair, cupboard and stove for cooking. It is freezing inside. There is no heat and he has passed three winters without it. To survive, he stayed in bed. . . . He needs everything.' This man and many others should get regular assistance of at least \$10 a month. But we don't have the necessary funds to help more than three months a year.

We are especially pleased to have been able to give small scholarships to 62 children this past winter. During the next year we hope to raise an extra \$10,000 for the Salvador de Madariaga Scholarship Fund, to honour him in his 80th year which begins July 23. If you want to honour him too, please send a special donation for this fund.

We are also hoping to have a benefit to honour Pablo Casals at 90. We will give you further details about this in the autumn.

We need your help again and we need the help of your friends. Even small amounts and friendly letters will boost the morale of those who have so little, live in isolation, and depend upon us to make life less sad and more bearable. Thank you for helping again.

Cordially,
HANNAH ARENDT,
Chairman.

Advert
Company Meeting
UNITED BLOODSUCKERS BUILDING SOCIETY

(Member of the Building Societies' Association)

Extracts from the Chairman's Report
At the Annual General Meeting of the Society, held at Claridge's Hotel, June 1, 1966, the Chairman, Mr. H. Leech, JP, said that 1965-66 had been a period of steady expansion which gave every assurance that shareholders could look forward to another year of profitable investment. More and more young couples were looking for houses; it was the Society's function to enable them to undertake the necessary mortgages. He saw no prospect of this trend slackening off.

In view of certain invidious remarks which had recently been made about Building Societies' activities, the Chairman felt it only right to point out that they made a positive contribution to the nation's moral health. In these times that was no small achievement. It was a fact that the responsibilities of a mortgage sobered the reckless spirits of youth as few measures could. In the light of this—leaving aside the financial aspect—the Government's misguided threat to introduce reduced-interest home loans, had it been implemented, would undoubtedly have led to further erosion of the country's moral fibre. Fortunately, the Building Societies had resisted, and the Government had seen the error of its ways. Yet although they must always combat attempts to lower rates of interest, since that could only cause a crisis of confidence at home and abroad, it was with sincere regret that the Building Societies had lately been forced to make further increases. This was due to inflation caused by the Government's wild spending on bad investments. Pensions were all very well in their place, but it should not be necessary to penalise the productive section of the community in order to support those who did nothing. It might be possible at some time in the future to lower rates of interest slightly, but the Government must give a firm undertaking that it would curtail its extravagance and direct the national resources into things which mattered. High amongst those things stood the need for better housing for the younger generation.

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A Capitalist Crisis

MR. WILSON'S announcements last week concerning the Government's economic policies further extended the deflationary plans for the economy. Moves in this direction have already been taken, but Mr. Wilson and his economists feel that this further stiff dose is needed.

What the measures amount to is that £500m. will be taken out of the economy, there will be a freeze in wages and prices, stiffer HP terms and the 10% tax regulator is applied on certain items. Workers are now faced with a wage freeze. This might be coupled with a price freeze, but one can only be sceptical about this. It seems that a wage freeze might be a bit much even for the loyal members of the TUC. They will come up against a lot of opposition in those industries where the

unions have a signed agreement on a long term basis such as the building industry, the railwaymen and the recent electricians' productivity agreement. Lower paid workers like the agricultural workers have challenged the wage freeze and have submitted a new claim for a 'significant increase'. Municipal authorities have taken the opportunity to freeze the new pay award until they receive Government guidance.

The so-called 'pressure on the pound' has, it seems, warranted these measures. It must be remembered that at the moment the Government has no legislation on the Statute books to enforce this freeze. It is purely voluntary. This makes it even more important that the Government's Bill to enforce its incomes policy should be opposed with far more energy than at present. The Government and, no doubt, the foreign creditors would like to see this legislation pushed through as quickly as possible and then workers would be faced with virtually a legally enforced wage freeze.*

This deflationary policy is expected to put 500,000 people out of work. That might be all very well for our capitalist economy, but even this figure could be an underestimate. The trouble is that once a deflationary policy is embarked upon, it tends to gather a greater momentum than was at first intended. Already there are factors that point to a higher level of unemployment than the Prime Minister suggests. It must also be realised that because of the trade unions and his own 'left wing', ineffectual as they are, Wilson obviously would play down the unemployment estimates. For instance, the mid-July unemployed figures show that these were increased by 2,959 to a total of 264,039. Although this is the lowest July figure since 1961, the indications are that this year the sharp drop which normally occurs in June and July has in fact been reversed.

The labour market has been tight for a long time, but it seems that the turning point had already been reached even before these new measures. Further measures such as the Selective Employment Tax will accelerate this process and could lead to an unemployment figure nearer the million mark.

