

The Irrelevant Act

THE HOUSE OF LORDS' judgement, which led to the release of the five dockers from Pentonville Prison, again reverses the law and the decision of Lord Dennings' Appeal Court. It now brings the law in line with the intentions set out in the Industrial Relations Act. The Law Lords said that the unions are responsible for the actions of their shop stewards and that the Transport and General Workers' Union will now have to pay the £55,000 contempt fine plus costs.

The decision could also mean that the T&GWU might have to pay compensation to the three blacked Merseyside and Hull companies, Heaton, Craddock and Panalpina. It also puts Jack Jones, the general secretary, back on the hook. If this wasn't enough, dockers' delegates rejected his joint report, with Lord Aldington, for dealing with dockers' jobs and containers. This report was looked upon as a rescue operation for bringing peace to the docks. Its rejection has meant the continuation of their strike.

The released dockers have done nothing to 'purge their contempt'. It may be said that there is nothing unusual in the Lords reversing the decision of an Appeals Court. However, this was not an ordinary case but one involving a political Act. The whole argument of whether the decision of the Lords was a political one to get the Government out of trouble is purely academic. The reality was that the Government stood helplessly by while thousands of workers not only took strike action, but by doing so in sympathy, they also broke the law. What this

proved is that once enough workers defy the law, then the Government is powerless.

RETURNED TO PICKET

The support and solidarity for the jailed dockers was still growing when they were released. But even though the lorry drivers and container depot workers were the first to support them, the dockers immediately returned to picket the Midland Cold Storage depot. Such action can only mean the loss of jobs for the depot workers. Unlike the dockers, they can be sacked. This picket will undermine the support for the dockers and the opposition to the Act which has grown up in the past weeks.

Bernie Steer writes in last Saturday's *Morning Star* that the National Ports Shop Stewards' Committee 'nine-point policy raises the need for all unregistered ports to be brought into the scheme and declares that all stripping and stuffing of containers be done by registered men, because that is traditionally their work.'

But what of the men who haven't traditionally done this work? What happens to these men, many of whom have been sacked from other industries which have been run down? Isn't it about time the traditional militancy of dockers was used to assist others instead of fighting selfishly to take jobs away from fellow workers? Let's face it, most industries have declining work forces and every worker has a common problem of retaining his livelihood. We should be uniting against the employers, not fighting one another.

It is true that by the dockers' own efforts they have secured wages and conditions which are far better than many other workers. Even their fall-back pay is higher than many other workers earn and they have to work for it. It is not a case of not wanting the dockers to have these conditions but of achieving them in other industries.

The Economist this week says the answer to militant dockers is the same as other employers do to their workers—sack them! They don't like the fact that the docks employers are without this weapon. Certainly the dockers are in a strong position and that strength could be used to help others.

AGAINST UNION WISHES

Although the dock strike is official, their action was against the wishes of the union. The Aldington-Jones report offers very little in the way of guarantees over job security. Its proposals are based on only the good faith of the employers, which is something a boss only has on Sundays. Jack Jones is only too willing to go along with the employers and reduce the labour force and job opportunities. The pattern has been set in America. Jack Jones and the employers see this strike as a last stand protest against the run-down of an industry.

But workers are fighting back on this very issue. It is no longer taken for granted that when a firm closes you take your redundancy money and go. The dockers are in a strong position to fight back but only if they join with the lorry drivers and container depot workers. Make



On strike and marching to Pentonville, July 25.

everyone a registered docker with the same wages and conditions. Take action not just over jobs but

for a reduction in hours so that the benefits of containers can be enjoyed
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Jack Robinson Imprisoned

THE IMPRISONMENT of our comrade, Jack Robinson, one of the editors of *FREEDOM*, on Tuesday (25.7.72), for refusing to pay the fine, imposed for not filling up his census form, shows how vulnerable people living in country districts are to this sort of persecution. Literally thousands of people in London and the other big cities have defied, or ignored, the census, and nothing has been done to them. The present writer is one of them. There is safety in numbers in the huge anonymous cities, but in a small village, like the one where our comrade lives, everyone knew everyone else. The census enumerator, in spite of official declarations to the contrary, was a local man, who knew the people he was enumerating personally.

Our comrade's stand was a principled one. He believed that the census was an infringement of personal freedom, and he refused to pay the fine also, because he would not give the state any kind of support, even in the form of a small sum of money. He challenged the law in a head-on confrontation.

A QUIET CHALLENGE

The imprisoned dockers received massive publicity, and widespread support. Our comrade has had neither. Yet it would be foolish to expect a radical change in the nature of our society until people like him get help from everybody in the neighbourhood. The local people of his Suffolk village should have staged a protest. Better still it would have been had they themselves refused to fill up the intrusive census forms. Until we get millions of people ready to refuse obedience and to help each other in their

resistance we are not going to get anywhere.

People are resisting, but they are isolated. An elderly woman living on the edge of Dartmoor in a cottage, and another woman near Bristol, have also taken the same stand as Jack Robinson. Our comrade's stand is the logical continuation of his whole life-style. He refused to take up arms in the Second World War, and as a result suffered a lengthy term of imprisonment. He has always adhered to the fundamental anarchist position on war and civil liberties. We should add that all the *FREEDOM* editors refused to fill in the census. One former editor, also living in the same part of Suffolk, was imprisoned, but later released, as his employers paid his fine. Again one is struck by the difference between the country and the cities, and the much greater freedom of the individual to lose himself and evade the authorities in the latter.

OBSOURELY HANGED

'There is nothing worse than to be obscurely hanged.'—Eighteenth century saying.

