

anarchist weekly Freedom

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PLAY ANY GOOD word games over Christmas? If you're still in the mood and fancy a little alliteration, try and turn on with 'Madrid . . . Moscow . . . Magnanimity . . .'. That should blow your mind.

You could go on with '... murder ... minorities ... machinations ... ministers ... military tribunals ... torture ... totalitarianism ...'.

The Spanish Fascists and the Russian Communists have played a great old Christmas game with the lives of a handful of their own minorities: Basques in Spain and Jews in Russia. Both have demonstrated their power over their people; both have demonstrated that they are really good guys dealing with very difficult situations in as humane and just a way as possible; both have demonstrated that they are prepared to listen to the voice of the world appealing for clemency and Christian forgiveness of their enemies; both have demonstrated to the world the weird interpretation of legal procedure that is possible under totalitarian regimes; both have demonstrated the utter cynicism and hypocrisy with which the State uses human lives as pawns in its games.

The military tribunal in Burgos, at which six Basque nationalists were found guilty of offences against the State, was a travesty of justice, although no doubt quite proper in accord with Spanish law.

CRACKS IN THE FACADE

There is no doubt whatsoever but that the 'confessions' on which the prosecution won its case were gained

GRIM GAMES OR RIDICULOUS REALITY?

by torture; equally no doubt but that the whole trial was put on as a showpiece in the face of growing and ever more open opposition to the Franco regime up and down the peninsula. As Franco shakes his way to his grave—only too slowly—the jockeying for positions of power in the succession have brought into the open criticisms and differences of opinion among the supporters of the regime: the Falange, the Army, the Royalists, the Church, the Bourgeoisie, which seriously undermine the prospects for a smooth transition from Franco's dictatorship to . . . well, what?

From the old dictator's point of view all this may be more serious than the rumblings from below: from the known and traditional opposition of the Left, existing underground for thirty years. He has known how to deal with that. The prisons, the firing squads, the garrote.

But when the vultures of the Right begin to squabble among themselves for the pickings to be got from the old man's carcass—this is most

disturbing. Like all psychopaths, Franco has his perverted justifications for his fearful crimes and they include the establishment of a United Spanish Nation, secure and everlasting in its cruel Catholic morality, stern paternalism and firm belief in its own bigoted rightness in bashing the brains out of any thought-criminals who dare talk about freedom or rights of association or any subversive stuff like that.

Something therefore had to be done to rally support for the regime—to close the ranks of the righteous. The Burgos trial was perfect for this purpose.

After all, a police chief was shot; Basque separatists have resorted to terrorist actions—and what government, of the right, left or centre, could put up with that? (Incidentally the attitudes struck by our own bourgeoisie have been amusing. With cries for law and order on the increase—what would have been the reaction if, say, a group of Welsh Nationalists machine-gunned an English police commissioner in Cardiff? Wouldn't there have been

howls for the return of flogging, the rope, 99-year sentences, thumb-screws—God knows what? After all, if Cambridge students get four years Borstal just for breaking windows . . . !)

NO EMBARRASSMENT

So Franco has been able to use this incident for his own political purposes very nicely thank you. Almost exactly like Mao Tse Tung organising the Red Guard in the 'cultural revolution' with massive demonstrations of support on the streets—so Franco pulled out his own Rentacrowd to give him the 'massive support' which enabled him to be magnanimous after the death sentences had been laid on the six Basques.

So he has been able to prove his own power and the support enjoyed by his own faction in the Right; he has subdued the Left by the torture and ruthless cynicism with which the trial was handled by the military (during the trial, incidentally, the six accused were for a time sitting handcuffed and with earplugs in their ears! To stop them talking in the Basque language!) And, above all, he has saved the regime from international odium by commuting the death sentences (and three of the accused were sentenced to death on two counts!) to a mere thirty years' imprisonment apiece. Thus the democratic West can breathe again. No embarrassing decision has to be made about Fascist Spain's place among the democracies. NATO, the Common Market . . . come back, Hispania, all is forgiven.

MINORITY POLITICS

Meanwhile, back in the USSR, similar political shenanigans were being woven around the fate of two Jews found guilty and condemned to death for hi-jacking a plane which they had not even boarded when they were not even armed. But the Court was convinced of their intention to hi-jack a plane, since, among other things, other Jews had done so on other occasions! There are three million Jews in

Russia, and an estimated half-million of them at least would like to get out and go either to Israel or to the West. This clearly cannot be allowed any more than the Basques can have their independence—or the Nagas or the Welsh or the Ukrainians or the Biafrans could, for that matter.

Not only would a mass exodus be a great propaganda defeat for the Communists, but any strengthening of Israel would not be in line with the pro-Arab policy of the Soviet Union in the Middle East.

The Communists for political reasons are anti-Zionist and it is of course very easy for this to spill over into anti-semitism in practice, although it would be false to say that this is what it is in terms of official policy—except that any minority is fair game for a totalitarian regime to play divide and rule with.

In the event, Mr. Kosygin was able to show himself as magnanimous as General Franco—and just about as much imbued with the Christian Spirit. Having had a usual Moscow-type trial, and found the defendants guilty as arranged, with the right two sentenced to death, although no plane had been hi-jacked and no one had been shot, the big generous gesture was then possible—commutation of the death sentence to a mere 15 years in Siberia! Such are the standards of behaviour of all the other governments of the world that a great sigh of relief went up. From the Vatican—whence the Pope had issued pleas for clemency to both Spanish and Russian authorities—came this gem:

The Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, said last night that the acts of clemency by the Spanish and Soviet authorities in the last hours of 1970 had illuminated the start of the New Year with a human light. 'At least for one day a common hope of clemency has triumphed.'

—Guardian, 1.1.71.

THE REAL QUESTIONS

And so it goes. Nobody questions the rights of life and death of the Spanish and Russian Governments. Continued on page 2

Growing Opposition to the Bill

ANARCHISTS HAVE a natural healthy scepticism when it comes to believing what politicians have to say. In common with all who wield power and authority, the latter have a habit of using doublethink. Their success depends on saying one thing and meaning another—usually the exact opposite. If they revealed their true intentions they would never succeed in carrying them out.

Mr. Carr, Secretary of State for Employment, aptly illustrated the doublethink technique when he recently moved the second reading of the Government's Industrial Relations Bill. He said: 'The years ahead will show that this Bill will increase the strength of the trade unions, the size of the trade unions and their degree of freedom and independence from State control and State interference.'

What Mr. Carr does not mention is the contradiction here of introducing the law or 'State interference' to bring about 'independence'. An independent trade union movement cannot be legislated for and it will certainly not be obtained from the Tories. But the Bill could 'increase the strength of the trade unions', not as more effective organisations of struggle against the employers, but as disciplinarians against militant members. The whole tone of the Bill is aimed in this direction—to isolate, to split, to divide and rule.

