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Threepence

THE LANDLORD'S BILL

THE Rent Bill row as it proceeds becomes more and more of a political battle; the eyes of the managers turn to the prospects of a general election within the next two years, their fingers on the political pulse of the electorate. With the Bill in its final stages the Labour Party is suddenly galvanised into action, too late to assume the leadership—if it ever had any such intention-of a mass movement of direct action against the threat of wholesale eviction, but suddenly aware that the Government's Rent Bill provides them with just the ammunition they need for winning those marginal seats which eluded them last time. For opposition to the Bill comes not only from the unrepresented "working classes" but from a growing number of the Toryvoting "middle-classes". The government as in the case of the Suez adventure is being harried by two sections of its supporters. Some Tory M.P.s, chiefly around London, where the notorious Clause 9 of the Bill will have the greatest repercussions . . . on their votes too, are said to be refusing to support the Bill unless the decontrol plan is eased. Others instead, whose votes presumably come from the rentierridden counties of Sussex and Surrey are pressing for the Bill to go through unchanged. These M.P.s are less concerned with their safe seats than with the prospect of finding themselves on the opposition benches. They argue that the sooner decontrol begins the better will be the chances of getting over the inevitable dislocation before the next general election, which they assume is at most only two years away. The government's decision to apply the "guillotine" to the debate on the Bill in its Committee Stage is, to our minds, an indication that it shares the latter view, though by shortening the debate it might feel that the time saved can be used for making a concession in Clause 9, by extending the six months notice landlords must give to tenants affected by rent increases or notices to quit, to say, nine months or even a year. It would still leave nearly a year for political manoeuvre, new crises and vote-catching measures to be introduced, before the elections.

ing, letting, conveyancing, converting and speculating on property. Finally there are those unfortunates who have for years been the victims of the landlords of uncontrolled properties, of the "furnished" bedsitters, "flats-sharing bathroom and kitchen" for which they pay outrageous rents. They support the Rent Bill because they have been promised (to quote the News Chronicle) that it will result "in a fairer sharing of the cost of housing". At the moment millions who live in rent-controlled houses are being grossly over-subsidised by the rest". Assuming the News Chronicle and its fellow-liberals to be right then one would expect a large number of landlords including that new postwar class of ex-landed-gentry landladies, to be up in arms over the Government's Bill since it will mean a serious drop in their incomes, for after all, it's not only the "controlled tenants" who are at present being 'subsidised" but the "uncontrolled landlords and landladies" as well! But we have yet to hear of any protests from these quarters. Perhaps, with the Observer they pin their hopes on the "forces of supply and demand" deciding the rents, and with the demand still exceeding the supply in the London area (which accounts for a quarter of the country's total population and is the area most affected by Clause 9) the future for them must appear quite rosy!

and that many others will suffer a similar fate. The controlled rents on these houses were based on pre-1914 figures and though they are to be decontrolled this will not take place for some time. First to be decontrolled are the so-called more expensive dwellings, which include large numbers of blocks of flats built in London between the wars and for which the "controlled rents" was based on 1939 rents which by comparison with the old houses were high. Just as the rents on dwellings built by Councils and private enterprise since the end of the last war are high in relation to these pre-war built (rent-controlled) houses. But they also cost three or four times as much to build! Now if the real purpose of the Rent Bill were to release dwellings by inducing people to make available rooms at present unoccupied, and for landlords to put their premises in a good state of repair, then all we can say is that the Government is going about it in a most curious way. The first 800,000 dwellings to be decontrolled will range from the luxury flats in Mayfair via the jerry-built breeze partitioned promiscuity of Hampstead to the columned monsters of Chalk Farm that have known more "gracious" living. The effect of decontrol as far as we can judge will be the eviction, through inability to pay the new rents demanded, of, say, some tenants in Hampstead, ultimate destination unknown, and a minor exodus from Mayfair to Hampstead. It is true that some accommodation will become available in Mayfair,

but it will obviously not ease the housing situation in St. Pancras. The unconverted columned monsters, which are presumably the kind of property at present occupied by aged couples and their deaf parrots, and which will disgorge their empty rooms under the incentives provided by the Rent Bill, will do so at a price.

lavatories and several coats of paint cannot be 'converted' on the strength of a Rent Bill which would allow the landlord to increase rents from, say, 7/6 a week to £1. It must either be subsidised so as to be let at a reasonable rent for those most in need, or it will be taken over by "iree enterprise" and let at rents beyond the purse of the average

The old couple who own the property or a long lease will very likely not have the capital needed to convert it into bed-sitters or flats. They will in any case be tempted to sell at an inflated price to property companies who will set about "converting", and by the time everybody concerned has had his rake-off, very ordinary accommodation (but with a very contemporary front door), will command very extraordinary rents. And this is the problem. The kind of property which badly needs repair, which needs bathrooms, proper washing accommodation, indoor

working-class family.

All the Rent Bill promises to do is to put more money into the pockets of landlords with relatively new property, needing only normal maintenance, raise the selling price of dilapidated property by giving the landlord power to evict controlled tenants; increase the number of higher priced dwellings and add to the number of overcrowded ones. Many young people who hitherto have had to live with their in-laws due to a housing shortage, will now have to share flats with others for Continued on p. 3

Ford's Workers Fight for Their **Shop Stewards**

SEVEN thousand workers at the Briggs Motor Bodies works at Dagenham put up a fight last week in defence of their shop stewards. Briggs is a subsidiary of Fords, and the whole of the Ford organisation in Essex-15,000 workers in the

embarrasses the union officials and infuriates the management, which would dearly like a showdown, but just can't afford it.

Referring to the shop stewards at Briggs, Mr. Herbert Jeffries, director of manufacture at Fords said: "Over the years they have built themselves into a position of power. Their grip was apparent long before Fords took over. You cannot end that quickly."