The publicity attending the imprisonment of the five dockers in Pentonville jail contrasts with the silence attending Jack Robinson's imprisonment in Norwich. It also contrasts strikingly with the lack of publicity attending the imprisonment, also in Pentonville, as well as elsewhere, of quite a number of people who have committed no crime at all. Like our comrade they have no powerful organisation or body of opinion to champion them. Says 'Crucifer' in the *New Statesman* (28.7.72), 'If this is to be

'getting people out of Pentonville week' perhaps someone might spare a thought for the 50 odd British citizens and UK passport holders incarcerated there without trial at the moment, for anything up to two months. They represent about half the current victims of the Labour Government's 1968 Kenya Asians Bill. Some are being daily shunted back and forth on international airlines to countries that will not take them, others are shut up at Ashford and London Airport in conditions even more atrocious than Pentonville. A few lucky ones have landed up in Italy and France, where rather more civilised regimes put them in hotels and give them a lodging allowance. There may, however, be a good fairy round the corner. Mary Dynes, of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, has written this week to the Official Solicitor, suggesting that when he has completed his business with the dockers, there are others who need him. I hope he takes up their case. It would be a convenient way of emphasising his total independence from Whitehall. The last sentence is probably satirically intended.

In short, if you wish to defy the law, and get away with it, it is essential to have a powerful organisation to back you up, to make a fuss and bring your case before the world.

Send letters to Jack Robinson, No. 301, HM Prison, Norwich, NOR 46S.

JOHN BRENT.

STOP PRESS

Jack has had a reception visit. He is well and unrepentant, and pleased to have received 'good wishes' postcards.

PLANET OF THE APES

ACCORDING TO the *Sunday Times* (30.7.72), 'Two policemen were hurt yesterday at Bangor University when 300 demonstrators pushed down crash barriers and broke through police cordons during a visit by Lord Hailsham, the Lord Chancellor. The demonstrators carried banners saying, "To hell with the English". . . . They were protesting against Lord Hailsham's description of the members of the Welsh Language Society as 'baboons of the IRA'.

There is an old Greek saying, 'Those whom the gods would destroy they first make mad.' It would appear that whatever gods may be in the British Isles are becoming tired of the mortal inhabitants. Beginning in Ulster, insanity seems to be spreading everywhere.

As anarchists we do not have much reason to respect the traditional institutions of the British state. Yet it is rather staggering to hear the Lord Chancellor of England referring to his fellow citizens as 'baboons'. Normally one expects a certain dignity of behaviour from high officers of the state. They may well be crooks, but at least they do not have to indulge in schoolboy abuse. At the present time, with mounting political hatred on all sides, it was an act of the most extreme folly.

The Welsh reply was equally deplorable. 'To hell with the English' is merely gutter racism. And thus the vicious circle is created, and the wheel of hatred begins to turn. People may die because of that 'baboon' remark. One may surely disagree with a man completely. One may detest his ideas. He may be a fool, he may be a swindler, and, if one believes he is, one may openly say so. This is all fair, in the way of controversy. But what one should never do is to offer gratuitous insults. For some reason human beings hate being compared to animals, although the present writer would far rather have been born a

baboon than a human. Baboons are not perhaps among the most pleasant of the monkey and ape families, but compared with human beings they are saints. Nevertheless, irrational though it is, people feel degraded by being compared to creatures who are in many ways their superiors, and one should recognise this. *FREEDOM* has tried to avoid the fashionable use of the term 'pig' for policeman, though it has occasionally slipped through, on the grounds that when you have described a man as a 'policeman' you have said the worst you can really say about him.

I remember years ago a Frenchwoman saying to me that the thing you noticed when you came to live in England was the absence of hatred. This statement, made in 1956, would require some qualification today I should imagine. Hatred seems to be encouraged, not only

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Leo Tolstoy's
THE SLAVERY OF
OUR TIMES

25p (postage 6p)

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Printing workers at the start
of their occupation of the
factory under workers' control
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John Lawrence,
29 Love Walk,
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Understanding the Revolution

THE SPANISH REVOLUTION AND THE CIVIL WAR, by Broué and Temimé (Faber and Faber, £6).

DURRUTI: Le Peuple en arms, by Paz (Editions Tete de Feuilles).

FOR MANY YEARS the 'basic text' of the Spanish Revolution has been either that censored and evasive 'history' of H. Thomas or the dull disinterested (or interested only in something less than truth) book by S. Payne. Unfortunately the fine *Spanish Cockpit* by Borkenau and *The Spanish Labyrinth* by Brenan together with Bolloren's *Grand Camouflage* have all that we have had in English to refute the biases of Thomas and Payne. Now with Vernon Richards's *Lessons of the Spanish Revolution* (recently reviewed in *FREEDOM*) and Broué's and Temimé's book, we have at last a fuller account of the Revolution to present. My only major criticism of the Broué book is that the authors seem almost consciously to be refuting the simplicities and misunderstandings of previous books to the detriment of what we all want to know

—what was the lesson of the Spanish Revolution? Broué comes close to this fairly early on when he discusses at length the nature of the organisations set up in towns and provinces after the July days. Only one—the Aragon Committee—does he consider to be a real confederation of independent groups, the others all had such political content that real collective action became so sectarian that the mistakes and deceptions had a fertile soil to flourish in. If the point of view, now fairly current among anarchist circles, that a Vanguard plus a Syndical Union is inadequate to provide for the needs of a revolutionary situation, as it limits the horizons of the membership, is to be pursued more studies of how the Revolution failed must be made. Perhaps someone will start where Broué and Temimé left off—in the organisation of defence committees and militias.

All these considerations sadly left behind the subject of the second book, Durruti. Again the mystification of Durruti is laid aside for a full and interesting narrative of his life from early struggles

in Leon to 'The Deaths of Durruti' as the author puts it. 'Actions speak louder than words' will always be a suitable epitaph to this militant who never deviated significantly from his basic beliefs (unless you believe *Izvestia*) after he returned for the first time from France in 1921. The exploits of the 'Iron Column' are given a justifiably small section as Durruti was never just a man who militarised the struggle but fought in the most effective way he could throughout his life. Unfortunately the same treatment is not given to the 'Deaths of Durruti' section. The 'five deaths', shot by the GPU, the Fascists, dissident anarchists, three unidentified gunmen or even by tripping over his own rifle! are pedantically examined, especially the controversy started in *The Times* by Professor Meltzer. The earlier sections more than make up for this however, with its clear detailed style. Altogether Paz has provided a far-reaching biography that anyone interested in the Spanish Revolution should read, if they can read French.

DAVID BROWN.

Some Kind of Tribute

MARX, ENGELS, LENIN: Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism (Progress Publishers, Lawrence and Wishart, 90p).

