

Freedom

Anarchist Weekly 6d

APRIL 22 1967 Vol 28 No 12

A DECANTED UTOPIA

All this happened once upon a time. Before the GLC elections in fact...

IT USED to be called Fulham Town Hall. The younger of us remembered George Brown explaining Socialist nationalism there, the middle generation remembered the Night the Cloakroom System Failed, the oldies remembered the Tribunals of Judge (Jefferies) Hargreaves beneath the portrait of Nell Gwyn (a Fulham girl).

Now that Fulham is incorporated into the greater gau of Hammersmith, it is known as Fulham Old Town Hall, it is not what it used to be.

However, rumour had been rife in the borough for many months and now, a fortnight after the plans for the new motorway and a week before the municipal elections, we were invited to a meeting to discuss the Moore Park Road Area

Redevelopment, at the Old Town Hall, and all tenants in the area were invited.

It was once recorded of a Fulham street that when one of the minor Great Train Robbers was captured there it was the first time the neighbours had spoken to each other. However they were all there now, in the Town Hall. Those vaguely half-remembered faces who are part of the scenery to us, rather than individuals. A large proportion of them were the local shopkeepers and a sprinkling of strangers in pin-stripe trousers.

About to mount the platform was the leader of the Council whose face seemed vaguely familiar but his function for the moment was but to introduce the architect who was going to illustrate the scheme with slides.

The pictures showed the proposed new



MAY DAY MEETING

Monday, May 1, 1967
from 3.30 p.m. to sunset

6.30 Public Meeting
7.30 March to Spanish Embassy

HYDE PARK,
SPEAKERS' CORNER
Organised by the LFA and SWF

MAY DAY IS MAY 1st
SHOW YOUR INTERNATIONAL
SOLIDARITY

The first world May Day demonstration resulted from protest against the judicial murder in Chicago of six anarchist workers 81 years ago.

Today thousands of Trade Union and political prisoners suffer in Spain's fascist jails including 20-year-old Stuart Christie of Blantyre, Scotland. Latest victims include ANTONIO CANETE, LUIS EDO, ALFRED HERRERA, ALICIA MUR, JESUS RODRIGUEZ.

News of this demonstration will reach Spain. Help the Spanish underground resistance by joining it.

(This leaflet is available from FREEDOM and Direct Action.)

Distribute leaflets, sell anarchist literature, sell 8-page 'FREEDOM' on 'official' May Day meetings all over the country!

development of a four-storey building with a high-level pedestrian walkway. The buildings of four-storey and two-storey terraced maisonettes will provide traffic free access to each dwelling.

There will be large garden squares of 300 feet long and 100 feet wide. It would seem highly probable that the present garden in Maxwell Road (now running wild), formerly cultivated by the former editor of FREEDOM, will be the basis of the new landscaped squares. Indeed they may have been the inspiration. We were shown shots of the area, before and after. Unfortunately, as all these pictures are, they compared the area (and traffic) at its worst with the highly idealized pictures of the artist's conception of the architect's idea of the council's hope of the ministry's permission of the exchequer's purse-strings.

Some of the neighbourhood petit bourgeois called out 'distortion!' when a truly horrible piece of local architecture at its slummiest was compared with a dream-like vision of what it could be.

The meeting proper then started with the leader of the council (who was he?) in the chair and the chairman of Hammersmith Housing Committee, the architect, the council's valuer and various other functionaries of the council on the platform.

The chairman said that 1960-1972 had been marked out as the second period of the development of the area. With the present development there would be an estimated 84% housing gain, at present the areas due for rebuilding housed 1,850 people in 725 households, the council waiting list was of 5,000 people.

Area (1) would be completed by August 1967.

Continued on page 3

PRINTWORKERS PROTEST AGAINST WAGE FREEZE

MAY DAY STOP PRESS

AN APPEAL is being made to all print workers in Fleet Street newspapers and in general printing for a May Day stoppage of work and demonstration march. The demonstration kicks off at 12 noon on MONDAY, May 1, from Blackfriars (Underground) Station, Embankment, London. It is in protest against the continuation of the Labour government's incomes and prices policy—the 'wage freeze'—but is equally aimed at the TUC's alternative 'voluntary vetting' scheme.

This call to action is not being confined only to print workers—any other sections of workers who are prepared to demonstrate their militancy by a definite STOP WORK and march will be cordially welcomed by the print workers on Monday, May 1.