The Tories, like the previous Government, want to rule and govern. They see that the strength of the trade union movement lies not at Congress House nor with its union executives, but with the workers organised at their places of work. The Bill is designed to curb that strength. When has a Government legislated for freedom? When have the Tories ever given freedom to the working class? The freedoms won in the past were fought for and not just given. They had to be taken from the State and the employers who have jealously guarded their rule and privilege and

have only conceded demands in order to preserve their position.

The Tories now feel that this is an opportune moment for legislation. Indeed the very nature of continual production processes demand such a Bill in order to prevent the costly unofficial strike. The trade unions are far from being organisations which could effect a radical change in society. However, their registration, with a Registrar inspecting and probably requiring unions to alter or adjust their rules, will deny the continuance of any independence that still exists.

The Bill provides for a National Industrial Relations Court which will have High Court powers and be able to impose legally binding decisions. Little justice can be expected from such courts which will reflect the interests of the employers and not those of the workers.

DEFY THE LAW

As anarchists, we have a healthy disrespect for the law. The same attitude was to be found amongst those who combined together to form the first unions. The history of the movement has shown that workers are not bound by laws and they will find the strength to defy the law once again.

Opposition to the Bill is growing. On New Year's Day car workers in the Midlands staged a stoppage and demonstrated in the streets of Birmingham. The TUC's call for lunch-time meetings on January 12 will certainly end with stoppages, while, in London, they will end with workers marching to the Albert Hall for the evening 'demonstration' organised by the TUC. Some will make a day of it.

VERBAL OPPOSITION

The TUC has only shown verbal opposition to the Tories' Bill. They have no stomach for a fight with the Government, for their opposition is tempered

by the knowledge that they really would like to perform the role that the Bill will allocate to the Courts. Discipline of the rank and file members and the sack for the militants is the aim of both the TUC and the Government.

Some trade union leaders have criticised the TUC for its 'feather duster' approach. But while we may laugh at this pun by Mr. Dan MacGarvey, we must remember that this same gentleman sat with Lord Cameron and the secretary of an employers' organisation and condemned the action of building workers who were on strike in London. In fact some of the recommendations made by these men, such as inspection of union rules, are incorporated in the Tories' Bill. One should be wary of support by Mr. MacGarvey as well as of the Labour Party's 'constructive alternative' that they are now proposing to work out with the TUC for when they return to power.

The Tories, the Labour Party and the TUC see the perpetuation of the present system as being of prime importance. Our struggle for higher wages and better working conditions has not altered the relationship of boss and worker in industry. Basically the power structure has not changed and a minority who own the wealth and control the means of production still wield power over our lives. We are governed politically and economically and neither the TUC nor the political parties will try to change that basic fact. Only workers as individuals can change this by joining together to make a revolutionary alternative to the present system.

The opposition to the Bill could grow and radicalise to form demands that the system could not meet. This is the only alternative. We should work towards the abolition of a system of the governed and the governors and rid ourselves of leaders who think that they know what is best for us.

P.T.

THE WRITING ON THE WALL

AGAIN IN RECENT WEEKS, the workers in Eastern Europe have openly expressed their opposition to the tyranny and economic exploitation of the Communist Party dictators. The result has been the uprising in Poland and the iron-fisted reaction of the Polish dictators which has resulted in the slaughter of hundreds of workers, including women and children.

Like any capitalist government in the West, the Polish Government has tried to solve its economic problems by lowering the living standards of the workers. The riots in the Baltic ports were apparently sparked off by increases in food prices, but there is little doubt that the opposition has gone beyond economic demands and the authority of the Communist Party has been challenged. There have been numerous strikes and demon-

strations, and slogans with the message 'Down with the red bourgeoisie' have appeared on walls in the capital. The nature of the demonstrations was made clear by the report of a Swedish newspaper reporter: 'What happened in Gdansk was a revolution—and a successful one. The local Communist Party leadership hung a white flag from a window of the top floor and left the building with their hands up. The building was set on fire and Party officials were seized by about 3,000 shipyard workers who had marched in from the harbour.'

The uprising has resulted in the replacement of Gomulka by Gierk but one realizes that everything changes to stay the same when one remembers that Gomulka came to power on a similar

Continued on page 2

Fernand Leger: The Banner of the Proletariat

Catch—Fernand Leger the banner of the OVER THE YEARS the Tate Gallery has rightly been the target for much criticism mainly because of their own pretentious follies. Every exhibition is offered as an Adoration to Genius, passing only to change the name of the artist within the catalogue, so who can blame the cynic or the honest man if he curls the lip or weeps hot wet tears among the teacups and the girlish student chatter

ROUND THE GALLERIES

within the basement restaurant over the rapo of truth. Once again the Directors of the Tate Gallery have closed both eyes and fired off both barrels Townwise and I, the most humane and gentle of critics, will grant them one hit and one ghastly miss.

Leger and Purist Paris is a magnificently mounted exhibition and it is a genuine pleasure to walk among these well-hung paintings on their temporary white walls with a low ceiling that gives a contemporary intimacy to the work. It is a well-mounted exhibition and a good and informative catalogue and Leger's 70 or so paintings can still excite

the spectator as they did when they were fresh from his brush. But the Tate claim too much for the artist for they have attempted, and probably succeeded, in resurrecting Leger into a leader of a movement who deliberately worked to clean the canvases of the romantic rubbish of the age, to sweep away the artistic debris of the Dadaist movement and to offer a clean-cut realistic alternative to the erotic literary-mystical futuristic world of the surrealist movement for, claim the organisers of the exhibition, 'the Purists of the title can thus be interpreted to refer to a specific movement in French art at a specific historical moment in time, and also more broadly to an artistic climate that placed its faith in formal, pure, objective values'. I choose to doubt this for I would hold that minor artists can be fortunate enough to find an easy style for their limited talents and within that small area they flower. The working-masses of Paris owe Leger a debt for they were his subject matter and he illuminated the world of the proletariat within a mechanised society and showed the working mass as free individuals within the iron cages of the age.

A man of peasant background who

fought in the First World War as a front-line soldier, Leger brought to his work a genuine understanding and sympathy for the Paris working class. Within the excitement of the cosmopolitan intellectual society of the Paris nineteen twenties Leger chose as his contact with his fellow-men the French working class and for that his art and his subjects won him a place within the context of our age and by virtue of that his work will never be lost. While the friends and associates of Leger turned to the cafe's and the political clubs for their subject matter, Leger turned to the factory and the factory workers. The Victorian painters idealised work and the workers at a safe remove and they portrayed the worker as a sweat-soaked Greek slave, happy and docile in his effortless labour, for this was painting by the middle-class for the middle class and this is what they wished to believe and this is what they bought, but Leger was too involved with his age for this deliberate deception and his limited talents found a full and happy outlet in the mechanical, managerial world of cone, cylinder, straight line and circle.