THIS HANDY COLLECTION from Moscow is the kind of thing that used to be published during the time of the Spanish Civil War, and its appearance now is presumably some kind of tribute to the revival of libertarian ideas all over the world.

The 300-page text is divided into two—the first half contains the main writings against anarchism (especially Proudhon, Stirner and above all Bakunin) produced by the two founders of Marxism between 1850 and 1894; the second half contains the main writings against anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism produced by the founder of Bolshevism between 1901 and 1921—and there are also 60 pages of editorial material.

The book's main virtues are that it is cheap and has informative notes; its

defects are that the items have been sometimes drastically abridged, and that it is of course utterly biased—in many of the notes, and above all in a crudely sectarian preface by N. Y. Kolpinsky, whose thesis is that anarchism is essentially petty-bourgeois and politically nonsensical.

The collection is presented as a weapon for good Marxists against 'leftism', but libertarians will actually find it well worth reading in order to understand the most important left-wing critique of their ideas. It is a pity that the prevailing orthodoxy in Moscow has prevented the inclusion of other interesting Marxist contributions to the debate by such figures as Plekhanov, Luxemburg, Trotsky, Stalin, Gramsci, and many others. But if Lenin is really rather boring, Marx and Engels are always fascinating and sometimes convincing.

N.W.

CHARITY SHOPS

THE RECENT DISPUTE about the application of the proposed Value Added Tax to charity shops, meaning in Oxfam's case a Government threat to take £136,000 over a full year, brings to public attention the proliferation of charity shops. They are, in fact, to be found all over the country in increasing numbers.

I am among those anarchists who can hardly prevent a groan on hearing certain words. Among them are charity and race. Having been involved with both for a goodly proportion of my working life might take some explaining!

Yet let's look at a defence of the concept of the charity shop. Here we find a building being used to sell articles which have been given by one public to be bought by another public. The proceeds of the operation go to a vast number of causes. Oxfam has some 250 shops throughout our land, a veritable empire in comparison with chain stores, but Shelter, Help the Aged, the Spastics and others have all seen what a fundamentally reliable means of fund-

raising charity shops are. The similarity to squatting has not, to my knowledge, been commented on before, but the use of empty property due for demolition, in between sales, etc., for means of raising money for charity seems very similar to squatting in empty houses.

Possibly no similarity has been commented on in libertarian circles because of a prejudice against charity shops and charity in general. I have great sympathy for this prejudice for charity has not been called cold without reason, and the argument of depicting charity as a means of ridding the bourgeoisie of guilt feeling has much substance.

There are other sides to a charity shop, however. Anarchists are adamant about the State being unnecessary and the voluntary principle is one that if kept alive could blossom in a free society. Voluntary work is at the heart of a charity shop. Also the goods in charity shops are bought by people at prices which are usually very reasonable. It is not too dramatic to claim that many families would be unshod and clothed in

rags but for charity shops.

The areas where one needs to retain a critical approach also require a mention. The personnel of charity shops are often the middle class wives of husbands who might well be spending their weekdays causing the problems which require the need for charity. With charity there is that creeping feeling of doing good for others which is so notorious about charity workers and makes many a good libertarian shy away.

At the other end charities can be criticised in the way they use their funds. The problems of the third world are not going to be solved by throwing sixpence into the charity bowl or by putting it into a revolving fund for peasant farmers. Many people have the idea that supporting overseas aid charities is the end of their responsibility for people in developing countries. The Marxist approach, as I understand it, argues that the State should run the country in such

a way that charity is not required. Marxists contend that charity enables the State to get away with not providing adequate social services and the strict Marxist theologian might well shun the charity shop because the State will only see its responsibilities if no one but the State helps those needing assistance.

Out of this picture we can see the grounds for both general positions on charity shops. Anarchists could hardly support the Marxist position but there is much more to worry about in the 'conscience salving' aspect of charity.

Charities like Oxfam and Shelter have continually found themselves up against the Charity Commissioners in recent years. The Commissioners have often reminded these charities that they are not allowed to take political action. Indeed suggestions about responsibility for misuse of funds have been made and although the charities on the political circumference make some 'political' noises they do not campaign fully for political action for fear of the Charity Commissioners.

The charity shop as a simple fund-raising exercise is at the opposite pole to the political action campaigners. Yet I can see in the concepts of the charity shop a set of values that have much to recommend them to revolutionaries. One can envisage charity shops and underground bookshops in a sort of alliance of a revolt against exchange value. A new sort of shop, not for profit but for needs.

The revolutionary sharpness applied to the question even envisages—taking the squatter analogy—a taking over of the retail shop and turning it into a shop tuned to the people's needs with factories under workers' control supplying goods for sale at production cost.

This is a practical aspect of revolutionary construction in society that gets overlooked because it's not so exciting as barricades, yet we'll need both when the time comes. Flexible revolutionaries use the aspects of society that have positive trends and nurture them to a practical alternative process.

J.W.

LESSONS OF THE SPANISH REVOLUTION by Vernon Richards

This is not a reprint of the work with the same title published by FREEDOM PRESS in 1953. It is a new and considerably expanded version which the author prepared for an Italian edition published in 1957, and recently published in Paris in a Spanish translation.

Additional chapters deal with such important topics as the Militarization of the Militias, the Cult of the Organisation and of Personalities, the Rank and File's Responsibility.

As well as a Select Bibliography, the author has contributed a 20-page Bibliographical Postscript in which he discusses the most important works that have appeared on the subject in the past twelve years.

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The Irrelevant Act

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by dockers instead of making huge profits for the employer.

It is unlikely that Mr. Heath will use the Industrial Relations Act against the dockers. That would be political suicide. However, if the strike lasts for any length of time, a state of emergency will be declared and troops used to unload and load cargoes. If this happens then once again the dockers should be joined by other workers.

ORGANISE OURSELVES

Anarchists, unlike the Communist Party, the International Socialists and the Socialist Labour League, are not demanding that the TUC call a general strike. We say, let us organise ourselves. Let us, as workers, control any strike situation and keep the initiative with the rank and file.

