

## BRING THE TROOPS HOME!

before they come home themselves

WE ARE ASSURED by President Nixon and his spokesmen that the Vietnamese war is being 'Vietnamesized'; that is to say that responsibility for combat is gradually being passed over to Vietnamese (of the Southern variety, naturally) and that American soldiers are gradually being withdrawn—all of those who survived, that is. One always has an impression that the war was 'Vietnamesized' enough already; that the Vietnamese (both North and South) were those who did the major part of the dying and suffering.

However, be that as it may, it is one of the planks in President

Nixon's platform to gradually withdraw American troops—so gradually as to be imperceptible. So he is plagued by those who voted for him to end the war in Vietnam, at least to modify some of its harmful effects; for example lack of victory, unbalancing effects on economy, drain on manpower by conscription and general decline in American morale. Some groups of the left have put forward the slogan 'Bring the Troops Home Now' with its 1914-18 echoes of Henry Ford's Peace Ship and equally vapid promise to 'Get the Boys Out of the Trenches by Christmas'.

The American Trotskyist journal

*Spartacist* (in an article reprinted by *Socialist Current*) criticizes this slogan as 'a soft and social patriotic formulation of the correct demand for immediate withdrawal of US troops'. This appears in an article criticizing the GI draft resistance movement in the United States.

One feels as one reads the half-a-dozen or so 'underground' army newspapers and sees the impressive list of current GI magazines; as one reads accounts of the statistics for desertion; the advice column 'shaft the draft' in the *Los Angeles Free Press*; and reads of soldiers taking part in moratorium day demonstrations—one feels that unless President Nixon is very careful there won't be any soldiers there for him to withdraw. To reiterate a well-loved *cliche*—and why should the Trotskyists have all the best *cliches*?—they will have 'voted with their feet'.

True, the portion of deserters, conscientious objectors and 'draft-dodgers' is minimal but one must assess it as the tip of an iceberg showing the mass of frostiness un-

derneath which can wreck the stoutest ship of state. Every boy that goes 'over the hill' to Sweden and safety, every conscript doing time rather than kill, every hippy who poses as a homosexual to avoid the draft, is helping to bring the Vietnam war to an end. And there are others who have some sympathy with these views and for personal, family reasons or sheer cowardice—for we are only human—will not take the same stand, but will fail to shoot on occasion, be slow in obeying inhuman orders, will turn a blind eye to infringements of military regulations. This is sabotage by the mind and is nurtured by the more brazen defiances.

*Spartacist*, in its exhortation, betrays its anxiety to recognize *faits accomplis*. 'The GI movement is vitally important not because it can end the war alone [if it moved in the right direction it could] but because the army is a place where radicals, predominantly middle-class, can reach and convince the masses of working-class youth with whom they are sharing common problems

in the enormously educational experience of seeing US Imperialism first hand.' This sounds very like the official line that conscription is democratic and one joins the Army, Navy or Air Force to see the world.

GI Press Service has a bitter joke of a lady at the 'Women's Club' asking, 'And for our servicemen's night, shall we give a "welcome home" party for our three returning Vietnam veterans or a "bon voyage" party for our fifty boys going there?'

Nixon's schemes for gradual withdrawal will not stand up to the real testimony of Pinkville—that there are GIs ready to say the war is immoral. The civilian who is ready to harbour a deserter (and the War Resisters' International is interested in this—but not by post or telephone), the civilian who knows ways of getting deserters away, may not be ideologically pure or correct, but are doing more to end the war in Vietnam than President Nixon or *Spartacist*.

JACK ROBINSON.

## POWELL REPATRIATED

ENOCH POWELL WITHDREW from his engagement to speak in Dundee today, Friday, 23rd. Dundee students had planned to occupy the Tower Building where Powell was to have spoken on Thursday evening. Although the decision to lock Powell out of the Tower was common knowledge, the details of the plan are not. There is a general feeling that we were robbed, for there is no substitute for a tangible victory which is a concrete show of strength, such as the seizure of a building. Many of us were ready to go to Dundee from St. Andrews last night (and from other towns) when we heard that Powell had withdrawn.

Principal Drearer of Dundee had stated his opposition to the visit last year, and I should think that the police met with no co-operation from the university. Certainly if the police were barred from university property they would not have been able to assure Powell's passage to the Tower.

In St. Andrews tonight the police put barriers around the Town Hall where Powell spoke at the St. Andrews Conservative Association annual dinner at 6 p.m. just before the main body of demonstrators arrived. The barrier ran right down the middle of the road with a 'gate' at each end (gates should be locked, militants carrying locks and chains forward please!) which were opened for motor cars, mostly carrying racists going to eat.

There were the usual cries and chants 'Disembowel Enoch Powell' until the ogre himself arrived, looked evil, and went inside.

Things began to look boring until Munza, an Arab student, walked up to the front door, carrying a ticket and wearing a dinner jacket under his red gown. On being refused admittance he tried to reason with the flunkies until, for no apparent reason, two courageous policemen grabbed him and dragged him off. The van then threw him into the road and he was run over by a car and driven home.

By the time Powell left, after 11 p.m., most of the crowd had drifted off, and he left with little more than a couple of jeers (about 100 demonstrators left). But not all the fun was over. According to a policeman one student fell, and when the policeman put out his foot to save him he accidentally struck the student's testicles. The student had to be helped into a car and driven home. I think that we should all arm ourselves with pen and paper, and get witnesses when we see this kind of violence at demonstrations, or when arbitrary arrests are made.

A constant stream of prosecutions against the police may help to swing public opinion in our favour, and at worst it will make policemen think twice before they kick, club and arrest our comrades. Meaning you, mate! B.T.

## Who's for Competition?

SIR KEITH JOSEPH, Tory Shadow Minister for Industry, outlined Tory economic policy to the Conservative Trades Union Advisory Committee. He advocated a vigorous competition policy. In the interests of boosting competition he foresaw privatisation of many sectors of industry now in public ownership and the minimum of public monopoly industries.

Reeds Group have made £120 million takeover bid for the International Publishing Corporation. One must assume of course that as it is not a government takeover, then it must be purely in the public interest. Cecil King in his statement to the *Sunday Times* sums up the situation. 'The merger serves two purposes. Firstly, it stops the squabbling

at IPC by making quite clear who is master; and secondly, it binds Reeds' principal customer to itself. (My italics.) IPC publications had shown a tendency recently to buy their paper abroad.'

It would appear that all had not been well with IPC management. The sale of the *Sun* cost them money in compensation and now the *Sun* was stealing *Mirror* circulation. The *Mirror Coloured Supplement* was finding it hard to compete with the well-established comic papers.

If the merger does go through and objections are not anticipated, one's mind immediately turns to closures. The incoming mob always look for so-called 'dead wood'. When IPC was formed

they did exactly this. Various plants were closed down, some periodicals went to the wall and others were merged.

The newspaper world is full of surprises; one is never quite sure what is going to happen next, nothing is impossible as the *News Chronicle* and *Star* printworkers found out to their cost.

Coming back to Sir Keith's vigorous competition, one wonders if he is really serious, unless he means competition for top managerial jobs, but there again if you are the mob taking over you don't have to compete, you just buy the jobs. It's as simple as that. Provided it is in the Public Interest.

BILL CHRISTOPHER.

## INDUSTRIAL UNREST GROWS.

Various complaints have been made—both by the present writer and others—to the effect that the Aberdeen workers are apathetic and reluctant to take action over even fundamental issues.