IN so far as one can gauge the public temper from the Press the country is as deeply divided over the Rent Bill as it was over the Suez crisis, and in spite of the fact that the three Liberal organs of the Press which were in the forefront of the anti-government campaign over Suez (News Chronicle, Manchester Guardian and The Observer) are editorially as one with the government in its determination to push through the Rent Bill as quickly as possible. Opposed to the Bill are those elderly people who live on pensions and hard-earned (and devalued) savings; working people whose earnings provide them with just the minimum, and some "middle-class" families who could well afford to pay more if only they didn't spend so much on private doctors and on sending their children to fee-paying schools! In favour of the Bill are those retired people who live on their income from property, inherited or acquired; the Property and Finance companies, the individual landlords, property speculators and the army of estate agents, solicitors and lesser leeches who live by the buying, sell-

T is true that as a result of "rent control" many dwellings have fallen into such a state of disrepair as to be unfit for human habitation,

Civil Service & 'Security'

IN recent years the word security has become endowed with an increasingly ominous ring; on reading it in the newspapers one's mind instantly springs to its associations with the Canadian spy trials, Mc-Carthyism and Klaus Fuchs. Even more recently there is the reminder of Burgess and Maclean who apparently dishonoured the Civil Service so much that it was found necessary to set up a Conference of Privy Councillors to look into the whole question of security proced-

ures.

The Conference, which commenced investigations in November 1955, and produced a report in March, 1956, has now had its main recommendations accepted by the government. At least two associations, the Institute of Professional Civil Servants and the Society of Civil Servants have expressed in no uncertain terms that they view the new procedure with alarm. And well they may, for some of the regulations are stated in such vague terms as to provide the possibility of dismissal for civil servants on the slightest possible suspicion.

and everyone. Quite clearly it gives rise to the abysmal prospect of guilt by association-whether the person concerned is aware of the "guilty association" or not.

There are other unpleasant recommendations also:

"That heads of departments and supervisory staff should be informed about and should report on anything which affects the security of their subordinates, including defects of character."

This means that all civil servants will be subject to continuous observation and report to the higher authorities, and should a head of department regard one of his men in a prejudiced way this could eventually lead to serious and unjust results for a man who may have done nothing but incur the dislike of his immediate senior, regardless of his ability or the supposed need for adequate security. Whilst anarchists have never been noticeably enthusiastic about civil servants or their duties, it must be remembered that they are also human beings who have just the same rights to personal freedom and justice as anyone else. The kind of legislation which leaves a man (who may have worked all his life in the same job) in a position where he may be dismissed with loss of pension and no likelihood of a comparable job, on grounds of being acquainted with a Communist or because someone does not like him. represents an even greater intrusion upon the freedom of the individual than usual-it is the kind of legislation which bred McCarthyism in America.

main plant-was brought to a standstill by the strike.

The dispute blew up because of the management's dismissal of shop steward John Macloughlin, who was sacked on the charge of the incitement of a strike two weeks ago contrary to the agreed procedure for. the settlement of disputes. He called the strike-a small one-because of the suspension from duty of one convenor and three shop stewards who left work without permission to attend a union meeting.

Permission had been refused because the secretary of the trade union side of the committee, Mr. C. A. W. Hallett, of the A.E.U. was understood to have told the Ford company that their presence was not required. The company would not, therefore, let them go: but they went all the same and suffered suspension for three days in consequence.

Mr. Macloughlin and a colleague organised two sympathy strikes in their support and were immediately suspended themselves and then Mac-Loughlin was dismissed.

Briggs came to a standstill on the demand of the workers for the immediate reinstatement of Macloughlin, and although the Amalgamated Engineering Union officials recommended, as always, the unconditional return to work so that negotiations could commence, the men refused to go until satisfied that Macloughlin was not going to be victimised. After nearly a week of idleness throughout the great plant, the management were forced to yield before the men's determination and they withdrew Macloughlin's dismissalleaving him suspended while discussions began with the TU officials.

You're right, Mr. Jeffries. In fact we can't see you ending it at all.

SOUTH AFRICAN TREASON TRIALS **Appeal Campaign**

A T the Central Hall, Westminster, London, last Monday a packed meeting gave a resounding public send-off to the campaign in this country for the appeal to raise funds to fight the South African Government's treason trials.

The appeal has been launched by Christian Action and has set its target at £10,000 for this country. £3,000 had been donated prior to the meeting, which raised a further £1,300 on the collection. The purposes of the fund are (a) to provide for legal defence of the accused; (b) to aid their families and dependants; and (c) to help ensure that the conscience of the world is alive to the issues at stake.

Christian Action is being supported in this campaign by the Movement for Colonial Freedom-a secular organisation with which anarchists might prefer to associate. We feel, however, that no feelings of anti-religious sectarianism should lead anarchists to fail to support the present campaign. The trials now being prepared by the Strydom Government are as blatant a piece of legalised trickery as the Reichstag trials of Nazi Germany. And they have the same aim-the crushing of all opposition to a totalitarian government. One hundred and fifty-six leading opponents of apartheid have been arrested and are now awaiting trial on charges of treason and sedition. In the South African police state to think even in liberal terms is to verge on the seditious; to act in human terms becomes treachery! In view of the close political, economic and cultural ties with this country, the South African Government, for all its bravado, is still likely to be susceptible to public opinion here. All those concerned with the civil liberties which are being cynically stamped out in the Union should raise their voices wherever possible all the time-and especially on the issue of these trials.

The definition of what puts a person's position in doubt is broad in the extreme:

"If he is, or recently has been, a member of the British Communist Party or (in such a way as to raise reasonable doubts about his reliability) is or has been recently sympathetic to communism, associated with Communists or Communist sympathisers, or is susceptible to Communist pressure."

The final phrase is so unrestricted in its possible application that it could be made to apply to anyone

But the men are going back to work as we go to press, only on the understanding that the union officials have 48 hours in which to come to an agreement with the management.