'TOO FAT AND TOO LAZY'

The Economist has this to say about the Government's measures: 'The massive package thumped down before Parliament on Wednesday means that Mr. Wilson's Government is now following a right wing policy of deflation more resolutely, more ruefully, more reactionarily — although, unfortunately, also more messily — than any of its predecessors since the war. It is right to begin by emphasising and praising the resolution. Any speculator who has been moving out of sterling because he believes that the British people have grown too fat and too lazy should, in logic, have started to move back into the currency as soon as the harassed Prime Minister sat down. Mr. Wilson has now done a great deal to see that the British people become less fat, and to make us more idle only in the sense that more of us are going to lose our jobs. In terms of higher unemployment and of far fewer unfilled vacancies, the breathing space for a redeployment of internal resources is almost certainly going to be there.'

The trouble is that, once again, the measures have been imposed in just about the clumsiest possible way. They are clumsy internally because the present fault of the British is that they are exporting and investing too little, but consuming too much; the need is therefore to redeploy resources, some of them by the imposition of temporary unemployment, out of consumption into exports and investment.

So what we are actually faced with is a good old capitalist crisis. To solve this, Keynesian economies seem to have been somewhat bypassed and the rather drastic, near panic of the Government to restore

confidence in the pound could, in itself, cause further panic among the sterling speculators. They want a more healthy economy in the sense of higher returns for investments. In other words, the profit motive, the driving force of the capitalist system. To achieve this certain changes in the employment of labour is needed, a 'breathing space' for a redeployment of internal resources'.

WHO REALLY RULES

It is not our job as Anarchists, or for that matter as wage earners, to tell the Government and the employers how to solve their crises. These crises arise because of the very nature of the system, but even though they are essentially phoney, they do serve a purpose. They create the climate and conditions under which certain changes, such as the redeployment of labour, can take place and so make for a more viable capitalist system.

If, because of the lack of confidence in the pound, people's livelihoods are threatened by the foreign and British speculators, it poses the question of who really rules. The present Government claims it was put into power to make tough decisions, but the last thing the electorate wanted was unemployment. In fact part of the reason for this phoney crisis is the Government's hesitation and delay in taking these measures. But finally, the measures that have been taken are dictated by people who never come up for election. The State merely enacts the measures necessary for this ruling class to survive. Whatever Government is in power, the position will remain essentially the same. In fact while the profit motive, whether in Western capitalist countries or in Eastern State capitalist countries, exists, a permanent crisis will persist.

Strong workers' organisation at the place of work is prerequisite to defeating the worst effects of the Government's policies. It should not stop here, for at the present time the true nature of the State is evident, that of an appendage to the capitalist system. Whatever the intentions of a political party on entering Parliament, they end up the same as the rest when they are in power. It will not be in Parliament that the main struggle against the wage freeze, etc., will be carried out, but at the place of work. It is not to Parliament that we, as wage earners, should look, but to our job organisations for it is here that the capitalist crises will be fought and decided. P.T.

*There is a strong possibility that statutory backing to enforce a wage freeze will now be added at the Committee Stage of the Incomes Bill.

A Package with Strings

THE CLASS WAR is over. The claim this time is made by a spokesman for the employers in the electrical contracting industry, on the signing of a new three year package deal.

The new agreement alters the job structure of the industry and sets up a joint board of union leaders and management, which will be responsible for managing the changes in job structure. This means that the employers will have a say in job grading. The employers will decide the initial grading but there will be a right of appeal to the board.

The board will also be responsible for controlling overtime and eliminating unofficial strikes. It will supervise the productivity and efficiency of individual companies. The board's accountants will have the power to examine details of company production costs.

The agreement included wage increases up to 33% spread over three years. Now, of course, the query is whether the agreement is frozen under the Government's latest measures. Both the ETU and the management feel this would be grossly unfair especially as they are trying so hard to increase productivity.

These productivity arrangements are a real confidence trick. The employers kid you that they have taken you into their confidence about increasing productivity, and then drop you a crumb, accompanied

Freedom For Workers' Control

JULY 30 1966 Vol 27 No 24

ENV's Showdown

THE DISPUTE at ENV's engineering factory at Willesden has now made the front pages of the national newspapers. It looks as though we are reaching the stage of an inevitable showdown with the management.

The American parent company last month sent over a Mr. Townsend as the new managing director of ENV. He said this week: 'I have been charged either to make this a profitable division or close it down.' The company claims that at present they are losing £36,000 per month, when three years ago they were making 15% profit on the year.

What the management wants is for the workers to scrap their existing agreements and to re-negotiate new ones. The shop stewards have achieved high rates of pay in return for the minimum of effort and now the management is attempting to alter all this. The company wants an all round speed-up and is bringing in an 'independent' firm of industrial consultants to draw up the plans.

Mr. Townsend has said they are tied up by 'literally hundreds' of local agreements which 'must be modified'. 'We refuse to negotiate with shop stewards on piece-work rates and other departmental issues since the management cannot negotiate under duress.' This statement is rubbish because the stewards have made certain that there are no departmental disputes taking place. So there is no question of 'duress'.

A BALLOT

However, what the company did do, without consulting the stewards, was to have a ballot of the workers. This was done in the factory and the workers were asked if they accepted the management's idea of scrapping existing agreements and negotiating new ones. Before the ballot, Mr. Townsend said: 'If the ballot is negative, we will have no alternative but to close down.' Shop stewards protested about this ballot and told workers that they were against it. Anyway, nothing came of it because some ballot boxes disappeared, another was emptied out and so the Electoral Reform Society declared the vote void.

