

THE TUC has now made it clear that it has abandoned its campaign against the Industrial Relations Act. Over the past few weeks, they have, like fish out of water, found themselves outside the law. This unaccustomed position has not suited the august members of the TUC and now they are desperately retreating in the face of the National Industrial Relations Court. The TUC has now reversed its opposition to unions appearing before the court and has advised the Transport and General Workers' Union to pay the £55,000 contempt fine, rather than face the sequestration of its finances.

Mr. Feather, the general secretary of the TUC, gave notice of this retreat when he said: 'I have now learned that it is a court in the same class and character as the Old Bailey.' In fact, Mr. Feather knew this all the time. If he didn't, then his legal advisers were all wrong. He and all those who have even casually looked at the IRA know of its coercive powers which it gives the NIRC.

Not satisfied with beating a retreat, the TUC went to 10 Downing Street to discuss 'conciliation procedures' with Mr. Heath and his Ministers. These moves mean that the leadership of the trade union movement is running away from a direct confrontation with the law and the Government.

Who's being Stripped and Stuffed?

TUC RETREATS

SCRAMBLING FOR THE BENEFITS

The TUC's retreat will now act as a signal for the individual trade union leaders to start co-operating with the Act. Instead of solidarity and co-operation between the different union executives, they will ignominiously scramble for the benefits they think they can derive from recognising the Act. These leaders, despite all their verbal opposition, will now only campaign for the election of a Labour Government, who have promised to repeal the Act.

In contrast to this climb-down by the leadership of the trade unions, members of the T&GWU in Liverpool, and now at other ports, are still defying the law and are continuing to black containers arriving

at the docks. Mr. Jack Jones, the general secretary, has again appealed to his members to lift the blacking of haulage companies, but if anything, the dispute is spreading to both Hull and London.

The dockers' struggle is basically about keeping jobs. In Liverpool five years ago there were 12,000 dockers, now there are only 8,500. Faced with this reduction in jobs, it isn't surprising that trade unionists are fighting containerisation. An agreement has already been reached between most of the haulage and stevedoring firms whereby dockers do the loading and unloading of containers ('stripping and stuffing'). Although these blacked companies employ members of the T&GWU, they are being paid a lot less than dockers for doing virtually the same work. This isn't saying much about the negotiating powers of the T&GWU. Both sections, the docks and commercial, should work together, as they have done in Liverpool, to make all workers on containers registered dockers, receiving the

same rates of pay and conditions. If there are too many men, then the simple remedy is to reduce the hours of work.

The Liverpool dockers' defiance of the law could lead to the shop stewards having their credentials withdrawn by the union. Sir John Donaldson, president of the NIRC, has made it clear that union executives are responsible for the actions of their officials, including elected shop stewards. As these shop stewards continue to disobey the law, then the court expects the union to remove them from office.

The president quotes the union's shop stewards handbook: 'Remember first of all that you are an official of the union.' The president comments: 'No union should be surprised if the court takes the same view and expects that union to require its officials, upon pain of dismissal or having their credentials withdrawn, to maintain the high traditions of the movement not the least of which has been a proud record of compliance with the law of the land.'

DISCIPLINARY AGENCIES

There we have it in a nutshell. This is what the Act is all about. It isn't union bashing, but a law against rank and file militancy. It is a law which both the employer and the union executive can use to silence and restrain those who favour and take direct action. Many union executives will welcome this excuse, of obeying the law, to rid themselves of troublesome shop stewards. The law can now be used to strengthen the trade unions as disciplinary agencies keeping workers in line and preventing disruptions of production. There are many union leaders who see themselves in this light and those who don't will be too scared of the law not to comply.

Sir John Donaldson is wrong about the movement's compliance with the law. The movement was built by ordinary working people breaking the law. These people were willing to go to jail for something they believed in.

Our trade union movement now faces the same prospect. Rank and file members will always have to take direct action to win demands and in doing so will fall foul of the law. This new movement will be outside the law and will have to build its strength on the solidarity and mutual aid that is basic in all working-class organisations. P.T.

A SORT OF VICTORY

THE FIVE-MONTH-LONG struggle to keep the Paddington Clinic and Day Hospital open has been won by the patients and staff to the extent that St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington, have withdrawn their application to take over the Day Hospital.

Unfortunately this is only a temporary victory. Dr. Julian Goodburn, who is the locum Medical Director of the Day Hospital, went so far as to say to a reporter of *The Paddington Mercury*, 'We're back where we started—we're as uncertain as before. The announcement that St. Mary's have declined to take over the management of our hospital means very little. We see it only as a delaying tactic.'

He went on to point out that in 1974 all local authority health services and hospital services will fall under one management, that of the regional hospital boards. The Day Hospital worked in closer association with local authorities

than hospitals. As a result, it had gained 'some independence of control'.

'But in 1974, if we are still in our present position, we shall lose our independence. We shall be completely in the power of the regional board,' Dr. Goodburn went on. 'We feel there has been some double-dealing between St. Mary's and the regional hospital board, and that the management transfer has only been postponed until 1974.'

We have received a leaflet put out by the Paddington Day Hospital Protest Group which says that although 'part of our campaign has been successful... we have now been deprived of consultation at Secretary of State level because Sir Keith Joseph is now refusing to receive representations. This means we have lost our most powerful area of pressure, 22 MPs and Doctors, including GPs, Social Workers, etc., who had been assured by the Secretary of State that they would be able to make a deputation to him personally.'

The Protest Group had also been assured that they would be able to make a deputation to Sir Keith in the near future, which has also been squashed.

'We are now back at Regional Board level.'

Continued on page 3

The Heaviest Penalty Yet

A WEST INDIAN, Mr. Joseph Munro, who pleaded not guilty to refusing to make a return under the Census Order last April, was fined £50 and ordered to pay £50 costs, all to be paid within fourteen days. Mr. Munro had spent two days in custody while the police obtained information about him. Evidence was given that he "defaced" the census form by answering questions with the words "racist—irrelevant". (*Hackney Gazette*, 21.1.72—reprinted in *Race Today*, April issue.)

This is, so far as we know, the heaviest sentence imposed in England on a census-resister. Most were fined less than £20. 'Costs' have been used to double the fine, 'time to pay' restricted to fourteen days, and the man held in custody for two days as an additional punishment. Clearly the disparity between these measures and those usually adopted is due to the fact that the resister is a West Indian.

One editor of *FREEDOM* and one former editor are being ordered to court for non-payment of their fines. Their case comes up on May 8.

A.W.U.

NALGO on the Move?

NALGO, the half-million strong (?) local government giant, is stirring. After considerable pressure from the membership, Camden branch has negotiated a 35-hour-week for all its Camden Town Hall staff from May 1 this year. 'It was a big fight,' said one branch member.

Copies of the agreement are available to all branches, so there is no excuse for any branch in the country not to put the pressure on the employers—and obtain a 24-hour reduction in working hours.

Meanwhile, nationally, NALGO has submitted a 12% wage and salary claim, with a £120 a year minimum increase. The claim is highest for the 18 to 21 age group—£834 a year at 18, rising to £1,101 at 21. Public sector workers on the move again? We hope so.

NALGO MEMBER.

