

may day number 1971

Towards a new kind of May Day

THE OLD SPIRIT of May Day—the moral fervour—the anger and determination to seek a better and more decent way of life—has gone. It has disappeared along with the destitution and misery which gave it birth.

A ritual celebration of sorts still takes place. In Russia, China and the countries of Eastern Europe it glorifies the State. In Britain it merely provides a Wilson or a Callaghan with an excuse to tell people how much better they could run the system than the Tories. The Communists and the even smaller 'revolutionary' groups, do a bit of marching and shouting, and here and there a few trade unionists are persuaded to join in—but in their millions the workers ignore it, for it has lost its meaning.

Certainly there is still plenty of poverty about in our affluent society. Thousands of our fellow countrymen are still badly paid and wretchedly housed, while life for the old and the chronically sick is a nightmare lived on a miserable pittance from the State.

Certainly also we are still wage slaves, selling each day a piece of our lives to an employer, and tossed on the scrap-heap if that employer thinks he can make do without us.

Nevertheless, for many, the chains which bind us to our slavery seem more comfortable than before. Indeed, many a worker en route with the family to a holiday in Spain may well imagine that the chains

don't exist at all. Twenty-five years of the Welfare State and almost full employment have meant inevitably that a whole lot of working men and women are not too dissatisfied with the system. With a bit of pressure—and bags of overtime—it can yield

the 'good things' of life in a way undreamed of by pre-war generations.

THE CORRUPTION OF AFFLUENCE

It would seem that affluence not only corrupts the environment, it

also tends to corrupt the human spirit. In the days when women and little children slaved in the pits and factories, when poverty, hunger and the workhouse was the common lot, the men of privilege—the nobility, the landowners and the capitalists—actually managed to enjoy themselves amid all the surrounding misery. They wore their fine clothes, hunted with their hounds, and attended their banquets, oblivious to the sufferings of those who created the wealth in which they wallowed. They regarded the 'lower classes' in much the same way as some workers in Britain today regard the blacks—as something less than human. Property and wealth corrupted the ruling class and it stays corrupt today.

But for the workers it was different. They still had memories of better days before capitalism came to plague them. They hated the inhuman factories and festering cities. They banded together, they practised solidarity and mutual aid and painfully built up organisations to resist the physical and spiritual ravages of industrialism. Many sacrificed themselves in this struggle for elementary justice. The Tolpuddle martyrs—six simple farm labourers—personified this truly noble period in our history. But to-

day all that has changed.

The old organisations of mutual aid have become powerful trades unions with millions of members, big bank balances, lots of property and investments, plenty of well-paid officials and... a spirit which is as mean and petty as the age we live in. Their leaders are no longer simple farm labourers, they are Peers of the Realm and Noble Knights, rich and greedy to a man.

Confronted with a Government which clearly intends to turn the unions into State-managed things possessing neither life nor independence, the TUC can only whimper that it is most unfair since they have always been ready and willing to get the workers to make sacrifices in the 'national interest' and to discipline those who won't.

True enough there is some opposition among the rank and file but, with few exceptions, it is not a very bitter opposition nor is it very widespread for truth to tell, the spirit of capitalism has to some extent, entered the soul of the British working man. Many have become obsessed with the accumulation of material things (not surprising since they were deprived of them for so long) and ask no more than to be allowed to

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May Day Committee's Demonstration 1968

May Day and Anarchist Propaganda

In 1891 Kropotkin wrote two anonymous articles for *La Révolte*, the leading anarchist paper in France, under the title 'L'Entente' (Understanding), as part of the build-up for the May Day demonstrations that year. The first article (April 11/17) was mainly concerned with organisation, and has little but historical interest now; but the second article (April 18/24), which was mainly concerned with action, remains one of Kropotkin's most interesting contributions to anarchist theory. We are printing the first English translation of the second article, with the omission of a few passages of more strictly historical interest.

The two articles have generally escaped attention, partly because Kropotkin never bothered to reprint them in either a pamphlet or a book, and partly because they have seldom been identified as his (though the reference to his pamphlet *The Spirit of Revolt* makes his authorship quite clear). The second article is in fact particularly significant, for it was

on May Day 1891 that a violent demonstration in Paris led to a gunfight between anarchists and police; and it was the prosecuting counsel and presiding judge in the ensuing trial whose houses were the targets for Ravachol's bombs ten months later. So Kropotkin may be said to have contributed to some extent to the beginning of the terrorist phase in French anarchism which he was to oppose so firmly. Perhaps it is not surprising that he left the articles in obscurity!

N.W.

