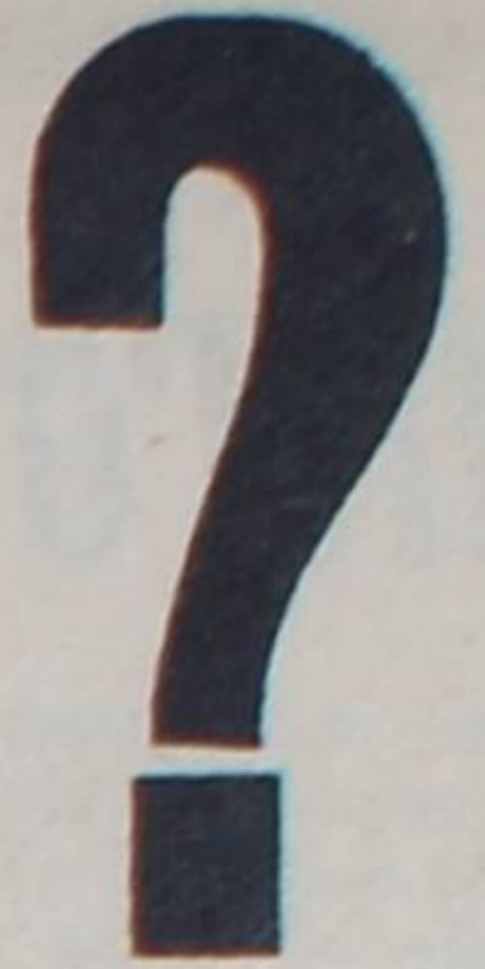


FREEDOM

JANUARY 5 1963 Vol 24 No 1

'Government is actually the worst failure of civilised man.'

H. L. MENCKEN



THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY - 4d.



...AND AS A RESULT OF MY EXTENSIVE AND EXPENSIVE EDUCATION AND OF MY MANY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN POLITICS BOTH IN OFFICE AND OUT I THINK I CAN NOW SAY, WITHOUT HESITATION OR FEAR OF CONTRADICTION THAT I HAVE AT LAST BEEN FORCED TO COME TO THE INESCAPABLE CONCLUSION THAT THE CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT IS NOT ALWAYS QUITE HONEST!

