

Freedom

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STRUGGLE FOR POWER IN SPAIN

P.P. is no armchair revolutionary. His despatch is from inside Spain, where he is active in the libertarian cause. This article reached us clandestinely. Further reports are promised.—Editors.

TO GIVE A CLEAR and objective view of the various groups that make up the Spanish opposition movement is, understandably enough, quite a difficult task as they are all clandestine movements and are apt to be cautious when met with inquiries from outsiders. Even after having gained their confidence one is just as wise as before as they are apt to exaggerate the size of their following.

Without doubt the first place is taken by the Communist Party (in numbers only!) but its most effective organ is the so-called 'Comisiones Obreras' (roughly comparable to the shop stewards committees, but nowhere near as revolutionary as those bodies). The 'Comisiones Obreras' are mostly responsible for the spate of strikes in Spain since early last year and have considerable force in almost every industrial centre in Spain. Although supposedly apolitical, these commissions were spawned by the Party to take the place of the factory committees of yesteryear that were being maintained by elderly Party officials who lacked the drive necessary to consolidate the forces of the petite bourgeoisie opposition. The tactic was successful and now the strength of the workers' commissions lies not with the rank and file CP member, but with the Catholic groups such as the Christian Democrats and even the powerful 'Opus Dei' which has its tentacles in everything imaginable.

The Spanish employers prefer to bargain with the leaders of the 'Comisiones Obreras' than to arbitrate through the Falangist Syndicates. This, I think, reflects the state of affairs in Spain at the moment—police persecution is almost nil (to my knowledge only one 'leader' of the 'Comisiones Obreras' is in prison, José Luis Camacho, and it is more than probable he will be freed very shortly). Capital knows that Franco cannot continue much longer, and that these commissions will form the new TU structure of Spain when he goes—they are preparing for that day! Despite all the publicity, agitation and successful strikes, the commissions are as revolutionary as the British Liberal Party. The *ultima thule* of their aspirations is something similar to British parliamentary democracy; I would define them as pinkly-tinged Social Democrats.

One could almost compare the development of the 'Comisiones Obreras' to that of the BTU's prior to the Repeal Act of 1824; they also show every symp-

tom of developing along the same lines as the 'Amalgamated Unions' did from the 1850s onward: denial of the class struggle, proscription of the sympathetic strike, etc.—all this, of course, to uphold the new 'image' the CP is creating as a peaceful, willing-to-be-law-abiding, but they-won't-let-us, sort of thing, parliamentary party which is trying hard to live down its rather turbulent and sometimes scandalous adolescence, and to prove itself as a staid and mature organ of popular expression.

AFTER FRANCO, WHAT?

The General Secretary of the Spanish Communist Party (in exile), Santiago Carrillo, states the immediate programme of the CP in Spain (presumably after Franco's fall) in his document 'After Franco, What?'. From what I can gather from sixteen pages of small type, the programme is roughly as follows: State control of all major industries; the opening of diplomatic relations between Spain and the workers' paradise (Russia, in this case), including the satellite countries (except Albania); last, but not least, we find a personal assurance from S. Carrillo and the executive committee in exile to the Spanish bourgeoisie that their interests will not only be defended but upheld as well!—I leave you to judge for yourselves.

Before passing on I must not forget to mention the pro-Chinese CP, who claim to be the only true purveyors of Marxism as interpreted by Lenin. They are Stalinists although they blushing deny the fact; those who follow the Muscovite star are, in the eyes of the Maoists, 'snivelling revisionists', 'decaying papier maché tigers' and other pejorative, but picturesque, phrases. The 'Marxist-Leninist' CP is not nearly so powerful as the Revisionist CP, but when one examines the comparative age-groups of the two organizations it is seen that the revisionist age-group is from 35 upwards, whilst the M-L CP has more support amongst students, apprentices and white collar workers under 35.