But the directors of the exhibition have served Leger ill when they attempt to

place him at the head of a non-existent movement and in an attempt to prove their case surround him with a rabble of minor painters doodling their own thing with lines and circles, circles and lines. Leger was no purist for he was a man who loved the bright primitive flat colours straight out of the tube and he had little time for the manic Kafka world of Mondrian who was the solitary and master purist of that age, for the ultimate in art is the drawn circle on a white background and the ultimate rejection of romantic art is a drawn single straight line on a white background and, like suicide, it is a magnificent gesture that can only be performed once.

Leger was fortunate in his age and his artistic associates for the age gave him a subject and his associates gave authority to his method of painting. What is indeed unfortunate, not for us but for Leger, is that the directors of the exhibition have chosen to hang Pablo Picasso's *Femme Assise* within the heart of the Leger exhibition and Picasso's monumental fat broad dominates this Leger exhibition and by the very nature of this magnificent painting everything else within the exhibition is reduced to the second and third rate. Picasso's wonder-

ful painting of a plump, plaid, seated woman dominates the entire exhibition and it is this painting that haunts the mind when we leave the Tate Gallery for everything within the exhibition (and the Tate) becomes no more than a display of superficial brilliance. Yet for all that this is one of the Tate Gallery's finest hours for it is one of the best exhibitions that they have mounted for a number of years and we can pay homage to Leger for, despite his limitations, he produced work as valid to his age as the illuminations of the medieval artist monks for if I had to place Fernand Leger within the history of Western art I would not relate him to the café cosmopolitan society of the Paris twenties or our own intellectual theorising by pictures of Wyndham Lewis's acid Vorticist groups but to a religious age a thousand years ago when monks as craftsmen-painters, working within the confines of their cells and their conformist world, turned the framed cell into a winged chariot to the glory of their age and their fellow-men labouring in the fields. Thus painted Fernand Leger.

ARTHUR MOYSE

Let There Be Light

THE DISPUTE STARTED in fact in September when negotiations started at the annual review of pay and conditions. Last year, if you remember, the shop stewards' committees unofficially demanded 18%, and the Unions accepted 10% (FREEDOM, Vol. 31, No. 3). The shop stewards tried to organize an unofficial national strike starting on January 5 last year and failed. It was notable, however, that in that dispute the main Unions in the limelight were the T&G, the M&O and the AEU, this time it was the ETU led by ex-communist Frank Chapple. Last year the largely communist-dominated Shop Stewards' Committee won an undertaking for more local bargaining. Now, a year later, this has not materialized, and instead the ITU took the fore, and cocked it, good and proper. Why?

Firstly the work-to-rule and go-slow (not a strike!) had more effect than they expected, mostly because the first two clauses of the official instructions stated '1. No overtime or transferred spares to be worked' and '2. No temporary up or down grading will be accepted'. For years the industry has got by on overtime for day maintenance workers, but only in certain regions to any extent (hence the low national average for overtime) and on transferred spares for shift workers—the great majority. What has happened is that every man works spare shifts a few times per month, as part of his rota, to make up a 40-hour week, even though his job is taken by someone else at that time. However these have usually been transferred, at short notice, to another day (or night) to fill a vacancy due to illness or shortage of men (turnover is very high). This may of course involve up or down grading. When this was done much plant was left undermanned and the remaining men properly shut it down.

The militancy of the men and thus their effectiveness shook the Unions, leav-

ing them unprepared when the propaganda and general lies started. That publicity could easily have been arranged at short notice is evident, but for some reason it was not. Instead the public received only the most insidious propaganda, not only lies from the news media (calling it a strike) but also of a bawdy kind such as cartoons or quips from disc jockeys. That humour and music have been used before to lower the conscious barriers in propaganda campaigns will be remembered by those who saw the Nazi anti-semitic posters or listened to 'Lord Haw-Haw'. That it is now part of a rising repression made its rejection more important.

Also that Herr Pardoe, Liberal MP for N. Cornwall, quoted the 1875 'Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act' (sic) amended by the 1919 'Electricity, Gas and Water Act' entitling any mere labouring man to six months at Her Majesty's expense with the pleasure of hard labour, for striking, shows that he, let alone the Tories (Red and Blue varieties), regards it a case for the new anti-strike Bill, demonstrating liberalism to be the mockery it is.

Anyway, because of the alienation of the public, the propaganda was soaked up with the results we all know. It is my opinion that this alienation is due to the slow but steady movement of power stations to the countryside. Once, when asking the way in town, one was told, 'Down past the gas works and right at the electric light works', now it's 'left at Tesco's, right at Sainsbury's and opposite Fine Fare'. The electricity workers are scattered in remote and reactionary rural communities, with only the National Front farmers for allies.

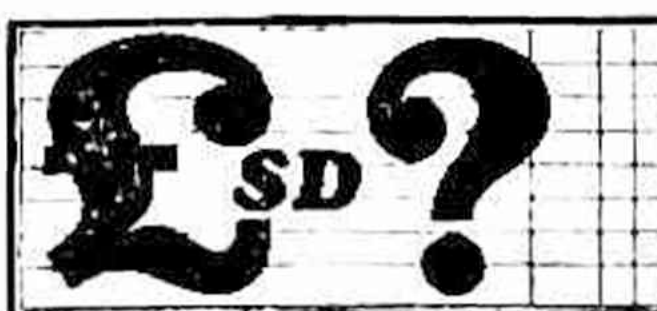
It has also been argued that certain people within the industry tried to aggravate power cuts to essential supplies to worsen the men's public image. This is quite possibly true and the Unions are now investigating. Many hospitals were

cut off unnecessarily as the Unions had instructed the men to co-operate in such cases if requested.

The most unfortunate thing about the dispute is the split between the staff and men after the EPLA's climb-down. It has become traditional in recent years for both 'sides' to demand the same rises through their separate negotiating channels and so the refusal to take industrial action at the last minute is not taken kindly. This climb-down was, however, in a way understandable. The engineers in the Area Boards were working up to 20 hours a day switching off areas a street at a time, enabling them to be selective. (This entails driving round town all day operating these switches.) If they had worked to rule more hospitals, etc., would have been cut off and the death of more than the one terminal patient blamed on the 'strike'.

What happens now we do not know. Further industrial action is unlikely, the men having been demoralized by public reaction. The court will not give us 28% and I suppose we shall wait yet again. Perhaps next time we should take a lesson from the French electricity workers in 1968. Stay inside and give the bloody stuff away. All it needs is a quick 'all out, brothers!' to the meter readers and bill collectors!

OUR MAN IN THE
ELECTRIC LIGHT WORKS



PRESS FUND

December 15 to 31 inc.
BET 173, Wolverhampton: JKW 2/-;
JL 5/-; Portland: JEC 13/10/-; Abingdon: M.B. 13/18/-; Peterborough: 1 W. 4/-; Soho: American Exile 4/-; Roath Park: H.C. 9/-; Cambridge: A.G. 12/-; Cardiff: L.E. 11/3/-; Oslo: R.B.M. 3/8/-; Cambridge: R.W.A.C. 1/-; Chester: D.J. 1/-; California: Italian Comrades per A.R. 120/-; Geneva: M.E. 7/-; Doncaster: D.R. 3/4/-; Graz: G.A. 10/-; York: L.F. 12/-; Peterborough: F.W. 1/-; London: W.S. 1 W. 4/2/-; Newcastle-on-Tyne: G.F.C. 11/4/-; St. Cloud: M.G.A. 11/10/-; Leicester: J. & P. 11/-; Glasgow: A.J. 5/-; London: N.19: J.H. 12/11/-; Wolverhampton: K.F. 5/2/-; London, S.W.4: J.P. 15/-; Hitchin: L.A. 10/-; Bookshop: R.A. 7/-; S.C. 5/-.