IN HIS INAUGURAL ADDRESS to Glasgow University, the new Rector, communist councillor James Reid of UCS fame, had this to say: 'The rat-race is for rats. We're not rats. We're human beings.' It brought a frenzy of applause from the assembled students who, no doubt, wanted to forget that most of them are at college in search of degrees and 'education' that will give them an inside track in the rat-race.

The Rector went on: 'From the Olympian heights of an executive suite, where success is judged by the maximisation of profit, the overwhelming tendency must be to see people as units of production, as indices in an accountants' book. Profit is the sole criterion used by the establishment to evaluate economic activity.' The students cheered again and the Rector continued: 'Let's gear our society to social need, not personal greed. Given such a creative reorientation of society, there is no doubt in my mind that in a few years we could eradicate in our country the scourge of poverty, the underprivileged, slums and insecurity. Our aim must be the enrichment of the whole quality of life. It requires a social and cultural or, if you wish, a spiritual transformation of our country...'

Good stuff. Fine sentiments. But while the students were cheering, the Government was putting the finishing touches to the deal it has now concluded with Mr. Wayne Harbin, a Texan millionaire, who has bought the Clydebank shipyard for his American company, Marathon Manufacturing. Asked on the radio to say why his company had bought Clydebank, Mr. Harbin (quite unaffected by the Rector of Glasgow's appeal for spiritual uplift) replied bluntly: 'To make a profit.'

What exactly will all this mean to Glasgow shipyard workers? We shall

know for certain next week when the terms of the deal are to be put to the workers by the Rector of Glasgow University who will then be wearing, not his robes, but his shop steward's cloth cap. Meanwhile, we have no reason to doubt that the terms will be as described by yesterday's *Observer* and we quote their statement in full.

'IN SAVING 2,000 jobs at the Clydebank yard of the bankrupt Upper Clyde Shipbuilders, trade union leaders have agreed to a "no-strike" clause and fierce, legally enforceable penalties on the men.'

Mr. Wayne Harbin, president of Marathon Manufacturing, which is taking over the yard to build oil rigs, initially sought fines of £50 per man per strike-day, but this figure has probably been reduced in negotiation. These terms may prove to be the hardest for the men to accept when they are discussed at a mass meeting this week.

In other areas, the Marathon agreement is believed to follow that used by Govan Shipbuilders, the successor company to the other three UCS yards. This means that the work-in by dismissed men must stop.

This will mean the immediate dismissal of fewer than 100 men, but another 200 are expected to receive redundancy notices shortly.

The Govan and Marathon agreements state that productivity needs to be substantially improved and Mr. Harbin clearly would like to double outputs to bring Clydebank into line with his American operations.

Pay and productivity negotiations will have to take place jointly with all the unions to preclude leapfrogging wage claims, and demarcations between craftsmen will have to be relaxed,

allowing full interchangeability of trades and flexibility.

When the final sums are done, it is likely that the Government will have given £10 million in aid to save Clydebank, and this will meet at least 60 per cent of Marathon's required capital investment. Marathon may also get a grant of 30 per cent of its labour costs for three years if oil rig building is deemed to be a new industry for Clydeside. (*Sunday Observer*, 30.4.72.)

No-strike pledges, fines for misbehaviour, productivity improvements, redundancies... surely the Rector will not stand for that? Not after all that fine talk of putting social need before personal greed? Sad to say, he will stand for it. Indeed, he has already written (on the front page of the *Sunday Times Business Review*) that he thinks it's fine! 'Yes, it's a victory!' he writes. May one ask, for whom is it a victory? No doubt James Reid will reply that it is victory for everyone. The workers will have jobs, i.e. they will be exploited by the inhabitants of those famous executive suites; Mr. Harbin will make a fat profit; and Mr. John Davies, the Minister of Trade and Industry, will have successfully bought off (with ten millions of the tax-payers' money) a movement which last year looked like developing into a real rebellion against the rat-race on Clydeside.

Mr. Reid is very nice about John Davies. 'I never did consider him an ogre,' he writes, for the delectation of the *Sunday Times* business readers, 'but only misguided.' 'Of course,' he added, 'I still cannot agree with his philosophy.'

Well, that's something anyway—but give the lad time, give him time.

JOHN LAWRENCE.

The UCS Struggle

END OF THE REID ROAD

Richardson, Littlewood & Red Ladder

THREE TYPES of political theatre. West End, East End and Street. That is to say: Tony Richardson's production of Brecht's *Three Penny Opera* at the Piccadilly Theatre, Joan Littlewood's production of an updating of Stephen Lewis's *Sparrers Can't Sing* at the Theatre Royal, Stratford East, and Red Ladder's production of a play on Social Security and allied topics performed, amongst other places, at a recent Claimants' Union conference at the Albany, Deptford.

First then, Richardson's production of the *Three Penny Opera*. The acting, the music and the set can't be faulted. What's wrong with it is the production itself. It seems to be conceived almost purely in

aesthetic terms. It's almost an unintended parody of Brechtian theatre of the late 20s, without, as it were, the politics of Brecht. Thus, for example, it looks like a collection of Grosz's sketches come to life, with suitable expressionist make-up. But where, oh where, are the politics of the piece? Answer: submerged in the music which relentlessly rises above and obliterates the text—and this in a 90p seat too! Even his use, reasonably successfully, of Brechtian alienation techniques in the acting, is dictated by aesthetic, rather than political concerns. One wonders why. Yes, one wonders. Could it be, one asks, that Richardson knows only too well that a political *Three Penny Opera* wouldn't be packing them in at the

Piccadilly as his aesthetically conceived production certainly is?

Never mind. Down to Stratford, and the Theatre Royal. Atmosphere here is a bit different. The Theatre Royal is currently surrounded by a mixture of property, notably Angel Lane, waiting to be pulled down, and a huge building site where Laing are no doubt making a packet in a glorious re-development scheme. A far cry from Piccadilly Circus. Inside the theatre too, the atmosphere's a bit different. Easier. You can relax and fart. Slapped on the walls of the foyer, and up the stairs are bright, cheerful drawings by Larry, the cartoonist. *The Londoners*, as *Sparrers Can't Sing* has been retitled, is a knock-about piece with plenty of music and mirth. It has a theme, rather than a plot, and the theme is: No matter what happens, as the council pull down our old terraced houses, we, the people of the East End can take it. Yes, there are moments of heartache and anguish, but... pass us the bottle, we'll sing another little ditty and it will all pass... Not only is *The Londoners* sentimental, it's also woolly. The enemy is the council and the welfare, the two combined in a gent who sports a Hitler moustache, has his trouser bottoms pinned by a pair of bicycle clips and is for ever carrying his briefcase, full of files and documents. This character is the butt of their hostility to all forms of authority, and is continually, within the play, at least, the victim of some prank or joke. But in real life things aren't like that. In real life it's the council, the welfare and the SS who are on top, and it's the Londoners (and everyone else up and down the country) who are on the receiving end. So, what are Stephen Lewis and Joan Littlewood up to? The mirror realism of *The Londoners* is a shade more real than, say, Coronation Street, but it's still a gross distortion of reality, and whilst a good hearty laugh may be a tonic for the victims of authority it doesn't, in the end, lead to anything productive unless it's linked with an understanding of not only how authority functions, which most of us know, but also why it functions. And you won't find a glimmer of an answer in *The Londoners*. (Incidentally, the idea

that women are to be screwed, that women are frivolous, or are matriarchal figures, is viciously reinforced in *The Londoners*.)