Although the final aim of the Marxist-Leninist CP is slightly more 'revolutionary' than the 'Revisionist CP', it is not very obvious in their immediate programme for Spain. Like its progenitor, the 'Marxist-Leninists' are leaning over backwards to gain the support not only of the Catholic opposition, but also of the petite bourgeoisie; once again we find the same assertion in *Vanguardia Obrera* that the interests of the middle-classes will be upheld (comes the revolution) and that they will have nothing to fear from the Marxist-Leninist State.

COMMUNIST RIVALRIES

Needless to say that relations between the two contenders for the title 'CP' are quite bitter; although it doesn't go so far as peeing on dissident comrades it is not far off it! The whole situation is quite absurd; most amusing of all is the fact that both 'Parties' print *Mundo Obrero*, exactly the same. This, of course, leads to some confusion amongst both Party and non-Party members who have now reached the stage where they don't know if they are coming or going. The Maoist paper is distinguished only by the inter-spersion of picturesque aphorisms by Comrade Chairman amidst the heavy Marxist dialectic. One interesting point to note is that, during and after the recent Israeli-Arab war, both CPs fervently competed with each other to see who could find the filthiest phrase to denounce the overwhelming victory of Israel—it was a draw, both came out, almost simultaneously, with variations on a slogan—'Imperialist swine' and 'Imperialist tiger'! Forgetting, of course, in most un-Marxist-

Continued on page 2

Is Johnson a Prisoner of War?

THERE ARE SOME indications that the war in Vietnam may be drawing to a close or moving to another theatre. The *Sunday Mirror*, with its uncanny flair for being on the popular side, has featured an excellent (if belated) article on 'How Can Britain Approve a War Like This?', with the sub-heading 'The country where there is an Aberfan twice a day' and even Alistair Cooke of the BBC, that soured liberal, returned from his holiday to notice a change of feeling in the US, and quoted extensively from Mary McCarthy's new book which advises the Americans to get out of Vietnam.

One cannot entirely share the wishful-think of the left that America is on the brink of social revolution due to disillusionment with events in Vietnam and that the combined forces of Hippies, Black Power and Flower Power will sweep the mighty from their seats.

It is only when the establishment itself grows disenchanted that the spell will be broken. Those progressive and radical journals *Esquire* and the *New Yorker* have both carried excellent anti-Vietnam war articles (in their August and July 15 issues respectively). Can one believe they would risk circulation and, what is more important, advertising revenue, on publicising an unpopular cause?

There have been right-wing rumblings of discontent. Mr. McNamara is not happy about the air-strikes, Senator Saltonstall has his doubts, and even Shirley Temple doesn't believe in Santa Claus Johnson. Art Buchwald, in the *International Herald Tribune*, two weeks ago compared the efforts to promote the Vietnam war to the imagined efforts of Mr. McNamara (late of the Ford Motor Company) to promote the Edsel car after it had manifestly failed to sell. (In fact the

Edsel was withdrawn.) Mr. Buchwald's narrative tells of the progressive increase in workers at the factory and with every increase sales of the car decline. Finally the year comes when they have sold one car only to the Smithsonian museum but the promoters are still hopeful that if they keep increasing the workforce they can sell the car! The analogy is obvious. It may be that Americans in Paris can quite safely speak out against the war in Vietnam but these indications are surely the tip of an iceberg.

It could be that the rebellions in US cities have jolted Americans into some sensibility but the knowledge is dawning (aided by higher taxation and higher casualty lists). Conscription too is not highly popular, selective though it may be. Even Ayn Rand, that arch-rightist individualist, has come out against it and, as our own dear *Evening News* said with charming naivety (anent Australian immigrants), 'national service is one thing, active service is another'.