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| Total: | £67 17 7 |
| Income Sales and Subs: | £308 2 1 |
| | £375 19 8 |
| Expenditure 2 weeks (1 Freedom, 1 Anarchy): | £300 0 0 |
| Deficit b/f: | £1,235 2 11 |
| | £1,535 2 11 |
| Less Income: | £375 19 8 |
| DEFICIT: | £1,159 3 3 |

In Reverse

Dear Comrades,

A way to illustrate the flagrant injustice of the legislation on trade unionism would be to imagine the outcry there would be if the legislation was to be reversed.

LETTER

If the TUC were to be due to appoint a registrar of employers with whom all firms must be registered and whom all such firms should be forced to satisfy that their relationships in industry were just.

If, whenever a wage claim was presented and refused, the TUC were empowered to declare a cooling off period during which the employer should pay the claim in full while holding a ballot of his shareholders on the advisability

Writing on the Wall

Continued from page 1

wave of popular discontent. Furthermore, despite his 'back-peddalling' on Gomulka's economic policies, Giersek is certainly no 'liberal'. He is remembered for his hard-line attitude against students' demands for greater freedom of expression in 1968.

Predictably, the bourgeois press in Britain was thoroughly confused by the whole incident. It all made great propaganda in favour of 'our free society' but the press hacks weren't perturbed by the fact that the Polish workers were protesting against economic 'reforms' similar in principle to those beloved by 'democratic' politicians and journalistic hacks in the West: measures to enforce stricter labour discipline and higher productivity.

The workers in the 'Communist' countries are certainly not giving their lives in order to replace the blatant tyranny of the Communist Party by the more subtle—but equally vicious when the system is challenged—form of oppression and exploitation which we find in the 'democratic' West.

The Polish workers may have been temporarily defeated again just like the Russian workers who were murdered by Trotsky and the other Communist Party butchers at Kronstadt in 1921. However, the idea of a free Communist society cannot be destroyed by the actions of lying murderers who try to camouflage their crimes against humanity behind a hideous mask of 'socialism'.

Holders of power, beware! The day is coming when workers East and West will refuse to be fooled any longer by your divisive lies of race, nation and ideology, and together we will sweep your kind into the dustbin of history. We will build a harmonious world based not on the uneasy 'peace' of your nuclear stockpiles, not the 'order' of the jackboot and the machine-gun, not the 'justice' of a system which denies workers the product of their labours, not the 'democracy' which denies the individual control of his own life and environment, but the voluntary co-operation of free groups and individuals.

The writing is on the wall!

TERRY PHILLIPS.

of going to strike—with full circulation of accounts.

That any employer engaged in an illegal refusal of such wage rise should be fined.

That... The trouble is that the TUC is so gutless that if it had such powers it would still use them to the bosses' benefit not the workers'—which of course is the fallacy of the state road to socialism.

Fraternally,

I. OTTER.

GRIM GAMES

Continued from page 1

because if they do, then the rights of life and death of any government will come under scrutiny.

Nobody questions the right of the Russian and Spanish Governments to continue to dominate minorities held by force under their control. It is accepted that the Basques be dictated to from Madrid, and the Jews throughout the Soviet Union—and the Ukrainians and other reluctant Soviet citizens—be dictated to from Moscow. Nobody questions this because then the rights of any government will be questioned.

Nobody actually questions the rights of the Spanish or Soviet Governments to control the movement of 'their' citizens, because then the whole question of the divine right of governments to give or withhold passports, visas, permission, will be opened for discussion.

Both Russia and Spain are wooing the Western democracies at the moment. For their own reasons, they are prepared to make genuflections in the direction of liberal democracy, but it had nothing to do with clemency, magnanimity, Christmas or any other crap.

Well, yes, it was a kind of Christmas game. A mixture of Monopoly, Diplomacy, Postman's Knock, Murder, Poker with marked cards, crap with loaded dice, chess with the pawns in the spotlight, and cribbage... fifteen two, fifteen four, and two for his knob...

But do we all have to play these games?

JUSTIN.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

We have now finished sending out all the various types of renewal notice, with the exception of those subscriptions which expired with the last issue of 'Freedom' of 1970.

As these constitute the bulk of our list, we'll not be sending separate notices, but use this instead to ask you to try and renew as soon as possible, if you have not already done so.

1971 rates are published in this issue.

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

ANARCHIST
FEDERATION
of BRITAIN

AFBIB—To all Groups.

Next AFBIB Meeting and Production. Sunday, February 7. 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 inquirers should

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

AFB REGIONAL GROUPS

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

North West Federation: Secretary, Les Smith, 47 Clarence Street, Peckham, Lancaster. Cornwall: A. Jacobs, 13 Ledra Road, St. Austell, (M. Ma. 11).

East & E. Heria: J. Newell, 'Aegean', Spring Lane, Eight Ash Green, Colchester. (QM, FL.) Surrey: G. Wright, 47 College Road, Epsom. Yorkshire: Martin Watkins, Flat 12, 90 Charendon Road, Leeds, LS2 9L.

Scotland: Temporary Secretary, Neil Munro, 203 Cornhill Drive, Aberdeen. Wales: c/o P. J. Mare (address above).

N. Ireland: c/o Freedom Press. S. Ireland: 20 College Lane, Dublin, 2.

University and Student Groups: c/o P. L. Mare. (Abbreviations: M—meeting; M2—magazine; B—badge; Q—Quarterly; FL—free leaflet)

New Writers and Readers Begin Here

Books

IT'S JUST A TRICK of the calendar and the New Year hasn't actually any significance (the phenomena of rebirth and recurrence takes place in Spring really) but editorial thoughts turn at this time to the problem 'What is FREEDOM all about?' This year, what with our sister *Anarchy* taking on a new look (and a new editor) and Fleet Street taking a new nose-dive, we are impelled to take a new cool look at FREEDOM.

We are helped in this by three letters from Leeds, York and Bath making suggestions and criticism about FREEDOM; we are ever loth to waste our precious space on self-regarding activities—even praise of FREEDOM is excluded. We do not take the hypocritical position that we welcome constructive criticism, for criticism is, by its nature, destructive, but destruction is necessary before something can be constructed on the same site. Thus destructive criticism is a creative act.