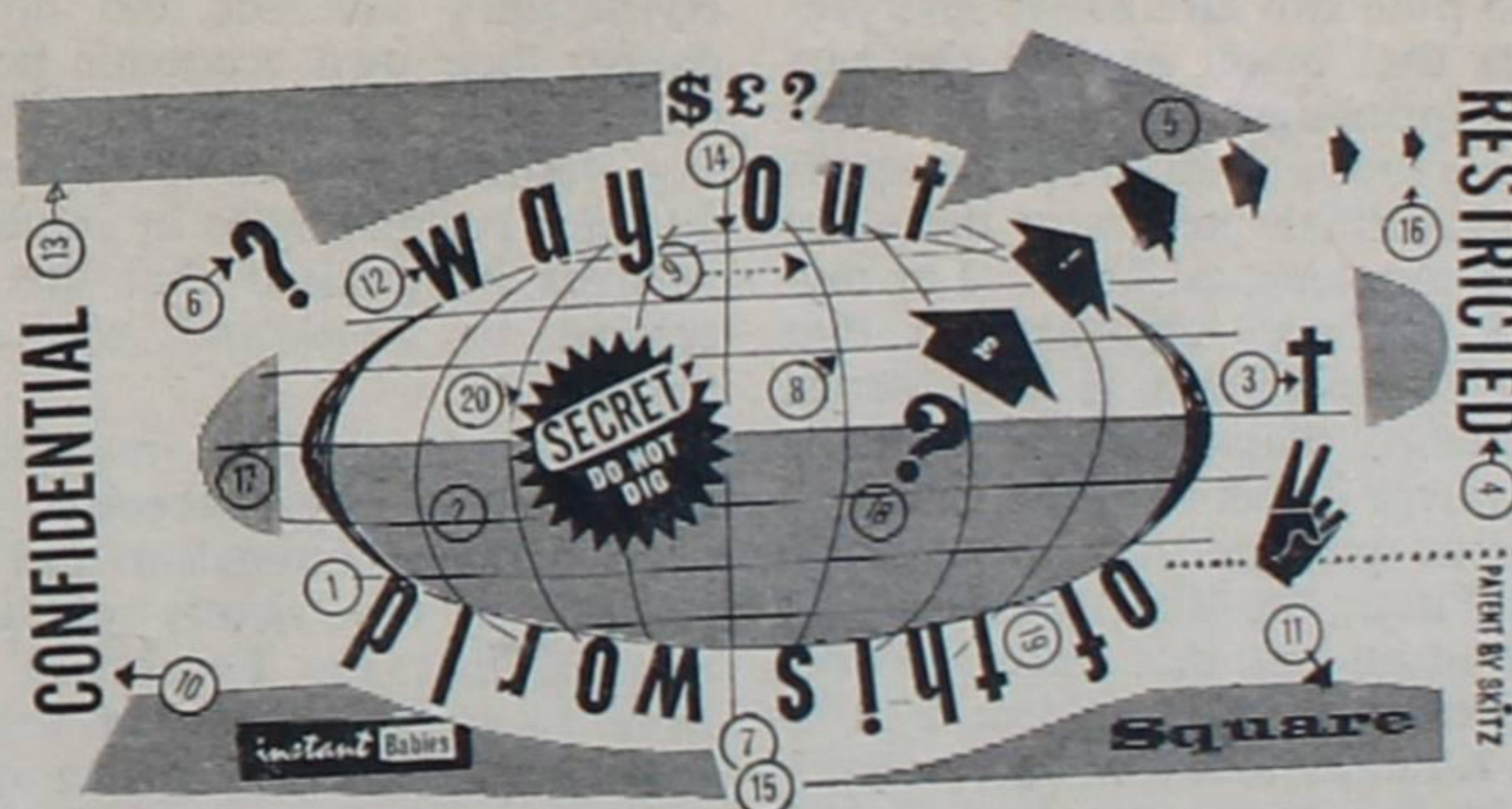
NEW YEAR RESOLUTION: ALWAYS TO SPEAK THE TRUTH ABOUT THE FORGES



GAITSKELL'S MASSIVE UNSLAUGHT ON GOVERNMENT

— DAILY HERALD

LOOKING BACK on 1962, Christmas, and a blizzard, all we can say is 'We survived'. The season of peace and goodwill was marked by a monuteman missile travelling 5,000 miles across the Atlantic to land on target near Ascension Island; Mr. Macmillan shot 77 pheasants at Rambouillet but failed to bring down de Gaulle or deflect Mr. Kennedy's 'bag' of Skybolt; the Russian magazine *Nature* said that radioactive contamination of oceans was spreading, endangering fish resources and producing fish freaks; the Russians began a series of nuclear exercises with Polaris-style missiles. A space-rocket test-tunnel in Tennessee collapsed under construction killing four workers. The tunnel which cost £3,750,000 is constructed of cement mixed with lorry-loads of sugar to 'stop it hardening' says A.P. The Russians conducted two atmospheric nuclear tests 33rd and 34th in current series; the Atomic Energy Authority reported that Russian tests in 1961 trebled the fall-out of one long-lived radio-active substance (Caesium 137). Up to the middle of 1962, the concentrations of strontium 90 were about two-thirds of 1959 totals, but because of bigger rainfall the total deposit was about the same. There may be a large reservoir of radio-activity from the Russian tests, relatively high above the earth which will descend slowly over a number of years. The Duke of Edinburgh went hunting wild boar, the party, made up of German nobility, shot fifteen wild boar. Russians conducted an atmospheric nuclear test on December 22nd, the fourth in a week. A bayonet practice target which 'hits back' has been devised to teach U.S. marines 'aggressiveness, confidence and alertness'. U.S. Defence budget is expected to show \$2,000m. rise. An American scientist says that 'spurious scientific arguments' were used to justify Rainbow, America's high-altitude tests, if the scientific community had been asked whether high-altitude bomb tests were necessary of desirable, it would, in his opinion, have said no. But "of course it wasn't asked". Scientific arguments, he said, should not be used to rationalise political judgments, at least until the United States "permits the scientific community the political stature



from which to exert decisive weight". Festivities were held to celebrate the juxtaposition of a Roman Saturnalia, pagan fertility rites, a commercial hypodermic jab and the alleged birth two thousand years ago of an obscure Palestinian beatnik agitator known, amongst other things as 'The Prince of Peace'. . .

GOODWILL TOWARDS men was maintained by the South African government who were responsible for the suicide of a former university lecturer to whom they denied a passport to return to England; goodwill between East and West Berlin police manifested itself when West Berlin police arrested three West Berliners for blowing a 32 square foot hole in the Berlin wall; three Navajos were put on probation by the goodwill of an American judge for eating peyote (defined as a narcotic) as laid down by their religion, the Native American Church. American Communists were found guilty by a Federal jury of failing to register as an agent of the Soviet Union and were fined £43,000. As a token of goodwill Jordan allowed 2,668 Christian Arabs living in Israel, to attend Christian services in Bethlehem. It was announced by the joint Foreign under-secretary that 3,439 people are entitled to full diplomatic immunity, this goodwill extends to their wives to the number of 1,025 and additional odour of sanctuary impregnates 2,581 people (including 770 wives) on Commonwealth missions. A further nameless 464 enjoy "immunity restricted to their official acts" whatever that may

mean, and finally, certain legal immunities are enjoyed by 506 people. These, and a further 15 also have the privilege of exemption from tax on official salary — can goodwill go further? James Meredith complained of lack of goodwill on the part of police who arrested him on a traffic charge. "They threatened me and manhandled me." He claimed he was "cursed and shoved around" for nearly an hour. As a gesture of Christmas goodwill the Government announced that from next February or March old-age pensioners and widows without children will be allowed to earn £4 5s. a week (15/- more than at present) without it affecting their pensions. Three members of the Baha'i sect were sentenced to death in Morocco and five others to hard labour for life. They are accused of planning to overthrow governments. The Baha'i movement is a heretical Islamic sect, it preaches universal brotherhood, racial tolerance and equality between sexes. Bradford Corporation dismissed a Pakistani bus-conductor because he would not shave off his beard and discovered it had at least three more bearded conductors, who will not come up for discipline until the next transport committee meeting. The Greek publisher and translator of Sartre's *Le Mur* were fined and imprisoned for three-and-a-half months under legislation against "immorality" and "indecent publications". A Major who failed to reveal in a security questionnaire that in 1937 he was a member of the Communist Party was sentenced to two years' loss of

seniority and a severe reprimand. *Cleopatra* will be banned in the United Arab Republic because of "pro-Israel activities" of Elizabeth Taylor. A French writer and publisher are to be prosecuted for a book critical of De Gaulle under the "state of Urgency" legislation proclaimed in April, 1961 and never revoked. A number of Jehovah's Witnesses who ran an underground printing press were sentenced to prison terms in Russia according to *Trud*. A Turkish editor has been arrested under an act "for making propaganda aimed at establishing the domination of one social class over another"—he had advocated socialism as the only salvation for Turkey. A Ghanaian warrant officer held for questioning about explosives used in the attempted assassination of Nkrumah, leaped out of a window at police headquarters 60 feet to his death. The verdict at Accra was that he died accidentally when attempting to escape from the police. Mr. Joe Appiah was released from imprisonment. Four Roman Catholic priests were expelled from the Sudan. The synagogue at Lvov, which town contains 30,000 Jews was closed in November. *Lvov Pravda*, according to the *Sunday Telegraph* correspondent said "the time has come finally to close the synagogue, which has become a shelter for idlers, speculators, parasites and money-grabbers." The Queen's script-writer misquoted Thomas Paine when he wrote for her dollop of good will "The world is my neighbour."

AN OBELISK which has stood for nearly four centuries in St. Peter's Square in Rome was originally erected in Egypt by a megalomaniac Roman prefect according to an expert who deciphered the inscription. He had a mania for creating monuments to his own glory and committed suicide in 26 B.C. The Emperor Caligula had the obelisk brought to Rome.