But all is not lost. Enter, with a flourish of trumpets, Red Ladder Street Theatre, for Red Ladder outstrip both the productions already mentioned. For a start, to see them you don't have to fork out 90p or 50p. Secondly, they perform not in a theatre, where we, the audience, have brought with us a sense of occasion, but on the building sites, shopfloors, public parks and halls of the United Kingdom. And thirdly, they are both funny, very funny in fact, and also political. Add to all this their professionalism and one has a potent brew. They went down a bomb at the Albany, Deptford. It was Saturday evening, the day had been spent in heavy discussion and now, with a few pints in our belly, the Disco dance about to start, Red Ladder performed their play to us, the claimants. There were the stock characters; the boss, the politician, the SS clerk, the copper, who were suitably and rightly hissed and booed. Red Ladder had their audience with them, due to the reality of the piece, which struck home and the tremendous expertise in putting it across, including a superb take-off of Edward Heath—but there was more to it than a simple mirror of our own experiences, for knitted into it was a political argument, an argument that was cleverly developing, under our very noses, as it were, until at the end it was dropped on us—the solution to end the machinations of the capitalist state which we had witnessed and experienced as claimants was

capitalists.

Anyone who has seen Red Ladder perform will know that this is their usual technique—to involve the audience, demonstrating imaginatively, say, the Industrial Relations Act, showing why it was brought in and how it operates against the workers, and ending by indicating a possible solution. It matters little to me that their 'solution' isn't mine, what matters is that they combine aesthetic appeal, first rate craftsmanship and agitational politics (rather than political statement) to create real political theatre, it in itself creating discussion within the audience and between the audience and themselves. Red Ladder. It's for this reason that, for me, Red Ladder are head and shoulders above the essentially mirror or aesthetic theatre of Littlewood and Richardson.

If any readers, involved in rank and file organisations, local action committees, tenants' associations, Claimants' Unions, etc., are interested in Red Ladder, I suggest they write to them at 7a Shandon Road, Clapham, London, S.W.4. As has been indicated, they're prepared to put on one of their agitational plays anywhere in the UK (within reason), and all they charge are petrol expenses. Incidentally, they've recently bought a new van and any donations towards its cost would be gratefully received.

P.G.

Kollontai Collected

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A SEXUALLY EMANCIPATED WOMAN by Alexandra Kollontai (Orbach & Chambers, paperback £1.30).

ALEXANDRA KOLLONTAI (née Domontovich) was an aristocratic intellectual who became the most prominent woman among the Bolshevik leaders in Russia, and she served as People's Commissar for Social Welfare after the Revolution. But as early as 1918 she fell out with her colleagues and resigned her post, and she was later active in the Workers' Opposition. She was sent abroad as a diplomat from 1922 to 1945, escaped the purges, and died in 1952 at the age of eighty.

Kollontai was not only a left-wing communist but an ardent feminist, expressing her views both in her private life and in her public writings, and she has recently been taken up by the women's liberation movement. Two years ago Sheila Rowbotham published a stimulating study of her in *The Spokesman* (June and July 1970). During the past few months three of her short works have been published as cheap pamphlets—*Women Workers Struggle for their Rights* (1918) by the Falling Wall Press (20p), *Communism and the Family* (1920) by the IS Pluto Press (12p), and *International Women's Day* (1920) by the IMG Socialist Woman (5p). Two more have been published together in this expensive book, which comes from Germany via the United States.

One-third of the book consists of *The Autobiography of a Sexually Emancipated Woman* (1926), actually a remarkably reticent memoir which has little interest except for the politically sensitive passages Kollontai deleted in proof, which have been restored in this edition. One-third consists of 'The New Woman', a chapter from her book *The New*

Morality and the Working Class (1919) which traces the figure of the 'new woman' half a century ago as it was described in contemporary fiction. And one-third consists of editorial material.

Unfortunately, however much one may admire Kollontai's personal character and sympathise with her political position, it must be said that none of these new publications is up to much. Some women's liberation writers have already complained about the reprinting of her works simply because she was both socialist and feminist, and it is difficult not to disagree. Her autobiography doesn't compare with those of Angelica Balabanova or Emma Goldman, and her political tracts seem very old-fashioned today, with their dogmatic assertions and simplistic slogans. They have also been consistently badly edited, with scrappy introductions and sloppy notes, and contain all sorts of errors and omissions (Russian names take a particularly severe beating, and there is no satisfactory bibliography anywhere). This book is no exception—Germaine Greer's foreword is thin though interesting, Iring Fetscher's afterword is thin and boring, and the editorial apparatus is a mess; the translation by Salvatore Attanasio is frankly incompetent.

If there is not going to be a proper collection of Kollontai's writings in English (one has been announced in Russian, though it will hardly be complete), then at least there should be proper editions of those that are published. The model is her manifesto *The Workers' Opposition* (1921), which appeared as an excellent Solidarity Pamphlet ten years ago. And strong candidates are her novels and stories, in which her socialist feminism (or feminist socialism) comes much more vividly to life.

N.W.

Reviews

a Revolutionary Workers' Party. This position also received hisses and boos and suddenly the play was over and the actors, now ceasing to be actors, challenged the audience to a discussion on the issues involved in the play. And despite the fact that the Disco was starting as the few, simple props were dismantled, one estimate put the figure at 40 who did discuss with Red Ladder their formula for the end of the wicked

The Forgotten Anarchist

ONE SIGNIFICANT and often forgotten aspect of revolutionary Russia in the years 1917-21 is the apparently inexplicable way in which some well-known anarchists were able to move from violent theoretical opposition to Marxism to practical collaboration with the Bolshevik Government. Apart from the 'anarcho-Bolsheviks' and 'Soviet anarchists' who actively supported the Bolsheviks, there were those who muted their criticism for fear of rocking the revolutionary boat.

When Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman arrived in Russia from America in early 1920 they were prepared to accept (although, admittedly, with misgivings) the imprisonment of anarchist comrades. On two occasions they 'missed' opportunities to meet Nestor Makhno whose peasant army in the Ukraine was offering armed resistance to the authority of the Red Army and the White Army, despite the fact that Makhno had made clear his eagerness to explain and justify his actions to them. Emma Goldman admitted in *My Disillusionment in Russia* that in the beginning she had defended the Bolsheviks 'as embodying in practice the spirit of the revolution, in spite of their theoretical Marxism'. It took the massacre of the rebellious Kronstadt workers by Communist forces in March 1921 to completely open the eyes of Goldman and Berkman to the hopeless tyranny of the Communist State.

However, there were thousands of little-known anarchists who were more perceptive and more faithful to their ideals. For this opposition they paid with their lives. Amongst these was the anarchist poet, Lev Chernyi, who had suffered imprisonment under the Tsarist regime for his revolutionary activities. In 1907 he published a book entitled *Associational Anarchism* in which he advocated the 'free association of independent individuals'. Paul Avrich in his study, *The Russian Anarchists*, states that Chernyi was greatly influenced by the extreme egoistic philosophy of Max Stirner. However, other writers have minimized Chernyi's debt to Stirner. The various 'brands' of anarchism are, as we all know, something of an academic invention. Chernyi's 'free association of independent individuals' must surely be the basis for all anarchism? Anarchism

is a social theory which bases itself upon the freedom of the individual. Workers' control is not the end of anarchism but merely a possible beginning.