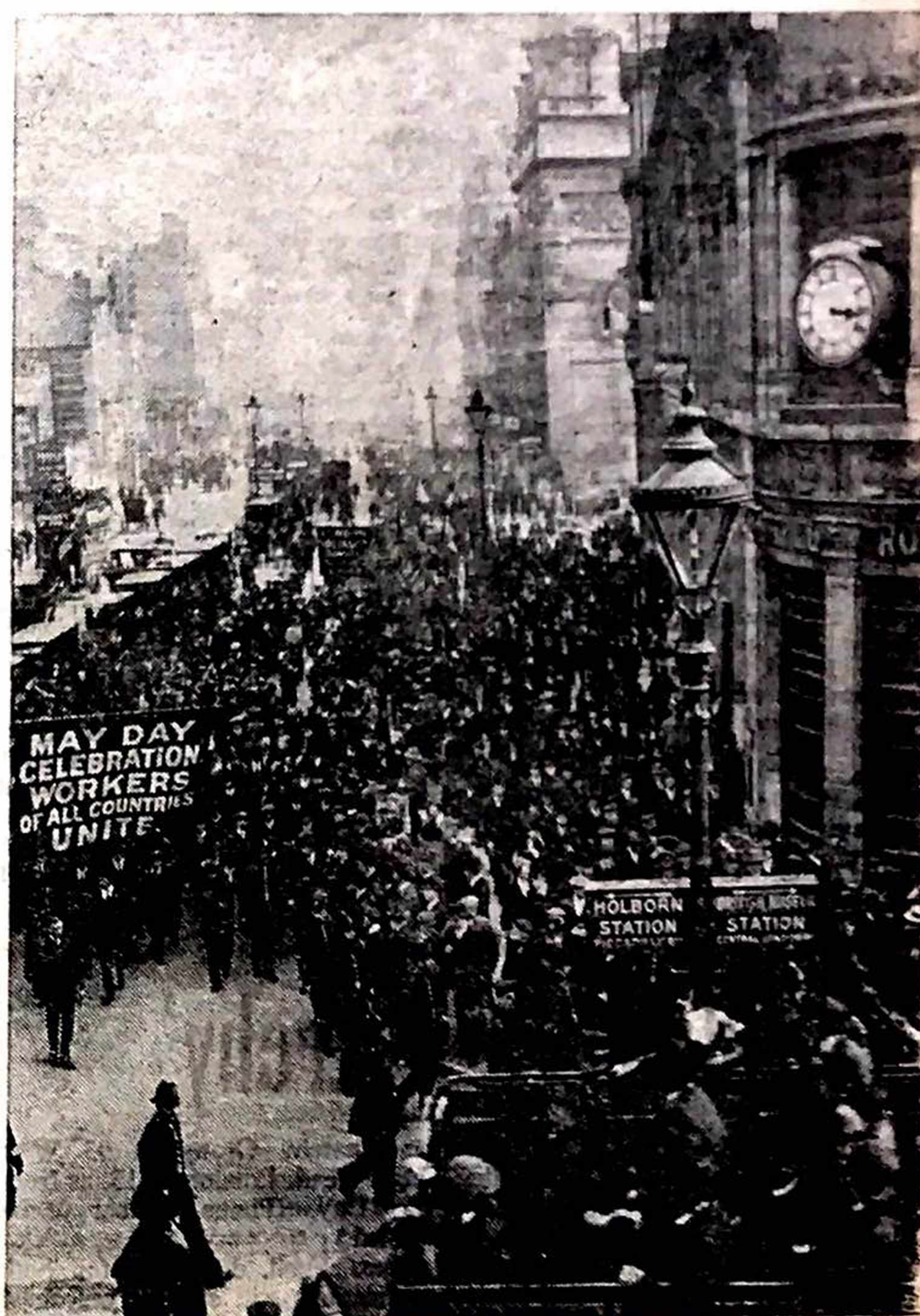
IT SEEMS TO US that among anarchists we have not distinguished sufficiently between what can be done in isolation by a few individuals and what can be carried out only in co-operation with others, in association with them, by agreeing on common activity.

There are actions which can be carried out only when one is alone—when one acts without putting responsibility on anyone else and tak-

ing it on oneself. Such was the action of Vera Zasulich. Such was the action of Padlewski. Such have been certain actions in France. If in 1877 Vera Zasulich had consulted her friends, who at that period were extremely moderate, and had asked for their approval, she would have been completely discouraged before getting it. And her action would have lost that character of spontaneity and courage which won it the admiration of Europe.

But if the development of the revolutionary spirit gains immensely from the deeds of heroic individuals, it is no less true (whatever historians say) that it is not by these heroic deeds that revolutions are made. Zasuliches are rare exceptions, even in Russia—though that country is at the moment passing through the heroic period in its history which was passed through by France and Italy between 1830 and 1848. The revolution needs heroes; but for their

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May Day Demonstration in London before World War I

Breakaway Unions & Anarchism

THERE COMES A TIME when even the most reactionary union leadership has to choose between pressing hard for more money for its members or losing its members. This year, thanks largely to the efforts of the militants in the independent Glassworkers' Union, Lord Cooper and his cronies in the General and Municipal Workers' Union have had to start forcing through their members' claims, and making strikes official at a rate previously unknown in their union, which till now, has been about as militant as a wooden duck.

Directly after the Pilkington strike we suggested in FREEDOM, that these same union bosses would either have to get their fingers out or risk losing members. No union leader can afford to ignore a membership fall-out of the dimensions which threatened the Municipal Workers' Union, had it continued with its traditional soft soap style of approach in its negotiations with the bosses.

By putting on a bit of a mildly militant show, the union, which has an underpaid membership, now looks like surviving the series of set-backs from which it has recently suffered. The impact of the Pilkington strike; the rival Glassworkers' union and the bad publicity, added to the members lost at Ford, Halewood, and at other firms like the Dunlop plant at Rochdale where both FREEDOM and the Manchester anarchists last year helped the tyremen to liberate themselves from the G&M union, has jolted the leaders out of their previous stonewall stand on their members' pay.

According to Colin Barker, who gives us an able account of the events during the Pilkington strike in St. Helens, the membership of the General and Municipal Workers' Union has been tending to decline ever since 1945. Colin's whole treatment of the strike in his pamphlet* is a very clear, concise and well presented piece of work, even if it doesn't really uncover any fresh information and does suffer to some extent from having been written by an academic type, who, while he may be skilled at recording facts, cannot, one feels, fully penetrate the workingman's mentality or for that matter understand the industrial situations in which the worker finds himself.

In point of fact, the pamphlet, which came out about July, seems to have had very little influence on either the thinking of the Pilkington's unofficial rank and file committee or the course events have taken since the strike ended. Circumstances forced the Pilkington unofficial workers' committee and many of its supporters to take a course of action, that of forming a breakaway union, which runs directly against Mr. Barker's advice. By saying as he does, that there is a difference between the GMWU and the TGWU, but it should by no means be exaggerated and, in the next breath, that there are differences between the TGWU and the GSWU, which should be recognised, he seems to be recommending a transfer to the Transport and General for the Pilkington workers.