The aim is a united workers' march which would include building trade workers, dockers, engineers and others, who are definitely prepared to stop work and begin a struggle against the 'wage freeze' policy and the complete failure of the trades union officials and executives to make an effective stand in defence of the whole future of the trades union movement.

The call to action comes from the recently formed Association of Rank and File Print Workers. A May Day organising committee has already been set up. It was elected by a print workers' meeting convened by the Press Association (Editorial and Clerical Chapel) of the Society of Graphical and Allied Trades (Sogat) on March 29, which was attended by militant print workers from various unions and chapels in Fleet Street and the general printing, ink and paper industries. With 130,000 members, Sogat is now the largest union in the printing industry, being an amalgamation of the old Natsopa and the Paperworkers Unions.

The joint May Day Committee and the Association of Rank and File Print Workers have held a further meeting and it has been agreed to distribute 10,000 leaflets making the call for action. It is already being widely circulated in Fleet Street newspaper houses and it is hoped that the distribution will be widened to general printing.

In the red 'May Day' leaflet, it says:

All over the world May 1 is regarded as the worker's day. It

originated in America where, on May 1, 1886, nationwide strikes took place for the eight hour working day. The idea spread, and at a conference of European and American Trade Unions held in Paris in 1890, a call was made to trade unionists everywhere to stop work and demonstrate on May 1 for working class demands. May Day has been part of working class tradition ever since.

But what started as a show of trade union strength has since degenerated into farcical and meaningless 'demonstrations'. In Britain May Day is not even held on May 1, but on the first Sunday in May so as not to interfere with capitalist production. This year's 'official' demonstrations will probably be addressed by those architects of the wage freeze—Wilson, Brown, Stewart and Gunter—all no doubt wearing their red ties for the occasion.

The print workers' May Day Committee is also taking urgent steps to contact organised sections of the rank and file workers in other industries before May Day and welcomes enquiries and support from other sections of workers.

It is on record that Sogat has been in favour for many years of a public holiday on May 1 as 'Labour Day' and the old Natsopa has presented this demand many times in national negotiations with the various employers organisations, without it ever having been generally conceded in agreements. Only in a few isolated cases of agreements with a number of individual firms has the claim been conceded.

This renewed interest in International May Day, which has already been achieved in many countries but not in Great Britain (the so-called 'labour movement's' May Day being usually held on the first Sunday in May) has been sparked off by the Labour government's anti-trade union legislation and 'wages freeze' policy. It is claimed that a stop work and march will be the 'practical application of union policy'.

It is understood that Sogat was originally opposed to the Labour government's incomes policy and was numbered among the few unions which had officially declared itself against this policy. Subsequently the union's executive has changed its original policy and now supports the alternative TUC 'voluntary vetting' policy. Information on the new policy in union circles appears

to be scanty and it is not known what considerations — if any — entered into the decision to change union policy. The rank and file of the union warmly welcomed the original anti-Labour government stand of Sogat on this issue and a number of chapels (shop floor organisation) have taken action to present demands to managements.

The print workers' meeting convened by the Press Association (Sogat chapels) did not receive the union's official support and a letter was read at the beginning of the meeting from the secretary of the 10,000-strong Editorial and Clerical Branch, quoting another letter from the union's national joint secretary, Mr. Richard Briginshaw, stating that the chapel had no authority to officially call such a meeting and that if it did take place it could only be in the name of 'unofficial' rank and file workers. Amidst low roars of laughter, the assembled print workers promptly constituted themselves into a 'meeting of rank and file print workers'. So much for the 'lead' from the union leadership. The initiative of Sogat rank and file print workers, known for their militancy on the job, was warmly welcomed by other rank and file print workers organised in other print unions and the May 1 Committee was elected representing various crafts and sections of the industry.

The Association of Rank and File Print Workers is now actively campaigning to get the maximum support for the May 1 stoppage and demonstration march. A general consensus of opinion is that ONLY a break-through organised on a chapel level can successfully challenge the 'freeze' on the wages and other demands made by the print unions in the past year.