The great problem for President Johnson is, how to end the war. He is in fact a prisoner of war. The military establishment knows nothing else but war, parts of the economy thrive on war, much of the political establishment bases its philosophy upon an anti-communist war. These pressure groups bear upon Johnson, flatter him, and make him feel a history-maker, a John Wayne riding out against the Communist Comanches, but he is essentially a small-time politician, a hick from the sticks in a situation too big for him. The military are getting too powerful, the economy is getting out of balance (witness the unemployment in Detroit) and, as for an anti-communist crusade, which communists do we war against?—Kosy-

gin's such a cosy guy!

As for the war itself, it seems to be a stalemate. 'The flies have conquered the fly-paper,' as Steinbeck said of the German occupation of Norway. It is conceivable that, by pushing forward, the Americans could occupy the whole of North Vietnam but with their tactics of infiltration the NLF could hold the whole of South Vietnam. Neither side seems to be fighting the same kind of war, except insofar as they are both inflicting enormous punishment on the people of Vietnam.

How can Johnson quit the war? Elections are some way off and he couldn't retire with honour. Perhaps the elections in Vietnam will give him a chance to say that the Vietnamese can run their own country. Last October, Senator George Aiken of Vermont produced a plan to end the war in Vietnam. He suggested that the United States should merely declare itself the military victor and announce that this stage of the war was over. Honour (or honor) would thus be satisfied leaving the issue as to who has won politically to other realms of activity. Like the race in *Alice in Wonderland* everybody has won and everybody must have prizes. Although in this case everyone seems to have lost. However this is Johnson's problem and it is not the function of anarchists to tell governments how to end wars or change the labels on wars.

For the radical and peace movement the problem is similar. They too are war prisoners. They have concentrated their hates upon the Americans, they have distinguished between good states and bad states, they have acclaimed 'the peasant's bomb', they have argued as to the niceties between 'peace' and 'victory', they have worked themselves into nervous wrecks at the sight of the atrocities (which are the normal accompaniment of war) and have worked themselves into frenzies of admiration for the liberation tactics of the Vietcong (which entail those self-same atrocities visited upon 'the others'). An end to the Vietnam war may only mean an end to this war, it does not mean an end to the exploitation of Vietnamese by Vietnamese or of American by American. War is only the continuation of diplomacy (and politics) by other means. To believe that wars are a mere accidental aberration of states (of some types) that can be modified in their harshness is an illusion shared by a great deal of the radical and pacifist movement.

It is this that leads to the isolation of Vietnam as an agitational issue and to the danger that if the war in Vietnam ends—and it is not the only war in the world today—the Vietnik will find his occupation gone and will sink back into non-attachment, non-commitment or just plain apathy. JACK ROBINSON.



ANARCHY AT THE FAIR

THE HARLOW TOWN Show was a jolly affair. There was a very large, good humoured crowd and at least 20,000 kids enjoying all the fun of the fair. Grown-ups with vulgar tastes were also well catered for. There was professional wrestling, beautifully rehearsed and very amusing, show jumping and rodeo and a great local band in lovely coloured coats and no musical sense whatsoever.

Here was democracy at its most alluring, the hard-working populace pouring into every nook and crevice of the show, demanding to be entertained.

In the marquees all that makes up for life in a town was advertising its existence. Commerce was there, traders from Wales, carpet sellers from Birmingham and the best fish and chips fryer from Cambridge. So were the sports clubs, the women's institutes, the film clubs, the horticulture lists, the amateur theatricals, the churches and the pubs under canvas. There was also a lushly painted, soothing merry-go-round with 'prancing ponies and proud peacocks', and dodgess and coconut-shies.

The Harlow Anarchists went down great with the crowd. All other political

stalls were ignored and quite rightly—they had nothing to offer except statistics, blown up photographs and slogans. The Harlow Anarchists were giving away free balloons and home made lemonade; there was a continuous bustle and gaiety around their stand. They burnt incense, played gramophone records and made their presence felt.

They were generally astounded when it was announced that they won third prize in the stalls competition. First came the Church Choir and second prize went to Amnesty.