Unfortunately the Pilkington men didn't have a chance to find out if there was in fact any real difference between the unions, because nobody, not the T&G nor any other union, would have them. Were the Pilkington lads right then to form their own organisation? John Potter has already said that the shopfloor favoured the formation of a new glassworkers' union, and that after the union had got off the ground it was getting considerable support from local workers in St. Helens. As for the sackings, victimisation, and blacklisting, which occurred later, it is my view, that this would have happened even if the new glassworkers' union hadn't been formed.

BREAKAWAY UNIONS AND INDEPENDENT MOVEMENTS

Over the years many anarchists, at one time or another, have tended to back the formation of alternative breakaway organisations, which become independent from the sluggish bureaucratic structures which occupy the TUC. During the 1930s we supported such movements as the National Rank and File Movement, the Port Workers' Union, the Union of Industrial Youth, the Gibraltar Labour Trades Union, the Libertarian Teachers' Association, and more recently we have participated in branches of the newly-formed Claimants' Union.

The first three mentioned 'movements', all backed by anarchists, sank rapidly, almost without trace; the Libertarian Teachers' Association exists mainly, it seems, as a propaganda body; while the Gibraltar Labour TU, formed after anarchists and other militants on the Rock left what was then in the early 1930s a very conservative T&G branch, operated for a few years quite successfully, but later re-merged with the T&G, with several anarchist militants taking on unpaid attractive jobs in the organisation.

It's a bit early to judge the prospects for the Claimants' Union but they seem to be getting off the ground all right. Indeed, in a recent issue of *New Society*, Tony Lynes suggests that the new Family Income Supplement will create more customers for the claimants' organisations and should make it easier to organise the low paid workers as a distinct group.

We can't dogmatically dismiss the idea of forming new alternative unions in every situation and for all time, especially

*The Pilkington Strike, Colin Barker, a Socialist Worker pamphlet, 10p.



if one accepts that the independent glassworkers union contributed to the slight tactical change of policy by the leaders of the General and Municipal. But reading Potter's account, it becomes clear that Barker's arguments against the formation of an independent union were in this case unreal. Workers, unlike Mr. Barker and other intellectuals in the IS opportunistic stable, do not take a course of action in the same way as they might pick racehorses, especially when a worker like Amos Topping has been victimised. Then it's not just a case of backing a winner, but of fighting for a principle and if we lose it's rough on us, but it still has to be done.

It was the same with the independent union, the choice was to form the new union or sit back and do nothing. And to suggest as Mr. Barker does that those who favour independent unions, like the Pilkington militants, should study the historical fates of such movements is really rather arrogant; for, as A. J. P. Taylor never tires of telling us, history merely informs us about the past, and is no reliable guide to the future or the present.

So there we have it, anarchists and other militant workers cannot afford to let the 'iron laws' of the Marxists influence their thinking on the essentially practical problem of forming breakaway unions and independent industrial organisations.

ANARCHISTS IN THE TRADE UNIONS

But what of the anarchist in relation to the traditional trade union?

Every industrial anarchist in trade union, workshop or office, must be free to act independently in a way he feels best suited to the circumstances of his own particular situation. In most cases, however, it would appear, that anarchists have most impact on the shopfloor when they are members of recognised trade unions, especially if this leads to their becoming shop stewards, or to them taking on unpaid positions either in the union or inside unofficial organisations connected to their industry.

On jobs where there are no trade unions, anarchists should not shrink from recruiting members into the unions. In industrial situations in which there are unions but no industrial militancy, then through our vehicles of propaganda we can raise vital local issues of importance and generally seek to stimulate passions by articulation of the workers' industrial grievances, which are often much closer to the spirit of anarchism than we sometimes realise.

On this question of propaganda, I feel that in times of industrial peace, we would do best to concentrate mainly on practical bread and butter questions, while at the same time ridiculing the stupidities and inconsistencies of the local managements and the trade union bosses, which prevail at most firms. During strikes and unrest, when feelings and awareness are most intense, we should unfold our more revolutionary arguments.

Once inside the unions we should do what we can to bring them under the control of the membership, and oppose all bureaucratic tendencies inside the organisation. But if it is decided that a rank and file organisation or unofficial shopfloor body is called for, which can act independently of the trade unions, we shouldn't hesitate to set one up. Obviously it is our job to resist state interference in both industry generally and in the trade unions, just as it's up to us to hinder those elements which seek to use the trade unions as a stepping stone to political office.

We should not, in my view, stay outside the unions because they are reformist and that to participate means making compromises; any more than we should refuse to work with the squatters who, in the interests of the homeless, have had to make some reformist concessions. People can't really be expected to hang around homeless and on low pay, simply on the offchance that the revolution will come that much quicker if they do; they must improve their living standard even if this involves doing deals with the authorities.

Let's face it, if anarchists are going to have any real social impact on British society and not to remain at the level of a political fashion or fad, they must be prepared to participate in essentially reformist bodies like the trade unions, factory committees, unofficial industrial organisations and squatters groups.

NORTH WEST WORKERS.

TOMORROW WILL BE OURS

The following was an editorial published in the *Industrial Worker* ten years ago in 1961 for their May Day issue. As most of our readers will know the *Industrial Worker* is the paper of our American comrades of the *Industrial Workers of the World* who have since 1905 carried on the struggle for the 'Abolition of the Wage System'.

As a small tribute to the IWW on May Day we are happy to reprint this editorial and 'May Day is Labor's Own Day' which also appeared in the same issue ten years ago.

ON THIS MAY FIRST, as on others, working people throughout the world will gather in the great cities, in towns and hamlets to celebrate their DAY, and to demonstrate their international class solidarity.

It is true that many of these demonstrations will be sponsored by vicious dictators who have no intention of emancipating labor from the wage slavery in which it is held. But the mere fact that these dictators find it expedient to permit, rather than to suppress, the May Day demonstrations indicates how deeply the meaning of this Day is imbedded in the hearts of the workers of the world.