Although only recently formed, the Association of Rank and File Print Workers is gaining support and appears to be the most advanced section of militant print workers to emerge in recent years. It includes in its aims and objects (according to its bulletin, the *Printworker*):

1. to fight the wage freeze, prices and incomes act, and all anti-trade union legislation by joint action in the industry;
2. to encourage sympathetic industrial action should the penal clauses of the Act be invoked against anyone trying to improve wages and working conditions;
3. to campaign within the printing unions for a ballot of the membership on the question of continued affiliation to the Labour Party;
4. to propagate the idea of one union for the printing industry;
5. to associate with rank and file movements having similar aims in other industries.

All print workers are urged to support this new movement and make the May Day stop work and demonstration the break-through and start of a big campaign of struggle. The association welcomes the support of ALL workers who are prepared to 'stick their necks out' on May 1. For further information of the May Day march and demonstration, readers are urged to write: Association of Rank and File Print Workers, 29 Love Walk, London, S.E.5.

'PRINT WORKER'.

We wish our comrades the best of luck and hope that their call will be answered not only by workers in print, but by workers from other industries.—Eds.

ANARCHY 74

ON SALE NOW DISCUSSES ASPECTS OF ANARCHISM

ANARCHY is Published by FREEDOM PRESS at 2s, on first Saturday of every month

PADDY FIELDS.

Roberts Arundel What Next?

POLICE were out again at the Stockport works of Roberts Arundel last night, as the first batch of over 30 redundant scabs left the factory. Large numbers of pickets laughed and jeered as the scabs came out.

For the pickets, this was the first ray of sunshine in a week in which negotiations had once again broken down. After an hour's discussions at the Ministry of Labour on Monday, the Union representatives walked out when the Company officials announced that they had no authority to negotiate a settlement, and that they would have to

write to America for instructions. This latest instance is just another act in something which, if it was not so tragic for the men involved, would be a farce. No matter how good the local officials, they are tied by the rules and in a dispute like this, constitutionalism isn't much good. As one local shop steward said to me, 'If we'd have had a well-established shop stewards' committee in the area, we could have settled this dispute in less than a month, with or without the officials'.

When you think what unofficial action achieved during the week of the mass pickets, in forcing the

Company to reopen talks, after refusing to do so for weeks, you can appreciate the truth of the statement.

However, the Unions have now ruled unofficial action out completely, and, consequently, things seemed to have reached stalemate. What has happened at Roberts Arundel demonstrates the real need for the formation of unofficial shop stewards' committees, and there does seem a definite possibility of an attempt being made to form one in this area.

Issue of Control at Metcalfe's

ACCORDING to statistics, the average length of an industrial dispute in this country is less than a day. Few of them ever get a mention in the press and yet many of them are over one of the most important issues in factories today, the issue of control. Who controls the factory, men or management?

One of the more militant factories in the Stockport area is the Romiley engineering firm of Davis and Metcalfe. Since January of this year alone, there has been three short disputes over issues relating to control. The right of management to move men from job to job, an attempt to force the firm to employ a local militant who had been blacklisted

by every other firm in the area, and this week a strike over the question of job timing.

About a year ago Metcalfe's shut down a small works they had in Dukinfield and brought all the personnel up to Romiley. The management, in return for the men moving, promised that they should be kept together in an extension which was built on to the Romiley works, and that agreements that were operative in Dukinfield should stand. One of these was that the timing of jobs should be done only by a wristwatch. Yet in the rest of the factory a 'fly-back stopwatch' was used. Recently the management went back on their promises and tried to standardise job timing throughout the factory with the use of the stopwatch. The stewards refused and used this occasion to press for the use of a wristwatch for job timing in the Romiley part of the firm.

Then, last Friday, late in the afternoon, the management sacked six machine

shop workers from the Dukinfield part claiming that they were redundant. On the following Monday, two new machine operators were started. The stewards immediately went to see, the management demanding that the two new workers be sacked and two of the others reinstated. The management refused to discuss it with them, so the men downed tools, and after a meeting outside the gates, went home. On Tuesday, following another meeting with the management, they went back. The management agreed that all six workers would be taken back and not only that, but a wristwatch will now be used for all job timing throughout the factory.

Once the men were out, the stewards decided to press for as much as they could get, and they got it all; with tight production schedules the management just can't afford to have stoppages, and the men know it.

NORTHERN WORKER.