Surely by now even the leadership of the T&GWU is discredited. They are just like any other trade union leadership, unwilling to take on the employer when it comes to fighting to keep jobs in a declining industry. Despite all their talk about 'nationalisation' the dockers are just as far away from running their own industry as they were when Arthur Deakin was general secretary. As railwaymen know, nationalisation in fact usually precedes the decline.

With the Law Lords' decision, container depot companies could take the T&GWU to the National Industrial Relations Court. Jack Jones would then be put on the spot and could hardly co-operate with the Court after his own members have been imprisoned.

What the past weeks have shown is that when workers stop, everything stops. The use of the Act has brought about a situation where the employers, the trade union leaders, and the Government were challenged by unofficial industrial action. The TUC just did not know what to do and could only hope for the best. The trade union bureaucrats don't like the Act because it forces a confrontation. They would rather get

round a table and draw up complicated procedure agreements and bargain away hard-won conditions. The TUC wants what it calls a 'genuinely independent conciliation and arbitration service' with the employers.

The Act is an anachronism and will be only used by the small reactionary employer. The giant monopolies would rather work out a deal with the accommodating trade union leaders. The Act, like all other laws, will not be used if the employer thinks it's not worth it. It is not a question of repealing the Act, because by taking such action when it is used, it becomes irrelevant.

P.T.



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The Congress of St. Imier

To commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the CONGRESS OF SAINT-IMIER of the International Association of Workingmen (September 15, 1872), the anarchists of Switzerland invite their comrades to an OUTING AND PICNIC

on Sunday, September 17, 1972, at Saint-Imier (Swiss Jura, between Bienne and La Chaux-de-Fonds). There will be a sign on the Place du Marché from ten o'clock to midday to show the way to the scene of the picnic. In case of rain a shelter will be provided.

Bring something to eat, to drink, to read aloud and also bring some musical instruments. No official entertainments have been organised. Impromptu speakers will be welcome. Comrades coming from a distance will be able to camp.

For all correspondence: Case postale 44, 1211 GENEVA 6 Eaux Vives, Switzerland.

Planet of the Apes

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by the would-be leaders of revolution, but by the Establishment itself. 'Bash the Paks!' 'Rivers of blood will flow if the blacks are not deported!' 'Irish murderers!' 'Welsh baboons!' 'English devils!' 'Don't trust anyone over the age of twenty-five!' 'Kill the pigs!' 'Dirty hippies!' and so on, and so on.

Enoch Powell is said to have made racism respectable again, and Lord Hailsham has done his little bit to revive the ancient wars between the English and the Welsh. Which is worse, the hippies with the gun-fantasies and support for the Provisional IRA (who beat hippies in Ulster, while no doubt welcoming their support, for what it's worth, in England), or the Establishment, who seem deliberately trying to provoke a show-down (so that they can spectacularly crush it? Or is that too Machiavellian?), it is difficult to say.

Certainly the gods seem to want to destroy Britain. Perhaps they hope to repopulate it with real baboons one day.

PORIUS.

Secretary:
Jeremy Brent,
1A Woodstock Road, Oxford.

**ANARCHIST
FEDERATION
of BRITAIN**

AFBIB—To all Groups.

The next AFBIB will be produced in Sheffield at 4 Havelock Square, Sheffield, 10. Send material to Secretary, Peter Le Mare. Also needs offers of help from Groups to bring out further issues.

The Contact Column in 'Freedom' is also available for urgent information.

Groups should send latest addresses to Birmingham. New inquiries should write direct to them or to the AFB information office in Birmingham.

AFB REGIONAL GROUPS

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

N.E. England: Mick Renwick, 34 Durham Road, Gateshead, Co. Durham.

Essex & E. Herts: P. Newell, 'Aegaeon', Spring Lane, Eight Ash Green, Colchester. (QM, FL.)

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

Yorkshire: Trevor Savage, Flat 3, 35 Richmond Road, Leeds, 6.

Manchester: Mat Cunningham, 9 Briar Hill Avenue, Little Hulton, Worsley, Lancs.

Scotland: Secretary, Mike Mallet, 1 Lynnewood Place, Maryfield, Dundee.

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

N. Ireland: c/o Freedom Press.

The American Federation of Anarchists P.O. Box 9835, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55440, USA.

S. Ireland: 20 College Lane, Dublin, 2.

University and Student Groups: c/o P. L. Mare.

Thoughts on Workers' Control

AT ALMOST ANY TIME, and in any place or industry, a group of workers is now liable to occupy a factory as an alternative to the dole queues. It has happened already on Clydeside at UCS and Plesseys, on Merseyside at Fisher-Bendix, in rural Norfolk at Sextons leather works, and in London at Briant Colour Printing.

But having refused to leave the factory, what then? Should they operate it under their own control as a co-operative venture? Or should they simply stick it out until a new capitalist can be prevailed upon to take over and set everyone to work again? The question of workers' control is certainly becoming a lot more than the abstract talking point that it has been for so many years.

So far (except at Fakenham) the workers have settled for UCS-type 'work-ins' whose aim was never more than establishing the right to work for an employer. At UCS this aim was achieved. With the aid of large government subsidies a consortium of capitalists were prevailed upon to take over three of the shipyards while the other, at Clydebank, has been bought by an American millionaire company. The workers remain wage slaves. They have won the right to work for a boss. Whether they have made their jobs secure is quite another question.

At Briants, too, the 'right to work' has become the main slogan and guiding principle of the occupation, which is now in its seventh week. No buyer has yet come forward, so the workers are living in a sort of economic no-man's-land. They have no employer. They are in complete control of the factory and are producing a certain amount of printing—mainly on orders supplied by sympathisers. They are being sustained by collections from fellow workers, mainly from print, but also from workers in other industries.

Such a situation cannot last for ever. Either they will get a new employer and return to the old days of wage slavery—or they will be forced to consider taking over the factory and turning it into a co-operative operated under workers' control. (The only other alternative is to accept the dole, take the

redundancy pay, and look for other work—something which not many are prepared to even contemplate at this stage.)