The details of Chernyi's activities which are known to us do not suggest a day-dreaming egoist but rather an active revolutionary. On his return from Siberia in 1917 he enjoyed great popularity amongst Moscow workers as a lecturer. He was also Secretary of the Moscow Federation of Anarchist Groups which was formed in March 1917. In the spring of 1918, in reaction to the growing Bolshevik repression of opposition, the groups within the Moscow Federation formed armed detachments, the Black Guards, and Lev Chernyi played an active part in these. On the night of April 11/12, 1918, the Cheka, the secret police, raided the building of the Moscow Federation and the Black Guards offered armed resistance. About 40 anarchists were killed or wounded and about 500 were imprisoned. In 1919 Chernyi joined a group called the Underground Anarchists who published two numbers of a broadsheet which denounced the Communist dictatorship as the worst tyranny in human history. On September 25, 1919, a number of Left Social Revolutionaries and Underground Anarchists bombed the headquarters of the Moscow Committee of the Communist Party in protest against the growing repression. Twelve Communists were killed and 55 others were wounded.

In August 1921 the Moscow *Izvestia* published an official report announcing that ten 'anarchist bandits' had been shot without hearing or trial. Amongst the dead was Lev Chernyi. Although he was not involved in the bombing of the Moscow Communist headquarters he was, because of his association with the Underground Anarchists, a 'likely candidate for an outrage'. The Communists refused to turn over his body to his family for burial and there were persistent rumours that he had, in fact, died of torture.

One of these days some academic in search of a subject will happen upon Lev Chernyi and then, perhaps, the man and his ideas will take their place in the history of Russian anarchism.

TERRY PHILLIPS.

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Bangor, NI: J.T. £5; Cardiff: B.A. 62p; Leamington: P.M. 26p; Wolverhampton: J.L. 40p; J.K.W. 10p; Anon. 72p; St. Cloud, USA: M.G.A. £22.10; Twickenham: C.G. 50p; Birmingham: R.L.F. 50p.

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Non-Violence and Revolution

Comrades.

A social general strike involves the mass occupation of factories; bosses will be hesitant about destroying their own property in order to evict occupying workers. In this sense the violence that is inherent in a revolution on the streets is irrelevant to one in the factories. I took it for granted that, having agreed that the bosses would use violence and then said a strike would make that violence irrelevant, that your readers were intelligent enough to see why.

LETTERS

I plead guilty (and run screaming from the court) to misuse of the term 'universal'. But C.C.'s deductions from this in no sense follow. The fact that there will always be one or two creeps who will side with the bosses does not justify abandoning the attempt to convert that majority of the working class at present contributing to maintaining the system.

The fact that one insists that an anarchist revolution is the conscious act of the vast majority, does not mean one is prepared to postpone it. Anarchist activity would be pointless if it did.

Fraternally,

L. OTTER.

Claimants' Unblessed Union


Dear Freedom,

I would agree wholeheartedly with the demands of the Claimants' Unions (FREEDOM, April 22) for a guaranteed adequate income per person, including children—as, incidentally, was urged by Bernard Shaw at the turn of the century—if only some way could be found of nullifying the incentive to produce more babies.

Yours sincerely,

BARBARA SMOKER.

(Perhaps if they had plenty of money they might get interested in other things than procreation!—Eds.)



Secretary:
Peter Le Mare, 5 Hannaford Road,
Rotton Park, Birmingham 16

**ANARCHIST
FEDERATION
of BRITAIN**

Address all letters to AFB at above address. The Contact Column in 'Freedom' is available for urgent information. Please inform AFB of any change of address of groups and federations. New enquiries should write direct to the Regional addresses listed below or AFB office in Birmingham.

AFB REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND/OR GROUPS

There are now anarchist groups in almost every part of Britain. To find your nearest group, write to:—

N.E. ENGLAND. Mick Renwick, 34 Durham Road, Gateshead, Co. Durham.

MANCHESTER. Matt Cunningham, 9 Briar Hill Avenue, Little Hulton, Worsley, Lancs.

LIVERPOOL. Contact 39 Lilley Road, Liverpool, 7. Tel. John Cowan 263 4890.

CROYDON. Pete Roberts, 652 Mitcham Road, Croydon, Surrey, CR0 3AB.

S.E. LONDON DWARFS. Jeff Dixon, 44 Penetration Road, Bromley BR1 5JY. Tel. 01-698 8596.

ESSEX & EAST HERTS. Peter Newell, 'Aegean', Spring Lane, Eight Ash Green, Colchester, Essex.

DORSET. Bob Fry, 30 Douglas Close, Upton, Poole, Dorset.

CORNWALL. Hazel McGee, Hillcrest Farm, Hicks Mill, Bissoc, Truro, Cornwall.

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NORTHANTS. Terry Phillips, 20 Blenheim Walk, Corby, Northants.

LEICESTERSHIRE. The Black Flag Bookshop, 1 Wilne Street, Leicester.

SOMERSET. Roy Emery, 3 Abbey Street, Bath.

KENT. Brian Richardson (phone Knockholt 2716).

BERKSHIRE. P.O. New Union Building, White Knights Park, Reading, Berks.

SUSSEX. Nick Heath, Flat 3, 26 Clifton Road, Brighton, Sussex.

EAST ANGLIA. John Sullivan, Students Union, U. of E.A., Wulverforce Road, Norwich, Norfolk.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE. Jim Hewson, 43 Henry Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE. c/o AFB Birmingham.

SURREY. Lib. Grp., 81 Mytchett Road, Mytchett, Camberley, Surrey.

YORKSHIRE. Trevor Savage, Flat 3, 35 Richmond Road, Leeds 6.

SCOTTISH FED. Secretary: Mike Malot, 1 Lynwood Place, Maryfield, Dundee.

GLASGOW. c/o Whyte, 135 Fergus Drive, Glasgow, N.W.

EDINBURGH. Chris Kerr, 9 Mayfield Terrace, Edinburgh 9. Tel. 669 2939.

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IRE. FEDERATION. c/o 20 College Lane, Dublin, Eire.

ABERYSTWYTH. Keith Fletcher, Rhyl Fach, Tal-y-bont, near Aberystwyth, Cardf.

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Please notify us if entries in these columns need amending.

Anarchy and the Law

THE USE OF the Industrial Relations Act was bound to cause, and is causing, some serious thinking about the law, what it is, should we obey it and, if we don't, will it lead to anarchy? Mr. James Callaghan — a possible future Labour Prime Minister — has declared that the law must be obeyed however bad it is. Most Trade Union leaders have taken a similar position. The people, however, are not so sure.

Since 'anarchy' is put forward as the dread prospect of what will follow if the law is not obeyed it behoves us, as declared anarchists, to state once again where we stand on this subject.

We believe that law is coercion—whether the law is made by a few people in parliament or by an absolute dictator. If people disobey the law they are punished by fines, imprisonment or, as in some countries, by death. Behind every law is the enforcement apparatus—the police, the judiciary, the prisons and in the last resort, the army. Without penalties law isn't law. It is then just a series of suggestions for codes of conduct, like the Sermon on the Mount. So law and coercion go together. That is our first point.

Anarchists are against coercion of any kind, they are against forcing people to do things they don't want to do, so it follows that anarchists are against the law. Socialists and communists are against what they call capitalist laws but they are in favour of what they call socialist laws which they would enforce

in exactly the same way as the capitalists enforce their laws—by the threat of punishment, even death. All strikes have been long outlawed in Russia. Anarchists are against all laws. We are all for good moral codes and we try to live up to what we think is moral—but we are against coercion and therefore we are against the law.