Recent events in local industry have revealed what, we must hope, is a chink in this curtain of apathy. Everyone in Aberdeen knows of the prominence of the Lewis Empire. Between father and sons, they own, or have an interest in, half the bloody city. Among other businesses, the Lewis clan have invested heavily in the building of luxury flats—to let at £8 a week upwards—in a city with thousands of couples sharing houses and on the waiting list. Hotels, the food trade, engineering and shipbuilding are the other activities of these local magnates.

Their recent attempts to dispose of a shop steward at the Lowy shipyard shows that this lot are vicious enemies of the workers of Aberdeen—apart from being about 200 years out of date, even by capitalist standards in Aberdeen. It has been remarked that while capitalists in more advanced parts of the country recognise that the union bureaucrats—suitably tamed—are a useful friend and ally against the unofficial strength of the workers, the Aberdeen mini-tycoons still exist in a mental

## COME & PICK OUR BRAINS!

world which pre-dates the Tolpuddle Martyrs. Some of them really honestly believe trade unions to be immoral and evil. I once had a boss who pleaded with me to give up union membership—with tears in his eyes, he implored me (as a valued worker) not to make the *gulf* between us unbridgeable. He was truly sincere! The Aberdeen capitalist sees trade unionism as a bad habit—like picking your nose—an unwanted import from the degenerate South.

Thus, as soon as the new shop steward began to put some life into the moribund union committee at the yard (which is just a scrap-heap anyway), Lewis struck—hoping no doubt that the seemingly general lack of consciousness and the ever-present fear of the sack would serve to discipline the men to accept the loss of their representative. The response must have given him the shits! The men struck, and at once made moves to spread the strike to other sections of the shipbuilding industry—a solidarity move not seen nearly enough in Aberdeen. They made the fatal mistake, however, of allowing the fight to fall into the soft hands of the union

officialdom and the dispute was spirited away to 'national level' (or cloud cuckoo land) never to be seen again. The lesson is, rely on *yourselves*. If workers on strike in Aberdeen want any assistance with organising—no strings attached—get in touch with groups like anarchists. We've a lot of tips to pass on.

The dust-cart drivers' strike has had two results—the men got their money and the Labour Council was shown in its true class colours. Only a Labour Council—personified by James Lamond (one-time Communist, CND member and pseudo-'Left') could have dreamt up the idea of calling in *non-union* contractors (some of the lorries were manned by country yokels who probably get paid in eggs) to break the strike. The men were lucky to pull it off—there was little attempt by the rank and file to control the strike—everything being left in the hands of the union. They also allowed the press to slander them stupid—which could have been counteracted by their issuing leaflets to the public. We'd have been happy to print them. The dustmen could use all sorts of tactics short of actual strike action. How about picking up the bins all right,

but leaving the councillors' ones unemptied? Or even dumping the city's rubbish in the Lord Provost's front garden. Or picketing councillors' homes in your spare time. This way the public gets a laugh, gets their rubbish picked up, warns to your cause, ignores the press, and the councillors would practically pay up out of their own pockets. We're full of little ideas like that. Why not come along and pick our brains?

PETER THE PAINTER.

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

POSTERS NOW ON SALE  
5 for 2s.6d. including postage  
from Freedom Press

(ssh!—for flyposting?)

## Bail at Last!

THE FOUR REMAINING squatters, arrested after the Rumbold Road, Fulham, eviction, were given bail today (Monday, January 26) in No. 6 court at London's Old Bailey.

Diarmuid Breatnach, Ken Harris and Ray Tuckwell, were at last united with their friends and families after being remanded for nearly four months. The case of Michael Ali is, at the time of writing, complicated by an outstanding case to be heard at a magistrate's court and the absence of the surety, and so he has not been released.

The usual objections against bail were submitted by Det-Superintendent Nigel Howell, a repetition of the offence and their professed anarchism or connections with anarchists.\*

All defendants were given bail on their own recognisance of between £100 and £250 and one surety each of £500 with conditions of reporting daily to a named police station.

A definite date of February 9 has now been set for the trial.

P.T.

\*See Vol. 30, No. 34.

**TO PROTEST** in generalised terms is an exercise that panders to one's conscience yet does little to abate the general misery of the individuals involved. That war, starvation, poverty and all the other pratfalls of the human comedy are evil things that should be written out of the universal script is accepted as a popular truth, but when we seek to isolate a particular evil we find that too many men of power, influence and/or high principles are inextricably involved, so it is back to the ancient truism that evil is wrong and the opposition is evil.

In discussing the work of Antoni Miralda, Beate Sydhoff demands to know why the Spanish Government should be represented at the last two Venice biennales by artists such as Rafael Canogar and Juan Genoves whose works protest the very system that sponsors them, and the answer is that as long as you generalise your protest, you dissipate it. Antoni Miralda was born in Barcelona in 1942 and he is a child of his time. For the last seven years he has chosen to live in voluntary exile in Paris as an active member of the group of young Catalans who oppose not only the Spanish Government but all forms of authority, legal and military. But Miralda is opposed to all forms of violence and

# Around The Galleries

this must make for this young Catalan a personal and ever-present dichotomy.

His work, now on display at the Hanover Gallery at 32a George Street, W.1, spells out his predicament. It is of a style that has become over-familiar these last few years and on first viewing one thinks of the creations of the American Louise Nevelson that were shown in this same gallery in the early sixties. The American covered the walls of this plush Mayfair gallery with a huge assembly of small black painted boxes and cupboards until they reared ceilingward as a huge gothic folly epitomising a monument to Western despair. But Miralda has reversed the process and has turned the gallery into a Regency sepulchre. Bone white, these dainty cupboards and columns delight the eye until one approaches to examine the intricate rococo lace-like decoration that overlays in geometrical patterns the white bases of cupboard and column. Miralda has used hundreds upon hundreds of tiny plastic toy soldiers to form his rococo

decorations and these tiny plastic snow-white American soldiers march in an endless and mindless regiment along every edge and around each column, an army of the dead, fixed in time for our delight. They turn each article of furniture into a loveless wedding cake and the planting of the American flag on Iwo Jima becomes a mass pose for The Ice-man Cometh as these tiny white plastic toys freeze into decorative immobility. And to stand in the doorway of the gallery for a single backward glance is to see once more only the white Regency furniture and colonnades and the tracery of white lace-like patterns but, as with the clinical case of John Lennon and Yoko, we are much too concerned admiring and being amused by the artistic act to pay heed to the actions it condemns.

But the Town is fortunate in not only playing host to the work of Miralda but in housing two major exhibitions that, though separated by a bus ride, complement each other as few major exhibitions have done in the past. The Elizabethan

Image at the Tate Gallery and the 1,000 years of Art in Poland at the Royal Academy offer two rare chances of seeing the supreme examples of a society in full creative flower. The Elizabethans had by violence already staked their claims as the great families of England and they could afford to turn their backs on the vulgarity of battle for the pleasures of the court and the world of politics. For in the jungle of their age they fought to survive and they survived. And the mark of their survival is now on display within the Tate Gallery wherein we, the lumpenproletariat, may cast a sad eye on the past and a shrug to the future.

The Tate indeed offers a magnificent exhibition of the high point of a particular society as frame after frame shows portrait after portrait at its brilliant best. The jewelled and flowered costumes are recorded in paint, pearl by pearl, but above the lace ruffs there gazes into time the faces of men and women, hard, greedy and insolent, but knowing that by their courage and their intelligence they have conquered their brutish society and that they intend to enjoy the fruits of their struggle. Yet even we can draw some small measure of comfort for ourselves and our age in the knowledge and the fact that as one surreptitiously measures oneself against the armour of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, that stands in the main hall, one finds that one is a head taller than the Elizabethan Earl.