IN A NEW BOOK *The Annotated Snark* the author, Martin Gardner says that because Lewis Carroll put so much of his mature genius into *The Hunting of the Snark* it is "a poem about being and non-being, an existential poem, a poem of existential agony."

JON QUIXOTE.

ANARCHY 23

is on

HOUSING

ANARCHY is Published by Freedom Press at 1/6 on the last Saturday of every month.

Controversy on Kaunda

AGAIN the old argument, this time from John Papworth (FREEDOM Dec. 22) who is at least seriously studying the politics of African independence and is not merely "doing his (journalist's) job". "... when you consider that after a century or more of propaganda the European worker is no nearer to achieving freedom in anarchist terms than is the prospect of lead being transmuted into gold, won't even J.W. at least concede there might be a case for achieving less ambitious objectives by more practical means? ... When someone starts to talk about—resorts to talking about—"less ambitious objectives" and "more practical means", it is time to make a few careful distinctions. There is: the way things are, the way they should be, and the reasons for thinking that the way they should be is the way they could be.

At the moment, this is the way things are: we are rushing headlong, almost like gleeful Gadarene swine, for a grand nuclear blowing up of all of us, because a large number of us (I am speaking of "all the world", as seen by me) think in some obscure way I'm not quite sure what but something like this: "In order that I (or, as some of the more sophisticated and so more crackpotted will say, other people) may live properly, it is necessary that my life (or, their lives or our lives) be protected from nuclear annihilation ... I honestly cannot in the end understand this argument, and it is my private opinion that the main weakness from which the pacifist movement suffers is the incomprehensibility of their opponents' arguments. What the anarchist, or the pacifist ("true anarchism presupposes pacifism; true pacifism will achieve anarchism"), says to all this is: "NONSENSE! It's not true that, in order to live—with each other, human beings need nuclear bombs (or

anything else, including policemen) to defend them—against each other." To put it more objectively: if, in order to live, human beings have to live in a world (and in societies which mirror that world) where every man allows his neighbour to be protected against him on the condition that he be protected against his neighbour, then the human race will surely not long survive, and its eternity will be as "a disreputable episode in the history of one of the minor planets" ... And when we are all blown up, it will perhaps be one brief and purely intellectual consolation to know that we deserved to be blown up.

The authoritarian principle, the principle of coercive i.e. penalising law, is that men are not capable of living merely because they are alive. It is possible, contrariwise, to assume that no human being does need to be "helped" or "protected" in the living of his own life: to affirm that the only qualification needed for living is to be alive: to affirm that life is not a length but a quality, and that the quality of life is freedom is truth is peace is non-violence is love ... This I regard as the anarchist affirmation which today takes the form of a denial that any man has any right to assume any other man to be incapable of living his own life: the equality of man does not lie in any disputable contention, but in the simple fact that there are no grounds for saying that one man is more capable of living his own life than another, no grounds for assuming that any man is not capable of living. The authoritarian presumption is that every man is guilty and shall be given no chance to prove that he is innocent—as Donald Roomm says, "The greatest obstacle to anarchism is the Doctrine of Original Sin." (ANARCHY 17, p.203). "The 'absurdity of law', said William Godwin, is that 'in its most general acceptance it is of

the nature of prophecy. Its task is to describe what will be the actions of mankind and to dictate decisions respecting them ... (The mirage of "relevant" circumstances and "practical" consequences, useful for the purposes of tentative scientific explanation, but for the purposes of human judgment—!) And for those who either make the law or obey it (as distinct from those who regard it as a tiresome obstacle for the time being must be taken into account) the law is not merely a prophecy, but a self-fulfilling prophecy: it assumes the incapacity of the human organism to direct its own activity, and thereby creates that incapacity by precluding any chance to show capacity—organs that are not used atrophy. The law does violence to the human consciousness—that is, it presumes to usurp the only obligation of every man, at all times to do that which he considers to be right. Those who make, and those who obey, the law do not give themselves a chance: starting with the assumption of the form of life being failure, they make success almost impossible; success in the Kantian sense, i.e. that all action should be the giving of a universal law to all mankind, meaning that every action should be that action which is the only possible, right and necessary action, for all appearance of choice is merely the delusion or lack of clarity accompanying lack of understanding of oneself ... The chance that what we do may be right merely because we do it, is made possible if it is clear that the only reason for doing something is that it appears right: this chance is given us by the libertarian or anarchist principle of life, but denied us by the authoritarian principle. Here again I do not think that there is any question of choice. To reject the doctrine of original sin is not to accept the doctrine of original virtue, but merely not to limit human behaviour

to a closed framework of expectations and preconceived judgments.

The only reason that could justify my disagreeing with John Papworth is that I think that I agree with him, or rather perhaps I am sure that we should agree, when certain points are clarified. He says: "I feel pretty sure that one change we need so urgently that human survival has come to hang on it, is to break down our present top-heavy governments into small units which ordinary people can manage and which they can understand ... He looks forward, and so do I, and so I think does everyone who looks forward at all, to a non-violent society, to a society in which people see the things that are done, that they are doing them, in which the things that happen to them are the things they do, in which (as Francis Ellingham says), "What could be more miraculous than lifting potatoes?" But when he asks us to consider "the case for achieving less ambitious objectives by more practical means" (to return), I wonder what he is implying. It is true that the achievement of the millennium has been an urgent social task for centuries, and that men oppressed by the sense of its immediacy and desirability have wrecked and gone blind in their attempts to drag it from its womb: the mind of man. Norman Cohn shows the social basis of the "pursuit of the millennium" (the title of his fascinating book) to be the feeling of disorientation and frustration among those suffering from the disruption of a traditional order of society; but he rather ignores the psychological truth of this pursuit—the fact that there is a good, a right, of which men feel themselves to be capable of achieving, but of which they have felt themselves to be thwarted: and in consequence either they have gone mad when they have tried and failed to achieve the millennium, this process including the violent and useless establishment of a fake millennium as John of Leyden did at Munster (see chapter XII of Cohn's book); or they have accepted laziness as the best security. It seems to me to be the challenge as well as the irony (we assume that it will not be the tragedy) of our age, that the alternative to "what is almost unimaginable"—universal annihilation—is that which "is almost unattainable"