The Industrial Relations Act is a law which affects the lives of millions of workers. They had no hand in making the law and, in general, they are opposed to it, but it is to be imposed upon them. This is coercion whichever way you look at it. If the railwaymen, for example, want more money for the job they do and feel they have no way of getting it without taking some form of industrial action then, that being their decision, they have a right to act on it. If they don't have that right they are slaves in every sense of the word. The new law says they no longer have that right, so this is a law which imposes slavery on the workers.

But, say the lawyers and the politicians and all those whose thinking is influenced by such people, what about the rights of those who travel on the trains? Haven't they got rights? The answer is, they haven't. No man has any natural right to use the labours of another man. People can travel on trains only so long as other people are willing to drive and service those trains. If railwaymen feel they are not paid enough for giving this service and stop working, there is nothing you

can do about it. It is the same with coal. No one has any natural right to use the labours of the miners if the miners want to stop work. So too with the labours of sewer-men, dustmen, farm labourers, builders, busmen and all the rest whose labours keep us all in comparative comfort. If workers don't want to do these things we must either do them ourselves—or go without.

But, say those who haven't thought much about it and have up to now always taken these sort of labours for granted, are you saying that the smooth functioning of our society, our daily bread, our drains, our clothes, our heat and light, depends on other people being willing to do these jobs for us? Yes, that's exactly what we are saying. And are you saying, they persist, that if these people who do all these essential things go on strike and disrupt our lives there is nothing we can do about it? No, we are not saying that at all.

Fundamentally, there are two things you can do. You can support laws making it an offence for people to go on strike and thereby introduce actual slavery, which is what the present government has done with its Industrial Relations Act and what the previous Labour Government tried to do with its 'In Place of Strife'—or you can reorganise society so that what work is done is done willingly, by people who want to do it, and see that it is important that it should be

done. That is the anarchist answer to the present chaos. There isn't any middle way—not now there isn't, not after the Industrial Relations Act.

The majority of people still believe that there is a middle way. They are against slavery and laws which introduce slavery, but they think that there must be some other way short of the complete reconstruction of society to preserve our rights. Unfortunately there isn't and we shall try to show why there isn't next week.

JOHN LAWRENCE.

Personal footnote: I am not unacquainted with the law myself. In the past twenty years' activity I have been arrested at least six times, been fined, and sent to prison for four months for my part in the St. Pancras Rent Strike. I have been charged, together with other Labour Councilors, for refusing to raise council rents. I have also taken trade union officials to court when they expelled me from my union (SOGAT) and, through the operation of the 'closed shop agreement', threatened my job and the jobs of my fellow workers. The matter has now been settled out of court, but I regret that I ever took the action. On reflection it would have been better to have been expelled and relied on my workmates to take direct action to keep my job. We probably wouldn't have been successful—but we would have had a fight on principles. I say this only to point out that anarchists are not know-alls. We make mistakes and, under provocation, we can forget our principles. We just have to keep on trying—like the rest of failing humanity.

Sort of Victory

Continued from page 1
level, who have said today to Jill, a patient at PDH, through the Deputy Secretary, Mr. B. J. Lord, that they are unaware of any change of plans about the unit, and in any case they would not discuss the issue with a patient!!!

The Regional Board have in the past evaded any direct consultation with the Day Hospital.

By remaining in the St. Charles Group, HMC there is still no security for the future of the unit.

a) In 1974 within the Health Service reorganisation St. Charles HMC will be phased out. The Area Health Board which will administer this area will be based on St. Mary's as the district service. This means that once again our existence will be threatened. Do we wait and fight then, or do we fight for guarantees for our future NOW?

WE SAY NOW.

b) The Regional Board that we are being asked to trust has in the past five years run down the unit by not appointing permanent consultants, for example the Medical Director of the Day Hospital is on a locum appointment, which means that he can be dismissed with a month's notice. The Regional Board have been continually informed of the insecurity felt by the staff and patients because of the uncertainty of their future, but they have persistently ignored this.

WE NEED YOUR HELP IN THIS CAMPAIGN NOW.

Lesley Mitchell, Liz Durkin, Mary Hall, PROTEST GROUP, 217 Harrow Road, W.2. Telephone: 286 4800.

N.W.

A.W.U.

ANGRY BRIGADE

SINCE OUR LAST report (April 22), the Stoke Newington 8 Defence Group has produced *A Political Statement*, an eight-page pamphlet containing the most ambitious attempt so far to explain its political position. It follows the line already laid down in *Conspiracy Notes*, attempting to generalise the Angry Brigade case into a confrontation between the state and the movement. It is open to the objections made in our last report, that this begs the question of what 'the movement' is and of whether the Angry Brigade is part of it. It tries but fails to answer the criticisms of what it calls 'the straight left'. It never manages to show how what it calls 'guerrilla action'—i.e. conspiratorial violence—contributes to social revolution. But it is an interesting document in the context of the approaching trial and in the wider context of the struggle in the country as a whole. It can be obtained from the Defence Group at Box 359, Compendium Bookshop, 240 Camden High Street, London, N.W.1.

N.W.

After Amchitka?

FOLLOWING REPORTS last month of an earth tremor in the North of England, and the appearance of a tiny and hitherto unknown island off the Isle of Wight, explained away as due to 'exceptionally low tides', the account has reached us of a minor earthquake in Central Europe, an area which, like Britain, is not usually thought of as an area where earthquakes occur.

On April 16 an earth tremor, centred to the south of Vienna, occurred. Its effects reached as far as Czechoslovakia. Houses were shaken, floors vibrated, glasses chinked together on shelves. One eyewitness stated, 'It was as if someone had let off a grenade in the cellar.'

Although earthquakes in Britain were not unknown in pre-atomic times, and indeed tiny, imperceptible earth tremors go on all the time everywhere, but so small are they that only very fine instruments can pick them up, it is difficult not to feel that the underground test carried out in the Aleutians by the Americans some time ago may have had something to do with these recent phenomena.

It appears likely also that large bodies of water, artificially created by dams, like that at Aswan in Egypt, are also responsible for movements of the Earth. Certainly man is now interfering with nature in all directions to such an extent that anything can happen, and it will most likely be bad when it does. It has been suggested that the mass of water piling up behind the Aswan Dam may have been responsible for the recent earthquake in Iran. It seems a long way for the effect of something in Egypt to reach, but in these matters the Earth is a small place.

Of course no one can prove anything. The scientists responsible for bombs and

dams can cheerfully shrug off all blame. But the days when they had everything their own way are over. In the 1950s it was considered folly to criticise technical progress. Its unstoppable was a dogma, as unchallengeable as the dogmas of the medieval church. But now people are becoming more aware of ecology. Now we hear an outcry that not enough students want to do science, and instead enroll for arts courses. Less happily perhaps there is a boom in magic, mysticism, astrology, witchcraft, flying saucers and so on.

With the world's supply of raw materials diminishing rapidly, and space travel still too much in its infancy to be of much practical help (by mining the Moon for metals, or anything like that), it is not so much a question of how to stop 'progress' but of how long it can go on. One cannot prove that the recent movements of the Earth's crust were due to anything man-made, yet it is possible they were, and if present trends continue they will become more frequent, more disastrous and spread to areas hitherto relatively free from them.