The workers at Fords and Briggs have built themselves a shopsteward organisation which really can reflect their interests, and they are showing their union officials and the management alike that they will stand no nonsense from either. This

PEOPLE AND IDEAS YORKSHIRE MINERS AT HOME

WANDERING round Yorkshire last autumn I went south from the woollen towns to Sheffield through the mining towns of the West Riding, through Pontefract, Featherstone and Hemsworth, to Barnsley in the centre of the South Yorkshire coalfield and Rotherham at its southern tip. This is the biggest coal-producing area in Britain, vielding one fifth of our coal, and the NCB is in the middle of its fifteen-year development plan for the area, spending £72 million in modernising and mechanising and sinking new shafts. Hardened to the appearance of industrial landscapes, you would not expect this area to be beautiful, but in its new prosperity and development, you might anticipate some of the vitality of a boom town, a raw but forwardlooking newness. What you do see is a chain of black and grimy towns and villages with an inner ring of back-to-back houses with communal privies around the older, often workedout pits with their derelict winding-gear, another of by-law houses with drab little corner shops and pubs, and an outer sprawl of local authority or Coal Board houses, and all around the mountainous spoil-tips or pit-heaps, old iron, weeds and rusty sidings. That the mine-workers, on whom our whole industrial society depends, should live in surroundings which despite the trim parlours and whitened doorsteps, are of the utmost squalor, is one of what used to be called the 'contradictions of capitalism', contradictions which most people would think had been vastly changed by ten years of nationalisation and higher wages. I had been looking in the Yorkshire cities* and in the different kinds of residential districts which house their populations, for a 'community'-something which is as hard to define as to find. Where you do find what is unmistakably a community in Yorkshire is

in these mining towns. It is a community which in the past fortified its members in adversity, but which to-day, through its very closeness and inwardness, deprives them from the wider choices and more liberating patterns of behaviour which are theoretically inaccesible. It is almost like tribal life in a primitive society, arising out of mutual aid and shared hardship, and establishing habits of living which while they may once have been the only thing making life possible, to-day restrict it in a rigid and narrow environment. A report recently published, Coal is our Life: an analysis of a Yorkshire mining community, (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1956), by Norman Dennis, Fernando Henriques and Clifford Slaughter, is the result of a two-year study of the town of 'Ashton' (recognisable as Featherstone) in which over 60% of the male population work in the colliery. The town's whole history has been an alternation of depressions with periods of prosperity, and in 1933 57% of the mineworkers were unemployed. (The figures were not so high in Yorkshire as in South Wales and Durham because of the proximity of the West Riding industries). The authors note the intense solidarity felt among the colliers, and declare that it is common memories of past struggles which have bound them into such a tightly-knit community.

Point of View, is borne out by the authors of this book. They remark that although "among miners there have been at one time or another, proposals for workers' control of the mining industry". the great majority of men in the pits "had and have no set of definite ideas for the actual changes which they would like to see in the industry". After discussing the alterations in the miner's working life since pre-war days, his better physical conditions of life, though they are still worse than in any other industry, his complete security of employment (in Yorkshire) and his much higher monetary rewards, they conclude:

"Does all this mean that the miner has experienced a basic change in his status and rôle in the society, a change which goes with a transformation of the rela-11 n between the miner and his work? In fact no such basic change has occurred. In the first place the actual changes have been absorbed into the miners' traditional ideology rather than transformed it. Secondly, changes within the mining industry, and the quantative improvement of the miners' position in relation to other workers, have been unaccompanied by any profound modifications in the general economic framework of which mining is a part, or of the social structure within which miners exist. Most miners know, for example, that the first charge on the industry's profits is compensation to the old colliery companies. They know that representatives of those companies were among the many nonworkers appointed to the executive and administrative staff of the nationalised industry. They saw no change in the local management of the mines when nationalisation took place. In all these ways they see themselves as opposed to the same forces as before nationalisation.

round the pub, the working-men's club and the bookies office. (There are five ready-money betting offices in Ashton whose population is less than 14,000). The children of Ashton grow into a set of attitudes and ideas which very consciously exclude women from the activities and permitted liberties of the male group, "which can be said to constitute a type of secret society".

"Institutionalised leisure activities are predominantly for males, and there is virtual and definite exclusion of women from any social activities. If the form of leisure activity is a consequence of mining, so is its content. We have suggested that the essentially frivilous character of leisure in Ashton is closely related to the insecurity, both physical and Social, produced in the past and present by coalmining as an occupation in Britain.

"The social life of Ashton creates groupings which cut across the individual family rather than demanding from it a simple conformity. In particular the sharp cultural division between the sexes, and the attitudes consequent upon it, cut right across the community and produce tension within the family itself. The demands made on behaviour by this division are in conflict with the demands of the life of the family as a unit." Very few Ashton children go to the grammar school, and "very few develop interests broader than those of their parents". Boys in Ashton are destined to be miners and girls to be miners' wives. "Their personalities must conform to the requirements of their rôles in society". Old habits in rearing children die hard in Ashton. Rubber comforters or 'dummies' are still widely used, often to the age of four or five. In the whole of the West Riding there are only four birth control clinics, run by voluntary bodies. The nearest to Ashton is seven miles away. Induced miscarriages and post-natal troubles are, declare the authors, "largely responsible for the obvious physical decline in married women". In this connection they des-

FREEDOM

cribe two sisters, Jean and Mary. Jean is not very intelligent but has a talent for entertainment and 'letting herself go' in company, and Mary is thoughtful with a bright and charming personality.

"Now these two women are a good illustration of the destiny of women in this male-dominated community, for despite their varying potentialities they are both being, moulded to the same shape. This statement is true physically as well as in terms of personality. One notes in Ashton, as in other mining areas, the rapid decline in physical beauty among the younger married women. By the late twenties they are often flat-chested, all colour and freshness have left their faces, and they seem to be hardly concerned at all with their physical attractiveness . . .

"When a woman does express any interest in politics or other general topic she speaks rather apologetically, and can be prepared for her husband to tell her not to interrupt intelligent conversation -'What the hell do you know about it?'.'

THERE is plenty of money nowadays in Ashton, except among the old or disabled. Much of it is spent by the men in gambling, 'sprees' and outings, and the women's increased budget, which has not kept pace with her husband's, is not spent to advantage. "... fresh fruit and vegetables are often neglected when preserved foods, much more expensive, are bought. This is due of course, like the persistence of traditional leisure pursuits to the fact that the advance of the miners has been largely confined to the wage packet, and the increased amount is utilised according to a way of life founded on the old level of wages". It is this kind of thing of course that infuriates the middle-class newspaper readers, whose different spending habits are also based on a long-established pattern. They ignore many factors; among Continued on p. 3

*See FREEDOM 3/11/56 (Hull), 17/11/56 (Leeds and York), 24/11/56 (Sheffield).