We have nothing but praise and respect for the Briant workers' efforts to keep their jobs and feed their families. They have already done more—much more—than most of us. After all, twenty-four million of us go off to work for an employer every day of our lives and very few think it otherwise than a quite natural thing to do. We get accustomed to slavery, as we get accustomed to anything else. The workers at Briants have started to get out of the capitalist cage, they have opened the gates and tasted a little freedom. If they should now feel apprehensive about the future and wonder whether it is possible to run a factory for ever without a boss this is understandable. All around them are people who accept bosses almost without question.

But if the workers' fears are understandable, the advice given to them by the various politicians and trade union leaders does nothing to remove those fears. All, except the anarchists (and their voice is terribly weak), maintain that the 'right to work' is the only correct strategy for such a situation and that any attempt to operate a factory under workers' control would be foolhardy and doomed to failure.

When pressed to state why this should be so, the arguments usually take the following lines—with variations according to whether the politician is a follower of Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Mao, or Wedgwood-Benn.

(1) 'All such ventures have failed in the past.'

This is untrue. The massive co-operative movement which exists today was started by a few workers who pooled their resources to cut out the profit-seeking middleman in the consumer industry. The co-ops are not anarchist organisations—but neither are they exactly capitalist. They were originally based on the principle of mutual aid. Suitably reconstructed, they will undoubtedly play some role in any future society that does away with private profit-making. Certainly the many efforts

made by building workers, farm labourers, engineers, and others, to create worker-controlled co-ops in production all failed in the past. But the fact that they were tried seems to indicate that it is a natural thing for workers to do—much more natural than shouting for another Labour Government, the meanwhile accepting all the ravages of capitalism.

(2) 'A worker-controlled co-operative would have to compete for orders with other firms and would jeopardise employment of other workers.'

I have heard this argument from communists, trotskysts, and trade union leaders. How strange it is that when a new factory, a capitalist factory, opens up it is hailed as bringing work to the people—but when it is suggested that a bunch of workers threatened with the dole should take-over and run the place themselves this is seen as a threat to the jobs of other workers! Such an argument could have been applied to the UCS 'work-in' for, by keeping the four yards in operation they have undoubtedly reduced the chances of the existing yards of getting what orders are around and thus made unemployment more possible. Indeed, this was argued by the Government at the time. To be logical, the supporters of this theory should advocate the dole, not work-ins, so that those still employed will have less competition to contend with. Most socialists and communists and many trade unionists shop at the co-ops on principle—and quite right, too. Are they thus helping to put the shop assistants in the supermarkets out of work? Carried to its extreme, one could argue that everyone who buys the *Daily Express* is helping to put printers on the *Guardian* out of work!

(3) 'A factory operating under workers' control couldn't pay the wages that workers are accustomed to getting.'

This may well be true—but a factory operating under workers' control has a lot more to offer than high wages. First of all—no boss! The workers all taking a hand in management and administration. Equal wages and flexible hours of work. Reduction of the stupid division of labour so that all may learn

all the skills. The knowledge that no one is living off the back of another. Finally, the beginnings of an effort to produce what people really need—and not what makes the boss a profit. If higher and higher wages is the only concern, then let us recognise right away that this 'dog-eat-dog' system is here forever.

(4) 'Workers' control is all right—but it is for the future, when we have a communist/trotskyist/maoist/socialist-type government. Meanwhile, the task is to build the communist/trotskyist/maoist/socialist-type party which can lead and direct the workers to the promised land.'

This, in essence, is the fundamental message of all the politicians from Right to Left. Workers are viewed as political cannon fodder. They have no role as workers, with skills and abilities and productive capacities. They must not themselves try to break out of the system of wage slavery but must merely shout and protest (and if necessary die) so that the leaders may take over the State and organise things for the benefit of the workers. In fact, of course, no Government, no State, has ever permitted the workers to own and control their places of work. The Russian workers did it during the revolution, but when the Bolsheviks felt strong enough they ended the regime of workers' control and appointed managers directly responsible to the State. Those who resisted (and there were many) were arrested, imprisoned and shot.

Workers' control wasn't then, and it isn't now, a mere academic question.

It is my belief that unless workers by their own efforts fight in every way to establish workers' control wherever they can and whenever they can, they will forever remain in slavery. If not to a capitalist boss then to a State boss as in Russia.

JOHN LAWRENCE.

something, or even mildly criticise some great and powerful organisation, don't for Heaven's sake take it to some respectable, old-established firm. Such a firm will be 'liberal', that is to say instead of condemning the Nazis for killing six million Jews it will say, 'Let's hear their case. Maybe it will turn out in the end that it was only three million after all.' Such a firm will be afraid of tarnishing its respectable image. It will be afraid of lawsuits and scandal and disturbance and so on.

Take it instead to some bunch of beatniks, with an ancient printing press and little to lose. Those sort of people are the only hope. Frankly, firms like Harper and Row are a dead loss in cases of this kind.

THE MODERN ASSASSINS

Everyone knows, after all the organisation is world-wide, and has links with gangsters and the Mafia, and secrets of this magnitude just aren't secret any more, that the CIA is a worthy successor to the ancient sect of the Assassins, the Jesuits of the Counter-Reformation and the old British imperial secret service. It uses intellectuals, it uses murderers, it sees itself dedicated to the fight against world Communism, as the Assassins saw themselves as the defenders of Islam, the Jesuits of Catholicism, the British secret service men (people like T. E. Lawrence for example) as defenders of their imperial destiny.

Says *The International Herald Tribune*, 'In a series of interviews with *The New York Times*, a number of present and former officials of the CIA acknowledged that smuggling and "looking the other way" was common throughout South East Asia during the 1960s. But many noted that the agency had since taken strong steps to curb such practices.' The reader here can take a strong pinch of salt before continuing. 'One official, who spent many years in South East Asia, said, "I don't believe that agency staff personnel were dealing in opium. But if you're talking about Air America hauling the stuff around, then I'll bet my bottom dollar that they were in it."' Which seems to the present to be merely the good old trick in intelligence work of sacrificing your buddies as soon as they become an embarrassment. In short, it seems quite clear from the above that a lot of very dirty work has been going on at the cross-roads of South East Asia. We are not allowed to know, therefore it is perfectly fair for us to make guesses, and if they sound rather unkind guesses that's just too bad!