May Day is the one day of all the year that calls inescapably to the mind of every class conscious worker the bitter and glorious struggles that have been waged throughout the ages by the oppressed against their cruel and ruthless oppressors. It is the day that fans into flame the ember that smoulders in the breast of every member of the exploited class who has the faintest conscious knowledge of his, or her, position in society. It is the day that renews and strengthens our firm resolve to play our full individual parts in the titanic struggles that are to come.

There are some among us who take the dark view of the situation that exists in this country and in the world in general on this May Day of 1961. They think back nostalgically to the times when we could muster more immediate strength. They point to the virtual destruction of the revolutionary labor movement of this country and of its harsh suppression in other lands. They call attention to the lack of class solidarity prevailing among the working class, particularly in America, and they say that the spirit of the workers' emancipation is dead.

We say to these: You are wrong! We do not share your pessimism. It stems from a short and surface view of history. We do not believe that there is anything in the situation on this May Day that calls for any retreat from our great principles; we see absolutely no reason to trim, to hedge, or to adopt the paltry expedients that bring with them the bubble advantage. We believe that now is the time to nail our colors to the mast and to enter the battle with renewed courage and hope.

The capitalist world, which seems so strong at first glance, is in reality in that desperate situation where it can maintain itself only through permanent war and ever stronger suppression of the working class. Our rulers are far less pessimistic about our future than we are

ourselves; like those who feasted at Babylon they see the handwriting on the wall and small though we are in numbers they do not underestimate us, or our potential. They know that the day is not far distant—in a historical sense—when the working class will turn away from the labor fakers, will see them for what they are enemies and will seek a true road to emancipation. They know that the imminent blood bath of the future will wash away from the minds of many the false faith that has been planted in them by the glib-tongued sponsors of the rotten, destructive, and dying system.

Our task on this May Day is to hold our ranks, to enlarge them slowly and patiently, to stand fast by our principles, to redouble and double again our efforts, to strike and keep on striking at the blank wall of ignorance that seems to surround us, to meet like men and women of labor every blow that is directed against us. Our hour has not yet struck; we cannot tell the day or moment when it will. But we know that that day comes ever nearer and that it is our revolutionary duty to be fully prepared to meet it when it does arrive. We have a great historic mission to perform; the task is ours alone. There is no one else to do the job, and we must not fail to be at our posts when the time comes, as come it surely will.

On this May Day to the Workers of the World everywhere, the *Industrial Workers of the World* Salute You! In the great struggle for emancipation we are with you and we will stand with you like an army of Gideon until the final victory is won.



Any book not in stock, but in print can be promptly supplied. Book Tokens accepted. Please add postage & cash with order helps.

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All correspondence to
Peter Le Mare, 5 Hannaford Road,
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ANARCHIST
FEDERATION
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AFBIB—To all Groups.

Next AFBIB Meeting and Production, Sunday, June 6. Please send a delegate to Birmingham. (Accommodation provided if necessary.) Address all letters to:

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

Groups should send latest addresses to Birmingham. New inquiries should

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

AFB REGIONAL GROUPS

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

North West Federation: Secretary, Les Smith, 47 Clarence Street, Manchester, Lancashire.

Corwall: A. Jacobs, 13 Ladrach Road, St. Austell, (D. M. B.)

East: R. E. Martin, P. Newell, 'Aegean', Spring Lane, Eight Ash Green, Colchester. (Q.M. FL.)

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

Yorkshire: Martin Watkins, Flat D, 90 Clarendon Road, Leeds, LS2 9L.

Scotland: Temporary Secretary, Nell Munro, 203 Cornhill Drive, Aberdeen.

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

N. Ireland: c/o Freedom Press.

S. Ireland: 20 College Lane, Dublin 2.

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

'Freedom' & 'Anarchy'

Starting with *Anarchy* 4, *Anarchy* will be editorially and financially autonomous. All subscriptions, including joint ones, and back number orders, will still be handled by Freedom Press at 84B Whitechapel High Street, London, E.1. All editorial matter, bundle orders and street sales for *Anarchy* will be handled by

the Anarchy Group at 95 West Green Road, London, N.15, as from May Day. (Phone number to be notified.)

Press Fund donations for both publications will still be welcomed at their respective addresses, and it would be appreciated if, when writing, comrades would put on the

envelope some indication of the contents, such as Editors, Subscriptions, Bundle, Bookshop, etc. Freedom Bookshop will continue as now with new books and Freedom Press publications, but the secondhand department will be allowed to run down.

MAY DAY IS LABOUR'S OWN DAY

MAY DAY is here again. It is being fittingly celebrated all over the world as a day of hope, struggle and fulfilment. It was first observed in India and Egypt with festivities for the goddesses of fertility. The medieval English custom of Maypole dancing still persists in many places to the present; as well as the Roman habit of presenting flowers. In the US children hang May baskets filled with flowers on doorknobs. A new aspect and appearance has been given to the day, following a workingman's convention in Paris, France, in 1890, in the same year the Berlin Labor Congress was held and the Congress inaugurated the First of May as International Labor Day, commemorating the Haymarket imprisonment in the USA.

May Day is not merely a day of banner waving, song singing, marching, and formal speech-making. It is all this and more. May Day was conceived in the idea that on one day in the year at least, Labor should demonstrate its power by downing tools and closing mills, mines, and factories.

May Day is not the proper time to beg for crumbs or merely to petition redress of wrongs; it is not the day for weeping, dreaming, or wishing. It is the day labor takes off to make revolutionary demands by displaying its solidarity and power. It is the day in which workers of all crafts, creeds, nationality, and color should leave their tasks to mingle with one another singing songs of rebellion and defiance against a fake democracy.

May Day is a day of action. It is ONE BIG UNION DAY. It is the day of the General Strike! It is the day in which the workers line up against the shirkers for the final conflict of the ages, the battles for economic security and economic independence.

Mankind is today faced with fear, uncertainty, mass unemployment and the possibility of H-bomb warfare which will wipe out the human race. Neither the governments of the US or Russia can stop this. Only the international unity of the working class can stop it.