ENV's have now sent voting papers for a postal vote to be completed by Friday, July 29. At a mass meeting in the canteen, workers decided to boycott

this postal vote and to demonstrate what they thought of the 'secret vote' by bringing their voting papers into work to burn them en masse.

How is it that such high rates of pay and good conditions have been achieved at ENV's? Full credit must go to the shop stewards, but they could not have done this alone. They must have had the backing of the men, who no doubt realised just what good union organisation can achieve. One could say, and no doubt the new American owners are saying this, that it was weak management. I would call it strong shop-floor organisation, which gained a favourable decision in 59 out of 60 local disputes.

As Mr. Townsend admits, the company has to gain the position where 'the management takes back into its hands the reasonable functions of management'. In statement after statement, this is the repeated theme. The Daily Mail said: 'To a large extent the shop stewards at ENV have taken the law into their own hands and local union officials have found it difficult to maintain any control over them.'

SUPPORT FROM OTHER WORKERS

What must be realised in this dispute is that there is a lot at stake, and this is an important dispute from which a lot can be learned. The implications and the outcome are important not only to the ENV workers, but to workers generally.

I think the management will close down the Willesden factory if it cannot get its way. After all, we have an isolated case where workers have gained very wide measures of job control and men can take home £27 for a comfortable week's work. Because the factory is losing money, the management is not going to tolerate this for very long. The whole idea of the ballot was to drive a wedge into the unity that exists amongst ENV workers. But in the final analysis, the management can close the place down. If this happens, these workers will need a lot of support, such as sympathy strikes, by other workers, for if it does reach the close-down stage, they will be defeated if this support is not forthcoming.

If on the other hand the management does provoke a strike, it will try to smash the Shop Stewards' Committee. If this does happen, no doubt top union officials will be only too pleased to negotiate fresh agreements with the management.

As I have written earlier, I feel this dispute does have important implications for workers generally in as much as this particular struggle involves an issue which is vital to all workers, namely job control. Because ENV workers have achieved this to such an extent, they should get the maximum support possible from trade unionists everywhere. P.T.

Under the new arrangement packaged timber instead of loose timber will be dealt with by 16 men as opposed to the conventional method which would need 72 men. The dockers were not too happy about this agreement and struck work for two days. They claimed that the new agreement would displace older dockers who could only earn a living by working on the quay. Also the new agreement will breach the 'continuity rule', a system whereby a gang stays on a job until it is completed.

Dockers have returned to work on the assurance of the London Docks' Group Secretary of the T&GWU that the continuity rule as applied to the new system would be reviewed. The T&GWU are so committed to this productivity kick that 'anything goes'. Increased productivity means eight for you and two for the employer, not the other way round. Blimey! You already start off any deal with a deficit.

BILL CHRISTOPHER.

Contact Column

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

Tourist Accommodation Wanted. American woman, travelling in Europe, needs CHEAP accommodation in London for approximately three weeks in September. Prefer relatively central location. Would like companion for European travels. Garcia Davidson, 63 Winfield, San Francisco, USA.

Centenary Lectures, NSS. August 5. Freethought and the Arts, Blakeston, Calder, Cotes. Meetings 7.30 p.m., Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.

Dictionary Definitions, Mutual (a), reciprocally given and received; showing community of action. **Aid** (n), help, assistance, relief. To all my financial beneficiaries: It's about time I was on the receiving end! Martin Bragg, 5 The Drive, Hunton Hill, Erdington, Birmingham, 23.

SOS. Nineteen-year-old girl, in mental hospital, will be certified for three years if no one will take responsibility for her. She needs love and affection! Box No. 38.

War Office? Would anybody who owns or has access to a military-looking vehicle please contact Box 37.

Accommodation Wanted in country near London for active man with invalid wife. Small income. Also any job considered. Open to genuine suggestions. Must move to help wife's health. Box No. 35.

Accommodation Wanted. Urgently. Poet seeks poet-cheap room in West London. Otherwise responsible person. Box 33.

Centenary Lectures NSS. July 22. Freethought and Social Work. Peter Fryer and Kerstine Richards. August 5. Freethought and the Arts, Blakeston, Calder, Cotes. Meetings 7.30 p.m., Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.

French Camp. Hitch-hiking companion wanted. July 23 onwards. Valerie Clarke, 58 Holmwood Road, Enfield.

Event. Would all those interested in participating in a lunatic event please contact Box 007.

Summer School. Committee of 100—July 23/30 on 'The Scope of Libertarianism' at Aylesmore Farm, Warwick. Cost £3. Register by 10/- deposit to 13 Goodwin Street, London, N.4.

Tapes wanted. Loan of tapes of poetry readings, meetings, protest songs, etc. Postage will be repaid. J. Barns, 144 Park Estate, Toftwood, Derham, Norfolk.

Wanted. Support for London market project. Cash and/or loan of van. Box 34.

If you wish to make contact let us know.