(Nicolas Walter)—the millennium; and moreover, the clearer becomes the necessity of society changing direction, the clearer does it become that there are no easy ways, no sleight-of-hand nor cutting of the Gordian knot, which will bring about this change. But for those who are interested in the free society, the question "means and/or ends?" does not really arise. I as an anarchist feel it is my duty constantly to affirm that the free society is here already, were we all but prepared to admit it: I see that human beings do get themselves into impossible situations (prime ministers, income tax collectors—even my own father), but yet I feel (otherwise I would feel impotent) that not only are men free, but that deep in their hearts they know it: and that not to think of men in this way is automatically to exclude them, and a society based upon a principle of exclusion is not a free society.

"Is peace to be achieved gradually, through a slow process of time?" asks Krishnamurti. "Surely, love is not a matter of training or of time ... Either the non-violent society is here now in every man waiting ... to see and to be seen; or it is nowhere. I too share what John Papworth considers the editorial writer's "curious naivete" and ask why, if Kaunda believes in non-violence, he should want a police force and an army. John Papworth replies: "Well, I suppose he wants a police force because if he didn't have one there would be much more rape, arson and bloody murder (i.e. more violence) than if he did ... Similarly Kaunda presumably wants an army to prevent his country from being suborned by hostile external interests ...". But the question is, not between more violence and less violence, but between violence and non-violence. John Papworth may be right in thinking that without a police force or an army, there would still be violence; but one thing is certain: as long as there is an army and a police force, there will be violence—at its simplest level, how can the relationship between the policeman and the criminal, between the soldier and his enemy, be anything but violent, if not in the mind of the policeman or the soldier at least in the mind of the politician who decrees the "criminal" or the "enemy"? One of the hardest things about building a non-violent society is that there can be no place in it for a defence against violence: to provide for violence is to be violent: it may be dangerous to trust our fellow men, but it is the only honest thing we can do: somehow or other we must conceive of every single human being as included in the free and non-violent society where anarchy will be unnecessary because there is no -archy.

MARTIN SMALL.

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Shift or Hoax?

RECENT events concerning the Central African Federation lead one to pose two alternative interpretations that might explain the various happenings. Either there has been a genuine shift in African politics and British politics or there has been a monumental hoax. For myself I am not fully assured that either interpretation is the correct one, feeling that the truth might lie somewhere in between the two.

Let us examine the two possibilities. Firstly the 'shift theory'. Here we must assume that since 1953 the Europeans as represented by the Suez-Katanga lobby in this country and by Salisbury and others in the House of Lords have been overpowered by the moderates in the Conservative Party as represented by Mr. Butler. Either to avoid a possible insurrection in Nyasaland or because Dr. Banda is now a safe bet, Mr. Butler has agreed to allow Nyasaland to secede from the Federation. In Northern Rhodesia Kenneth Kaunda has (according to Mr. Papworth) been allowed a political "success" by aligning himself with the stooge Harry Nkumbula in order to secure an African majority opposed to the Federation. With Mr. Kaunda wedded to constitutional action, Northern Rhodesia can be kept in the Federation for the time being.

The shift is only slight. Nothing revolutionary or even radical has occurred—if we follow this thesis. Central Africa will still have economic links—indeed Dr. Banda has agreed to this—the political act of secession, a paper victory, has been allowed. Yet paper victories, however meaningless, are never won without pressure—a pressure that has meant a shift in Britain away from the Right in Central African affairs since the imposition of Federation in 1953.

The hoax theory has to rest on certain suppositions, the main being that Lord Salisbury was pretending to be aghast at the change of direc-

tion whereas he, and his fellow reactionaries, knew full well that Nyasaland's secession did not endanger their own economic holding on Southern Africa. Sir Roy Welensky would also have to be seen as an actor pretending to be infuriated, whereas he realised that this concession to Nyasaland was small pidgeon.

By these tactical manoeuvres, whichever of these theories holds true, African nationalism has been satisfied by the 'victory' of the admission that the Federation must come to an end. Only in Southern Rhodesia where the return of the Rhodesian Front by the European electorate clears the air, does the danger of unconstitutional action now seem real, unless the rank and file of the UNIP turns on Kaunda.

Various other activities in the area with Tshombe and Katanga in real danger from United Nations action strongly supported by America lead one to tentatively question whether American interests do not wish to take the place of Belgian and British interests in Katanga via the United Nations. The position of Tshombe is open to doubt, as he has been called a rebel by the Belgians. Also one can pose the idea that the UN might nationalise (or internationalise?) the Union Minière, or at least force them to assist the whole of the Congo. Might they then try their hand in a troubled Northern Rhodesia?

The picture, at the moment, is by no means clear to this writer. The politics of Southern and Central Africa leave one uncertain, with the questions being asked remaining unanswered.

THE FIGHTING in Katanga between the United Nations force and the Katangese which seems to be resulting, at the time of writing, in a victory for the UN, will probably result in the forced unification of the Congo.

With Tshombe having fled to Rhodesia, having lost control in Katanga by all accounts, it seems that there is not likely to be enough resistance to stop the United Nations action.

The protest by the British Government, whilst being significant, in criticising the UN for attempting to enforce a solution by force in Katanga, shows a particularly stark hypocrisy. The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was from the start imposed against the wishes of practically the entire African population of the area. Anyway imposed settlements are always the meat of government, for they are the very act of ruling.

From the anarchist standpoint, one can hardly support the UN force; the most likely outcome of a fundamental change in Katanga is for American-orientated UN officials to be found working with Belgian economic interests to ensure unification of the Congo under the Central Congolese Government of Mr. Adoula.

RICHARD J. WESTALL.