An economy that relies for its stimulation on waste and disaster is taking the road to oblivion as surely as the dinosaurs, those creatures that were all bulk and no brains.

May Day is feared by the POWERS THAT BE because it is dedicated to the overthrow of the present corrupt social order. It is doubly feared because from the beginning, it has been synonymous with economic direct action, the GENERAL STRIKE. May Day did not grow out of a political campaign, a philosophical controversy, or a whining plea for social justice; it grew out of a GENERAL STRIKE for the eight hour day. Politicians, political parties, and craft union leaders had little or nothing to do with it. They have and can have little to do with May Day at the present time. In spite of the fripperies which have been added to it, May Day still stands for the GENERAL STRIKE and

its revolutionary objective. The INDUSTRIAL COMMONWEALTH. If politicians or dictators and potential dictators had not been able to pervert it from its original revolutionary industrial purpose, they would oppose it as bitterly as does the employing class.

The First of May is Labor Day in every sense of the word. The September 'holiday', like the 'labor days' established by Fascism, is simply a celebration of Labor's own enslavement. But May Day still stands as Labor's own day of action, and no power on earth can make it otherwise.

So deeply is May Day rooted in the minds and hearts of the workers of the world that no betrayer or enemies of the labor movement have been able to alter the custom. Neither the guile of politicians, the bribery and promises of self-seeking 'leaders', nor the brute force of authoritarian dictators have swerved class-conscious workers from the revolutionary character of May Day.

The reason is that May Day stands for everything labor must have, if it is ever to escape the hell of torture and torment in which it lives and has lived. Our struggle may be in vain, but when you think of May Day, think of the INDUSTRIAL COMMONWEALTH and of the joy and abundance it holds for all of us who toil. When you think of May Day, think of the IWW which, by building the structure of Labor's One Big Union, alone upholds the true purpose of May Day.

CAPITALISM . . . HOW DO YOU LIKE IT?

Hard times are with us again, large scale unemployment, insecurity of income, and privation are already the lot of many today. A hard winter has just ended, with one to follow. In spite of all efforts of capitalist-liberal politicians to stem the tide of depression, the standard of living sinks lower and lower while prices rise. The attempt to preserve the price structure at all costs is merely resulting in postponing the inevitable.

The machinery of production and distribution responds with less and less vigor to each succeeding pop in the arm. Like a huge dam, the natural resources and mechanical equipment of the country holds back the abundance of an era of mass production, permitting only a tiny trickle of the good things of life to reach the producing class. The rest is used for the exclusive benefit of the parasite absentee 'owners' of industry. They continue to revel in unparalleled prosperity. The unnatural situation cannot endure. Sooner or later the dam will burst.

THE SYSTEM

The system has shown itself incapable of coping with the situation. It is not striking and does not propose to strike at the root of the trouble, which is the operation of industrial equipment to produce profits instead of goods. This fundamental measure it dares not attempt. Instead it continues to enforce an eco-

nomy of scarcity in order that beneficiaries of the present social order may enjoy profits which can only be obtained by depriving the vast majority of people of that abundance which is their birth-right.

Six million willing and capable workers have been deprived of the opportunity to earn a living. Those who are employed know that wage cuts, lay-offs, and poor conditions lie ahead. All efforts to solve the problem of unemployment have failed and are failing. The best the ruling class has to offer is charity, war jobs, farm price supports and some minor tax reductions. It is not only a question of the blind leading the blind; it is also the mad driving the mad to more desperate madness. Sooner or later the dam will burst!

WHAT ARE YOU CONFRONTED WITH?

Yet, futile as the system is, the alternative is worse. Mr. Kennedy and his advisors are at least attempting, like the rulers of old Rome, to keep the rabble supplied with 'bread and circuses'. Even this is too much for the diehard Bourbon elements in the ruling class. These are clamoring for a return of the brutal and hypocritical laissez-faire policy of Hoover, the policy of drift and rugged individualism.

There is growing discontent, it is true, but most of it is either unintelligent or misdirected. Industrial unrest is increasing, but strikes are in the main sporadic in character. Under the leadership of old-time labor leaders, or modern leaders with old time ideas, they are not striking at the root of the trouble. They are designed to gain 'recognition' for various unions or temporary positions of preference for their members.

The so-called 'revolutionary' movement is a house divided against itself. The cry, 'Workers of the World Unite!' will fall upon deaf ears as long as the warring factions of labor continue to nurse the theoretical and dogmatic differences which make basic industrial solidarity impossible. To remain divided in the face of common danger and a common foe is the height of folly. Fascism is gaining ground again largely because of this. Fascism is a religion, a monstrous, perverse rebellion, it is true, against the stupidity of statesmen, the incompetence of political experimenters, and the dis-

unity of the working class movements.

WHAT WILL YOU DO ABOUT IT?

The IWW takes this opportunity to repeat its appeal for industrial solidarity and organized economic direct action to cope with the present increasingly desperate situation. Solidarity means to 'stick together' strategically where the greatest benefits may be derived; in the industries. This applies to employed and unemployed alike. There must be solidarity between the two, or the forces of reaction will inevitably triumph. The General Strike for the four-hour day, with full support in the form of mass picketing by the unemployed, would give labor a power greater than it has hitherto been able to use. The IWW contends that, in view of the record of the political revolutionary movement, no other tactic remains for labor if it hopes for anything save humiliating and disastrous defeat.

The IWW ONE BIG UNION plan offers the most powerful, most modern and most scientific labor union ever devised by the thinking, class-conscious element of the working class. We believe the future will either be Scientific Industrialism or chaos. The reason is that nothing else will 'work'.