Harlow is taking its anarchists seriously. Here is a very simple anarchist tenet put into practice: involvement in the affairs of the community. It is good to know that Kilburn Anarchists are attempting to do the same at the Brent Show this weekend. JOHN RETY.

ANARCHY 79

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ANOTHER ROUND IN THE CENSORSHIP BATTLE

AT THE TRAVERSE THEATRE, during the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, on August 21, 1967, a play entirely new to this country was presented by the LA MAMA EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE of NEW YORK. Immediately, the newspapers... particularly the *Scottish Daily Express* in a blistering article headed "FILTH ON THE FRINGE!"

started the usual outburst whenever anything new and untraditional is attempted. Like frantic Mrs. Grundys at the point of being raped, they screamed, screamed and screamed!

The play causing all the fuss was called *Futz*, written by Rochell Ownes, and it was set in a small farming community in America.

In one scene a girl is handled intimately by two men.

In another the leading character appears to be suggesting intercourse with a pig.

In yet another an actress bares her breasts before her mentally defective son who has just murdered a girl.

And in yet another a man puts his head under a girl's skirt.

(A song which went 'Teenage cremation, oh how I cried when you died' sent them wild.)

These then are the 'sordid' scenes which have created convulsions amongst the 'with it' critics and certain members of Edinburgh Corporation. The storm produced by them has amounted to almost an anti-free expression campaign bordering on a paranoid obsession. One could almost visualize Senator Joe McCarthy mounted on the back of John Knox (not a sow) riding through the cobbled streets of Auld Reekie screaming—'Burn down the theatre! Light the stakes! Up with the gallows!'

In defence of the play, the La Mama Club Director, Tom O'Horgan, was quoted: 'We intend to produce a very physical theatre by pushing the limits of physicality to the ultimate. I don't believe you can preach to an audience... the days of that kind of theatre are past. Audiences now are too sophisticated to accept that. The indirect method of getting a play across is the only way. It starts subliminal rumbling on the part of the audience. That is why we repeat our physical acts so that after a period the audience no longer sees them simply as

they are—but asks them as the language of the play. They are left free to appreciate the message that we are trying to get across.'

Gordon McDougall, Artistic Director of the Traverse Theatre Club, an experimental group that—though suffering withdrawal of financial aid and threats of closure—has gained a high reputation both here and abroad, immediately challenged the moaners to a discussion on censorship. (And to show that the general public want such plays to be staged, two hundred people queued the following day outside a theatre normally seating about sixty.)

Censorship is usually established in the holy name of morality (whatever that means), but history has countless examples of how malevolent censorship has been abused—either politically or artistically. Today, the main attack against any progressive work of art is spearheaded by the Torquemadas of the Catholic Church and the Moral Rearmament witch-hunters, organizations which have condemned and tried to have banned books such as *Last Exit to Brooklyn*, *Cain's Book*, *Naked Lunch*, *Fanny Hill*,

The Ginger Man, *City of Night*, *Tropic of Cancer*, *Sexus*, *Tropic of Capricorn*, *Our Lady of the Flowers*, et al. (They have played a major though clandestine role in the senseless banning of the film *Ulysses* in many of our cities, depriving intelligent people from seeing Joyce's magnum opus.) In short, these hidebound hangovers from an unenlightened age are utterly and totally against everything that is NEW.

This continuous and growing menace against man's basic and vital liberties—the right to express himself freely by word or in print—must be resisted to the death. The artist's essential right to preserve his creativeness in its original, unexpurgated, uncensored form, must be the principal aim of every libertarian on this hellish planet. We must hit back hard at the ossified brains that form the hypocritical branch of TWISTS INCORPORATED who would incarcerate us in our own skins.

As an aspiring playwright, one who detests anything that proclaims itself the guardian of public morals, who abhors even the censorious attendant obliterating the surreptitious gem of the pisshouse

poet (and some of the most ingenious poems and sayings have decorated the shithouse tiles), I maintain that the Traverse Theatre's fight for the right to stage a play dealing with sex and bestiality is the Anarchist's fight. It is only one more round in the centuries-old war—FREEDOM versus TYRANNY. It is a battle we must win.