Worms will turn

GEORGE WOODCOCK, TUC General Secretary, had a meeting with Mr. Stewart last Friday. It was a very brief meeting at which Stewart informed Woodcock that although he appreciated the fact that the TUC would love to impose their own form of wage freeze, the Government could not risk any thaw around the edges. Therefore, the Government would have to implement Part II of Prices and Incomes. By the time this article is in print Stewart will have made a public statement.

John Davies, Director General of Confederation of British Industry, also saw Stewart for half an hour. Stewart was informed that Confederation members were very disturbed about the granting of Civil Service pay increases.

One thing about this Labour Government, it can act and the play that they are performing now ('Democracy') deserves an 'Oscar'. One can always make a show of consulting with the interested parties, if the outcome is predetermined beforehand.

This Government has pulled every stroke in the book and only two unions have shown any signs of fight (irrespective of whether we agree with their methods or not), ASSET and DATA, and another 'stroke' is on the way. According to the Government the Wages Councils' structure will have to be changed. Ray Gunter makes the point that Wages Councils are concerned with statutory minimums and the practice has grown up among employers of paying the increases in statutory minima to all their workers regardless of their actual rates or earnings. Therefore, pay increases which might be fully justified in the case of the lowest paid workers, are as a consequence enjoyed by many workers who were relatively well paid.

I think it is fair to say that the majority of the workers covered by Wages Councils are those who are poorly organised and who are in the type of industries that cannot be measured production-wise.

Therefore, even if we accept the fact that these workers or some of them, enjoy the benefits of the 'wage drift' their earnings are still bloody low. The word relative is mentioned. Relative to whom?

A part-time worker doing three days a week, or relative to Ray Gunter's wages of £9,750 a year?

Gunter still has to decide what he is going to do about the Retail Drapery Council's award which the PIB classified as 'too much'.

If the Minister of Labour and the Government have the criminal audacity to interfere with the award, this action will push all lower paid workers further down the wage scale because a precedent will have been set.

Will we worms ever turn? And I don't mean by playing silly buggers with ballot boxes, Tweedledum in this year and Tweedledee in next, but by taking action which means that the people have had enough of the 'ins' and then 'outs' but want all 'outs'—permanently.

BILL CHRISTOPHER.

Ford's Wage Plan

CAR MANUFACTURERS have been doing a lot of thinking recently on the wage structure that they operate in their plants. Rootes in Coventry are trying, with considerable opposition from their workers (see FREEDOM 28.1.67 and 18.2.67), to change from piecework to a measured day work. The British Motor Holdings (formerly BMC) are also thinking of changing from piecework.

Fords already have a form of measured day work and pay on an hourly basis. However they have been dissatisfied with this and so, about a year ago, with union co-operation, a firm of management consultants, Urwich Orr and Partners, were called in to do job evaluation. This week their findings, together with Fords proposals for a new wage structure, were presented to the trade unions and the rank and file.

The new structure will abolish the present four grades of labour and will introduce five new ones. Women will now be graded according to the job they perform, instead, as previously, in

Freedom

For Workers' Control

APRIL 22 1967 Vol 28 No 12

NEWS FROM GIBRALTAR

THERE EXISTS no Libertarian Group as such, in Gibraltar! Perhaps we don't need one, for we have here an excellent branch of the Transport & General Workers' Union. This 2,000-strong T&G branch has progressive policies and quite a few local libertarians can be found amongst its leaders. Due to their personal qualities, these men have a popular appeal which transcends its political limitations.

The recent Biennial General Meeting of the Gibraltar T&GWU (Gibraltar's only industrial Union) was a clear demonstration of that Union's progressive intentions. The motions put by the militant dockyard section (the Union's biggest), in particular, showed something of a libertarian leaning! It was the dockyard workers who recently indicated that they would prefer to free the Union from its connections with the political parties here.

The first motion backed by the dockyard called for 'the formation of a Co-Operative Society in Gibraltar'. This would be organised by the Union, with a view to containing price increases, cutting out 'the middle man', and providing services for members. During the discussion of another motion, a dockyard delegate described how he would like the intended new premises to include a rest home for the old members, and a school of further education where young workers might study. Both these motions were passed.

Among the other motions passed by the meeting was one from the dockyard, attacking the system here whereby local workers work a 42-hour week, whilst British employees contracted from England only do 40. Another motion asked that efforts be made to obtain three weeks' holiday with pay, and a motion recommending a revised pay structure also went through.