Not only is revolutionary industrial unionism the crying need of workers in their everyday struggles with the employing class, but it offers the only solid foundation for structure of the industrial administration of the future. The IWW proposes a NEW SOCIAL ORDER, a world without bankers, exploited or exploiters, speculators, mortgage-sharks and politicians. The IWW states that the present social system, based on production for profit is shattered beyond repair. There is no going backward to the 'good old days'. We must go forward with the onward sweep of modern technological advancement. This leads in only one direction, the INDUSTRIAL COMMONWEALTH OF THE WORLD.

Another LABOR DAY has arrived and we are still here asking you to organize right, in the ONE BIG UNION. In union there is power, and the kind of power you need as workers can be found no place else. Why not line up today?

By DENNIS CROWLEY for WNS.

New Kind of May Day

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work for as good a wage as possible.

This is not a moral judgement on the workers, it is a condemnation of the system we live in. The working class, warts and all, is still the most generous and compassionate section of society. They are so by history and by tradition. It is easy to breathe sweetness and light from the comfortable surroundings of a garden suburb—not so easy when you are crammed cheek-by-jowl in a decayed, rat-ridden tenement in a working class district of a big city.

DESTRUCTION OF THE SPIRIT

Capitalism is wrong not because it doesn't sometimes deliver the goods and not because it is unplanned. It is wrong because it destroys the spirit and practice of mutual aid without which men could never have survived down through the ages. It is wrong because it has divided men into classes—and then subdivided them again by a lunatic division of labour. This makes for bigger and quicker production and much bigger profits—but it divorces men from reality and deprives them of any responsibility for what is produced and for what purpose.

As a result, men are fed, clothed and sheltered not because anyone wills it but because some men make a profit out of it. It is a system which breeds irresponsibility all round. The workers are not asked to care—and the capitalists, by the very nature of their system, cannot care. They will produce anything for a profit, be it beef or beer, cars or coffins, Concorde planes or Council houses. The class division and the artificial division of labour means that we know not why we produce at all. We only know that we live because someone pays us

wages and the more wages we get the better we live.

With the capitalists only interested in profit, and the workers only interested in wages, the earth is ravished for its limited resources; the land, the sea and the air are polluted by a flood of chemicals and dangerous wastes, until now the very existence of the planet itself is threatened. Lots of people are uneasy, but no one feels personally responsible and all feel helpless.

The motor car is, as most scientists admit, a filthy destroyer of the environment which, if it isn't restricted, will choke us all to death—yet hundreds of thousands of workers may only live if there is an ever-increasing market for the motor car. And it is the same with the chemical industry, with pesticides, with jumbo jets, with factory farming and with profit-making technology in general.

This is the crime of capitalism—it has created a world of masters and slaves each equally irresponsible. It has almost destroyed the spirit of solidarity which has sustained us for millions of years and because of that the world is headed for disaster.

THE PACE IS TOO FAST

Unless we can create a world of free men living in free communities, living as brothers knowing neither master nor slave. Living with a respect for nature and a respect for each other, not depending on the welfare of the State but on each doing unto his neighbour as he would have done unto himself. Living simpler but fuller lives, where each shall have enough and no one shall have more than another, in a classless, stateless society—unless we can create that kind of world we shall all perish. It may look an impossible task—but we have got to achieve

the impossible if we are to survive.

The old class solidarity may have decayed now that many of its material aims have been achieved but a new and more human solidarity is beginning to emerge. Beneath the surface, many people are profoundly dissatisfied with the quality of life, with the rat race. The pace is too fast, the cities too big, the price of affluence too high.

The old methods and the old slogans have led up a blind alley, but new methods are taking shape—the squatting by the homeless, the sit-downs against the spreading motorways and airports, the boycotts of the worst pollutants, the beginnings of actual defiance of the State as in the recent census, and a growing rejection of dictatorship within the trade union movement.

A NEW POWER ELITE

Men are essentially good not bad. Split into warring camps, divided and poisoned by propaganda, they still yearn to be brothers. Anarchists have always believed this—it is at the centre of their whole philosophy. Those who maintain that men are essentially bad turn either to the Church or to the various parties of State Socialism or State Communism. Both the one and the other maintain that people need Authority—a State—to compel them to act 'for their own good' or for the 'good of society'. But what these authoritarians really have in mind is the continuation of their own very comfortable lives based as they are on the slavery of the majority of mankind.

Tolstoy saw through this more than seventy years ago. 'The well-to-do classes,' he wrote, 'always have in view only such improvements as will not do away with the system of factory production and those conveniences of which they avail themselves. . . . The Socialists who demand the complete control of the

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(on a postcard from Freedom Bookshop)

New Kind of May Day

Continued from page 3
means of production for the workers—expect production of the same or almost the same articles as are produced now to continue in the present or similar factories with the present division of labour... the difference, as they imagine it, will be that all men will make use of such conveniences as they alone now enjoy. They dimly picture to themselves that, with the communalisation of the means of production they, too, will do some work—but chiefly as managers, designers, scientists or artists. In other words, they will remain on top and in power, there will be no real equality. The workers will remain workers—even though they will somehow 'own' the factories!

Such people want a State and compulsion because they have no faith in humanity. Anarchists have always rejected this repugnant idea—and life is teaching that anarchists are right. Centuries of class rule and State control have brought us to our present plight—more of the same will end us for good.

NO NEED TO DESPAIR

Anarchists believe that free men, living without compulsion, may prefer fresh air to city life, hay making to car making, craftsmanship to mass production, and certainly, co-

operation and mutual aid to competition and the rat race. They have always believed that once remove the physical shackles of compulsion and the spiritual shackles of the profit motive, and society will slow down. Tensions will disappear, people will respect one another and all will find time to stand and stare—and that, as every honest ecologist will tell you, is what the world needs today if it is to avert the coming catastrophe.

It is freedom and anarchy which today is being vindicated by life—it is compulsion, competition and inequality that stand condemned as the chief enemies of mankind.