BOOKSHOP FREEDOM OPEN DAILY

THEY notice too, the mineworker's deeply rooted sense of being undervalued by the outside world. "Passengers on buses going through Ashton will invariably comment on its drabness, and the place is often quoted as an example of the backwardness of the mining area. In conversation with strangers, men and women of Ashton will defend their town almost before it comes under attack". Ferdynand Zweig commented the same thing in his Men in the Pits:

"Ask a man from a colliery village who is not a miner whether he is a miner, and you would get the characteristic answer, 'Oh, no,' in a tone of indignation, as if you had offended him. Even now the 'pitman' is recognised as somebody who could not do better. He was, and as a matter of fact still is, looked down on, in spite of all the Government and Press propaganda to the contrary". Of the miner at work, and his relations with the NCB and the NUM, much that was said in Dr. Zweig's book, and in the Acton Society report The Worker's

These conclusions reflect those of other disinterested observers of the mining scene, and indeed that of other nationalised industries, and they illustrate, with great clarity, the irrelevance of the Labour Party panacea of nationalisation, from the worker's standpoint. To remedy his often inchoate resentments and frustrations a much more radical transformation of the structure of the industry is required, but it won't begin to come until he can formulate his demands.

THE social and family life of Ashton

International Anarchist Centre in London (Anarchist Journals please copy)

A RISING out of the current correspondence in FREEDOM and discussions in London, an International Anarchist Centre has been founded on the initiative of a small group of comrades.

couraging and helping each other in a wide variety of functions and enterprises, laying the foundations for a libertarian world.

Its beginnings must, however, be modest. Immediate tasks are:

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is dominated by the pit and the three-shift system of working. It is a male society and its leisure is centred

Its aims are ambitious: the creation of a world-wide network of anarchist groups and individuals en-

American Viewpoint on the ANARCHIST INTERNATIONAL

HAVE just received the issue of FREEDOM of December 29, 1956, and read an article by Comrade G.B. on the subject of an Anarchist International. I find myself in complete disagreement with that comrade's views.

There are several minor points in the article. G.B. feels that the Bulgarian Anarchist Union in Exile does not represent the bulk of exiled Bulgarian Anarchists. I' don't know myself, but it seems to me that if this were true some protest would have been made to the Commission for International Anarchist Relations (CRIA) long before this. Until this is done, I will have to suppose that the comrades of the Union do represent the exiled Bulgarians.

Comrade G.B. also says that he disagrees with the first four points of the Bulgarian appeal, although he doesn't say why. Therefore I cannot argue the

However, the main point of the article

is G.B.'s attack on the idea of forming

an international organization at this time.

I agree with him that steps must be taken

point with him.

But just as I was isolated, groups can be isolated and national federations can be isolated. One of the main reasons for the failure of social revolutions has been the ease with which international reaction has been able to isolate them and then destroy them at its leisure. Our work must be co-ordinated internationally, as well as nationally and locally. Reaction is organized on an international scale. It's just common sense that we must also be organized internationally in order to be able to combat it effectively.

It seems incredible that we Anarchists should still have to argue this matter of organization, when the lack of organization has given such tragic fruit time after time in the past. When Flores Magon, Librado Rivera and others were making desperate appeals to the solidarity of their comrades in the United States for the Anarchist fighters in the Mexican Revolution, said comrades in this country quibbled about the purity of Magon's Anarchism. They decided that he wasn't really an Anarchist (now he is internationally recognized as one of the greatest Anarchist figures of all time) since he advocated organization and they did nothing. They must bear some of the responsibility for the failure of that revolution. Again they quibbled during the Spanish Revolution and again they did nothing. When Malatesta came to this country expressing the need for organization, he met such bitter opposition that one "comrade" shot at him while he was making a public speech.* Within the last year we saw the Hungarian Revolution fail due to the lack of international solidarity.† Perhaps our Bulgarian comrades realize that the same thing would happen to them if they revolted to-morrow, and therefore feel more strongly the need for an international organization to stimulate that solidarity than the Comrade G.B. does.

ing from the scant financial support its bulletin has been receiving I don't believe that the bulk of our comrades feel that it is, either. The CRIA performs a very necessary function, but it is only one of many functions an Anarchis International should perform. To say that the CRIA is enough of an organization for the international movement is like saying that the body can function on the liver alone, dispensing with the stomach, heart and other organs.

And to cap it all, Comrade G.B. feels that we will be handicapped in our propaganda among the people if we have an international organization. I suppose that we are also handicapped by national organizations? And local organizations? But this line of reasoning leads to absurdity and chaos. Isn't Anarchism "the highest expression of order"?

It seems much more likely to be that

1. To establish direct contact with anarchist groups, journals, communities and interested individuals in all possible countries.

- 2. To collect information from these sources and make it readily available to the movement in this country and abroad.
- 3. To encourage the formation of similar groups in all countries, all to be in direct contact with each other.
- 4. To stress ideas which unite us, rather than to aggravate differences.

To further these aims, we ask all journals abroad to reproduce this statement, to establish contact themselves and encourage responsible groups and individuals in their countries to do likewise. It would greatly help if correspondents could indicate whether they are able to correspond or receive material in languages other than their own.

The I.A.C.'s obvious need is for capable translators. We therefore ask all comrades with knowledge of languages to contact us and let us know what their abilities are and what time they have to give to this work. In this way we shall be able to build up a translation service which will be if immense value to the movement.

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to avoid centralization and the dictatorship of a bureau, but is the mere fear of such a thing going to stop us from organizing for more effective action? Any organization can be abused, no matter how federalistic its structure may be if its membership does not stay informed and awake, but is the mere possibility of such abuse a reason for never organizing, for vegetating in isolation? I was isolated in a small town in Ohio for some years before the Libertarian League was formed, and I know what it means to be isolated. My radius of action was limited to a single town, or rather to a handful of friends. The small scale on which I was forced to work discouraged me until I found myself doing nothing. Then the LL was formed. I came into contact with comrades all over the country, I began to travel, make speeches and write for Views and Comments, the organ of the LL. In a word, I began to do something, having regained my perspective.

sent time. I say that it isn't, and judg-

people will be skeptical of our ideas if they see that we aren't even capable of organizing our own movement, much less society at large!