JOHN BRENT.

Kropotkin Lives

AN AMERICAN television network recently asked Schocken Books, the New York publisher which has just issued reprints of *In Russian and French Prisons* and *The Great French Revolution*, for the address of Mr. Peter Kropotkin to take part in a panel discussion programme on anarchism. Who says anarchism is a thing of the past?

Jailed for Sedition

SEDITION, a 'crime' with a long history, can still send a man to jail in 1972. Medway libertarian Michael Tobin has just been sentenced to two years under sections of the 1934 Incitement to Disaffection Act at Maidstone Court. The charges concerned pamphlets with which it was claimed Tobin was trying to undermine soldiers' morale in Ulster. Mr. Justice Thegier described it as a 'bad case'.

This punitive sentence also seems to have been aimed at local libertarian activity. Two years was the maximum Tobin, a working man with five young children, could have got and the judge effectively took away his job as well. He said it was 'extremely undesirable' that Tobin should be employed by a public utility—Kingsnorth Power Station—and asked for his remarks to be passed on to the 'appropriate authorities'.

Kingsnorth has been the main base of libertarians' activity in the Medway Towns. Their newspaper, *Sunrise*, which Tobin edited, has had some success in attacking conditions at the power station and the distortions of the local press—to the obvious dislike of the authorities. (Last Tuesday's *Chatham Standard* published a snidey article praising the severity of Tobin's sentence and discussing the

'repercussions' of the case.)

Libertarians may disagree with some things in Tobin's position on Ulster. He tends to be nationalistic and supports the IRA. But Tobin, who was born in Cork, insists, rightly or wrongly, that the Establishment in the North and South can only be overthrown if the present troubles are channelled into a national struggle.

This is currently the most effective means for overthrowing the system and the best way of arriving at a situation where libertarian ideas could be put into practice, he claims. 'Rather than waste my time preaching non-violence, as is the wont of bourgeois hypocrites, I believe in removing the causes of it.'

The trial itself was a depressing experience. The attitude of the whole court was condescending and Mr. Justice Thegier's summing up sounded like a second case for the prosecution. A note of bias could be clearly heard in his voice as he carefully picked out for the jury what seemed to be the most damning evidence against Tobin. Tobin, who defended himself, made an articulate and moving final speech. This was utterly ignored by the judge. Tobin is now incarcerated in Canterbury Prison.

P.J.I.

Anarchists in Jail

'SABOTAGE MEANS TO PUSH BACK, PULL OUT OR BREAK OFF THE FANGS OF CAPITALISM'—W. D. Haywood.

IN A LETTER from the Alameda County Jail in Oakland, California, Ed Stover wrote:

'It is almost impossible to express how much a class war prisoner behind bars needs moral support from comrades on the outside. When you are caged behind concrete and steel for alleged crimes against the State, the knowledge that there are people on the outside who remember is the most valuable thing you have. It's hard to put into words what the feeling of isolation is like. I guess it has to be experienced before it can truly be envisioned.'

'Our whole case stems from police raids on two alleged bomb factories we were supposed to have been operating. It is all too apparent that the State is preparing to make an example of Mike Lamm and I. We face a possible (or probable) sentence of 10 years to life imprisonment. Obviously I am hoping for a verdict of not guilty, but as an anarchist, I have little faith in bourgeois justice. So I'm prepared to expect the maximum penalty.'

'What is the outside world like now? After a year in here the existence of everything outside of these walls has grown into a half-myth, spurred by

memories of what freedom is like. The thoughts that play across my mind as I stare at bar shadowed walls.'

Fellow worker Stover spent over a year in jail awaiting trial. Then his worst expectations were realized. He was sentenced to maximum time in Vacaville Prison. A couple of months ago he was transferred to the maximum security ward of San Quentin Prison. He performs limited work and is allowed in the yard. At 2 p.m. he is returned to his cell and not allowed out again until the next morning. This ritual is tediously repeated each day.

An Appeal is being prepared by Bay Area lawyer, Milt Nason. In the meantime, Ed would, no doubt, appreciate letters and visits from fellow workers. Please write Robert Ed Stover, Box B-38341, San Quentin Prison, Tamal, California, 94964. Any word from 'the outside' would help. Appeals take a long time.

Ed Stover and I are co-authoring a book on his case, *Anarchist in Exile*. Hopefully, the book will awaken more people to the injustice suffered by political prisoners in this country. Money from the book will be used to defray legal expenses. If you can contribute anything to this end, please send it to the Stover Defense Fund, c/o Micia Aleksandra, 707 South Washington, Livingston, Texas, 77351.

MICIA ALEKSANDRA.



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WE ARE OF that generation born to view with a liberal horror the opening of our private correspondence. When the clerks in high office of the State Post Office Service played harlot to the State's Security Services we waited on an abstract justice to send down, if not lightning, then at least an Order in Council telling them not to open private letters as it was not British, but nothing came the way of the liberal conscience, and we now accept the opening of our most private correspondence as part of this way of life. We of the militant left have learned to play by their rules, and only sad-eyed Church of England vicars find that their orders for naughty postcards have led, via their private letter order, a grey-fingered Post Office clerk and a simpering policeman, into the felon's dock to be publicly crucified as an example of the might and majesty of the State, the sexual purity of the Establishment and the raucous amusement of the Sunday newspaper readership.

When the telephone became an accepted method of communication the State washed the wax out of its ears and proceeded to sit in eavesdropping and uninvited company with those using the singing wire to tell of dreams, of plots and stratagems and it was recorded, but not as admissible evidence, as Our Learned Friends would pointlessly pontificate, but it was recorded and we learned by their rules to listen for the judas click. And in part the fault was ours, little comrade, for we had sat too long, in that long, dark night of our youth, watching all those American films extolling the FBI as they tapped the phones of the Bogarts and the Edward Gs and the Cagneys, until it became our turn, for the State is amoral and has but one duty, one purpose and one function, and that is to survive, and all the moralities are but philosophical dress if they impede the existence of the State. Our only safety and our only safeguard was in a personal and individual loyalty, based not on ideology but on friendship

SHIT-HOUSE COMMANDOS

and a personal and individual trust in each other, and only by that fashion can we survive no matter who controls or claims to be the State. Every new technical innovation adds another weapon to the armoury of the State, yet like the embattled peasants we learn to live with them, to fight them and to defeat them, for the saving grace in all these things is human fallibility, and the witless clerk and the humourless State policeman is the broken cog in the State machinery, placed there by the gods for the protection of us, the innocent.

It was the television camera and its assumed uses that had us rolling in the aisles of the local flea pits, when those long years ago we watched Charlie Chaplin, in his film *Modern Times*, freeze into action, as a television screen blazed into angry life, with the transmitted face of the workman screaming at the workman having a secret drag in the factory bog. This was funny, we knew, for television cameras would and could not be used in that minority fashion, and as the management could only transmit its own image it was, we reasoned, of little importance. But as the little old men in brown dust coats controlled the areas of transmission and reception, the State knew that they had a new baby to place alongside the rubber truncheon and the accidental falling down of station steps, and the intercommunication television camera slipped into our ways of living as no more than a means of traffic control, with a young and bored Z Car policeman viewing traffic jams and pressing traffic light controls.