There is no need to despair, freedom is on the move again because life demands it. The students and workers of Paris, only three years ago, shook French society to its foundations with their reassertion of the brotherhood of man and their rejection of the values of this rotten, capitalist society. They were, I am convinced, but the forerunners of a movement which is going to sweep the whole world. The real spirit of May Day will then be reborn, and the old slogan of the French Revolution, never bettered and never yet realised, will sound again: Liberty! Equality! Fraternity!

JOHN LAWRENCE.

May Day Propaganda

Continued from page 1
blood to be of any use, it is necessary that they should be backed up: that the thousands and hundreds of thousands of men who are in no way heroes should also come to bring their strength, their day-to-day devotion, their energy and their judgement to its service. Revolution is above all a popular movement.

And this is why the young Russian heroes have changed Russia so little, despite all their boundless devotion and their epic courage. They have forgotten that revolutions are made by the people, and that the blood of the martyrs is useful only when we have succeeded in awakening the great mass of the people.

That was the error of the anarchists in 1881. When the Russian revolutionaries had killed the Tsar—which, thanks to authoritarian prejudices, seemed to be the beginning of the revolution—the European anarchists imagined that from then on a handful of ardent revolutionaries armed with a few bombs would be enough to bring about the social revolution. They made the mistake of forgetting the special conditions which Russia happened to be in, and imagined themselves all to be heroes like those who went to the scaffold in St. Petersburg. They believed that a few cartridges and a few men of courage would be enough to blow up the social edifice. But with a few exceptions they were not heroes at all; and an edifice founded on centuries of history cannot be destroyed with a few kilos of explosive.

Instead of realising in advance that the great majority are not at all keen to die as isolated victims, and that all can nevertheless contribute to the best of their strength to keep the agitation going (as we tried to make clear in *The Spirit of Revolt*), they spent several years discussing grandiose actions which had to change the face of the world, but which did not do so. Too often they neglected the day-to-day agitation and wasted time discussing with their comrades plans for social reconstruction...

We had to go through this period, and we needn't regret it at all, just as we don't regret in any way that other period when the Russian youth thought that with a few socialist pamphlets they would rouse the mass of the peasants. Such errors are preferable to the 'practical good sense' of the far too practical gang

who today throng the corridors of the bourgeois parliaments, who deny and betray the working class from which they came. If this period was poor in action which appealed to the great majority, it nevertheless had fortunate consequences: there were a few celebrated deeds; despite everything, there were a few heroes. And this period made it possible for the anarchist ideal to be maintained at a certain level which will later be regained in the revolution. The party managed to think, on the basis of its habits of initiative and independence; it remained revolutionary, while elsewhere everyone caked.

So long as we were in this phase of the movement, we could confine ourselves to scattered little groups scarcely aware of each other, and acting in isolation. When there were five or six anarchists in Paris, what indeed could be done, other than some act of individual courage, or perhaps some noisy interruptions in electoral meetings to heckle some political crook?

But the times have changed since then. There are no longer the five or six comrades of those days; and the environment we are acting in has completely altered.

Through the general spread of revolutionary ideas alone, the great mass of the workers, holding aloof from all the socialist parties, has launched itself into movement. In the whole of Europe and in the United States it already is in revolt against the present conditions of the exploitation of labour...

The masses want the general strike. And even those who don't come out in favour of it have only one argument: it is that they are not well enough organised, that they are not sure that everyone will stop work on May 1. Give them this assurance; let them have the certainty that every one of you, to the extent that you are revolutionaries, will not let a single factory work after May 1; that you will take it by storm... if the machines move after the declaration of the strike—and you will see if the general strike doesn't break out on May 1.

And if only half the machines are idle that day—this means either the submission of the bourgeois, or else the beginning of the social war, fought on the real battlefield...

That is the situation. And we are wondering whether in such a situ-

ONE & ONE MAKE ONE

INDIGNATION HAS BEEN aroused by the proposed showing in Birmingham schools of a film on arithmetic. The film demonstrates the processes of addition, multiplication and subtraction. A young school teacher who was filmed doing vulgar fractions has been temporarily suspended although it has been pointed out that she was not working as a teacher when she made the film.

The major complaints come from people who have not seen the film. They say there is too much emphasis on arithmetic nowadays, they would not dream of going to see a film with figures in it and they do not believe other people should see it either. Lord Short-arm only sat halfway through the film and left when the common denominator was explained. He himself says he was never taught arithmetic, he was introduced to the subject by a priest who believed that one could be divided by three and that one and one should always make one. With this foundation Lord Short-arm says that no one could go wrong in arithmetic.

Alderman Bottom says that he was taught arithmetic by his mother and father who told him at an early age that three fours are ten, this and other simple facts he had picked up from other boys—such as five from three leaves eight were sufficient for anybody to get along with. Alderman Bottom is on the Council financial committee.

Councillor John Thomas said he thought the film was too explicit. He thought the approach should be through mathematics starting with the differential calculus and gradually progressing through geometry and algebra, say at about the age of twenty-one to the cruder concepts like the three times table. He felt it was too much of a shock for children to be presented too early in life with such facts. He himself felt that the abstract concepts of stochastic mathematics were a healthier atmosphere than the present sordid insistence on one, two and three.

Lady Constance Vulva said she thought that arithmetic was all part of a Com-

unist plot. It was evidence of the materialist approach to life which thought that everything could be measured. She believed it was part of the move to metrication which was a lure to get us into the Common Market with a lot of foreigners. She believed in the four absolutes, absolute innocence, absolute business integrity and absolute limits.

The Rev. Penis commented that the tendency of the film was to add to the growth of permissiveness in society. He had already heard talk of multiplication and had heard in the circles where such things were discussed of 'isosceles triangles' and he had overheard talk of the square on the hypotenuse.

The Right Honourable Fuckingham-Bollocks, MP, a chartered accountant and a partner in Balls, Balls and Sphere, said that once the workers knew something about arithmetic there was no knowing where it would end. They would be working out their wages as a percentage of the profits and arguing about the correctness of their pay packets and tax returns. The day might come when the workers would be able to read balance sheets and understand what happens on the stock exchange. It was perhaps wiser and better all round that they should be shielded from knowing such things. It only made them restless.