JONATHAN TELFER.

LA MAMA PREMIER IN LONDON

THE La Mama Troupe will play for two weeks in London, September 11 to September 23, instead of four days as previously announced. This will be their first visit to London. They are being presented at the Mercury Theatre, 2 Ladbroke Road, W.11, by the International Theatre Club and performances are for members only. Temporary membership is available in the ITC for the La Mama plays. They plan to present *Futz*, *Melodrama Play*, and *Times Square*.

Struggle for Power in SPAIN

Continued from page 1

like manner, that they were thus supporting a degenerate and corrupt feudal regime against a highly developed and progressive capitalist society with, most important of all, one of the socially-conscious working classes and peasantry in the world today. Marx must have been having epileptic fits in Highgate cemetery!

The 'Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias' is another group I must mention, not because it commands any great following (in fact I doubt if they number more than twenty), but because it is one of the greatest dangers to the revolutionary movement in Spain. The FAR has a programme quite acceptable to anarchists although it has a Marxist Syndicalist background—something like the 'Social Labour Party' of Daniel de Leon or even *Solidarity* (my apologies for the comparison, I have nothing but the greatest respect for the latter journal).

According to this group, the Social Revolution can only be precipitated by the forming of armed guerrilla bands, based in the Sierras, who will take Spain town by town. These inspiring groups will swoop down upon industrial, agricultural and mining communities, throw out the forces of reaction, and hand over the workshops and the land to the people; the class struggle being archaic and superfluous! They lay claim to possessing huge, well-equipped arsenals at key points in Spain.

This is their revolutionary doctrine which to us is quite irrelevant at the moment—what is important is that the founder and spiritual leader of this organization, previous to the 'FAR', was a member of the executive committee of the Spanish Communist Party (M-L) and was expelled from that body suspected of collaborating with the Spanish secret police after a series of untimely arrests. That he is a police spy I cannot affirm but I have good grounds to believe that

he is an 'agent provocateur' of great merit. He plays the game of political hopscotch, affiliating himself to other underground groups, creating schisms and causing dissension, thus winning himself converts; there have been quite a few mysterious arrests where this man has been involved—he has a lot to answer for in the near future!

THE ANARCHISTS

The libertarian movement in Spain has revived considerably over the last eighteen months and the causes are obvious. The bomb campaign, called off in 1964, was replaced by another type of 'propaganda by deed'—kidnapping! The statements made by Monseigneur Ussia after his release on May 10, 1966, radically changed the image of the anarchist as a mere bomb-thrower, nun-raper and priest-killer. Interest was at last revived in the Iberian Federation of Young Libertarians and political prisoners in Spain within Spain itself!

The young people who had only vaguely heard of anarchism began to take an interest in libertarian thought and action, but sad to say, there was no one who could tell them, or give them books to read or just discuss the subject with them. The youth, however, went its own way, forming a multitude of groups, some ephemeral, some not; Trotskyists, Socialism et Barbare, Marxist-Leninists, etc., etc., the impetus was given to these groups by the kidnapping of Mgr. Marcos Ussia. There has been, however, since then, a discussion group started in Madrid which, we hope, will correct this deplorable state of affairs and form a nucleus within the university and in the workshops of Madrid, spreading throughout Spain not only equalling the force of the CNT/FAI of yesteryear, but surpassing it in both numbers and dynamism.

Elderly members of the CNT/FAI were shocked out of their apathy last year (prior to Ussia) when a handful of *Cenetistes* initiated dialogues with the

Falangista syndicates without carrying any mandate from the CNT whatsoever. They were denounced not only from outside Spain, but most vociferously from comrades in the interior who had previously sunk into a state of apathetic resignation; they were re-animated by this challenge coming from Madrid itself—no, the libertarian movement inside Spain is not so dead as it once seemed; it is awakening once again, slowly but surely.