[FOOTNOTE: For the benefit of Mr. Papworth. 1. Whilst I was in the Rhodesian Federation I was either working for the Provincial Administration of the Northern Rhodesian Government or serving in the Royal Rhodesian Regiment in Southern Rhodesia. At that time I was not an anarchist but supported, after some doubts, the African nationalists. Due to the example of Ghana I have been disillusioned as to the value of nationalism in the struggle for freedom and independence in Africa. 2. Mr. Kaunda, when he aligned himself with the ANC of Harry Nkumbula became identified in my mind with all he said he was opposing. Before the elections he strongly criticised Mr. Nkumbula's ANC for receiving financial assistance from Katanga, after the election—due to his holding the balance of power—Nkumbula received overtures of friendship from Mr. Kaunda. Does one have to be an anarchist to be disgusted?—J.W.]

Mutual Aid for the Ball

This year's Anarchist Ball continues after midnight, and some revellers might have difficulty getting home. Will any comrades from outside London who can offer transport and any in London who can offer sleeping space for the night of Jan. 25-26 please get in touch with the Freedom office?

A group from Watford might be hiring a coach to and from Fulham. Comrades on that route should also write in, if they would like to book a seat.

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	1,647
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Weeks 1-50 (414)	447
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	2,116
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WEARIED by the struggle of life, how many close their eyes, fold their arms, stop short, powerless and discouraged. How many, and they among the best, abandon life as unworthy of continuance. With the assistance of some fashionable theories, and of a prevalent neurasthenia, men have come to regard death as the supreme liberation.

To those who hold this view, society replies only by advancing *clichés*. It speaks of the *moral goal of life*; argues that one has not the *right to kill himself*, that *moral sorrows must be borne courageously*, that man had *duties*, that the suicide is a *coward* or an *egoist*, etc., etc. All of these phrases are religious in tone; and none of them are of genuine significance in rational discussion.

What, after all, is suicide? Suicide is the final act of a series of deeds which arise from our reaction against our environment, or from that environment's reaction against us.

Every day we commit suicide partially. I commit suicide when I consent to inhabit a dwelling where the sun never shines, a room where the ventilation is so inadequate that I am suffocated on my couch.

I commit suicide when I devote, to hours of absorbing work, an amount of energy which I am not able to recapture, or when I engage in work which I know to be useless.

I commit suicide when I leave my stomach unprovided with food in such quantity, and of such quality, as I actually need.

I commit suicide when I consent to obey oppressive men or measures.

I commit suicide whenever I convey to another individual, by the act of voting, the *right to govern me* for four years.

I commit suicide when I ask a magistrate or a priest for permission to love.

I commit suicide when I do not reclaim my liberty as a lover, as soon as the time of love is past.

Complete suicide is nothing but the final act of total inability to react against the environment.

These acts, of which I have spoken of as partial suicides, are not therefore less truly suicidal. It is because I lack the power to react against society, that I inhabit a place without light and without air, that I do not eat in accordance with my hunger or my taste, that I am a soldier or a voter, that I subject my love to laws or compulsion.

The workers daily commit suicide in spirit by leaving the spirit inactive, by not letting it live, as they commit suicide as to the arts of painting, sculpture, music, which offer to some of us release from the cacophony which surrounds them.

There can be no question, in regard to suicide, of right or of duty, of cowardice or of courage; it is purely a material problem of power or lack of power.

One hears it said, "Suicide is a right of man because it constitutes a necessity . . ." Or, again, "One cannot allow to the proletariat the right of life and death."

Right? Necessity? Shall one debate his right to breathe scantily—that is, to kill the health-giving molecules and to encourage the unhealthy? His right not to eat in accordance with his hunger—that is, to kill his stomach? His right to obey—that is, to slay his will? His right to love always the woman designated by the law or chosen by the desire of one period—that is, to slay all the desires of days to come?

Or, if we substitute, in these phrases, the word "necessity" for the word "right", do we make them thereby the more logical? I have no intention to condemn these partial suicides more than definitive suicide, but it seems to me pathetically comic to describe as *right* or *necessity* this surrender of the weak before the strong—and a surrender made without having tried everything. Such expressions are nothing but excuses given to one's self.

All suicides are imbecilities—the total more than the others, since in the partial forms there may be some hope of recovering one's self. It would seem that, at the very hour of the dissolution of the individual, all energy might be focussed on a single point of reaction against the environment, even with a thousand to one chance of failure in the effort.

This seems still more necessary and natural in view of the fact that one leaves beloved persons behind one. For this part of one's self, this portion of the energy of which one consists, cannot

The Joy of Life

one engage in a gigantic struggle wherein, however unequal the combat, the colossus Authority is always defied?

Many die, declaring themselves to be victims of society. Do they not realize that, the same cause producing the same effects, the same might no less apply to these others whom they love? Will not a desire then come to them to transform their vital force into energy, into power, so as to burn the battery rather than to separate its elements?

The fear of death—of the complete dissolution of the human form—once rejected, one may engage in the struggle with a corresponding accession of power.

Others respond to us: "We have a horror of bloodshed. We do not wish to attack this society, made up of men who seem to us to be both unaware and irresponsible."

The first objection does not hold. Does the struggle take none but a violent form? Is it not multiple, diverse? And the individuals who participate in it, can they not do so each according to his own temperament?

The second is too inexact. Such words as "society", "knowledge", "responsibility" are too often repeated and too little explained.

Unaware and without responsibility are the barrier that obstructs the road, the angry serpent, the tuberculosis microbe—yet against them we defend ourselves.

Still more irresponsible (in the relative sense) are the cornfield which we reap, the ox that we kill, the beehives that we rob. Nevertheless we attack them all.

I know nothing of "responsible" nor of "irresponsible". I see the causes of my suffering, of the cramping of my personality, and my efforts are bent to suppress or to conquer them by every possible means.

According to my powers of resistance I assimilate or I reject. That is all. Even stranger objections are advanced, in a neurasthenically scientific form.

"Study astronomy, and you will realize the negligible duration of human life as compared to the infinite . . . Death is a transformation and not termination."