It is unlikely that the film will be shown in schools.

JACK SPRATT.

Another 4-page leaflet. Two articles from *FREE-DOM: The relevance of Anarchism today and Anarchism and Nationalism*. Available from Freedom Bookshop for 30p a hundred including postage.

Minister of Labour in the armchairs where they soon hope to sink, are there to fool the masses, to throw dust in their eyes with their so-called scientific nonsense. Do anarchists have the right to stand aside? Shouldn't they make their ideas heard, and distribute by the thousand their papers, pamphlets, manifestos everywhere where the masses of the workers are?

And if the First of May is really what we believe it will be—that is, an impressive demonstration of the unity which is being formed among the workers, with partial rebellions here and there against the exploiters—then it will make thousands think who are not thinking today, who read neither our papers nor our pamphlets, and who visit neither our groups nor our meetings. It will make them reflect, and will help to spread the anarchist idea a hundred times more than all our spoken and written propaganda. It will force new elements to become anarchists.

Man, it has been said, is a thinking animal who hates to be made to reflect. That is true. There are, however, great deeds which, by stirring his imagination, lead him to think. Let us stir his imagination.



PRESS FUND

April 20 to 26 inc.
New York: L.M. £2.10; Oxford: B.E.H. 50p; Wolverhampton: J.K.W. 10p; J.L. 50p; London: E.I. G.M. £2.50; Bangor: J.T. £5; Brecon: M.M. 25p; Haarlem: D.J.B. £2.36.

	Total:	£13.21
Income Sales and Subs.:		£80.49
		£93.70
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Deficit B/F.:		£305.99
		£455.99
Less Income:		£93.70
		£362.29
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Demo. March Meeting. May 1 (Saturday), at 2 p.m. Assemble AEU House, Primrose Hill, Chesham Road, Essex. Bring flags, etc.

Two lectures in Spanish at Holy Trinity. Kingsway Hall and Cash Hall, Kingsway, W.C.2 (opp Holborn Underground Station). The University, New Forms of Power and New Forms of Revolt, given by A. Garvia Calvo, Professor of Philosophy of the University of Madrid, on May 9 at 5.30 p.m. Second Lecture: 'Spanish Political Situation', given by Jose Peirats, journalist and author of various books on the Spanish social problem, on May 16 at 5.30 p.m. Both Lectures will be given in Spanish. Organised by the CNT FIJL in Exile.

Anarchist Bookshop, 6a Hunters Lane, off Yorkshire Street, Rochdale. Call if in town.

Cheerful girl/woman wanted to share unpolluted, creative life with bloke on primitive, remote farm in Northern Ireland. Write plenty and I'll write lots in reply. Box 003, Freedom Press.

Wanted. Duplicator. No large amount of ready cash, but could strike bargain at about £2 weekly. Contact Brian Banks, 553 Liverpool Road, Platt Bridge, Nr. Wigan.

Proposed Group—Exeter Area. John and Jill Driver, 21 Dukes Orchard, Bradninch, Exeter, EX5 4RA. England, Shelley, 'Poster Poem' with Jim Huggon, c/o Housmans Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, London, N.1.

Accommodation needed for visiting comrade from America, arriving early in May. Reply airmail Jim Nelson, 909 East University, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104, USA.

Leeds Direct Action Pamphlets: The Japanese Anarchists, 1p. Who are the Brain Police? 1p (Breakdown of the Power Structure of yer Leeds University—stripping away of liberal bullshit, etc.). Coming soon: 'Listen Marxist', 5p. All these available from the Anarchist Bookshop, 153 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds 2.

George Melly will compare the Racial Harmony Show at the Theatre Royal, Stratford, on Sunday, May 2, starting at 7.30 p.m. Cy Grant, Dudu Pukwana's Spear with Chris McGregor, Alex Pascal Singers (Soul and Reggae) and Indian dancer complete the bill. Tickets at 25p, 50p and £1.25 available from Newham International Community, 63b Woodgrange Road, Forest Gate, E7 (01-534 3103).

Radical Alternatives to Prison Benefit. Mermaid Theatre, May 2. Mitchell, Abse, Henri, Holm, Woolf, Rossell, and others. Tickets 75p, £1.05, £2.10, from RAP, 104 Newgate Street, E.C.1.

Scottish Anarcho-Syndicalist Conference. May 8/9. Details: Contact Moira Young, 91 Burghhead Drive, Glasgow, S.W.1.

Wanted: A copy of Voline's 'Unknown Revolution' for comrade in Australia. Send to Box 002, Freedom Press.

Preston Libertarians. Please contact Dr. Charles Shaw (for Mad research work), 12 Elmsley Street, Preston, PR1 7XD. Telephone: (0772) 52659.

Proposed Group—Dundee. Mike Malet, 1 Lynnewood Place, Dundee.

Anyone interested in forming a Cambridge Anarchist Group contact John Jenkins, 75 York Street, Cambridge.

Kropotkin Lighthouse Publications. 'The Revolutionary Catechism', Necheyev, 5p + 24p post. 'Song to the Men of England', Shelley, 'Post Poem' with Walter Crane's 'Workers' Maypole', 10p + 24p post. 'Poems', Jim Huggon, 5p + 24p post. Discount available on bulk orders. Jim Huggon, c/o Housmans Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, London, N.1.

Spanish lessons given in London. Rates on request. Write, in first instance, to Box 02/71, Freedom Press.

AFBIB needs subscriptions urgently. Any other donations would be very welcome. To Peter Le Mare, 5 Hannaford Road, Rotton Park, Birmingham 16.

Meetings at Freedom: Every Wednesday at 8 p.m. For details see 'This World' column.

Urgent. Help field and dispatch *Freedom* every Thursday from 4 p.m. onwards. Tea served.