However, two motions supported by the dockyard were resisted by the Executive, which remitted them. The first, to be held up, was a motion asking that the 'Executive Committee press the Government (Gibraltar) to release information to allow a study of the distribution of wealth in relation to taxpayers in Gibraltar to be made'. The wealthy here don't seem to pay income tax, super-tax, or company tax, on

anything like the same scale as in England. Whilst it is known 75 persons, out of 25,000 living here, receive an annual income of over £5,000, it is not known by how much they exceed this figure.

The other motion remitted suggested that we reject the principle of calculating 'cost of living' increases on a percentage basis, as 'this progressively increases the gap between the lower and higher income groups'. Obviously, the intention here is to bring about a wage equality by way of a fixed rise in incomes for everyone, and so decreasing the pay demarcations between different grades of workers. This is important, because the Union often finds itself fighting for percentage pay increases, which are later claimed by high grade Civil Servants, in this way they get the biggest rise for the least effort. Needless to say if the Government functionaries think they're worth more, they should demand 'responsibility' money, not a 'cost of living' allowance.

With the basic wage of many workers at under £8 a week, and prices rising due to trade problems with Spain, the people here are becoming restless. The teachers have already struck once over pay and are threatening a longer strike next term. A housewives' organisation is considering a boycott of fruit and vegetables as a protest against price rises. A labour shortage is also being created by Spain, who in the past provided cheap labour, but is now gradually withdrawing her workers.

Much will now depend on the T&GWU of Gibraltar which, though not exactly to our taste (it has the English T&G Rule Book), is syndicalist in spirit, if not in structure. This Union is responsible, in that it is willing to tackle the price problem by starting a Co-Op, and technical education by running a school. On wages, they're militant and have just turned down a 5% wage rise offered by the employers, and subsequently raised their own demand from 9% to 12%. But, above all, these people are anxious! Anxious that their sons will not become waiters and shoeblacks of tourism, as some businessmen, shopkeepers and politicians here would like, but become well-trained industrial workers. T&G WORKER.

Contact Column

This column exists for mutual aid. Donations towards cost of typesetting will be welcome.

Unfurnished Accommodation Wanted. Responsible gentleman, thirties, exemplary tenant, requires spacious self-contained flat/house, minimum three bedrooms, central London, quiet surroundings. Maximum seven guineas inclusive. No premium. Could decorate. Reciprocal references. Box 52.

Colour Film Show. Aldermaston March. Easter 1967. Wednesday, April 26, at 8.30 p.m. at Lucas Arms (upstairs room), 245 Grays Inn Road, W.C.1. Syndicalist Workers' Federation.

Duplicator, Anybody? Needed for important Vietnam project. Few months loan or hire, or would buy if very cheap. 106 Regents Park Road, London, N.W.1 or phone 01-272 7200 (Brian McGee).

Open University. At London School of Economics, Houghton St., Aldwych, W.C.2 until April 26. Twenty-four hours a day. Everyone interested is welcome.

Badges. 'Free Stuart Christie—Franco's Prisoner', 3/6 for six (including postage), minimum order. Proceeds to new campaign expenses. Orders to John Rety, c/o Freedom Press.

House or Apartment wanted for July. American comrades (4) need house or flat to rent for month of July. Box 50.

Former Junkie. Wants job and accommodation in London. Box 54.

Civil Liberties Social. Bar, music, entertainment (performers wanted). 7-11.30 p.m. Saturday, April 29, Camden Studios, Camden Street, N.W.1, in aid of NCCL. Tickets 5/- at door.

Accommodation Available — London. Medium sized room in unfurnished s/c flat Camden Town, about £3 p.w. Whole flat (2 large/2 medium rooms, k. & b.) on three year lease from mid-May, £500 p.a. Box 53.

Accommodation Wanted. Cheap sleeping accommodation/dry floor. Anywhere in London for seven days June-September. No cooking. Write Alan Murgatroyd, 28 Sun Street, Haworth, Keighley, Yorks.

Elizabeth Windsor. Hull Anarchist Group require any anti-royalist information or literature. Particularly about the Queen. H.A.G., 89 Fountain Road, Hull.

Unaligned in Vietnam? Easter Pamphlet. 'Neither Washington nor Hanoi but Libertarian Socialism.' Duplicated pamphlet for sale, price 3d. Write Laurens Otter, Tolstoi, New Yatt Road, North Leigh, Witney, Oxon.