New York, Jan. WILLIAM ROSE.

[*We suspect that our correspondent relies on Max Nomad for his information though we have not had an opportunity of consulting "Rebels & Renegades" at the time of writing. The facts of this incident are given by Armando Bughi in his biography of Malatesta (New York 1933). He points out that the "antiorganizer" G. Ciancabilla who, Nomad declares, fired on Malatesta was not in fact present at the meeting in question. And Malatesta himself never placed any political interpretation on the attentat.-EDITORS].

[†Really this is a gross simplification of the problem, and certainly the lack of international solidarity cannot be explained because the anarchists outside Hungary were not organized. After all, there were a great number of highly organized organizations sympatheticfor one reason or another-with the Comrade G.B. says that the CRIA is Hungarian rebels who were nevertheless enough of an organization for the pre- unable to do very much to help.-EDITORS].

All correspondence to: INTERNATIONAL ANARCHIST CENTRE, c/o Freedom Press, 27 Red Lion Street, London, W.C.1. England.

SOCIAL FOR IAC

The International Anarchist Centre will need funds for its activities. All work will of course be voluntary, but postage and stationery cost money.

The I.A.C. will therefore hold a fund-raising social evening in conjunction with the Malatesta Club on Saturday, 23rd February, from 7-11 p.m. Admission 2/6, including refreshments. Entertainment will be laid on.



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The Landlord's Bill F Continued from p.)

economic reasons (apart from the ever-present housing shortage, which in fact no one denies. All we are told is that if all available accommodation were released then we would have "more houseroom per head than before the war" . . . poor consolation when we think back to the vast slums in all our major cities).

THE surprisingly dogmatic attitude adopted by the Liberal Press is really not surprising at all. The Liberals of to-day pose as the champions of freedom; they take up their stand between the privileged society of the Tories on the one hand and the mediocre, colourless, initiativedenying State-controlled society of the Social Democrats. One has only to read the title of Mr. Joe Grimond's recent article in the News Chronicle: "You'd think it was a Crime to Get On" to realise what kind of free-for-all tooth-and-claw struggle, what kind of "freedom", the liberals stand for. And in the matter of a roof over one's head, even that, for the self-declared liberal Observer is not a right but a privilege:

tackled, and is now only forcing measures through in the teeth of widespread opposition, relying entirely on its voting majority.

Perhaps it is that the Labour Party's alternative-of the local authorities taking over ownership of rent-controlled houses-is considered equally impracticable. This alternative-declares the News Chronicle indignantly—would cost the Exchequer at a moderate estimate £6,000 million". An awful lot of money, though let us not forget that this country manages to find a fifth of that sum every year-and has been doing so for the past fifteen years — for Defence Expenditure alone!

BUT even that is not the basic issue. At the root of the social problem is money as the coin of privilege and power. It is not a question of its redistribution, as the

Letter from France

THE STREAM OF WORDS

and one incentives to regain the support of the socially discontented class.

Incidentally, a particular tendency shows itself in the trade-union movement parallel to the phenomenon discernible in certain of the satellite countries and to "Operation Nenni" in Italy. It concerns non-Communist elements who are trying, to escape from the strict control of the party but who remain in fact tied to the general Soviet policy. Le Brun, one of the confederal secretaries of the CGT, and with him men like Ehni, secretary of the Book Federation, take a position against Russian intervention in Hungary although they defend adherence to the CGT and look favourably on Soviet manœuvres in non-Communist spheres.

The possibilities that working-class movements of protest against Red Army repression in Hungary offered were immense. They are in danger of being wasted in default of an authentic working-class thought and purpose. The majority of non-Communist trade-union leaders are content to issue manifestos or to sign orders of the day. Their appeals to UNO, the United States, and "world opinion" have perhaps had the result of quieting their consciences; but it is doubtful whether they had any effect on Soviet foreign policy, which is determined by realities and by cynics who take scant account of sentimental considerations. One working-class weapon that was available for use could injure the Russian dictatorship: the boycott of all products of Soviet origin. It was the immediate reply that the dockers of Amsterdam and Rotterdam had made. It was a countersign essentially trade union in character, able to be controlled and applied by the workers without regard to the calculations of governmental or imperialist order. The powerful Transportation International declared itself in favour of putting it into operation. The International Confederation of Christian Trade Unions and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions were agreed in principle. It seemed possible to set going in the whole world, with visible results that would give an opportunity for constant propaganda, a powerful and healthy movement. But that was reckoning without the vast trade-union bureaucracy, which contented itself with principles and left their practical application until later-until it is too late. Not one national confederation, "Force Ouvrière" no more than the CFTC, led a campaign to spread the countersign, to explain it and give it practical conclusions, or to mobilize the different corporations. No doubt the stream of words was enough for clear consciences, antitotalitarian in words, but defenceless against the sometimes attractive realities of relations with those same régimes.

For the moment nothing has been effectively severed; but the days pass and the Hungarian workers' councils are broken by cold, hunger, and repression while the resistance is entrenching itself in marshy or mountainous regions, whereas the working-class world that calls itself, and wants to be, free, bathes in useless tears or breathes the pure oxygen of principles.

It was necessary for groups to establish themselves, for the Trade Union Congress to issue a manifesto, for local committees to be formed to keep the working-class public informd so that they could understand that beyond the particularisms of different groups a great work of effective solidarity could-and can yet-be undertaken.

This new insecurity of tenure has aroused more middle-class resentment than the prospect of higher rents. But landlords, surely, have a right to choose their tenants and to free their property for the highest bidder.

Rent control is sometimes vaguely regarded as part of the 'social security' provided by the Welfare State, but in fact it originated purely as an emergency measure during the First World War.

Liberals seem to think :

Too many children still start with no stake in the country. Too many begin without capital, without a home belonging to their family-(Jo Grimond in the News Chronicle).