The Royal Academy exhibition of 1,000 years of Art in Poland by its very title covers too great a period of time to form any understanding of the societies that produced these works. To use a period of 1,000 years as a measure of

the cultural worth of any society can only mean that one skims off a small measure of its surface greatness and in doing so gives a false impression of its true achievements at various periods. When this exhibition was on display at the Petit Palais in Paris in 1969 it stopped at 1914 but Jerzy Banach of the Cracow National Museum has chosen to bring the exhibition up to date by including a large number of contemporary Polish paintings and posters, etc. In this he was wrong for the speed of modern communications kills off any national arts in Europe and, having walked through room after room of paintings, weapons and ancient church treasures of a crude and brutal strength, we end in a gallery of contemporary, sophisticated and internationalised art that is the common coin on any gallery in the Western world. But here in the main galleries is the wealth of a primitive peasant people, savage in their living and savage in their arts, so that only the use of gold and precious stones saved much of it for our age. Here is the record of a feudal society that degenerated into a wasteland of hereditary landlords whose hollow titles won them a place at the dining tables of their Western hosts while their arts and their lands lapsed into decay.

For the Polish nationalist there could only be a vision of a romantic past epitomised in the gold cross of Prince Boleslas, the crude copper crown found in 1910 but already six hundred years old, or the armour of Stanislaw Jablonowski. But let us begin with the present and end with the present, for this is our age and our problem. And Roy Rasmussen at the Whibley Gallery at 22 Cork Street, W.1, offers work that of its monumental strength looks back to the Polish artists rather than the Elizabethans for his sculptures of beaten metal exist between that borderline of abstract and reality that stands outside time.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

## LTA CONFERENCE

**SOME TWENTY PEOPLE** gathered together on Sunday, January 18, for the fourth Day Conference of the Libertarian Teachers' Association, held this time at the Meeting Hall, Freedom Bookshop.

Although it is true to say that the LTA began as a one-man-band and continued for some time to be little more than that, gratifyingly this is no longer accurate, even though nothing in the form of a committee or conventional organisational structure exists. It was evident from the morning discussion of internal business that at least amongst those present, there was no strong feeling of dissatisfaction with the vague nature of the group. Some associates from Ipswich pointed out that, despite the location of the central address, the LTA is not a London group—it is international in principle and in fact, with a basically small number of contacts widely scattered throughout the British Isles and in over fifteen countries abroad. This point was made in curtailing a discussion on the need for more London meetings, a matter of interest only to London contacts.

*The Libertarian Teacher*, the weighty annual journal of the Association, remains its cornerstone and principal *raison d'être*. It has been encouraging, as the issues have increased in size and, hopefully, in quality, to register subscriptions from a variety of University Departments of Education, Colleges of Education and Libraries. There is no current shortage of high quality educational magazines but, particularly since the demise of *Id* (Journal of the Summerhill Society), it seems that *The*

*Libertarian Teacher* occupies a secure niche as the only British journal catering for specifically libertarian educational opinion. However the Association must find ways of producing its literature more frequently; might it be a realistic aim to establish, within the next two years, *The LT* as a quarterly printed journal? The persistence of interest in the Association and its literature despite the lack of any systematic advertising does suggest how much more interest might be tapped with the stimulus of an advertising campaign. A small practical step taken by the Conference towards this end was discussion and agreement on the text of a basic descriptive leaflet suitable for distribution and display in Colleges of Education and elsewhere.

The London group of the Association has recently agreed to work with the Fifth Estate Press in compiling a *Libertarian Educational Directory* (including amongst other material, the addresses of relevant educational groups here and abroad, descriptions of schools and colleges and a bibliography). This printed pamphlet should be completed by July 1970.

A number of extensions and improvements to the LTA service were discussed including the feasibility of a postal library, the value of an educational advisory service, the possibility of holding weekly discussion meetings in London and the merits of occasional militant direct action. Some of these schemes are dependent on the LTA devising for itself a more stable and reliable source of income. However, this problem we shall always have with us in

some degree, and we will make no progress if we permit every other advance to be contingent on the solution of the endemic 'money-problem'.

In the absence of invited speakers on the Anti-Social Research Project of the London Street Commune, a social worker who has been linked with the Commune answered questions about the LSC and took part in a broad discussion on the essentials of communal living and the problems facing young people intent on creating alternatives to the generally approved goals of our society. What purposes are served by labelling some people as inadequate, delinquent or mal-adjusted? What does the process mean for the labelled and for the labeller? In the time available, these questions were stated rather than explored in any detail or subtlety.

Finally an associate described his recent adventures in the West Indian Island of St. Vincents, during a brave but unsuccessful attempt to establish an

educational community to meet the unanswered needs of the local young people. Having met his main opposition in the West Indies from the local Anglican priest, some participants in the Conference were amazed at the speaker's optimism in attempting a similar project in what must surely be one of the world's centres of reactionary

## The Cnequers Lane Swindle

**A £52,000 BACKHANDER** from Fords to the Council gives Fords the right to buy their way onto the Council waiting list at the expense of those in housing need.

No one gains out of this manoeuvre, least of all the Fords tenants who are being forced out of their homes—against their will.

The millionaires who own Fords can afford their own rehousing scheme but instead have attempted to get their way on the cheap in a manner which forces

## LETTER Enlightenment?

Dear Comrades,  
Ian Sutherland (FREEDOM, 24.1.70) wants you to 'restrict your columns to supporting the class struggle'. So, if someone like Dave Dunliffe writes an

us to ask the question, 'Who runs this Council, Fords or the elected representatives on the Council?'

The Campaign to Clear Hostels and Slums intends to fight this issue on behalf of those on the housing list and in half-way houses. Contact 3 Osborn Street, London, E.1.

clerical influence: South Italy. A case of marching in where even angels fear to tread—unless they are in the mafia. However, nothing ventured...

A summary of decisions taken at this conference is included in the second *LTA Newsletter*, available free from 36 Devonshire Road, Mill Hill, N.W.7.

PETER FORD.



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

## ANARCHIST FEDERATION of BRITAIN

**LONDON FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS.** All correspondence to I.F.A. c/o Freedom Press, Black Knight Group, 5 Nelson Road, N.8. Meeting Wednesdays.  
**LAVENDER HILL.** Contact C. Broad, 116 Tyneham Road, S.W.11 (228 4086).  
**LEWISHAM.** Jon Rames, 12 Oakcroft Road, S.E.13 (852 9551).  
**PORTOBELLO ROAD ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact Andrew Dewar, 16 Kilburn House, Malvern Place, N.W.6. Meetings 8 p.m. every Tuesday.  
**PINCH'S ANARCHISTS.** Regular meetings. Contact P.P., 271 Portobello Road, W.11.  
**BEXLEY ANARCHIST MOVEMENT.** Steve Leman, 28 New Road, Abbey Wood, S.E.2. Tel. FT 33377. Meetings every Friday, 8 p.m., Lord Bexley, Bexley Heath Broadway.  
**S.W. LONDON ANARCHISTS.** Meeting alternate Wednesdays. Correspondence c/o Freedom Press.  
**NOTTING HILL S.P.S.H.** 18 Powis Square, W.11.  
**NEWHAM.** Pat Keen, 98 Clova Road, London, E.7.

**EAST LONDON LIBERTARIAN FEDERATION**  
Secretary: Anthony Matthews, 35 Mayville Road, London, E.11. Meetings fortnightly on Sundays at Ron Bailey's, 128 Hainault Road, E.11. Ten minutes from Leytonstone Underground.  
**OFF-CENTRE LONDON**  
**DISCUSSION MEETINGS**  
Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Flat 10, Chessington Lodge, Regents Park Road, N.3.

**REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND GROUPS**  
**BIRMINGHAM ANARCHIST GROUP.** Secretary,

Peter Le Mare, 5 Hannaford Road, Rotton Park, Birmingham, 16. Meetings every Sunday, 8 p.m., in the smoke room of St. Martin pub, corner of St. Martin's Lane and Jamaica Row.  
**BOURNEMOUTH AREA.** Bob Fry, 30 Douglas Close, Upton, Poole, Dorset.  
**CORNWALL ANARCHISTS.** Contact Arthur Jacobs, 13 Ledrah Road, St. Austell, Cornwall. Meetings on the second Friday of each month at 42 Pendarves Street, Beacon, Camborne. 7.30 p.m. Visiting comrades very welcome.  
**PEACE ACTION.** Rory Weightman, P.C.T. Peace Action Group, St. Pauls Road, Portsmouth, Hants.  
**CROYDON LIBERTARIANS.** Laurens and Celia Otter, 35 Natal Road, Thornton Heath, CR4 8QH (653 7546) or contact Keith McCain, 1 Langmead Street, West Norwood, S.E.27. Phone 670 7297.  
**EDGWARE PEACE ACTION GROUP.** Contact Melvyn Estrin, 84 Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middx.  
**FARNBOROUGH.** 81 Mytchett Road, Mytchett, Camberley, Surrey. Tel. Farnborough 43811.  
**HERTS.** Contact Val and John Funnell, 10 Fry Road, Chells, Stevenage.  
**LANCASTER.** John King, 4 The Grove, Lancaster.  
**LIVERPOOL ANARCHISTS & SITUATIONISTS.** Contact Gerry Bres, 16 Faulkner Square, Liverpool.  
**LEICESTER.** Contact Di and A. Humphrey, 74 High Street, Leicester (22406).  
**MUTUAL AID GROUP.** c/o Borrowdale, Carrage Drive, Frodsham, Cheshire.  
**NORTH EAST ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact M. Renick, 122 Mowbray Street, Heaton, Newcastle on Tyne 6.  
**NORTH SOMERSET ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact Roy Emery, 3 Abbey Street, Bala, or Geoffrey Barfoot, 71 St. Thomas Street, Wells.  
**ORPINGTON ANARCHIST GROUP.** Knockholt, Nr. Sevenoaks, Kent. Every six weeks at Greenways, Knockholt. Phone: Knockholt 2316. Brian and Maureen Richardson.

**READING.** 26 Bulmershe Road. Tel.: Reading 65645. Meetings every Thursday.  
**SOUTHALL.** Dave Smith, 102 Abbots Road, Southall.  
**TAUNTON.** c/o Dave Poulson, 473 Bramley Road, Taunton, Somerset.  
**WEST HAM ANARCHISTS.** Regular meetings and activities contact Mr. T. Plant, 10 Thackeray Road, East Ham, E.6. Tel.: 552 4162.

**ESSEX & EAST HERTS FEDERATION**  
**NORTH ESSEX.** Write: Peter Newell, 'Aegean', Spring Lane, Eight Ash Green, Colchester.  
**BASILDON & WICKFORD.** Mick Powell, 24 Cameron Close, Brentwood, Essex.  
**BISHOPS STORTFORD.** Vic Mount, 'Eastview', Castle Street, Bishops Stortford, Herts.  
**CHELMSFORD.** (Mrs.) Eva Archer, Mill House, Purling, Chelmsford, Essex.  
**EPPING.** John Barrick, 14 Centre Avenue, Epping, Essex.

**HARLOW.** Annette Gunning, 37 Longbanks, Harlow.  
**LOUGHTON.** Group c/o Students' Union, Loughton College of Further Education, Borders Lane, Loughton, Essex.  
**NORTH-WEST FEDERATION**  
Secretary: Phil, 7 Trinity Square, Preston.  
**BLACKPOOL.** Contact Christine and Graham, 2 Fenner Avenue, Southshore, Blackpool.  
**BOLTON.** Contact John Hayes, 51 Rydal Road, Bolton.  
**CHORLEY.** Contact Kevin Lynch, 6 Garfield Terrace, Chorley.  
**LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE.** Contact Les Smith, 30 Dunkeld Street, Lancaster. Meetings Monday at 8 p.m., Phil Woodhead's, 30 Dunkeld Street, Lancaster. Regular literature sales.  
**MANCHESTER ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact Rachel Golditch, 34 Waterpark Road, Salford, Lancs. (740 2516).  
**MANCHESTER ANARCHISTS AND SYNDICALISTS.** John Walker, 92 Clyde Road, West Didsbury, Manchester 20.  
**MESEYDE ANARCHISTS.** Contact P. Duke, 70 Huskisson Road, Liverpool, 8.  
**PRESTON ANARCHIST GROUP.** Rob Wilkinson, 73 Trafford Street, Preston. Meetings: 'The Wellington Hotel', Givers Court, Preston, Wednesdays, 8 p.m.  
**STOCKPORT.** Dave Crowther, 1 Castle Street, Edgeley, Stockport.

**SURREY FEDERATION**  
Munro Park, 16 Overdale Road, Dorking, Surrey.  
**EPSOM.** G. Wright, 47 College Road, Epsom. Tel. Epsom 23806.  
**KINGSTON.** Michael Squirrel, 4 Woodgate Ave., Hook, Chesham.  
**GUILDFORD.** Contact Epsom Group.

**MERTON.** Elliot Burns, 13 Amity Grove, London, S.W.19. Tel. 01-946 1444.  
**SUSSEX FEDERATION**  
Groups and individuals invited to associate: c/o Eddie Poole, 5 Tilsbury, Findon Road, Whitehawk, Brighton.  
**BRIGHTON & HOVE ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact Nick Heath, Flat 3, 26 Clifton Road, Brighton.  
**MID-SUSSEX.** Contact Adrian Howe, 10 Silverdale, Keyner, Hassocks, Sussex. Tel. Hassocks 3458.  
**CRAWLEY ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact Richard Ashwell, 87 Buckswood Drive, Gossops Green, Crawley, Sussex.  
**SUSSEX UNIVERSITY ANARCHIST GROUP** (see details under Student Groups).  
**YORKSHIRE FEDERATION**  
Secretary: Contact Leeds Group.  
**HARRGATE.** Contact Roger Willis, 22 Princess Avenue, Knaresborough, Yorks.  
**HULL.** Jim Young, 3 Fredericks Crescent, Hawthorn Avenue, Hull.  
**KEIGHLEY.** Steve Wood, 26B Cavendish Street, Keighley.  
**LEEDS GROUP.** Contact Martin Wiggins, 3 Marlborough Grove, Leeds 2.  
**SHEFFIELD.** Dave Jeffries, c/o Students' Union, Western Bank, Sheffield, 10.  
**YORK.** Keith Nathan, Vanbrugh College, Heslington, York.  
**WELSH FEDERATION**  
**ABERYSTWYTH ANARCHISTS.** Contact Steve Mills, 4 St. Michael's Place, Aberystwyth, Cardiganshire, Wales. Aug-Sept. correspondence only.  
**CARDIFF ANARCHIST GROUP.** All correspondence to: Pete Raymond, 18 Marion Street, Spillot, Cardiff.  
**SWANSEA ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact Ian Bone, 18 Windsor Street, Uplands, Swansea.  
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Please notify us if entries in these columns need amending.

# ON THE POPULAR WAR LEADER!

ARISING OUT OF our two recent articles on Biafra: 'Triumph of the Politicians' (January 10) and 'Agony of the People' (January 17), we have received two letters which we feel need answering.

The first letter was written immediately after our first article and we did not publish it because by the time we were going to press the following week the Biafran resistance had collapsed and history seemed to have caught up with Nigel Wright's arguments. Nevertheless, we think it only fair to present his central argument, even though we have cut his letter slightly.