The editorial board of FREEDOM is an example of workers' control. A group of people got together to do a job (viz. producing a newspaper); from time to time people drop out, from pressure of other work, from inability to work with the original group, for various reasons. On the other hand, various people are asked to join the group (some decline) because they are known to have talents useful to the paper. Some people are talented but thought to be difficult to work with, some who are acceptably useful are prevented by geography or other circumstances from joining.

We do not claim, nor ever have claimed to be the paper of the anarchist movement. We have been defined as 'a paper at the service of the anarchist movement', a fact to which the 'Groups' and 'Contact' columns bear witness even if the rest of the paper sometimes fails, in the eyes of some, to meet that promise.

1970 saw changes in editorial personnel and to match this there have been changes in our content and in our readership no doubt, since it is true, as one of our critics mentioned, that 'a strong personality of a paper' would help. The fact that FREEDOM is edited on a veto basis would seem to negate the possibility of a single-pointed, single-minded paper but we believe that even without one strong dominant personality on the editorial board (our Leeds correspondent mentioned the late Marie-Louise Berneri as an example) we are emerging as a team and producing a paper with personality.

We are not a mass-agitational paper. True, we agitate, and would like to appeal to the mass—but the world is not like that. To get a circulation like the *Sun* we should have to be like the *Sun*, and the same goes for the uncommitted high-circulation underground (and Metropolitan line!) publications such as *International Times*, *OZ* and *Private Eye*, which some would have us emulate.

As to mass-agitation we tried to avoid the cliché-mongering and politicking that

goes on in other left-wing papers which can command the selfless sacrifice and dedication of the noble idiots who sell the well-known papers at factory gates and on street corners. Anarchism is dedicated to teaching people to live for themselves not, as most left-wing movements do, to impress upon people 'the sordid necessity of living for others'—to quote Oscar Wilde. We are not mugs or martyrs. There are people who enjoy editing newspapers, writing for newspapers, despatching newspapers, selling newspapers and, we want people to enjoy reading our newspaper. We need such people. But, things being what they are, such people are rare.

We do not aim at explicit propaganda of the cliché-mongering kind but aim at implicit propaganda which the intelligent reader will grasp. This is not, in the cliché phrase, a class issue. Intelligent readers can be workingclass and some intellectuals are not intelligent. On the other hand we do not wish to start an anti-intellectual campaign. What use will the new society be if there is to be no art or philosophy? Surely one of the aims of anarchism is to make art and philosophy the concern of all.

We have had suggestions for a horoscope column, we know other left-wing papers devote columns to sports activities but our space is limited and astrology, football and cricket do not rank yet among our priorities. We have our biases in favour of literature, art, pop music, jazz and cinema, which find their way into our columns. We occasionally review theatre, television—if we had regular contributions on these subjects we should have to ration them out. One of our correspondents gave us a list of potential subjects as follows: 'revolutionary eating, sex (that old thing), music, entertainment, community, protesting, letter-writing, habitation, reading, thieving, disruption, propaganda, dialogue, teaching, holidays, raising children, religion, enjoyment'. We do not say we should be happy to consider articles on any or all of these subjects. We recently rejected an article on how to make blackberry wine and a severely limited useful article on a speed trap for motorists in Southern England. The sombre fact is that the more contributions we can get, the more we must reject.

The same correspondent suggested articles on the mainstream thinkers of anarchy pointing out their relevance, contradictions and their relation to other movements. Perhaps he hasn't noticed that this is what we're trying to do with our supplements. Optimistically he says that 'they need not be very long'. Most of our contributors are only part-time writers (all the editors are) and 'haven't got time to write short articles'. If we are to explore contradictions and relations this is going to take a long time because, to be fair to our opponents—or even to our friends—we must state their case too and not just drag quotes from out of context.

Further, he says we should have a strip cartoon. There is some dissension

on the editorial board on this but the truth is that we haven't seen the right cartoons yet. Humour is the most difficult thing to put over and opinions on it differ—even on editorial boards and more so with readers! As regards humour in general, it is extremely difficult to be funny week after week after week. Humour must be spontaneous or nothing.

He makes a plea for us to follow issues from week to week such as the Fulham squat and the prosecutions. As regards Fulham we were favourably placed (and biased) because two of the editorial board were deeply involved. Many stories we could have had we have failed to get, owing to lack of correspondents writing to us—the Brighton squat, the recent squats in East London—and we have also failed to send reporters out to get these stories. We were recently given details of academic trouble at Birmingham but our correspondent was so heavily involved that he could not give us a story, all we could do was pick up details from the national press and 'hand-outs'. One of the more vulgar editors has coined the expression 'a wank' for the type of story which retells the well-known facts of some governmental or judicial outrage and then proceeds to get worked up about the predictable dirty behaviour of government or judiciary. It is one of the aims of FREEDOM to avoid such 'wanks'. For this we do need on-the-spot correspondents. This if course faces us with the question of choice, and authoritarian as it seems, it is the function of editors to edit!

It is quite true, as other correspondents have pointed out, that our somewhat bizarre publishing schedule mitigates against topicality. Unfortunately this is true but certainly we can give a fresh, detached viewpoint on current events, and if we keep it that way people will find it worth while waiting to see 'what FREEDOM says about it'.

By and large since the advent of AFBIB we have given up the function of being an internal bulletin for the anarchists. We strive to keep out displays of PM being rude to AN (not quite as our correspondent puts it, we have changed the initials). We also strive to keep out personal attacks; to question X's ideas on squatting as a reformist movement is valid but to allege that X beats his wife is interesting but irrelevant to the purpose of FREEDOM.

It is true that there is some difficulty in involving new people in the group as another correspondent says. Given the conditions—ability, availability and acceptance—it is difficult to find people who will turn up week after week and work harmoniously, contributing regularly to the work of FREEDOM. One editor had an open house when the paper went to press but alas! time was consumed by mere idlers and gossipers and the production was delayed and rushed. We do have an open house on Thursdays and one, at least, of the editors is present to discuss with would-be contributors or even disgruntled readers. By a strange coincidence they

can also help to despatch FREEDOM.

We do aim for 'scoops' and articles in depth. These could come from outside correspondents and they often do. One of the functions of the supplements is to make room for longer articles which are written with greater depth than more regular contributors have the time or knowledge for.

Another correspondent asks if we couldn't get more articles by A. We know that A is a good writer and a friend to FREEDOM but she happens to be a professional writer and journalist. We hesitate to ask A for contributions since we know this is a 'huswoman's holiday' as it were, and would probably prevent her from earning money (or her living) from such work. We have occasionally received pieces out of the blue from A or the famous B and for these we are grateful. In any case it is much better for anarchism if A can put over anarchist ideas into papers of mass-circulation. There are dangers in people coming over to anarchism because they admire A. What happens if A reneges on anarchism?

Another method of getting 'names' has been adopted rarely by FREEDOM but sometimes by *Anarchy* and more often by other papers of the progressive movement, that is to 'lift' or more dignifiedly 'syndicate' articles of interest between papers. This has its attractions but for a very wide reader it does make for uniformity of newspapers in the same way that syndicated material has its effect on the mass-circulation press. We do not say that we reject this device but it is a thing to use with care.