There was a logical development of this method of secret surveillance, and it logically developed, and we found that there were now hidden television cameras

watching us as we walked the streets of Soho to protect us, it is claimed, from the criminal elements that seek to prey on our £18.50 a week take-home pay. It is now accepted, little comrade, that every employer can, and does if he can afford it, keep his workmen under secret and constant observation with his spying television cameras. Every major shop and supermarket watches us from some small back room, as we finger the packets of soap powders, and it is only a matter of cost that prevents the State and the employing class from making the television camera a universal and twenty-four-hour guardian of our daily living, and it is an inevitable step, little comrade, and we must learn to accept it, to live with it and learn how to defeat it.

The new addition to the Peeping Tom armoury of the State and private and corporate industry is now the two-way mirror. Two-way? It began as a handy joke, and was advertised for sale, in the *Ur* beginning, in the American soft porn magazines as a way of watching the girl friend taking off her knickers without knowing she was being observed. A small mirror coated to reflect the face of the viewer while in a dark room behind the small mirror the watcher could dribble and masturbate, as he looked through the mirror without being observed in the final cloak of invisibility of Greek legend. It was all part of the fun game, with the dirty postcard and the plastic dog shit, and it served its erotic function. And as always the private and corporate employers found a use for it, and it became part of the London Transport weapons of their war on the travelling Londoners, for they could and are erected behind the ticket collector so that as one smiled or

frowned at one's mirror reflection, while handing in one's ticket, a uniformed official, all but a foot away, kept you under expensive and pointless observation. It can only be a matter of time and cost before these spy mirrors are built into every factory and office lavatory, work place and canteen, and some unknown authority will be able to examine us at any time and under any condition at their leisure. 1984 is here, little comrade, and we have by the very nature of the beast, in that it is in its kitten stage, learned first to love it and then to live with it.

In London's Strand, W.C.2, stands the Law Courts. A brick building dressed in stone as a monument to Victorian gothic. A place of sadness and bitter reflections, jockey-like judges and pallid fee-grabbing lawyers. A place for all honest, yea and guilty, men to avoid, for it is a breeding ground for the sickness of the heart.

In less than five seconds' walk, less than six steps from the entrance of the Law Courts, in the roadway of the Strand, stands a newly-built public lavatory. It carries its sign in four languages, that here in its depths one can empty one's bladder. It is a spacious T-shaped room of white tiles with clean well kept throne rooms and a regimented row of clean white porcelain standing urinals for the passing traveller to strain his greens. At one's back are two large mirrors many feet in length for the vanity or the use of the pisser. The lavatory is empty except for oneself, and there is a brief play of light from an outside car, and for but a fraction of but a second the face of an old man shows in the huge mirror and then is gone. One questions, hesitates and then seeks for an answer, and, humbly aware of the frailty of those in authority, opens a private door to the rear of the mirror, and there in the darkness stands an old man peering through the darkness like a creature from a Francis Bacon painting. He is alone in his small dark room with

only a shining kettle to disturb us. The mirrors have now, by virtue of the dark room, become secret windows, and one has a complete and unknown view of the whole of this lavatory. One smiles at the old man and withdraws with an apology for opening the wrong door, and asks nothing of him, for in his mode of employment as a shit-house attendant I see my own ancient way of life. But days later one enquires why some nameless authority should place a secret see-through mirror in a public lavatory outside London's Law Courts.

One is told that it cost £22,000 to rebuild this public shit-house, and that this secret see-through one-side-only mirror cost £110 to install at £6 a square foot, and that its purpose is to keep an eye on pickpockets or people falling sick. I would suggest that the way to keep an eye on people falling sick is not to have an old man isolated in a dark room all his working day, but as in almost every other public shit-house, an open door of a well lighted room and an attendant with freedom to walk around, while, as for watching for pickpockets . . . and an old man to fend them off . . . oh my masters, sic, sic, sic! If this becomes the norm, these secret spying mirrors will become no more than another observation hole for the State police. Witnesses meeting in the public lavatory, homosexuals holding hands, youths believing that in a moment's isolation they can secretly masturbate. No longer need the vice squads climb onto dusty bog doors for their evidence, no longer need the vice squad pretend to pee for hours on end for their evidence, no longer need the security services fix up hidden cameras to watch the documents being passed over, for we are now in the world of the secret mirror and the State can stand and watch us piss and groom, act out our plots and follies in the comfort of the small back room. In Machiavellian darkness, with a cup of tea in one hand and a two-way radio transmitter in the other, we are once more under the State's microscope, and the master pattern is now in operation in a public shit-house outside the courts of justice.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

BETWEEN THE WORLDS

WE LIVE, as the cliché-mongers always say, in a period of transition. Things being what they are and so many interesting things having happened which as isolated subjects are not worthy of the full treatment, it might be profitable to examine some recent developments in politics and radical journalism, not excluding the anarchist movement and its concern with, in Sir Herbert Read's phrase, 'the politics of the unpolitical'.

It is obvious that we always live in an age of transition, much of the reactionary suppression and revolutionary upsurge is because of the reactionary's desire not to move from entrenched positions of privilege. Some would say that the crisis arises from the revolutionary's urge to move too fast, an anarchist would not agree with this thesis which is a liberal position.

There are times, and they are rarer than some think, when the quantity of change made (or needed) is so great as to be a change in quality. It could be that we are arriving at one of those points.

In any case rapid changes are taking place, in the situation in Ireland, in the State-Trade Union relationship, in the Vietnam war, but these changes are not all in the direction we would wish, hope—or expect!

The major change we are assured—which is no change at all—is that we are moving away from a permissive society. It would be tedious to repeat the fallacies of this argument but it is equally obvious that the illusion has been maintained of a rightward swing so successfully that the media have duly noted it and acted accordingly. This accounts for the decline in the underground press and the panic-stations reshuffle at the *New Statesman*.

In times of crisis there is a tendency for 'democratic' organizations to choose a mediocrity in order that no one may be offended. Obviously the *New Statesman* has tried to please both management and staff and succeeded in getting Anthony Howard whose intellectual height will be long remembered in a BBC discussion on 'Anarchism' when he said, 'Come along, Mr. [Colin] Ward, you know perfectly well that the origins of your movement are mixed up with these bogus atheist churches like the Theosophical Society and this kind of thing. You have got a long history of Humanism and mock religion in the anarchists.' (It was the same quest for unassuming mediocrity that made the Labour Party opt for Mr. Short rather than Mr. Michael Foot.) However, Mr. Anthony Howard has been rather enviously scathing about *The Economist*

and has engaged Peter Paterson (formerly of the *Sunday Telegraph*) as assistant editor. It is also reported that the new *New Statesman* will support the Common Market, incidentally, a course now taken by the maverick *Spectator*.

It is understandable that the commercial weekly reviews should find themselves up the financial spout and should seek for more titillating ways to gain customers but this habit has even spread to the underground press and the recent ignominious collapses of *Ink* and *Seven Days* have left recriminations behind. The notably cantankerous but occasionally enjoyable *Private Eye* attacked *Seven Days* for its unremitting search for a financial backer but it has been pointed out that *Private Eye* accepted advertisements from Securicor (*Peace News*) and it was also seen to publicise in a pull-out spread *The Socialist Worker* whilst it offended IS by an anti-IRA slant.