The second letter came after our second article, and we reproduce it in full out of respect for its writer, Roger Moody, who is Nigeria/Biafra Editor of *Peace News* and who has worked tremendously hard on this subject, doing perhaps more than anyone else in any minority paper to keep the Left alert to the Biafran tragedy.

## MAKE UP YOUR MIND, JUSTIN!

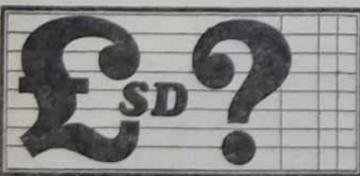
Dear Comrades,

When a group of people are threatened with decimation, as the Ibos, Ibibios, Ijaws, Efiks and others of the Eastern Region of Nigeria were in 1966/7, they are quite justified in taking up arms to defend themselves. These conditions of extreme emergency, it seems to me, demand strict organisation and responsible leaders: a time when you are surrounded by an invading army is not the time to indulge in libertarian experiments. Justin seems to use much the same argument as Harold Wilson, that the Biafran people should have surrendered, should have put themselves at the mercy of a murderous army (remember the 1966 massacres?), and allowed themselves to be kept in the corrupt, unworkable federation under the control of the old 'venal power seekers' whom Justin rightly condemns.

Under the circumstances (and comrades should know these by now) the only feasible course of action was secession by the 14 million people of the Eastern Region. What kind of structure these 14 million people might have adopted was predecided by Gowon's invasion. At this perilous moment (according to Ojukwu, the Biafran army possessed a total of 150 rifles), it was reasonable that Ojukwu should assume command. That he should do so was a universally popular step; if at any time in the past three years Justin had been to Biafra for a bloody good look and a bloody good talk with any man in the street, he would have discovered this to his utter conviction. This fact must not be misunderstood. When Justin condemns Ojukwu, with what amounts to a new variation of the old Foreign Office handout that Ojukwu is a power-hungry lunatic driving his people to destruction, he is ignoring this extraordinary, almost unanimous, and continuing popular desire for Ojukwu to control affairs so long as the war lasts.

Under the paragraph in which Justin accuses Ojukwu of being 'prepared to see millions of people die for his ambition', he accuses the Federal Government of waging a genocidal war. Make up your mind, Justin!

Fraternally yours,  
NIGEL WRIGHT.  
London, W.3  
10.1.70



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P.S.—For comrades who wish to find out what exactly Ojukwu's views are, I recommend *The Ahiara Declaration: (Principles of the Biafran Revolution)*, which is obtainable from the Save Biafra Campaign, 13 Goodwin Street, London, N.4, price 5/-.

## BIAFRA ON OUR CONSCIENCE?

Dear Editors,

I'm afraid that the anarchist conscience will remain ineffectual so long as the leading anarchist weekly generalises like it did last week on Biafra.

I am prepared to believe that a Biafran elite, complete with record players, cars, wine on the table and women in bed, survived until the bitter end. But this was in no sense the upper class as we understand one—but an assortment of individuals rightly or wrongly striving for normality. Too many discriminating and left-wing observers have been to Biafra in the past two years for us to discount their evidence, with pat analyses. The facts as I understand them are these: Basic decisions about the war were taken through a consultative assembly of chiefs, and elected representatives of the people, from the districts. The decision to abandon the war came from this body, and (from three different sources which I trust) the evidence is that Ojukwu was asked to hand over command by this assembly. He did so after making it clear that he believed surrender was the most effective way of stopping the suffering. There is still no real evidence that Ojukwu is out of Biafra, and to suggest that he hotfooted it simply for his own safety is not at all in keeping with anything he has yet done.

The conduct of the war was in the hands of a military council which comprised active leaders of the armed forces, and was not an armchair brigade. The cabinet functioned in a remarkably British manner—with its own foreign affairs minister, home affairs minister, economics adviser and so on. Biafra was even involved in helping rehabilitation of Ibos in the mid-West (the so-called Republic of Benin, declared by Ibos there after eastern secession).

In addition, there was an advisory council consisting of men like Chinua Achebe, whose task it was to report to the government on the feelings of the people. These men formed a National Guidance College whose eventual aim was to educate Biafrans in university subjects according to the 'principles of the revolution'—principles which, as laid down by Ojukwu in his green book, *The Ahiara Declaration*, seem a strange combination of exhortation, home economics, and Old Testament moralities—but as expressed by some of the College's founders seem to owe more to Marx and Lenin.

By and large, however, what happened in Biafra was in the hands of local

administrators, village chiefs, and farmers, living close to the people—indeed who were the people—in a society that has traditionally been noted for its village democracy. Whatever one feels about the state structure imposed in 1967 in order to carry on the war effort, the fact is that the common people of Biafra had a greater part in decision-making both for themselves and for the future 'Biafra' than do their counterparts in almost every other part of Africa.

If there was anything approaching an upper class it remained largely preempted by the village administrative-town civil service class. These people came up from 'the people' by a shorter route than in most Western and certainly most African societies.

By the end of 1969—if this is a useful guideline against which to measure class gaps in Biafra—Independent estimates state that about 60% of the entire people—including the administrative groups—suffered from severe malnutrition, and were either refugees or dispossessed of their property.

It is strange that so many commentators who should know better, assess the merits of both sides in this war against an academic and false measuring-stick. Given that the Biafrans seceded in order, as they believed, to protect their own lives and livelihood, that of their families, and that of generations to come, the only question we had to ask over the last two and a half years was whether or not 'Biafra' gave greater immediate guarantees to the easterners and better prospects for freedom, and a non-violent, non-exploitative community, than any of the arrangements proposed by the Federal government. I would have thought it overwhelmingly met that test.

In saying this, I do not subscribe to the values of statehood any more than I would elsewhere in the world; nor do I dismiss the possibility that a different form of resistance at the time of secession may have averted the present disaster. I only claim that, in human terms, the Federal war, British intervention on Nigeria's behalf, and the Soviet shop-front in Lagos backed by its murderous Mig fighters, cause infinitely more suffering, damned many more people, and laid the ground for more hell to come, than a settlement with the state of Biafra, on the terms offered from 1968 onwards, ever would have done.

London, N.1  
17.1.70  
ROGER MOODY.

## THE GREAT MYTH

Both our critics are obviously well informed on the internal politics of Nigeria. With respect, we should like to point out that we are concerned with something a bit more fundamental than that: the freedom of the African people.

For, Mr. Moody, this may be a generalisation which makes our con-

science ineffectual—whatever that means. The sad fact is that African politics, like politics everywhere, makes all our consciences ineffectual. Whose conscience has been effectual in this ghastly business?

The suffering of the Ibo people over the last thirty months has been completely in vain. The decision to declare UDI and then fight for it on the part of the Biafrans was a piece of political misjudgement worthy of Che Guevara himself. Nigel Wright tells us that when General Gowon invaded—after secession—the Biafran Army possessed 150 rifles! To say that they were justified in taking up arms, then, is mere rhetoric.

Nor am I impressed with the fact that General Ojukwu was a popular war leader for the Ibos. Compare Churchill in 1940—or even Hitler for the Germans! The fact that the people are stupid enough to follow leaders in a suicidal war does not make us irresponsible enough to suggest that therefore the leaders are right—or that leadership is right.