JOHN BRENT.

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A State within a State

IT SEEMS to be the fashion now for large and wealthy organisations to go in for censorship. Rio Tinto Zinc have already suppressed a book on Snowdonia which criticises their activities (*FREEDOM*, 28.7.72), and now it is the turn of the CIA. According to *The International Herald Tribune* (24.7.72), 'CIA Openly Contests Drug Charge', the Central Intelligence Agency has acted more openly than Rio Tinto, but its intention is the same, to prevent the public reading anything unfavourable to it.

It has been an open secret for many years that the CIA has financed itself from the traffic in opium, which is grown in the countries of South East Asia still under American control and flown out by an organisation rejoicing in the name of Air America. The CIA have done much worse things than this. In several countries they have stirred up reactionary risings in the interests of the United States—or perhaps more truly in the interests of the CIA itself. Many people believe that the CIA were responsible for the murder of President Kennedy, and of his brother. Certainly the organisation was responsible for the massacre of the Indonesian Communists and it is well known that it at one time helped to finance the magazine *Encounter* and has committed many other crimes against humanity. In short it is a state within the American state; the American Secret Service, which is separate, hates it, and so does the FBI. Neither of these organisations can lay much claim to being radical.

The present furore has been started by the testimony before Congress of Alfred W. McCoy, a Yale graduate who has spent 18 months investigating the narcotics trade in South East Asia. He has written a book which is, or perhaps one should say was about to appear, entitled *The Politics of Heroin in South East Asia*, published by Harper and Row, a famous firm.

Mr. McCoy claims in his book that both CIA and State Department officials have provided political and military support for America's allies engaged in the drug traffic, and done everything they could to conceal what was going on.

UNWARRANTED, UNPROVEN AND FALLACIOUS

As did the officials of Rio Tinto Zinc, the CIA men claim that the book contains many 'unwarranted, unproven and fallacious accusations', which means in the new political jargon 'uncomfortable, well-authenticated and undeniable', and so of course the general public must not be allowed to read these accusations.

Instead of letting them be made, and then answering them, if they could be answered, the CIA prefer censorship, only, since America is not England where things can be done in an gentlemanly underhand way, they are forced to come out into the open to some extent. The CIA officials at least tell us that they are trying to do the dirty, and to that extent (I suppose) they deserve the respect given to open brutes, honest thugs.

To begin with Mr. McCoy's accusations, both in congressional hearing and in a magazine, did not attract much attention. Probably most Americans, whether they support the present regime or not, are pretty cynical by now, and would not find anything very surprising in these revelations. A columnist used some of Mr. McCoy's statements in *The Washington Star*, and two letters were sent denying the accusations, one by W. E. Colby, the CIA's executive director, and the other by Paul V. Velte, Jr., an Air America official.

Unless there is some complicated and deep-laid plot, unless the whole thing is a scheme to first of all get the CIA accused and then triumphantly disprove the accusations, which would be phoney to begin with,* this move suggests that the organisation is beginning, for some reason, to get awfully jumpy. Because, really, when you come to think of it, no action could be more foolish. Far better to have let the accusations of

*The idea of a plot is amusing, but in real life governments and similar organisations rarely go in for such subtlety. The writer's opinion is that rulers are generally rather stupid men, whose power is based on the submissiveness of the people rather than on their own great cleverness.

Mr. McCoy fade into oblivion. Instead of which the CIA has drawn attention to itself, a thing which no secret society should ever do.

GIVING IN TO THE BULLIES

Not content with this the CIA then approached Harper and Row, and asked for a copy of the manuscript for review before publication. This was an informal request. Evidently to begin with they were rebuffed, for later a formal demand was sent by Lawrence R. Houston, general counsel for the CIA, and this time the publishers gave in.

B. Brooks Thomas, vice-president and general counsel of the publishers, said, 'We don't have any doubts about the book at all. We've had it reviewed by others and we're persuaded that the work is amply documented and scholarly.' Then of course he went on to back down. 'As one of the oldest publishing houses in America, Harper and Row has an obligation to itself and what it stands for. We're not submitting to censorship or anything like that.' [Of course not!] 'We're taking a responsible middle position.' [No wonder the word 'liberal' has become a hate-word in America.] I just believe that the CIA should have the chance to review it.' In order to show how liberal he was, he went on to say that if Mr. McCoy did not agree Harper and Row would not publish the book. What a pity that the author did not take him at his word and go to another publisher!

Alas, Mr. McCoy, after first writing to his publisher to the effect that he would not submit the manuscript to the CIA because 'the public's right to know is best served by publishing the book as it now stands', then climbed down too—the pressures in America are grimmer than anything we in England know—and signed an agreement with the publishers that the books should be sent in page-proof form to the CIA, giving the agency ten days in which to respond.

THE MORAL OF THIS SAD STORY

The moral of this little tale is the same as that concerning Rio Tinto and the book on Snowdonia. If you've got a good book that will blow the lid off

Workers' Control— but not just yet!

Dear Editors,
My attention has been drawn to a report in *FREEDOM* of July 15 entitled 'Workers' control—but not just yet'. It purports to be a report of a meeting called by branches of the International Socialists in support of the occupation of Briant Colour. In fact it gives what can only be described as a deliberately misleading account of the views of myself and IS.

Thus J.A. writes that I refused to 'agree with the take-over at Briants'. This is a lie. The whole meeting was called in solidarity with the Briant workers (one of whose shop stewards—FOCs—spoke at the meeting). To the contrary I and the IS trade unionists from the print industry present called for sympathetic support and action for the Briant occupation. The only disagreement with the occupation expressed at the meeting came from an anarchist comrade who said that Briant workers should tout for orders—even taking work from other trade unionists if necessary. This view was opposed not only by the IS speakers but also by the Briant workers present. While one does not expect to agree with the anti-politics line of *FREEDOM* one has come to expect it to abuse the methods of sectarian distortion found elsewhere on the left.

Yours fraternally,
S.W.19 JOHN PALMER.