For myself, being finite, I have no conception of the infinite; but I know that duration consists of centuries, centuries of years, years of days, days of hours, hours of minutes, etc. I know that time is made up of nothing but the accumulation of seconds, that the great immensity consists only of the infinitely small. Short as our life may be, it has its dimensional importance from the point of view of the whole. Life seen from my own point of view, with my own eyes, cannot be of little importance to me; and all seems to me to have had no purpose but to prepare for *us*—for myself and that which surrounds me.

The stone which, dropped from a metre above, caresses the head, will break it open if its falls twenty metres. Arrested on the way, seen from the point of view of the *All*, it differs in no particular, but it lacks the energy which makes it a power.

I ignore all that I cannot conceive, and I regard primarily myself; and there is a dissolution of power, or perhaps rather its non-assimilation, in either partial or definitive suicide.

Death is the end of a human energy, as the dissociation of the elements of a battery is the end of the energy it releases, as the dissolution of the threads

NOTE ON THE AUTHOR:

[S.E.P. writes: "Albert Libertad (1876-1908) was one of the founders of *L'Anarchie*, a weekly paper published in Paris from 1905 to 1914. A pioneer of anarchist individualism in France, the magnetism of his personality has been testified to by Max Nettlau and Victor Serge. The above essay is, as far as I know, the only part of his writings to have been translated into English. This was done by George Headley and first appeared in *MAN!*, Vol. 4, No. 7.]

of a tissue is the end of that tissue's strength. Death, the end of my "me", is more than a transformation.

There are those who say to one, "The goal of life is happiness", and who profess to be unable to attain it. It seems to me to be more simple to say that life is life. Life is happiness. Happiness is life.

I know sorrow only as my attempts at assimilation are arrested through a partial suicide.

All the acts of life are a joy to me. Breathing pure air, I know happiness; my lungs are expanded, an impression of power makes me glow. The hour of work and that of rest afford me equal pleasure. The hour which brings the meal-time; the meal itself with its labour of mastication; the hour which follows, with its interior activity—all give me joy of varying sorts.

Shall I evoke the delicious attention of love, the sense of power in the sexual encounter, the succeeding hours of voluptuous relaxation?

Shall I speak of the joy of the eyes, of hearing, or odour, of touching, of all the senses, of the delights of conversation and of thought? Life is a happiness.

Life has not a goal. Why wish for a goal, a beginning, an end?

Let us recapitulate. Whenever, herded on the stones by an earthquake, avid for air, we bow our heads against the rock; whenever, seized by the regimentation of society as it is, avid for the ideal (to make this vague term exact: avid for the integral development of one's self and one's loved ones) we arrest our life, we obey neither a *necessity* nor a *right*, but an obsession of force, of the obstacle. We do no voluntary act, as the partisans of death profess; we obey the power of the environment which crushes, and we depart precisely at the hour when the weight is too heavy for our shoulders.

"Then," they say, "we do not go except at our hour—and our hour is now." Yes. But since, resigned, they envisage their defeat in advance; since they have not developed their tissues with a view to resistance—they have not made due effort to react against the regimentation of the environment. Unaware of their own beauty, of their own force, they add to the objective strength of the obstacle all the subjective weight of their own acceptance.

Like those resigned to partial suicides, they surrender themselves to the great suicide. They are devoured by an environment avid for their flesh, eager to crush all energy that appears.

Their error lies in the belief that the dissolution is by their own will, that they chose their hour, while actually they die crushed inevitably by the black-guardism of some and by the weakness of others.

In a locality infected by the malevolent germs of typhus, of tuberculosis, I do not think of absenting myself to avoid the malady. Rather, I proceed immediately to disseminate disinfectants, without any fear of killing millions of microbes.

In actual society, made foul by the conventional defecations of poverty, of patriotism, of the family, of ignorance, crushed by the power of government and the inertia of the governed, I do not wish to disappear, but to throw upon the scene the light of truth, to provide a disinfectant, to purify it by any means at my command.

Even with death approaching, I shall still have the desire to change my body by means of phenol or picric acid for the sake of humanity's health.

And if I am destroyed in this effort, I shall not be totally effected, I shall have reacted against the environment, I shall have lived briefly but intensely—I shall perhaps have opened a breach for the passage of energies similar to my own.

No, it is not life that is bad, but the conditions in which we live. Therefore, we shall address ourselves not to life, but to these conditions—let us change them.

One must live, one must desire to live still more abundantly. Let us accept not even the partial suicides.

Let us be eager to know all experiences, all happiness, all sensations. Let us not be resigned to any diminution of our "me". Let us be champions of life, so that desires may arise out of turpitude and weakness; let us assimilate the earth to our own concepts of beauty.

Thus may our wishes be united magnificently; and at the last we shall know the Joy of Life in the absolute.

Let us love life.

ALBERT LIBERTAD

Productivity

DEAR EDITORS,

In reply to Francis Ellingham's latest ("What matters to Man?"), I am not prepared to debate any subject, least of all philosophical questions, by making a series of quotations from "authorities", ancient or modern, and putting them forward as proofs of the arguments. Anything can be "proved" that way, as Francis must surely know. "If he [Chuang Tze] was right . . . then . . ." granted; but was he right? Francis also misses Tawney's, or Tom Barnes', point. Their two statements on wealth and poverty, and the figures he then quotes are not in conflict. The "wealth" "owned" by 1%, etc. is almost entirely in the form of capital goods, etc. Redistribution of the consumer-goods they own would make a negligible difference to the poorer people, while their ownership of factories, etc. gives them undue power, and indirectly causes the poverty of others, and is a part of the general social evil, but a simple, sudden redistribution of it would be of small benefit to anyone!

Again, I must deny his statement on potato-peeling. True, a housewife is less likely actually to resent this task than a maid (or cook?)—but she is still unlikely to find it a really satisfying task! There is a measure of truth in the quotes Francis throws in—but only in relation to some commonplace actions, for some people, some times—when they are appreciated in some way as symbolical of something else.