My mind boggles at Roger Moody's apology for the Biafran ruling class. 'The cabinet functioned in a remarkably British manner' forsooth! '... the state structure imposed in 1967 in order to carry on the war effort... how are ye? The way to the top was... a shorter route than in most Western and certainly most African societies' if you don't mind! And what do we make of this pathetic faith in General Ojukwu? Remember Roger is writing in a pacifist paper and presumably from a pacifist point of view—but has faith in a general! '... to suggest that (General Ojukwu) hotfooted it simply for his own safety is not at all in keeping with anything he has yet done,' Roger writes, while that very week, on another page of *Peace News*, cartoonist Donald Roomm has a drawing of the General with his running shoes on hot-footing it like hell.

Right to the end, while well-fed Biafrans in London were weeping 'How could he behave like this?', Roger Moody could not believe that a General had salted away a fortune in some other country, got his own family out to safety, and flown away after them.

Really, you know, these two contributions from our readers, far from refuting anything we said in our two articles, prove up to the hilt one aspect of them at least; that progressive, well-meaning left wingers want, in the face of all the evidence, to cling to the idea that nationalist governments are an improvement on the old colonial administration. This is a great myth which in fact vitiates the anti-imperialist struggle, like the myth of democracy vitiates the class struggle.

When Nigel Wright asks me to make up my mind, I would like to point out that my mind on taking sides in war was

Continued on page 4

# Fear of Shop Floor Power

RECENTLY A NUMBER of people have been describing the present situation between employers and employed as 'industrial anarchy'. By this they do not mean that the workers of this country are adapting the ideas of anarchism or that they want to create an anarchist society. They are referring to the unpredictable nature of the industrial action in which workers are increasingly taking part.

For the employers, this 'industrial anarchy' is chaos. The same viewpoint has also been expressed by trade union leaders. At first this may seem to be a contradiction in that both top management and trade union leaders should describe the same situation in exactly the same terms. However on closer inspection it is not in fact a contradiction, but the logical outcome of the close relationship and collaboration which has grown, both in the political and industrial sense, over the years. The so-called 'two sides' of industry are just two sides of the same coin and the industrial anarchy arises from the dissatisfaction with the signed agreements reached by them. However, those involved in this usually have only the smallest say as to what the agreements contain and which, if drawn up anywhere other than in industry, would be attacked. As it is many, like the Tory Party and most of the employers, would like to see such agreements binding by law.

## ROBENS' LAMENT

At a recent luncheon engagement in London, Lord Robens, Chairman of the National Coal Board, used the above-mentioned term and said: 'There is one great shadow over the economy—the

breakdown of industrial relations.' He lamented the fact that negotiations were becoming a thing of the past and that workers took action while talks were still in procedure. This is anarchy. Negotiations are ceasing to be negotiations and demands are taken straight into the battlefields. Anarchy, if allowed to develop in industrial relations, will destroy this country.

But what could be more chaotic than the coal industry? There have been so many ups and downs that it is no wonder that miners feel insecure and frustrated. After the closing of pits, the breaking up of whole communities and the reduction of output, the NCB are now planning an increase in production in order to meet the rising demand from the Central Electricity Generating Board and export orders.

If this isn't chaos, I don't know what is, but the tragedy is that the lives of people have been disrupted and made insecure by the policies of the National Coal Board. Making coal economically viable has been the aim, while planning for needs has been forgotten. Employers talk about the 'right to manage' but many do not have the ability since it is lost in the profit motive.

## MEMBERS ATTACKED

The fear of shop floor power was also behind the warning of Dai Davies, General Secretary of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, to the 400 members who joined the strike of 1,700 men at Port Talbot steelworks at Christmas. He wrote in the union journal that the union 'cannot condone or remain indifferent to stoppages of work which are in breach of the organisation's rules and

in violation of agreements to which the Confederation is a joint party. To adopt a contrary attitude would be to subscribe to a charter of industrial anarchy.

The Confederation can be relied on to ensure that its members receive just rewards for their efforts, but its effectiveness will be seriously diminished if production is lost by stoppages which are unjustified and unnecessary. Collective bargaining becomes a sham if it is not founded on the sanctity of agreements and industrial irresponsibility in any industry is a certain obstacle to efficiency, stability and economic security.

If workers are increasingly going to ignore agreements then the reason for having a trade union leadership will cease to exist. Long drawn out procedural agreements suit managements and trade union bureaucrats, otherwise they would be out of a job. Union leaders and employers are aware of this power. They wish to contain and discipline workers who step out of line. This is because these people see efficiency and increased production as the supreme goal. Modern production methods demand a continual process and stoppages, even of a short duration, can be very damaging.

## PROPOSALS REJECTED

The aims stated in a document issued by the executive of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Union have this in mind. Certain of the points contained in it would give the employers a weapon to keep workers under control and at work:

- (1) No industrial action, of any sort, until after procedure is exhausted at local level unless the national executive first sanction such action.
  - (2) Joint works committees to be set up.
  - (3) One year's employment before a worker can be elected as a shop steward.
- These proposals were submitted to the



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employers months ago, but were only recently made known to those affected. Leyland shop stewards have condemned the document.

Agreements are increasingly being drawn up which sell hard-won conditions and rights for a pittance. Such conditions as freedom to take strike action should not be negotiable. Productivity deals are undermining workers' freedom of action. They are regulating their hours of work, compulsory overtime, increasing the work load and cutting the labour force.

Trade unions are going along with these deals and workers are having to fight such agreements to safeguard conditions. Industrial action now is not only directed against the managements but also against the agreements made by the trade unions. As with the employers, the only weapon is industrial action to secure the demands agreed to by the rank and file and not those thought up by national union officials and managements.

P.T.

# SARAGAT'S CLIMB TO POWER

GIUSEPPE SARAGAT, President of the Republic of Italy, man of integrity. A noble past. Right-wing Socialist, he goes abroad during Mussolini's dictatorship. From his exile he gives much-needed moral support to the partisans fighting against the Nazi invaders and the Duce's blackshirts. During this period he also has his first contacts with American intelligence. After the war he comes back and joins in with the 'reconstruction government' in which everybody, from the Communist Party to the Christian Democrats, happily co-operates under the benevolent eyes of the American occupiers. Then, the Cold War: the US State Department worries about the possibility of a Communist-Socialist majority in the Italian Parliament. Saragat acts: he splits the Socialist Party and founds the Social Democratic Party—freedom, democracy and US investments are saved. The Social Democrats split the union movement and create a new syndical confederation; money is provided by the employers. The Social Democrats give unwavering support to the repressive post-war governments; they are rewarded with government posts, influence and money, but little popularity.

1960: the Christian Democrats get fed up with their diminutive but greedy allies, Saragat gets the boot, a Catholic-neofascist alliance is formed. Genoa uprisings, huge popular demonstrations shake the country, the CP threatens civil war. The government has to back down and resign. Here is Saragat's chance, he is useful again. In the Centre-Left Government he plays the role of mediator between Christian Democrats and Socialists. Saragat dreams of a Socialist reunification, of a great reformist party which will take advantage of the struggle between Communists and Catholics to become the leading force of the nation, with Saragat himself leading the reformist revival from the Highest Position of the Republic. His past of anti-fascist exile is rediscovered, he comes forward, the hope of the people, the defender of the Constitution. He takes the pretext of his wife's death to simulate a sort of conversion: a prospective candidate to the Presidency cannot be at odds with the Vatican. (Later on, when installed in the presidential palace he will find more earthly consolation for his grief in the arms of a young lass.) Giuseppe Saragat gets triumphantly elected President, thanks to the duped Communists. Socialists (purged of their left wing) and Social Democrats unify themselves in a single party, the party of the future, as the press tell us. . . . But then . . . the unified Socialists lose a third of their votes at the elections: they are bluntly

## LETTER

### My Own Movement

Dear Editors,

L.A.W.'s letter (FREEDOM, 10.1.70) includes some remarks about my piece 'Anarchism Without Tears' (your heading, not mine) which you published on 15.11.69. He seems to think that truth and power are merely 'great abstractions', and that to see the futility of idealism and militancy entails 'remaining passive, quiescent, and complacent in the face of whatever evil existing society perpetrates'. He also infers that I would refuse to join a united front against the State.