Money in a decentralised society. in which production is determined by joint consulation between producer and consumer on the basis of needs, might function as a means of exchange — allowing that choice which a system of rationing does not, and so long as it is available to no man for the exploitation of the labour of another. But to-day it is the measure of all things. Everything from Sex to Security, from Labour to Land is converted to money values. Grimond of course is right when he protests that too many children start life "without a stake in the country". He is wrong when he seems to think that what we need is capital. What we need is to know that the fields on which our food is grown, and the mineral wealth beneath are the common heritage; that the factory in which are produced the things we need does not function according to the whim of an industrialist any more than our ability to contribute to the common pool depends on an accommodating boss. (The much vaunted right of the worker to "withhold his labour" far from being the slogan of a free man is the confession of a wage slave; just as to "sell one's labour" is no less of a humiliation than that of the street girl who sells her body). It is equally ironical that few building workers ever own one of the houses or flats they have helped to build! But fundamentally it is not ownership so much as to be able to feel that every person has a right to a roof over his head and that no one has the power to deprive him of that right or that particular roof. To-day man is not free. He works in another man's factory and is subject to his wishes and his rules; he lives in another man's house and is tolerated so long as he can pay the rent and is prepared to obey the landlord's rules (no cats, no women, no wireless, no cooking in the room, etc.). He uses the "public" highway but is obstructing—the footpath if he stops to tie up his shoe lace, and the road if he stops his car by the kerb-if such be the considered opinion of the officer of the Law. And when he wanders through the countryside he is more likely than not trespassing on someone's Private Property.

munists are falling to pieces: the National Committee of Writers, the Peace Movement, and the Friends of the USSR. If mental confusion is still great, one thing at least is obvious to those who have a brain capable of thinking: the Soviet intervention in Hungary cannot, under any pretext, be justified.

DESPITE the torrent of propaganda

happen and endure. There is the only

sure ally of trade-unionism: in the elo-

quence of realities. It is vain for the

Communist secretary of the CGT,

Benoit-Frachon, to stomp the country

repeating that his organization is open

to all and that each affiliated body has

the absolute right to think and expound

what it pleases about the recent events

in Hungary: intellectuals can multiply

subtle interpretations about the hidden

nature of the Budapest revolution, but

nothing at the moment can hide the im-

posture of the French Communist party

and its branches. In most of the indus-

trial ballots the Communist CGT lost

from 10 to 30 per cent, of its votes to

the free unions, whether Christian, auto-

nomous, or affiliated to "Force Ouvrière".

The movements directed by the Com-

and partisan interpretations events

The spontaneous reaction had to be fierce and immediate for its effects to become manifest in the present circumstances of French social and political life. The Socialist party in power could hardly exploit the Hungarian tragedy since it had itself initiated the bombing of Egyptian bases, under pretexts as different as they were contradictory, and it had banked on Russian difficulties in the countries of eastern Europe to feel safe from any Soviet reply. Neither "Force Ouvrière" nor the CFTC (a Christian union) has taken up a categorical position on the repression in Algeria or the Suez adventure, and-either voluntarily or through timidity-neither one nor the other has led an earnest campaign to denounce the sad rôle of Thorez's party and its union subsidiary.

However, at the congress of the powerful Federation of Education, autonomous since the split of 1947, a clear majority redeemed themselves by condemning Russian repression, and the leaders have had to count only on their faithful followers, losing the hesitant and even their sympathizers. In the Book Federation, which stayed in the CGT, it has taken all the manœuvrability of the directors to prevent a split; what is more, the internal storm has not been calmed, and some provincial sections have gone over to "Force Ouvrière", although a strong current shows itself in favour of autonomy. Different sections of the CGT have shown their discontent with the position taken by their confederation, since some federations or national unions are in revolt against the attitude of their leaders. It is probable that if the free unions take up a clear position on most of the crucial problems and abandon their union "patriotism" to unite their efforts, the moral and material power of the CGT would collapse. But there is room to consider the pusillanimity of the two free confederations, their fear of initiative, and their lack of boldness while the Communist machine remains almost intact, and the French economic situation, which can only be aggravated by the consequences of the Suez affair, is going to give this machine a thousand

THE most striking phenomenon, for the

foreigner in particular, is the absence of any public opinion about the war in Algeria and the Suez adventure. No doubt the fact that the Socialist Party is in power removes an important part of the usual opposition movement. No doubt the fact that it is the Communist party that protests most clearly against colonialism and imperialism prevents a number of the discontented from making their voices heard. Hungarian excuses for the ones, Algerian or Near East excuses for the others mean that not one objective analysis is attempted in any newspaper; and only the reading of a thousand and one publications, from the biggest to the smallest, would give the ordinary citizen any chance of seeing things clearly. As he cannot devote himself to this exercise, and as he does not read foreign papers, he has a feeling that falsehood reigns, but he knows neither whether nor how to intervene.

Even while the Algerian affair seems to be approaching its climax and various personalities-Raymond Aron, Maurice Allais, indeed even the moderate leader Antoine Pinay-are expressing the opinion that sooner or later an Algerian State will come into being; even while cries of protest are raised in the heart of the Socialist party-André Philip has been clear and courageous in denouncing the immoral and retrograde policy of his own party-these healthy reactions have not made any direct impression on public opinion because there is no powerful spokesman or organized popular support to make them known.

LIBERAL "London Doctor" contributed a rather different joint of view in the correspondence columns of the Manchester Guardian however:

It has become traditional during this century for the provision of the basic essentials of life such as health services. education, employment, housing (and some would add food) to be the responsibility of the community: and whenever any of these are in short supply it is almost axiomatic that their distribution must be controlled. So it is that our way of life is an improvement on that of the jungle. Most of us are proud that "rationing by the purse" is opposed in principle even by the present Government.

It is, therefore, extremely puzzling that you should so wholeheartedly support Clause 9 of the Rent Bill. Here is a commodity which, like health and the Post Office, should probably be in the hands of the community for all time.

Though "London Doctor" does not distinguish between the "community" and the "State" (a serious oversight in his diagnosis, which explains his puzzlement!) his case is unanswerable if one assumes the abolition of private property. And the Manchester Guardian in its reply is quick to point out that "there is a case (as we have said), for public ownership of rented houses . . . But the question is how best to secure those objects under private ownership." We do not know whether it is by choice, or because of some gnawing complex which forces the majority of thinking people to express themselves as "realists", but the fact remains that apart from the anarchists and a few other voices in the wilderness, everybody, critics and supporters alike, simply follow-the-leader in their thinking. The question may well be for the government to seek to secure those objects "under private ownership" but if "there is a case for public ownership" why not discuss that case rather than the one for "private ownership", which has been discussed for years on end and which no government has

Yorkshire Miners

And we see, too, those principally responsible for the French crisis trying to revive the old anti-American slogans and denouncing the whole world for not admitting their own faults.