And just what, please, is "natural" to Man, and what is so sacred about it? Dwelling in caves, grubbing for roots, freezing and starving? Yet in the next breath Francis appears to be extolling the heights of the ancient, slave-based civilisations! — "without the aid of modern scientists"—yes, but not without benefit of some degree of scientific thought! Despite, not because of, their limitations. And today it is not the "scientists" who threaten to destroy man, though, like virtually everyone, they may be lamentably acquiescent.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

In my last letter, I did not say finance-capitalism was the cause . . . , but was a cause . . . I reassert; it is indeed a major cause of our present ills; it is a major cause of the spiritual troubles that worry Francis, as well as, in part, itself resulting from them. Cause and effect are hopelessly intertwined, and no one line of attack can succeed by itself.

Reading further: we return to the question of cultivation; at just what point does "simple cultivation" become "manipulating nature" by machinery and cunning devices? This is simply not good enough; that there are many specific objections to be made about specific tools, or the use made of them, I fully agree; this applies equally to a hoe, a wooden plough, or a combine harvester. But this is not good reason for rejecting all tools, or even all above some undefined dividing line of complexity. On the contrary, it is cause for greatly intensifying scientific research into problems of cultivation and health, in all their many and interrelated aspects.

Back to the potential quality of mass-production and automation; yes indeed; far beyond the capacities of Chippendale or Morris, given a designer with comparable talent, and freedom to exercise it; it was not their skill as craftsmen, or the tools they used, that made their products notable, but their quality as designers. Machines do not "merely reproduce [beauty]", unless they are designed and operated for that purpose. That is the whole point of the key phrase in my last letter, on this topic: "in their own idiom". An object properly designed for mass-production uses the characteristics of the machines used for its production to achieve a quality unique to that method, and not a mere inferior imitation of something designed for a different technique. This is precisely the way Chippendale designed, for his own workshop, which for his day was at an advanced stage of development towards mass-production techniques!

Finally, I still see no moral imperative implied in labelling something foolish; unless it were also harmful to others, what the hell? To me, many things other people do are foolish, but I would not seek to interfere on that account, unless I thought they might appreciate help! I would certainly think it foolish to spend my days digging up potatoes with my bare hands, contemplating the beauty of the action, but I would not seek to prevent Francis from doing it, if he so desired—except, perhaps, in the way I am now trying!

"Anti-social" is, to Francis, "a thumping value word". To me, it describes an act which interferes with the freedom of others to act as they wish; surely the limitation on one's own freedom which anyone with any pretence to social responsibility must recognise. The retention of productive capacity by the general population need not interfere with Francis' freedom to starve as he hunts for roots, but if he had his way, and persuaded a majority to join him, he would certainly prevent Jackie from achieving her Utopia!

"Spiritual" values are certainly of great importance; but so, too, are reason and freedom.

Yours,
BRIAN LESLIE.

London, S.W.2. 26 Dec.

Worker's Viewpoint

DEAR COMRADES,

In some of the discussion re productivity there seems to be an assumption that factory work is, of necessity, more monotonous and soul-destroying than other work. It seems to me that most work (on the level at which I, and probably most people, experience it) is in itself monotonous, and that it is other factors which determine whether it is satisfying or not. I am using 'work' in the sense of labour given in exchange for wages or as a necessary contribution to the needs of society. Work of one's own choosing (composing letters to FREEDOM?) in one's 'leisure' time is a different matter.

Take office work for example; it may be that in a moneyless society a lot of office work will be unnecessary, while in a fully automated society it will still be letters to be typed and records to keep for some years ahead.

In one firm where I worked there was very little contact between the production side and the recording side. Working conditions were (unnecessarily) bad—excessive noise, poor lighting, uncomfortable chairs. The boss was the sort who was quick to blame mistakes, a stickler for routine, and did not allow us to talk during working hours.

In another firm, the workshop was beneath the office, there were friendly relations between office and workshop staff. We were welcome to go down and actually see the stuff we were making ledger entries about. (One may have been a cog in a machine, but one was aware of the necessity for, and relation to the rest of, one's particular cog). Pressure of work fluctuated; when things were slack we were free to walk about and chat, or slip out for some shopping. When things got hectic the boss would come and give a hand where it was needed, and was prepared to back us up whatever sort of muddle our mistakes got us into.

The work I was doing in both firms was pretty much the same, and was boring in itself, but the difference to my feelings as a human being does not need pointing out.

At another time I worked in a factory for a few months, partly on a conveyor belt, and partly on simple machines, packing gift boxes of soap, perfume, etc. We were mostly married women on the shift (an evening one) and we rather looked forward to the social contact, getting to know each other, exchanging stories about the iniquities of our husbands or children. The work was monotonous, but there were varied aspects of it, so we changed round frequently. (The supervisor wanted us to stick on one thing, but we decided ourselves to change around). It was of course only a short shift (3 hours). We worked more or less as a team and those who worked quickly would help the slower ones. We even managed to get enthusiastic about increasing the number of boxes we got done, although we were paid a fixed wage. I personally thought the end product pretty useless but the others didn't and presumably in an Anarchist society one need only work at what one believed to be socially useful. Also in an Anarchist society one would not be working for a small wage in order for others to make profits—a fact which I must sadly admit did not seem to bother the others. They were annoyed however by lack of responsibility, for instance it was decided higher up how the boxes should be packed, but we often thought we could do it a more attractive way, but could not make changes. The personality of the shift supervisor also made a lot of difference; some let us organise ourselves, and were there to help out where needed, and keep things running smoothly. Others detailed our energy more, and told us off like children if we stopped one minute early for tea.

I have also done a certain amount of potato lifting—another repetitive task—and have enjoyed it for the sort of reasons Joan Ross touches on (15.12.62) but would not care to do it as a full-time occupation. Changes of work would be grand, and feasible in our anarchist society where job security did not matter.

All right, so machines are more advanced tools (John D. McEwan, 15.12.62) but are they not exciting? Man at the controls of an aircraft (does the aircraft control him?—any more than the nature of his materials 'controls' the craftsman). Man at the controls of a machine filling bottles with beer. The more complicated the machinery the more skill is needed to maintain and work them. At the simplest level man has the power to switch them on and off!