On the other hand we have, or had, a small band of translators whose arduous task is to go through the foreign anarchist press (some scores of papers) and select articles worthy of translation. This is so arduous a task, finding worthy material that few can be found to consistently work at this with the always attendant risk that the editors will reject it after all. We have never been able to find an anarchist sympathiser volunteer of discrimination and good translating powers to translate from the Japanese or Yiddish.

In this discursive reply to correspondents we hope to have cleared up some points; we have doubtless obfuscated some, but we hope we have inspired some new writers and possible future editors.

We may in penultimate reply briefly dwell on the two suggestions sometimes made—(a) Drop FREEDOM; (b) Drop *Anarchy*. We do not propose to discuss with those who believe in a combination of (a) and (b). In short we believe that the more libertarian and anarchist periodicals there are the better and if both FREEDOM and *Anarchy* can go on without absolute financial disaster they should do so. Relative financial disaster has always been our lot but then so it is with *The Times*, the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily Sketch* and the *Guardian* even with all their advertising!

Finally, it is thought by some that the obvious plundering and anti-union policies of the Heath Government should make a good opportunity for FREEDOM's propaganda. That may be so, but even as far right as the Labour Party there is denunciation of Heath's policies and all we can affirm is Me-too-ism but we can also point out that Heath is only building on foundations laid by Labour Governments or destroying that which Labour had already damaged. At the same time from all sides there are repudiations of the 'permissive society'—whatever that was. The underground press sinks further and further into the escapism of pop music, drugs, sex, religious cults, community and conventional politics. We must keep up the struggle for freedom.

THE EDITORS.

THIS YEAR IN IRELAND

BOTH PARLIAMENTS are in recess, but some of us feel we are only in the calm in the centre of the whirlwind and worse must come before things get better. True, even over the Christmas period there were robberies galore, a few murders, chiefly private I think, and plenty of explosions, but for Ireland we were quiet. A number of people walked from Dublin to Cork arriving in Cork on Christmas Day as a protest against the political prisoners held in such inhuman circumstances in English jails. Twenty-three hours a day in a cell the size of a postage stamp, bad food and beatings-up, if they are to be believed.

In the 26 counties we are becoming very aware that our Taoiseach (Prime Minister) is a sick man mentally and needs treatment. He told newspapermen about the 'plot' to kidnap himself or other high-up officials and was genuinely surprised that they did not believe him. Kidnapping would just not be possible in Ireland where everyone knows exactly what everyone else had for breakfast. We are too small a country, and where would the kidnappers take a hi-jacked plane? Lynch however sees plots and plotters behind every bush, and threatens internment. He presides over the strangest government that the State has ever seen. He fired two of his Ministers and had them arrested, he fired another for reasons not yet clear, a fourth whom

shortly before he had called 'a rock of integrity' resigned calling Lynch a traitor, while a fifth Minister was denounced by colleagues as a scoundrel of the worst order and certainly this man's evidence in court strained even the most credulous. Following all this, why should any story peddled to Lynch by John Fleming of the Branch or Peter Berry (who has since resigned himself in fear) be too ridiculous to be believed?

The world has suffered before from dotty leaders from Nero on. Remember the fantastic blunders Sir Anthony Eden's ill-health led him to commit? Think of Stalin, Beria and Hitler. All gone a bit in the upper storey. Mr. Lynch should be treated by a psychiatrist and not be permitted to open concentration camps and have the Branch kidnap his political opponents and presumably shoot them if he gets more scared for his position. Many of us believe it is those who oppose Ireland's entry into the EEC whom he especially wants out of the way. He might do well to remember one internment without trial and Ireland is out of the EEC for ever, whatever Dr. Hillery thinks. Greece lost its association with the EEC when it imprisoned without trial, Chichester-Clarke would do well to think about this if he intends following Lynch's example as he threatened to do, and Britain too would be out on its ear.

The behaviour of Fianna Fail is so

reminiscent of the National Socialist Party in Germany in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Dr. Conor Cruise O'Brien spoke in the Dail against internment without trial, for which he was ordered from the Chamber. He had to pass by a group of Fianna Fail Deputies. They screamed, 'Kick him. Kick him. Throw him out', and two would have actually gone as far as to strike him had they not been restrained by a wiser colleague. Millions were interned in Dachau and Belsen. Lynch seems to be trying hard to follow Hitler's example.

It is almost certain that a very unholy alliance has been drawn up between Lynch, Heath and C-C which will drag Ireland back into the Commonwealth and federate under Westminster.

Meanwhile while our Government indulges in these high jinks, prices rise and rise and rise. Paraffin goes up tomorrow, postage on Decimal Day, and so on and so on. Houses stand empty all over Ireland rotting away while the homeless are evicted onto the streets and exposed to the bitter weather. Old age pensioners are found dead of cold and malnutrition, but let's go into the EEC and kill two-thirds of our dairy cattle to keep prices up.

I cannot say Happy New Year. It would be hollow mockery, but I hope for just a little sanity to prevail.

H.

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THE POVERTY OF DOCUMENTARIES

HARDLY A WEEK goes by without BBC or ITV churning out yet another documentary on poverty. There was the 'Panorama' of August 18, criticised in *Freedom* two months ago. On November 3, Thames TV's 'Report', 'Hard Times'. Its producer, Ian Martin, did a documentary 'Report' in April 1969 on the poor of St Anne's, Nottingham. Some people make a living out of turning poverty into a spectacle. And some people never learn. I'm not talking about the poor, I'm talking about the TV producer. This film marked no development whatever from his film a year ago. Will he remake the same film in a year's time?

There are too many woolly pseudo-progressives around who honestly and stupidly believe that any and every programme on poverty is a Good Thing. I wonder how many of them belong to the Free Communications Group?

Such films are imprisoned by stylistic preoccupations and middle-class documentary conventions. As technically fine as a glossy-gloss article in the Sunday Observer, photos by Lord Snowdon. I'm all for technical expertise, it's my business as an assistant film editor. From that myopic viewpoint, the only criticism I could think of was that the film had a bit of cigarette ash spilt on it now and then. Otherwise, a smart professional product. But all this technique merged with the content to convey INERTIA and PATHOS. It was saturated with

pathos, the pictures, the music, the depressed world-weary voices of the poor, the soft-voiced commentary, the slow-stilled camera-work, the gentle artistic dissolves and fade-out-fadings, the sweetly-sad overlapping complaints of the poor.