But the facts are there; and they are more solid than the quibbles of politicians.

S. PARANE.

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FREE men can redress a wrong by discussion, by reason and through persuasion. Unfree men to achieve their freedom must resist all the way, whatever the consequences. The Rent Bill will in due course become law in spite of the Labour Party's eloquence and mock indignation. More effective than parliamentary language will be the extent of the resistance to the landlord's eviction notices or, what amounts to the same thing, any exhorbitant rent increases. We hope that when the time comes many fellow victims will join us in barricading themselves within their four walls.

United we can defeat the landlords. Divided, many of us will end up on a bench on the Embankment!

Continued from p. 2

them the hazards of a miner's life, the fact that for him there is no promotion and until recently no alternative employment, and that he has generations of insecurity, poverty and ostracism behind him. The miners have long and bitter memories. In Ashton they still recall the lockout of 1898 (when troops were brought in and two men shot dead and 16 injured). A 17-year-old youth when interviewed hazily grouped together the years of unemployment, the shooting of the two men, and the General Strike, in "the days before the war". And the authors of Coal is Our Life comment that, "it does, of course, fit in with the general experience of the place of the miner in our social life".

Only radical changes are going to alter the miner's attitude to the structure of his industry, but one wonders how long it is going to take his wife to make her demands felt, and impose new habits in the family and the home. Perhaps the fourpenny magazines, if only they could lay off the royal families of Britain and Monaco for a while, will do the trick.

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FREEDOM

In Lighter Vein The Anarchist Cup Final

TF you think this article has anything to do with football you're wrong. This particular cup final was played out at the Bishopsgate Institute between the debating teams from the anarchist Malatesta Club and the Conservative Trade Union Advisory Council. The subject of the debate was "That this house today prefers Caesar to Cleopatra."

4

Up stands the Tory speaker to deliver an eloquent plea that Britain to-day in these hard times needs a man like Caesar to set things right. Thereby in one lash of his eloquent tongue, perhaps without knowing it himself, he extolled all the virtues of Caesar and his Imperial administration as a perfect example of what Britain should be like.

Had Macmillan heard him he would have disowned him on the spot. One point to the anarchists. The speaker concluded his speech with a quotation from Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" suggesting the virtues of Caesar, etc., etc., and the elements so mixed in him that nature might stand up and say to all the world. "This was a man". Applause from all the audience. Very well one might say, except for the fact that this bit of whitewashing was really Anthony's for his conspirator Brutus. As nobody was interested in authenticity this was not discovered until the end of the meeting. The Anarchist opponent made no bones about Caesar being a dictator and a politician even if he did build a couple of roads here and there. He went on to say that women in control to-day might make for greater happiness all round, illuminating this suggestion by describing the first Elizabethan period, the second Elizabethan period, as well as throwing in Boadicea, Marie Antoinette, and only just leaving out Annie Oakley and Calamity Jane. What a night for the Suffragettes. Besides, the speaker concluded, Cleopatra was a woman, and as far as he was concerned, a woman was better than a man for some purposes he had in mind. Great applause. The supporting Tory speaker made a modern parable out of the whole business. Nasser became Cleopatra, and Caesar became Anthony Eden, so the whole issue became confused, even if

you had your wits about you, which many were reluctant to have. One didn't quite know whose canal was being blocked, Egypt's or Cleopatra's. The applause that greeted her concluding remarks were mixed with audible sighs of relief.

The supporting anarchist speaker infused the gathering with a few pertinent facts and observations, but as facts were out of place here she concluded that as a woman, for some purposes she preferred Caesar, but at the same time she recognised that it all boiled down to Liberty versus Dictatorship and everyone knew where she stood on that issue.

The floor during discussion threw up interesting observations. One old fellow opened the discussion by saying nothing that had anything to do with either the debate, the speakers, or even the place, town or country that the debate was taking place in. In fact his statements could best be described as out of this world. One anarchist supporter stated baldly that the only reason he would vote for Cleopatra was because Cleopatra had a cure for baldness (according to Shaw's play). No finer crop of ginger hair graced the dome of this particular voter. One other supporter of the anarchist case bluntly reminded the audience that Caesar was nothing but a dirty old man, seducing the young and virginal Cleopatra right between the hands of the Sphinx.

War Workers' Dilemma?

THE developments in modern war

weapons, apart from the threat to human life, is already having its economic effects on those sections of workers involved in the production of old style equipment.

There is 'widespread fear' in the trade unions that the Government's decision to reduce defence expenditure will create redundancy among the 40,000 workers employed in Royal Ordnance factories throughout the country.

Last week we witnessed the sad spectacle of ordnance workers at the factory Motley, Yorkshire "expressing full support to all ordnance shop stewards in the fight to keep all Government factories in full employment and condemning any attempt by the Government to close the factories". A speaker from Dalmuir, Scotland, told the meeting that 1,000 employees are threatened with unemployment. Dalmuir is a tank factory and according to a Government statement it will have to be closed unless further orders for tanks are received. We think it is a sad spectacle when workers demand the continuation of tank production, not because we are insensitive to the plight of men likely to be thrown out of work-and thus under capitalism being deprived of a living-but because the only solution which appears to them feasible is the continued production of destructive weapons.

explain that depressions and unemployment are a necessary part of a capitalist economy, and that as long as armaments are being produced a use must be found for them which means war, if only in the relatively remote Middle East. But it is becoming more and more obvious with the replacement of obsolete weapons and with more refined instruments of destruction, that unemployment cannot be solved in the old way by turning factories over to armaments production. Although as long as local skirmishes continue all over the world there will still be a market for old fashioned weapons; but this will only be on a small scale. Now the problem of keeping men in jobs previously employed in war production will have to be met in a new way. Is it too much to hope the obvious way out is to put men to constructive work, building houses and schools and hospitals, instead of producing things which will destroy them?

opment of the hydrogen bomb and of atomic missiles, "until international agreement has been reached for the ending of atomic tests or for the abolition of atomic weapons" (Manchester Guardian 31/1/57).