On the last point he is quite correct. I would never join any front or movement. I am my own movement. To be part of a movement means to follow others, which is hardly very anarchistic, is it?

As for being passive, quiescent, and complacent, does this necessarily follow from the abandonment of idealistic militancy? Can't you talk, write, discuss, argue and protest, disobey orders, go your own way in spite of unpopularity and danger—can't you do all these things without trying to impose some ideal on yourself and others, and without the hatred and violence that are essential elements in any form of militancy? And if you can, is that passivity or complacency? Does this letter sound passive, quiescent?

As for truth and power, if L.A.W. thinks these are merely abstractions he had better watch out. There is such a thing as the force of gravity. That is a true statement, and if L.A.W. fails to see its truth he will eventually come to grief. Power, for L.A.W.'s information, is also a reality. Policemen, for example, are not abstractions. They are very solid facts indeed, as L.A.W. will find out if he tries hitting one.   
Bristol, 7 FRANCIS ELLINGHAM.

reminded that in order to become a great reformist party you have to make great reforms, instead of sabotaging them.

A new popular movement starts raising its head throughout Italy, and this time the CP does not seem able to control it. The structure of power is in danger. The cleverer industrialists and Catholic politicians realize that real reforms are needed. Only the transformation of Italy into a modern country can guarantee rising profits for capital and at the same time ease social tensions. Real reforms are made by real statesmen, not by discredited mafiosi, music-hall politicians and corrupt courtiers. The CP, not the ridiculous Socialist Party, is what is needed. The way to the entrance of the CP into the government must be prepared by a slow evolution to the left.

At this point the State Department goes berserk: a smooth and rapid growth of the Italian economy is welcome to the Italian industrialist—but the US, with their balance of payment problems, could not care less (as is well witnessed by the stagnation of the Greek economy after the CIA-sponsored coup). An independent Italian foreign policy is, again, welcome to the Italian industrialists, clamouring for their share in the world market, but certainly not so to the Nixon administration. After the good job the CIA did in assassinating Enrico Mattei, head of the state-owned Italian oil monopoly, culpable of preferring cheaper Russian oil to dear but democratic US oil!

Nixon writes to Saragat, funds are pumped in: again the Social Democrats leave the Socialist Party—the government is forced to resign. What are the Christian Democrats to do?—form a government with the Socialists, counting on the external support of the CP? They would be betrayed by their right wing, chaos would ensue, and Saragat would come forward as the saviour of law and order. The Christian

Democrats are not stupid, and do not fall in the trap: they wait until the next elections, when there will be a popular mandate for the left, and when a more amenable President can be elected. Saragat is foiled again; there he is in the golden cage of the Quirinale, a President with no political weight. He knows that when his mandate expires he will leave the stage—this time for ever. The Catholics and the Communists will have no use for an old drunkard at the head of a ridiculously small party of political failures, blacklegs and police informers.

Then the day of the bombs. Half an hour after the tragic explosions in Milan and Rome, the radio transmits a presidential message, putting the blame squarely on left-wing extremism and threatening the iron fist. We wonder, how could our President, usually blind drunk by 2 p.m., prepare his message at 6.30 p.m.? Maybe he had it prepared beforehand? This must be the coup—we had better not sleep at home tonight.

But the Republic and FIAT are stronger. While the American-controlled newspapers blame the CP(!) for the explosion and implore a military takeover, the greater part of the government, the trade unions, the capitalist-owned press and the CP unite in asking for calm and vigilance against right-wing provocation. The 15 victims of Milan were murdered in vain. . . . Saragat must confine himself to dictating noble telegrams of grief and indignation. But is the republic really stronger? Why then cannot the real murderers be arrested? Why is the Milan chief of police, the ex-fascist criminal Guida, allowed to arrest innocent people and to throw a railway worker, Pinelli, father of two, out of a fourth floor window? The police had quite a few informers in the group '22 March', and, some months ago, when the group planned to bomb a Fiat stand at the Milan Fair, the police could easily foil them. Why,

admitting that the '22 March' had anything to do with the Milan explosions, did the police not stop them? Who prepared the bombs anyway? The experts say that only two hundred people in Italy have enough expertise to make bombs like the one exploded in Milan. These two hundred people are not in left-wing groups, but mostly in the Army.

The fact is that a scapegoat had to be found. It is impossible to subvert the government and make another Greece; let us at least have a go at the extra-parliamentary left. Anything but getting the real culprits. In the complex chess game of Italian politics the generals cannot risk unseating the politicians if this might provoke a popular uprising. On the other hand, the neo-capitalist politicians have to tolerate the continuous threats and plots of the American party, as they could beat Saragat and his colonels only by mobilizing the people, and God knows what the people will do once they started moving.

At the moment neither of the sides is strong enough to attack openly. The politicians of the left hope to wear down their rivals little by little, gradually weeding them out of the army, the police and the state machinery; Saragat's colonels wait for the other side to make a fatal mistake, in order to wipe it out in a blow. Who will win in the end? This is difficult to say, but one thing is certain: if ever the popular movement was to endanger seriously the social structure of the country, both sides will unite in the repression. Giuseppe Saragat is more likely to die of alcoholic poisoning than to become another Napoleon, but the Italian bourgeoisie does not need an Eighteenth Brumaire to conquer absolute power: they already hold it and, in spite of internal squabbles, they are not going to hand it over graciously to the workers.

PIETRO SPINA.

## Direct Action Politics

IN THE LAST ten years we have seen a very significant change in the style and mood of British political life.

The Thirties—era of battles against fascism, long desperate hunger marches, Spain—were followed by two decades of squalid parliamentarianism—the era of apathy, Gaitskellism, looking back in well-heeled anger—marked by total inactivity of any large section of the nation.

The divorce from political action of the mass of the people is normal and necessary under any governmental system but the stillness that hung over post-war Britain was exceptional. However, growing opposition in Eastern Europe of the workers to 'their' States, riots in Poland and East Germany, and revolution in Hungary, had their repercussions here. Desertions from the British Communist Party of hundreds of its best young intellectuals and thousands of rank and file militants, seemingly unimportant at the time, provided the leadership of various ultra-left groups founded in the early 60's. These people were prominent in the Committee of 100—which for all its shortcomings educated thousands in the nature of power, authority and the State (often with extracurricular help from the Metropolitan police force). The Suez adventure, staged at the same time Russian tanks were suppressing popular revolt, was the last fling of gunboat diplomacy and proved a sharp lesson in the new reality when Britain, France and Israel, who had attacked Egypt (for different reasons but the nationalisation of the Suez Canal was the dominant factor for the Eden government) were called sharply to heel by the USA.

The first domestic disturbance was the movement of moral revulsion against the symbol of the new Great Power Politics, nuclear weapons. This never developed farther than horrified naiveties and on the surface its main result was to provide the vague 'progressive' impulse and half-hearted politicisation which gave the Labour Party (temporarily) a new generation of canvassers and its victories in 1964 and 1966.