'Hard Times' quoted several interviews (vox pops) from the classic documentary of 1933, 'Housing Problems'. What these extracts demonstrated vividly was not just that housing problems have not changed since the thirties. They revealed that the methods and attitudes of documentary film makers haven't changed much either. The TV audience has had a bellyful of poverty, unemployment, vulnerability, illness, depression, pathos and apathy. The dozen or so people interviewed in the film have had their fill of it too. But unlike most of us, most of them are stuck in the mire. Only one person in this film spoke out of turn: 'We don't want pity'. With those words, he gave the lie to the whole spirit of 'Hard Times'. This film induced pity, it begged for pity. It showed degraded and demoralised people. Any poor people who saw it could only be further degraded and demoralised by it. It rotted the soul. So who was the programme really for? Just like 'Panorama' of August 18, this was not for poor people themselves to use to better their individual and collective situations. Twice, the film showed the scrawled wall message: 'We teach all hearts to break'—and other photos on loan from Shelter.

Whose hearts was the message aimed to touch? Who but our tender conscienced middle classes. It's the same old story.

Appeal to middle-class conscience, compassion, charity.

Working-class poverty and apathy, poverty and apathy alleviated by charity.

Oscar Wilde tore apart this charade in *The Soul of Man Under Socialism*: 'Charity degrades and demoralises. It is immoral to use private property in order to alleviate the horrible evils that result from the system of private property.'

We are often told that the poor are grateful for charity. The best among the poor are never grateful. They are ungrateful, discontented, disobedient and rebellious. They are quite right to be so. Charity they feel to be a ridiculously inadequate mode of partial restitution, or a sentimental dolo, usually accompanied by some impertinent attempt on the part of the sentimentalists to tyrannise over their private lives. Is there a better comment on a typical 'committed' TV documentary film maker at work?

'Hard Times' reported a woman who has £8 or so Social Security, but doesn't claim Supplementary Benefits 'because she doesn't like to'. Yes, we know there are millions like her. But should her attitude be condoned? No, it should not. It should be attacked. Not by director or commentator—that would be to abuse the role of the media. Better for the film to show her in discussion with a poor

person like herself, but one who thinks her attitude is self-defeating. It represents deep-rooted conservative convictions of reverence, deference, strengthened by the fact that the poor think of little else but how to get by from one day to the next. It was symptomatic of this film that the unique moment and possibility of escape from the grind of everyday subsistence shown to the people in the film and to the viewer, was the loan of a social worker's holiday cottage to a family—an act of true charity!

The commentator said: 'Hardly anyone makes sure the poor get the benefits they are entitled to.' This begs the big question: What about the Social Security, why aren't they doing their job? Why doesn't a film like this include an interview with a liberal S.S. officer? Ask him why they don't/can't make sure the poor get their rights. Ask him why there are squatters, why there are Claimants' Unions. But first, the eyes of the production team that made 'Hard Times' have to be forced open! It had not a mention of the squatters. Not a whisper about the Claimants' Union. This film introduced nothing that could possibly result in poor people coming together to fight their misery and desperation. It behaved almost as if it was on a mission of discovery or rediscovery of the poor. E. P. Thompson writes of Mayhew's huge 1884 reportage, *London Labour and the London Poor*. 'It would be ludicrous

to suggest that Mayhew discovered Victorian poverty. The poor had long discovered themselves.

The same applies to 'Hard Times'—Dickens' version and Thames TV's pallid echo of it. Again, the commentator said weakly: 'The poor if their case were heard might argue differently.' The fact is that the best among the poor are making their case heard. They aren't just sitting in their misery or conniving with corrupt TV producers, they're taking action on their own behalf.

Not all TV programmes on the poor are as misty-eyed as 'Hard Times'. A recent 'This Week' (which is very inconsistent however) did a really good job on Islington. The people in it spelled the lively message loud and clear. Don't just sit on your arses, DO something. There must be no more sympathy for the pathetic, no more pathos, no more charity sermons. Where the Claimants' Union has shown the way, apathy is stupidity. Apathy is cowardice. We want to see programmes showing poor people getting their rights by fighting for them; programmes intended to stimulate other poor people to do likewise. Anything else is useless. JULIUS

Contact

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

Seminar on Anarchism

WHILE MEETINGS continue every Wednesday at 8 p.m. in Freedom Press Hall the first planned event in the New Year is for January 20. This seminar arises directly out of the desire of 20 visiting American students (Denison University, Ohio) to acquaint themselves both with anarchist thought and individuals. All are welcome, particularly those with contributions to make. In the latter connection we hope, on the same night, to draw up a list of events and speakers for the forthcoming year. If you have a subject on which you could give a paper please advise then or by mail.

A Pawn in their Game

The food riots in Poland attended by brutal government repression and accusations that 'anti-social' elements were at the root of the trouble will surprise no observer of authoritarianism.

Students of Marxism in power—the realisation of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'—could well scrutinise the reactions in Russia and China. The latter refers to the 'revolutionary storm of the Polish people' against 'revisionist' rulers. Peking newspapers wholeheartedly supported the Poles, denouncing Soviet 'colonial rule in east Europe'. The Russians responded by denouncing the Chinese for a 'most unpardonable' intrusion in the internal affairs of another 'socialist' country, and went on to say that this Chinese opportunism was blatantly making capital of the existence of 'forces hostile to the socialist order'.

The very existence of such hostile forces—as previously evidenced in Czechoslovakia and Hungary—within a long-established authoritarian regime is for all freedom-lovers a hopeful sign for the future even if we are limited now to merely expressing solidarity with these 'anti-social' elements.

Revolt of the Slaves

The yielding of voluntary obedience to the authorities is probably the principal continuing cause of their survival. When this condition of servitude is seriously questioned by the masses the existing order may be seriously challenged. The American Army recently did a survey of its troops in Europe where a high percentage of the men are Negroes. The official report expressed great concern at the 'acute frustration... volatile anger' encountered. The troops told the investigators that their true place was back home 'where they could fight to liberate and free their black sisters and brothers from the dirty, stinking, teeming ghettos, and from all forms of racial bigotry and oppression'.

Exit one militant

Terry Devey was a leading Communist for fifteen years. For six years he had worked for Batchelor's Foods—owned by Unilever—where he had an established reputation as a militant and 'trouble-maker'. In October 1970 a seven-week strike brought all production to a cease and was caused by the management dismissing him. Finally the strike was settled but Devey was not reinstated. Instead he was given £3,000 by the company. He then surrendered his party card—this bit of 'pragmatism' was too

THIS WORLD

much even for the CP.

When one examines the record of the Communist Party, however, this sort of opportunism does not seem out of character. It is exactly men like Devey who have flourished in the Soviet Union—not to speak of the satellite states where even more obsequious carrion dominate in the establishment. Even in Britain communist officials are not marked by a trust of the people—in my experience they have a large measure of contempt for ordinary workers but claim that given power they can bring about a change in their economic lot. Devey has not waited for communism to attain power in Britain—he has made his peace with the present establishment.

Our Prime Minister

'One of the attractions of politics is to enable one's opponent to do some of the dirty work and then to be able to come along and take advantage of what they have done'—At the National Press Club, Washington, D.C.

Influencing government

In the last issue of *Freedom* I suggested that Dr. Donald Schon's series of lectures on BBC should be of considerable interest to anarchists because of his analysis of the deficiencies in authoritarian structures and his postulation of alternative societies now present in our society. In the sixth and final lecture Dr. Schon makes two further important points that should be of vital interest to anarchists.