John McEwan says that at present machines are a method of disciplining the workers, reducing the human element etc., but this does not have to be so. It is not the machine's fault but the fault of the workers for allowing the bosses to do this to them. In an anarchist, even in a fully automated, society there would still be dull repetitive tasks to do, but no-one need work more than a few hours a day at them, people could change jobs more often, the human relationships, and sense of participation and social usefulness would be satisfactory, so that the nature of the job would not be so important. (Incidentally automation aims at cutting out a lot of the repetitive, conveyor belt type jobs, not increasing them).

JACQUETTA BENJAMIN.

London, Dec. 18.

Curious

The Editor, FREEDOM,

It is curious that a reviewer in FREEDOM (J.W. on the SWF pamphlet, "The Bomb, Direct Action and the State, 15/12/62), should take issue with the distinction between the executive committee of the ruling class, and a body central to class rule; since as far as I know this distinction was first made in FREEDOM. The only reason that the passage did not appear in quotes and attributed is that the writer of that section of the Pamphlet, I found I could not remember the issue or the exact words of the original. (This original was as far as I remember somewhere in February or March, 1952). The argument as put originally in FREEDOM and also in the pamphlet (as JW would have found had he bothered to read it, rather than just those sections in bold type); was that whereas Marx may well have had an arguable case 100 years ago that the State was not central to oppression but was merely an instrument of class rule so that if one changed the control of the State it would become possible to change the class system; this analysis is no longer arguable since the State has become more centralised and Capitalist businesses are now for the most part either State Capitalist or Giant Corporations with a direct influence in the running of the State. Therefore arguing against the intelligent Marxist—of perhaps the SPGB or ILP brand it is worth showing that whatever the rights and wrongs of a quarrel waged 100 years ago; capturing the state can now only mean running Capitalism.

To go back to the preceding nark. The passage on Social Democrats and Stalinists quoted by your reviewer follows 2½ pages of instances where radical aspirations had been betrayed by the leaders of radical movements—chiefly social-democrats. It is followed by a further paragraph on the SLL and the CP. Here of course your reviewer's objection depends entirely on the usage of words; in the narrow sense that Krushchev calls Mao Tse Tung a Stalinist it is certainly possible as he says that most people in the CP are not Stalinist. However the traditional usage of the word is to consider as a Stalinist someone who subjects the interests of radical movements, to those of the ruling caste or class in the Soviet Union.

It is also curious that while allegedly showing that Syndicalism is not relevant to today, your reviewer culls one quote from page 6 and one from page 9, whereas no mention of Syndicalism whatsoever is made before page 13. The first 12 pages being devoted purely and simply to putting the case for Anarchism in general; only thereafter does the pamphlet set out to show the relevance of this particular form of Anarchism, not to bring it up to date, if that were necessary it would have been done by the Collective Contract system, which for reasons of space could not be brought into the present pamphlet. The analysis which JW describes as lacking depth and penetration stems more from Bruno Rizzi's "Bureaucratization du Monde" (or its plagiarized version—Burnham's "Managerial Revolution") from Dwight MacDonald and from Raya Dunayevskaya than from Sorel; for the good and simple reason that Sorel is long dead; so again if it is true that the analysis is shallow, then JW had better blame me personally (as the author of that section) not the Syndicalist philosophy. I am quite content to let readers compare the analysis in the pamphlet with that in his FREEDOM articles for depth and penetration.

Yours faithfully,
LAURENS OTTER.

Christmas Fast

DEAR SIR,

For 96 hours over the 'festive season' a group of Committee of 100 supporters, all having anarchist sympathies, held a public fast outside one of the central churches in Oxford.

Despite intimations from the police that we were not to collect money or to hand out leaflets on the pavement we collected £80 for Oxfam and distributed 5,000 leaflets.

In the leaflet we pointed out that while governments spend millions on war preparations millions starve. Our fast was to help us to consider our own individual responsibility to do what we can to relieve hunger and achieve peace. Also to remind people of the millions of men, women and children who are always hungry. Those of us fasting shared a common conviction that a non-violent world of peace, freedom and respect for the worth of every person is the only thing worth working for and that action for this must begin now. We hope that our collection will help

three impoverished Basutoland farmers to establish themselves with seeds, tools and fertilisers. Many people expressed complete sympathy with our leaflet and we hope that we have made a start in Oxford in showing people the connection between war preparations and hunger and that we can all help.

Yours,
ROY PATEMAN.
Witney, Dec. 28.

LONDON FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS

CENTRAL MEETINGS

meetings to be held at
The Two Brewers,
40 Monmouth Street, WC2
(Leicester Square Tube)
Sundays at 7.30 p.m.

JAN 6 Donald Room:
The General Strike for Peace

JAN 13 Tony Smythe:

Revolutionary Pacifism

JAN 20 Jack Robinson:
Were the Luddites Ideologically Correct?

JAN 27 Oonagh Lehr:
Is Non-Violence Against Human Nature?

FEB 3 Jack Stevenson:
The Only Union

FEB 10 Ken Weller:
Subject to be announced

OFF-CENTRE

DISCUSSION MEETINGS

1st Thursday of each month at 8 p.m. at Jack and Mary Stevenson's, 6 Stainton Road, Enfield, Middx.

1st Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m. at Colin Ward's, 33 Ellerby Street, Fulham, S.W.6.

3rd Tuesday at Brian and Doris Lelie's, 242 Amesbury Avenue, S.W.2 (Streatham Hill, Nr. Station).

Third Wednesday of the month, at 8 p.m. at Albert Portch's, 11 Courcy Road (off Wood Green High Road), N.8.

Last Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m. Tom Barnes', Albion Cottage, Fortis Green, N.2. (3rd door past Tudor Hotel).

3rd Friday of each month at 8 p.m. at Donald & Irene Room's, 148a Fellows Road, Swiss Cottage, N.W.3.

Please note that the meetings at Fellows Road, N.W.3 are now on the third Friday, not the third Wednesday as hitherto.

Last Thursday of each month at 8 p.m. at George Hayes', 174 McLeod Road, Abbey Wood, S.E.2.

Notting Hill Anarchist Group (Discussion Group)

Last Friday of the month, at Brian and Margaret Hart's, 57 Ladbroke Road, (near Notting Hill Station), W.11.

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