J.A. Replies:

John Palmer should not have been so stung by my report of the IS meeting. The question put to the platform was 'Do you agree with the take-over at Briant's and its operation under workers'

LETTERS

control?' The speakers said that they did not (to their credit if that is what they think) and the terms of their reply made it clear that it was workers' control they meant. Otherwise why should John say that he was opposed to 'building Socialism in one factory in the Old Kent Road'?

Of course International Socialism supports the occupation—so does everyone else including the trade union bureaucrats who organise the sending of large sums of money to the Briant workers. But, as a trade union official said at the last mass meeting, 'The question of the factory being under workers' control was deterring prospective buyers—definitely so.' This probably sounds the death knell for those workers (and there are some) who want to keep and run the factory themselves.

The probability is that a UCS-type buyer will be found and the workers quietly sold into slavery again. This is the line of the unions, the Communist Party and, as far as I can discover, of International Socialism. If not, why should John Palmer speak so scathingly in his letter against the idea of Briant workers seeking orders? If, against all probability, the workers keep the factory, then they would initially have to seek (not 'tout' surely) orders everywhere, and I would say particularly from organised factories where they could expect a sympathetic hearing for their case.

'Nor Iron Bars a Cage'

IT WILL BE interesting to go to prison again! It was thirty years ago and it will be interesting to see if the places have improved. There was a war on at the time and that was given as an excuse for all the shortcomings. The poor food, the unbalanced diet, the shoddy clothing, the bureaucratic delays, could all be put down by the young and charitable to wartime conditions. But the indifference, inefficiency alternating with gross administrative rigour, and sheer waste of it all could not be overlooked.

One has heard over the interval that things have not changed. Gross brutality, harshness and corruption were not easy to see and no doubt, if they existed, were more human in their execution than the cold precise punishment of the routine locking-away of hundreds day-by-day to isolate them from society. To teach industry by bored inactivity; to teach responsibility by regulation of every act; to teach social behaviour by an anti-social system where sociability could be punished—this was, and probably still is, the task of the prison service. Can it be wondered that it does not succeed?

This sentence, whatever it will be, is in exchange for a fine. Looking at the cost of keeping a man in prison, the Government is getting no bargain. Indeed to pay such a fine would be the equivalent of extracting twelve days of

labour; one works enough for the State as it is.

One was told by the Census enumerator that such fines will go towards the cost of the Census. This, except in a very remote way, is untrue but nevertheless there exists the uneasy feeling that all fines paid to courts help to keep the State system of injustice running. Therefore I do not intend to pay and furthermore would urge all comrades, however well-intentioned, not to pay for me. If they have so much spare money and want to do something for *FREEDOM* there is always the Press Fund.

It will be no picnic going to prison but it is not utterly waste or hardship. The cavalier poet, Lovelace, wrote some of the most sententious lines about prison ever quoted (and they're quoted very often). It is called 'To Althea, from Prison' and its closing stanzas read something like this:

'Stone walls do not a prison make.
Nor iron bars a cage.
Minds meditative and quiet take
them for hermitage.'

A rather ribald but charming Irish bigamist, with whom I had the privilege of being handcuffed on a transfer to Shrewsbury, used to chant the first line 'Stone walls do not a prison make'—and add 'But O Boy! How they help.'

JACK ROBINSON.

THIS WEEK IN IRELAND

BLOODY FRIDAY. On Saturday we were almost numb with the horror of what the Provos had done. I went up the street to shop, and a group of them were actually on the street selling things for their cause. I ran to them with threats of the gardai and calling them bloody murderers. A five-month baby, a fourteen-year-old boy and others. No day of mourning called by our Government who called one for Bloody Sunday in January. In fact they have risen and are all on holiday or fighting (very dirtily) the by-election in Cork.

Whitelaw joins the Unionists and helps them crack down, not on the Provos specifically but on all Roman Catholics. These people had turned away in agony from what was done in their name, but now they are about to give back their loyalty to the Provos 'as we have no one else to defend us'. The soldiers are in their houses putting barbed wire along the passages and confining the family to ONE ROOM, and indulging in their usual way of defecating and urinating on the carpets and destroying the homes. Meanwhile the UDA and Vanguard literally get away with cold-blooded murder, going round in cars and shooting those on Craig's

assassination list, and today they declare they will prevent oil getting into the Bogside and Creggan so that all the people will perforce be driven out. Then they will destroy the whole of these Catholic ghettos.

Whitelaw lets them say and do these things. He and Britain are so afraid of the Unionists. I am in despair. I have no hope left, none. We will kill each other off until, like the Kilkenny cats, nothing is left but our nails and the tips of our tails, and begun we've got tails, and horns and hooves. We aren't human, we are devils, or vampires mad with the lust to kill, kill, kill.

For fifty years the Unionists have sowed dragon's teeth. Naturally monsters came up. What Whitelaw and Co. seem incapable of grasping is that it is NO USE to kill the monsters off if they leave alive those from whose loins the monsters sprang to spawn more monsters ad infinitum.

By all means stop the Provos murdering innocent people BUT stop the UDA and UDF and UVF murdering too. The same sauce must serve for both goose and gander, they are equally EVIL.

H.

RAF

Dear Comrades,

Abuse from Albert Meltzer (July 22) is praise indeed. He has of course perfected the curious technique of arguing by contradiction, so that it makes sense for him to join the mass media in calling the Red Army Fraction anarchist although—or rather, because—it calls itself Marxist-Leninist.

There is some attempt at rational argument—that the RAF doesn't resemble the Communist Party, and doesn't advocate proletarian dictatorship or a revolutionary vanguard party; actually it has discussed the necessity for proletarian dictatorship, and clearly sees itself as a revolutionary vanguard organisation.

Still Out—after Two Years

ON FRIDAY, JULY 7—the unions met Barclay, Fine Tubes' boss, in London—but nothing came of the talks. Barclay, having seen the union bureaucrats' inability to do anything over the past couple of years, must have felt quite safe in telling them to clear off.

Monday, July 10.—Pickets back on at factory gates turning most people away. Blacking started again including third party blacking, i.e. Rolls Royce (Derby) use Fine Tubes' stuff so workers at Centrax (Newton Abbot) stop all supplies to RR and threaten to disrupt production there.