The delightful feuding between the weeklies in their quest for the Holy Grail of circulation came to a head in a parody of *Private Eye*, published in *Punch*. Most of the *Punches* were below the belt which seems to be where *Private Eye* lives. It is good and much more healthy to have such open disagreements openly arrived at and recognised than the snide sniping which goes on from time to time.

This unceasing quest for circulation leads to the dreary maxim of supplying the public with what it wants. An unremembered name among the host of ex-editors of *Peace News* once advocated a policy of 'going where the people were'. Such a policy followed by a pacifist-anarchist paper would obviously lead to a pro-war, pro-Statist paper. The anarchist paper that tried to be like the *Daily Mirror* would end up as the *Daily Mirror*.

The history of *Peace News* is not without some interest. Like a failing ballerina it keeps threatening to make its last appearance. Whether this constant cry of 'Wolf' is meant to rally the faithful (like the *Morning Star's* agonizing grunts and groans) to its Press Fund or whether their financial distress is (like ours) real, recently they have claimed to be the other anarchist newspaper and have shared many of *FREEDOM's* contributors and interests. This, coupled with the controversies on pacifism in *FREEDOM*, have made our slightly paranoid contemporary *Black Flag* scream that *FREEDOM* had been taken over by the pacifists and *FREEDOM* and *Peace News* should merge! *Black Flag* is prone to seeing liberals and pacifists under the bed but it need not fear such an outcome.

Meanwhile *ORA* is going forward with its plans for producing its *News-letter*. We wish it well as indeed we do all libertarian papers; the more papers the better. However we were subjected to some criticism from *ORA* which was precisely of the nature criticised above. They said, in a leaflet circulated before the *FREEDOM* conference, 'One large field that *FREEDOM* seldom reports on is the women's liberation fight. This is a situation that all political groups are cashing in on. As anarchists we have argued for the need for women to liberate themselves. This is a struggle we should be supporting and putting our view on.' This probably unfortunately—and hastily-phrased statement sounds like political opportunism of the worst kind. There is the danger that *ORA*, with its political obsessions and its organization-mindedness, will blunder into such mistakes and go in for issue-politics. Such a fate has already befallen many papers of the left. Topics are used for 'cashing in' on and the victims of the State and capitalism are used as issues to be discarded when politically inconvenient or no longer 'hot copy'.

One of our other contemporaries, *Socialist Leader*, has also succumbed to the current sickness. It has become a fortnightly but there has obviously been a shift of power in the party. *Black Flag* printed a letter from Terry Liddle saying that the right-wing elements were seeking to gain power—and obviously control of the substantial assets which the ILP is rumoured to have. Be that as it may, the ILP has now become an 'open' party, no longer pledged to fight bye-elections. Members of the ILP may now be members of other political parties at the same time—such as the Conservative Party for instance?—this makes nonsense and a corpse of the ILP, but it probably preserves the structure intact.

It is obvious that the transition is taking place. We live 'between two worlds' as Yeats says 'One dying, one powerless to be born'. Must the left always exist in this twilight state?

JACK ROBINSON.

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Contact

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

Help Fold and Despatch 'FREEDOM' Thursdays from 2 p.m., followed by discussion at 7.30 p.m.

Rudolf Rucker's 'Johann Most: das Leben eines Rebellen' need for translator. Please write, don't send, to John Hinsley, 61 Sandhurst Avenue, Ward End, Birmingham, B36 8EJ.

Anarchist Syndicalist Alliance National Conference to be convened in Manchester/Salford on May 13/14. Details and items for agenda, enquiries: A. Portus, 116 Gilda Brook Road, Eccles, Lancs.

Will Jake Jenkins, believed to be in South Shields, get in touch with Maurice, Alison and Kiki, 107 St. Pauls Road, Jarrow.

'Roadrunner'—revolutionary Christian monthly—issue 34 has special feature on education and articles about Namibia, the Harrisburg Eight and the 1838 Act plus regular items, Tiny Mines, etc. £1.25 for 12 issues, or 65p for six from 28 Brundrells Road, Manchester, 21.

'Inside Story', monthly, 25p. 'This beautifully produced magazine is a sort of anarchist *Private Eye* . . . an excellent publication' (*'Freedom'*). 'A lot of research has gone into producing this paper . . . good hard information' (*'Freud'*). For sample copy of 'INSIDE STORY', send 25p (or £1.50 for six issues) to 3 Belmont Road, London, S.W.4.

Leeds Free School and community trust. A free school project is being organised in Leeds. Money and materials are urgently needed. All donations and enquiries to: M. Silver, 7 Hesse Mount, Leeds 6.

Arts Festival in Bickershaw (Lancs.) (Theatre, Poetry, Pop, etc.) May 5-6-7. Comrades participating and willing to sell literature, leaflet, etc., 'phone Bob Lees 061-652 4047 or write Brian J. Banks, 553 Liverpool Road, Platt Bridge, Nr. Wigan, Lancs.

Nihilistic Luddites interested in forming an agricultural commune contact

M. Phillips, 26 Uckfield Grove, Mitcham, Surrey.

Direct Action. We need practical help in the form of other human beings, who want and need to challenge the entrenched Establishment through anarchist intervention. Anyone interested please ring 852 8879.

'A Flight of Silver Birds', original poems by Tina Morris. Send 24p for 6 cards (3 different designs) to 18 Pemberton Street, Blackburn, BB1 9AB.

All Saints Collective, 53a Portland Road, Radford, Nottingham, need militant activists for full time community work or industrial action.

ORA. Meetings at Peace Centre Coffee Bar, 36 Romilly Street, W.1. Sundays 7 p.m. May 7 Subject: 'Industrial Struggle'. May 21: 'Women's Liberation'.

Iberian Centre, Holy Trinity Church Hall, 125 Kingsway, London, W.C.1. Cycle of films. Sunday, May 7, 7.30 p.m.: 'The Executioner' (directed by Luis G. Berlanga, English subtitles).

Harrington and District Anarchists meet every Thursday from 8 p.m. in the Saloon Bar of the Osborn Tavern, Stroud Green Road, Finsbury Park.

Anarchist Meetings. Wednesdays 7.30 p.m. 271 Commercial Road, E.1 (1st floor).

London Anarchists meet socially at 'The Marquis of Granby', Cambridge Circus, Charing Cross Road, Sundays from 7.30 p.m. onwards.

Oxford. Anarchist meetings every Friday 8 p.m. Clarendon Press Institute, Walton Street, Oxford.

Corby. Public meeting on 'Anarchism and Workers' Control' planned for June 29. Green Room, Civic Centre at 7.30 p.m. Local help with publicity appreciated. Contact Terry Phillips, 70 Blenheim Walk.

Help! Stoke Newington 8 Fund. Comrades now on remand in Brixton and Holloway need financial aid urgently for meals, fruit, papers, books (which must be new) and cigarettes. Please send donations to the Stoke Newington 8 Fund, c/o Compendium Books, 240 Camden High Street, London, N.W.1, a.s.a.p.

Free Valpreda Campaign needs help, not just by way of support, but also involvement in planning and organising. Please contact c/o N. & E. London Group ORA.

Libertarian Book Club. Spring Lectures Series. Thursday evenings, 7 p.m., 369 Eighth Avenue, New York City. May 11, Murray Bookchin: Marxism and Anarchism.

Would Box 001 please send *Freedom* Press his address as we have mislaid it. We have a number of replies from your ad.