However the revolutionary groups had a field-day inside this vague movement. As Labour ever increasingly lost the glow of the saviour, other, more rigorous and thoroughgoing criticisms of social reality became more popular. The issue of the Vietnam War, linked with the whole question of imperialism and revolution, allowed the overtly political groups to surface whilst the moralistic, wishful-thinkers floundered as their Labour

friends supplied gas and goodwill to the US Army, bombs for Biafra, kept out the Blacks, etc. CND, the Labour Party branches and their shadow, the CPGB, collapsed into the self-assertive pleadings of senility ('Aren't Labour's ideals YOUR Ideals?') The Party has lost 1,957 members, the YCL 37% of its membership . . . our analysis has been proved correct—CPGB Conference Report 1969). The passage of the new activists into University was also an important element in the growing ferment. The growing scope of the movement has introduced direct action into industry (where it was absent for a generation), housing and education. As the Che Guevara industry slumps, revolutionaries are forced to jump into the everyday social problems and 'get their principles wet' (Trotsky).

The squatters campaign for the homeless, teachers and pupils fight for popular control of education, tenants organisation not only for defence but for community control, moves for greater shop-floor control of negotiating and action, are a direct part of the revolutionary process. Even the current farmers' action for more money introduces the corrosive concept of direct action into areas where politics is voting for the Squire. The problem is one of co-ordinating and servicing to link up the individual struggles.

It used to be said of Army General Staffs that they prepared to fight the previous war (i.e. a war of trenches before WW II—the French Maginot line of fortifications which was outflanked by German armour). The same is true of revolutionaries to a very large extent—particularly those dependent upon scriptures. For twenty years after 1917 everyone looked around for Winter Palaces to storm. Nearer home, after May 1968, every Student Rebel wondered where he'd get a pavé from. The LSE occupations were marked by the slogans lifted and badly translated from the Sorbonne. Let us at least make our mistakes more illuminating by deriving them from the future.

The key element in the next few years will be the survival of the Labour Party. With a nominally left-wing government carrying out swingeing attacks on living standards, the task of the left is to fight them remorselessly—not to co-operate with 'left' MPs and generally leave discontent to be channelled by the Tories or the National Front. Less fraternal criticism and debate and more outright opposition. The dangers of a left-wing

group which is unable to tear itself away from reformism is evidenced by the CP which, for all its daily paper and 30 years 'experience', has not been able to take advantage of the disillusionment of the Labour rank and file but has lost members itself.

Our opposition to Labour must be even more forceful in the likely event of a Tory victory at the next general election. Then the problem will be the resurgence of the vague 'progressivism' which marred the distinctions between social democracy and socialism in 1964. The only way forward for the British revolutionary left is over the corpse of the Labour Party. The hold of Labour on the working class organisations serves to paralyse their effectiveness even in defending past gains. The future of the calcified form of the 'Labour Movement' is its destruction, not its capture. Its content—the aspirations of the working people—can then be released into the new forms of grass roots organisation which are the organisational forms of the new society.   
K.N.

(Reprinted from *Anarquista* No. 14)

## WAR LEADER!

Continued from page 3

made up the moment I tumbled to the power game. I am on the side of the people against whatever authority is destroying them. And if the people are gullible enough to support the authority which is destroying them, I try to make them see reason. This is the anti-war position for anarchists—and it used to be that for pacifists, too, which is why I am so surprised to see Roger Moody, by implication, approving of the Biafrans fighting on for 'the terms offered from 1968 onwards' instead of cutting their losses, swallowing their pride, and finding other methods of defending their village democracy.

In the event, two years of destruction and a million starving children later, Ojukwu leaves his understudy to surrender and hotfoots it out of it.

Absolutely nobody comes out of this stinking business well. Not Ojukwu nor Gowon, nor their gullible, loyal, tribal-minded or nationalistic peoples, certainly not the bloodstained British, Russian, Spanish and French Governments which provided the arms for the slaughter, not any of us who could not stop 'our' Government's knavish tricks.

But at least some of us have never supported any of the contributory factors!

JUSTIN.

## Contact

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

**Squatters' Ball**, Tuesday, February 3, 7.30-11.30, Northern Polytechnic, Holloway Road, 10/-. John Peel presents Edgar Broughton, The Forest and others.

**Wanted**, experienced cine camera operator to film documentary. Contact A. Villa, c/o Freedom, Thursday evenings.

**York Group Need Speakers**. Expenses and accommodation arranged. Write R. Atkins, Vanbrugh College, Heslington, York.

**House wanted**, furnished or unfurnished, to accommodate junkies and helpers. Cheap rent. Douglas Kepper, 21 Vernon Road, Leytonstone, London, E.11.

**Jumble Sale**, Saturday, February 7, 2.30 p.m., Valentine's Road Congregational Church, near Wood Street Station, Walthamstow, E.17. Jumble and helpers wanted. Douglas Kepper, 21 Vernon Road, Leytonstone, London, E.11.

**Meeting on drugs**, drug addicts and the Government, Wednesday, February 25, at 7.30 p.m. at 6 Endsleigh Street, London, W.C.1. Details from Douglas Kepper, 21 Vernon Road, Leytonstone, London, E.11.

**Chemical and Biological Warfare Action Group**. Film Show: 'The Movement of Nerve Gas', 'Science For Life' and the 'Silent War'; followed by General Discussion led by Father Simon Blake, Wednesday, February 4, at 7.30 p.m. at Central Hall, Westminster. David Lane, 77 High Street, Penge, London, S.E.20. SYD 0940.

**Assistance to find work urgently needed**. Brian J. Banks, 553 Liverpool Road, Platt Bridge, Nr. Wigan, Lancs.

**'Listen Marxist'**. New Libertarian Student pamphlet, 1/6 post from LSF, c/o Keith Nathan, Vanbrugh College, Heslington, York.

**Left Literature Conference**, January 31-February 1 at Nottingham University. Pamphlet and book display by over 20 political groups and distributors of left publications. Discussion about aims of political publications and about ways to facilitate distribution of pamphlets, books, newspapers, etc. 'Alternative' newspaper workshop. (Write to S. Ferdinando, 78 Clarendon Road, Wallasey, Cheshire. 021-639 5448.) Information, write to Agit Prop Literature Programme, 160 N. Gower Street, N.W.1. 01-387 5406.

**Could anyone** with articles written by Pa Chin (alias Li Fei-Kan or Fei Kan or Hei Lang) in Chinese or translation contact Denis Watson, 25 Retreat Road, Hampton 3188, Australia.

**Every Tuesday Evening at Freedom Hall**. Informal discussion/entertainment/chess evenings. Small musical instruments and pocket chess sets welcomed. Refreshments. From 7 p.m. admission 2/- . Proceeds to Press Fund. All Welcome.

**Worthwhile work** wanted by ex-voluntary worker. Mike, c/o 11 Barway Road, Manchester, M21 1JZ.

**Combat Academic Psychology**. Conference at Keele, February 28-March 1. Anti-Behaviourism; Psychology in the service of the late capitalist State; Examination of Alternatives: Body—Freudians (Brown, Reich, Marcuse), Phenomenological Approaches (Laing, Merleau-Ponty), 'Humanistic' Psychology, Psychodelia, etc. Anyone willing to write a paper or anyone wanting details, please contact Keith Paton, 21 Victoria Street, Basford, Stoke-on-Trent.

**Anarchist Revolution**. (Leaflet back in print.) 5/- per hundred. Cash with order please.

**Malatesta Poster Screen Printed**. 7/6 (inc. post) from Freedom Bookshop.

**Floodgates of Anarchy** by Stuart Christie and Albert Meltzer. Available mid-January at 22/- inc. post. Advance orders to Freedom Bookshop.

**Nova Scotia**. Comrades please contact Pete Ridley, c/o Newport Post Office.

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

**Schools Anarchist Group** in Gloucestershire? Contact Kate & Joe, 3 Withy Lea, Leonard Stanly, nr. Stonehouse, GL10 3NS, Glos.