As the blacking picks up again the repercussions begin to be felt through a large sector of British and European industry due to the fact that Fine Tubes have a monopoly in their field—in 6 to 8 weeks' time the Concorde project, both here and in France, will face disruption due to lack of supplies.

Monday, July 17.—Crispen, T&GWU bureaucrat par excellence, phoned the strike committee, saying that all the

But there is no attempt to come to terms with the basic fact that the RAF has a perfectly good idea of its political position—its published statements are littered with scriptural quotations from Marx and Engels and above all from Lenin and Mao, and follow the recognisable Marxist argument for urban guerrilla already laid down by Marxist theoreticians in Latin America. Moreover, the RAF has specifically insisted that 'we are not anarchists' and has frequently called for a 'reconstructed Marxism-Leninism'—see the new collection of RAF texts published by the Stoke Newington 8 Defence Group (*Armed Resistance in West Germany*, 20p) and especially the untranslated essay *On the Armed Struggle in Western Europe*.

Of course it is possible that the Red Army Fraction is Marxist-Leninist only in name, just as the Bonnot Gang was anarchist only in name. Indeed Albert Meltzer is so fond of saying that people who call themselves anarchists are not really anarchists that one begins to wonder. . . . Incidentally the correct spelling is not 'Mainhoff' but 'Meinhof'.

N.W.

strikers should be on picket duty—thus saying that no one was to go on delegation—which means that the strikers would not be able to meet fellow workers at factory floor level, in fact they would have to rely on local union bureaucrats to mediate. And we all know what that means—fuck all done, blacking fades away—Union bosses come along and say, 'You'll never win, call it all off.' Crispen was given the same answer that he got before—fuck off.

Now the factory either meets the strikers' demands or it gets closed down. And as the company's position gets weaker, the demands increase.

R.G.

Send money to the Fine Tubes' Strikers—they still need it. Don't forget they have been out for over two years now—clothes, etc., wear out. Send to Fine Tubes Strike Committee, c/o 65 Breton Side, Plymouth, Devon.

(From Atlantis News Agency, Plymouth.)

Is it 'No Go'?

WHILE THE 'Green' and the 'Orange' partisans battle for the mastery of Ulster, in a senseless welter of bombing, squalid shootings, beating and maiming, one thing seems to stand out for Libertarians as a ray of hope. That is the 'No Go' areas of the Creggan, 'Free' Derry, and the Bogside. In some aspects at least they bear a superficial resemblance to the 'Libertarian' communes in

Spain. The military and the State police are driven from the streets; the 'People' instead control their own districts and run their own affairs. Rents and debts are no longer paid to outside absentee landlords and moneylenders; rates are collected and spent within the 'commune' on services organised by the people themselves.

So far, so good. All very fine. But look at the other side. 'People's' police can mean 'people's' kangaroo courts, 'people's' prisons, sordid execution squads, hooded men, beatings, maimings, and public degradation, with no pretence of a 'defence', no jury, no 'Habeas Corpus', and no Appeal—and not even the bewigged charade of the State Tribunals of Vengeance (Law Courts).

(In Maoist China for instance, 'juries' of boiler-suited zombies are sufficiently well versed in jurisprudence and carefully trained in objective judgement to shout 'Guilty! Death!' upon a given signal from the 'bench'.)

And who are the 'People'? The Workers and Residents as a whole, or the local Bully Boys? For these controlled areas are not Libertarian, but sectarian, puritanical, and fundamentally reactionary—rather like some of the Spanish communes, where wine, women, coffee and tobacco were all banished in the sacred name of wartime austerity. And where does 'No Go' come to a stop?

What if the 'Mafia' started 'No Go' areas in New York; if the Krays took over the East End, or even worse, if 'Moral Rearmament' took over the squalid tenements around the 'Westminster Theatre', which they already occupy?

But, the obvious weakness of a 'No Go' area is its vulnerability to blockade, starvation, or even bombardment. To the cutting off of essential services, such as gas, water, electricity, and food supplies. Therefore, ideally, any 'No Go' area must contain a reservoir, a gas works, and a power station at least, schools and a hospital, and lie across the main arteries of communication.

(In London, as a matter of interest, Battersea would seem to be the ideal place. 'Up the Junction', power station, gas works, and control of river traffic.)

Because of this vulnerable isolation, there can never be any real self-determination until the whole of Ireland, in fact the whole World becomes a 'No Go' area, where reactionary priests, sectarians, and chauvinistic politicians can be shot on sight! Now, who controls

D.B.

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these areas? It is useless to speak, or even to start thinking about a 'Workers' Militia' until the means of production, distribution, and exchange, are brought under Workers' Control. Otherwise we should be faced with the ludicrous spectacle of workers guarding private property, and factories and premises which they do not even own!

The 'Militia' defending a Libertarian Society and the gains of the Revolution should consist of volunteers of both sexes from all sections of the community, trades and professions (apart from known saboteurs or counter-revolutionaries). They should be based upon the place of work, and the place of residence, and every member should serve on a rota basis, so that there can never be any permanent command. 'Leaders' of 'groups' of 10, 'centuries' (100) and 'columns' of 1,000, should be elected, subject to recall, and under the control of factory and street committees on the lines of the CNT, FAI.

There can be no immediate or facile solution for Ireland. The Republic, as it stands, has nothing to offer. It is priest-ridden, medieval, and backward-looking; ruled by a complacent bourgeoisie; dotted with the castles of wealthy English tax-dodgers and horse-breeders, and heavily invested by West German Industrialism.

But, meanwhile, the British Army of Occupation which protects the 'Orange' ruling-class must be withdrawn; all internees (POWs) released, an amnesty for all political prisoners. Then, once a free, Socialist, secular, and United Ireland has been proclaimed, the IRA and the UDA should disband and give place to a non-sectarian, libertarian Citizens' Militia, until such time as men can agree to live in comradeship, tolerance, and amicability and the 'Gunman' of today becomes the 'One Man' of tomorrow. Until then, until the verdant dawn arises and dispels the fogs on the craggy political bogs of 'Mother Ireland', it's just No Go.

CAVAN MCCARTHY.