Therefore we find the unhappy situation where the ordnance factory workers are demanding the retention of these factories; the T.U.C. and Labour Party agitating for a cut in the call-up, but supporting the development of nuclear weapons. If all these organisations were genuinely interested in the welfare of the workers they would be fighting for the end of capitalism and war.

But the anarchists are considered utopian when they suggest that it needs a social revolution to stop the trend towards war, and only a complete change in the world's economic structure will prevent the fear of unemployment.

It was forgotten that Cleo was shrewd enough to know that not to give in to Caesar would be a fate worse than death, so she gave in and who can blame her?

The judges of the debate were unanimous that the Anarchists had won not only the debate but a cup and a fountain pen for each of the speakers. When a vote was called all the anarchist hands moved upwards. Principles were not for these occasions.

Anarchists being human the post mortem proceeded surrounded on all sides by glasses of beer, smiles and beason-like countenances flushed with Victory and momentary Power, a little mixed, one must admit with the anxiety that pleasure sometimes produces. Some were sorry for the losers, some lamented that there weren't enough Tories to make it a good fight. The speakers had a conscience about taking the cup and pens. There was a feeling of uneasiness. Christ . . . what would happen if we ever won an election? S.F.

The consequences of armaments production and the uses to which armaments are put are not really considered either by the T.U. leaders who are concerned with keeping jobs, and the workers 'happy', or by the rank and file who are primarily interested in work. Thus arises the inevitable conflict of meeting 'practical' problems (in this case the important issue of livelihood), and what is right and practical from an anarchist standpoint.

Adding to the chaos is the recent demand made by the T.U.C. for a cut in the call-up as a stage in the process of ending conscription. Logically it follows that still more men will be in need of jobs and if present trends continue what will be done with men released from military service?

We are not suggesting that military service should continue (or should ever have started), on the contrary we think the T.U.C. is belated in its demands, considering the 'experts' are in favour of a new approach to defence, but we are interested in knowing what is planned for the civilian rehabilitation of exservicemen in conjunction with the threatened unemployment of so many men at home.

The Labour Party supports the demand of the T.U.C., but in case anyone thought that these two organisations had become pacifist, George Brown, at a meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party, "is understood to have argued" that Britain should persist in the devel-

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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In propagating anarchism as a practical solution to these problems one feels impotent when trying to

Diary of the Recent

Barcelona Student Agitation

The following information was printed in Solidaridad Obrera, organ of the Spanish National Confederation of Labour (C.N.T.) in exile, upon receipt from two Spanish students' underground unions, the National Union of Spanish Students and the National Federation of Catalonian Students, which recently established a permanent delegation in France:

action.

R ECENT reports confirm a renewal of the agitation among University students in Barcelona. This time it has taken the form of student demonstrations for the freedom of Hungary and

strations, which the Governor announces will be prevented henceforth by police

TUESDAY, OCT. 30: The students of the Medical School refused to attend classes and staged a demonstration inside of the school buildings. Armoured jeeps of the Police Department patrolled the streets around the University, the Clinical Hospital (seat of the Medical School), and the Industrial School. Demonstrations took place in all of the schools, with clashes between the liberal students and the Falangists.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 31: In the morning, there was an impromptu mass meeting in the Plaza de la Universidad. Speakers demanded freedom of press and progaganda, relating this to demands for the freedom of Hungary. Falangist students who attempted to speak against the students' strike of solidarity with Hungary, were heckled so badly that they were unable to continue. No one attended classes. Slogans were shouted in the corridors-"For freedom of organization," "Viva Catalunya," "Down with all dictatorships." In the afternoon there was a minor riot in the School of Economic Sciences.

there would be no school until the following Monday, to give time for the excitement to die down.

MONDAY, Nov. 5: Instead of the calm hoped for by the authorities, the students continued their demonstrations of protest. Early in the day a cordon of police surrounded the University. Two cops were severely beaten when they tried to enter the premises. At noon several dozen policemen tried unsuccessfully to get into the building.

The Civil Governor of the Province-Felipe Acedo in person-appeared at the University and was pelted with missiles thrown from the windows by the students. There were shouted insults against the Falange, against the S.E.U., and against the Civil Governor who finally lost his temper and sent for police reinforcements. After some further fighting inside of the University, the students took to the streets and organised a demonstration. The marchers were attacked by the police and more than forty students were arrested and dragged away. The remaining students, to the number of over 2,000 continued the street demonstration. TUESDAY, Nov. 6: The University buildings continue to be surrounded by police. Student meetings continued to be held inside demanding dissolution of the S.E.U., and release of those students under detention. At eleven, a demonstration was organized to march on Police Headquarters. Once again, the armed police attacked the demonstrators and three persons were wounded. The students withdrew into the University buildings, several further arrests having been made.

SLOUGH

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by PHILIP SANSOM

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against dictatorship in general. The demonstrations ran into the violent opposition of Franco's police as well as Falange and the S.E.U. (Sindicato Español Universitario-Spanish University Syndicate-a subsidiary of the Falange, membership in which is obligatory to all Spanish students). More than fifty students are known to have been detained.

The following is a run-down of recent happenings in Barcelona:

MONDAY, OCT. 29: The first news from Hungary stirred great public enthusiasm. There were numerous commentaries on the heroism of the Hungarian people, the criminal actions of the Russian armies and the similar actions of the French régime which is also a dictatorship built on the violent, bloody repression of the people's liberties. Leaflets were circulated in the University expressing solidarity with the embattled Hungarian students and calling for public demonstrations in their support. The Civil Governor of Barcelona, Felipe Acedo Colunga, summoned Señor Vigil -University District Chief of the SE.U. to his office, and accused him of responsibility for the disturbances and demon-

Taking advantage of the fact that Thursday would be a holiday, the Rector of the University announced that

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WEDNESDAY, NOV. 7: The University of Barcelona was ordered closed until further notice.

> (from "Views & Comments", N.York, January.)

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