Firstly, he points out that once a government is in power it frequently failed to adjust to changes in society and in that respect at least there was no difference between one government and another. In its propaganda efforts the government's message was always represented as 'true'—irrespective of what the facts were. Dr. Schon compared this type of activity to commercial firms who were bent on selling their products—and using dishonest advertising gimmickery to achieve success—despite a lack of demand for them. The behaviour pattern which politicians inevitably develop must, objectively, be seen as 'dehumanising and repressive. And you will be doing it in the name of preservation of the means of operation of the system'.

Secondly, there is the question of how to influence government. Given, as suggested above, that government is quite blind in issuing its orders and propaganda and expects only dumb compliance and acceptance the answer to the question is clearly the CREATION OF A CRISIS. If this makes for a crazy sort of society it is, given the authoritarian structure, inevitable. Dr. Schon concludes: 'Our organisational map is endemic and perpetually mis-matched to the problems that we think are worth solving.' The Blind leading the Blind.

Civil Liberties

Simon Glynn has had his exclusion from residence at Keele University for being naked with others (a protest) confirmed by the High Court.

Richard Neville, editor of *OZ*, was refused bail when he appeared at West London Magistrates' Court on a charge of possessing cannabis. Pressure from the National Council for Civil Liberties and an appeal to a judge in chambers secured his eventual release. The magistrate's refusal was clearly based on the police persecution of the underground press—*OZ* is currently indicted with corrupting morals.

Rudi Dutschke, whatever his ultimate fate, has provided us with a penetrating insight into the workings of the security police in Britain. Despite the fact that Dutschke, whatever he could have done, was never any threat to the establishment here, he was followed night and day and all his phone calls were tapped. Now, before an appeal tribunal, all the trappings of so-called British justice are abandoned with official evidence being given in secret without any opportunity of examination or rebuttal by the defence. If ordinary guarantees of a free trial are withdrawn in such a minor matter it augurs ill when more crucial cases are brought to trial.

ANARCHIST TOPICS—2

Freedom in Education

Part of the vicious circle in which humanity is trapped by authority is that

obedience is taught from the earliest age. Thus God, parents, police, employers, the government all comprise the sacred cows to whom servility is due. To those who would change the system one fundamental problem is the provision of a system of education freed from the ancient myths and degradation. It is for this reason that practical anarchists have taken interest in experiments in a freer form of education.

One of the eminent pioneers in this field is A. S. Neill, founder of Summerhill. It has been objected that the endeavour is purely bourgeois, that only the children of the well-to-do can attend because of the fee system necessary for survival of the school. It is, however, the inner workings of the place that will concern the pragmatic observer. That students should be encouraged to self-expression and autonomy from the earliest age, that they should play a vital part in the running of school (the aim of current 'student power' movements) represent a break from traditional education that must be of great interest to anyone desirous of that change in the vicious circle which is absolutely essential to the creation of a free society. This may be condemned by the utopian revolutionary as piecemeal social engineering but this criticism is the sort of approach which is utterly destructive of the possibility of social change and characteristic of the hardened pessimist. To those who take anarchism seriously the whole point is its achievement.

BILL DWYER

FAILURES IN POWER & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Dear Friends,

Justin surprisingly does less than justice (ha-ha!) to his theme about the electricity workers: may I add a few facts?

By no means do all power stations in the country need overtime to keep them going: a sufficient number do so as to make an overtime ban—which is broadly what the work-to-rule amounted to—hurt. In fact, those in the South Western Area have always worked to rule, and they

under that extraordinarily silly old man Douglas Stewart at ten in the evening was an absolute disgrace by any standards—except by those of what it set out to do which was to put over a one-sided view to the public. An instance of this can be best cited with reference to hospitals.

There was never any need at all for any hospital to be cut off: all circuits with hospitals are well known and well indicated. Such circuits are normally the last to be affected if there is any power cut: I know, I've lived on one, and many others have done so too. Not one of these circuits need have been affected: that they were was a deliberate decision of management. Nor may I add were hospitals the only ones: a circuit containing mines would not be touched either, as some of the comrades in Cornwall are very well aware, because they, unlike hospitals this time, were not cut off.

Justin is dead right when he says the ETU failed massively in its propaganda effort. Let the lesson be learned by other unions in the struggles to come: it is more important to buy space even in the capitalist press to put over the truth—and pray let it be the truth and not waffle—than, in the end, to pay out strike money.

Yours,

Cornwall

R.B.

Printed by Elephant Press, London, E 1

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

Dr. Robert H. V. Offendorff, MA, MD, LRCP, etc., will speak on the differences between the treatment of addicts in Britain and USA, at conference this Sunday, January 10, 1971, at 2.30 p.m., at 6 Endsleigh Street, London, W.C.1. Questions—Discussion Admission Free. Organised by Drug Dependents' Care Group.

Socialist Medical Association. A Day Seminar on the 'Social Causes and Consequences of Addiction'—to Drugs—Alcohol—Smoking—Gambling on Sunday, March 28, 1971, at the NUFTO Hall, 14 Jockey Fields, London, W.C.1 (off Theobalds Road), Holborn. Two sessions: morning 10 a.m. to 12.45 p.m.; afternoon 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Fees: 5/- per session, 10/- per day, per person. Send to 54 Finchley Court, London, N3 1NH.

History Workshops, Saturday and Sunday, February 13 and 14, 1971. Send for full details to: Ruskin College, Oxford.

The Anarchists, 1/-, P.O. Box A 389, Sydney South, NSW 2000, Australia. Leaflet available for distribution on January 12, Day of Demonstration against the Labour Relations Bill. From Freedom Bookshop.

The Ad Hoc Basis of Revolutionary Organisation. The notorious article by Terry Phillips (originally published in *Freedom*) is soon to be republished as a duplicated leaflet. Available free from: Corby Anarchist Press, 70 Blenheim Walk, Corby, Northants.

Young Man (degree) desperately seeks some form of employment. Ring 229 6713 (evenings only).

Exeter Group. Anyone interested in getting a group together contact: Nigel Outten, Westeria House, Cullompton Hill, Bradninch, Exeter. If possible, please write first.

George Foulser, now squatting at No. 090123, HM Prison, Jebb Avenue, Brixton, S.W.2. Letters, books welcome.

Durham Anarchists—new group being formed. Contact Mike Mogie, 8 Mavin Street.

Proposed Group: Kingston-on-Thames and surrounding area. Write to Roger Willis, 69 Woodlands Avenue, New Malden, Surrey.

Comrades in Plymouth wishing to form group or just meet other anarchists. Contact: John Northey, 16 Adelaide Street, Stonehouse, Plymouth.

Freedom Weekly? Eight pages every week? If all readers could get one extra subscription—it could be done. You may prefer to sell by the week. We can let you have copies on sale or return.

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

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

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

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