The possibilities are tremendous; the young people who are socially conscious have lost their faith in Marxist dogma and the half-arsed measures of social democracy; they are searching for something which will bring them the freedom and social justice that the doctrinaire parties cannot supply. As I mentioned before, the Fourth International, the recently augmented Anti-Bomb Movement, S et B and diverse other groups, have a complete monopoly on the youth, but as yet they are merely probing—looking for the answer to their problems—and that answer is the Libertarian Social Revolution!

P.P.

HELP KILBURN ANARCHISTS at the BRENT SHOW Saturday Sept. 9 Sunday Sept. 10 10.30 onwards each day

PROPOSED GROUPS

BIRKENHEAD. Please get in touch with G. Woodhouse, 59 Cambridge Road, Woodchurch, Birkenhead.

MUCH HADHAM, HERTS. Get in touch with Leslie Riordan, High Street, Much Hadham, Herts.

BATH ANARCHISTS don't exist! Or do they? Contact Roy Emery, 3 Abbey Street, Bath.

SHEFFIELD RADICAL GROUP. Contact S.R.G. 31 Harcourt Road, Sheffield, 10.

LONDON: NOTTING HILL. Please get in touch with John Bennett and Marilyn Faddy, Flat 4, 88 Clarendon Road, London, W.11 Tel.: 727 9745.

TORONTO, CANADA. Any Torontonians interested in Anarchism please contact Leonard Tankas, 108 Silverhill Drive, Islington, Ontario, Canada.

ABROAD

AUSTRALIA. Federation of Australian Anarchists, P.O. Box A 389, Sydney South. Public meetings every Sunday in the Domain, 2 p.m. and Mondays, 72 Oxford Street, Paddington, Sydney, 8 p.m.

DANISH ANARCHIST FEDERATION. Gothegade, 27, Viborg, Denmark.

VANCOUVER, B.C., CANADA. Anyone interested in forming anarchist and/or direct action peace group contact Derek A. James, 1844 Grand Boulevard, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada. Tel.: 987-2693.

U.S.A. VERMONT/NEW HAMPSHIRE. Discussion group meets weekly. Contact Ed Strauss at RFD 2, Woodstock, Vermont 05091, USA.

SWEDEN. Stockholm Anarchist Federation. Contact Nadir, Box 19104, Stockholm 19, Sweden.

CANADA: Winnipeg. Anybody interested in Direct action/anarchy contact G. J. Nasir, 606 Matheson Avenue, Winnipeg, 17, Manitoba.

BELGIUM: LIEGE. Provos, c/o Jacques Chartier, 11 Avenue de la Laiterie, Sclessin-Liege, Belgium.

EAST AFRICA. George Matthews would like to make contact. Secondary school teacher from UK. PO Box 90, Kakamega, Kenya.

USA: NORTH-EASTERN MINNESOTA. Contact James W. Cain, 323 Fourth Street, Cloquet, Minn. 55720, USA.

GROUP-TREASON. Australian Anarchist, c/o Melbourne University Union or A.R. Giles Peters, c/o same.

Anarchist Federation of Britain

(As there is no national secretariat for enquiries, speakers, etc., please contact local groups.)

1967 AFB CONFERENCE. Oct. 6, 7, 8. For details of London venue and proposals for agenda apply to LFA.

LONDON FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS. Temporary address c/o Wooden Shoe, 42 New Compton Street, London, W.C.2. Sunday evening meetings 8 p.m. Lamb & Flag, Rose Street, off Garrick Street, London, W.C.2. (Leicester Square tube).

LEWISHAM. Locations of meetings temporarily altered to 83 Gregory Crescent, London, S.E.9.

EALING ANARCHIST GROUP. Get into touch with Ken King, 54 Norwood Road, Southall.

OFF-CENTRE LONDON DISCUSSION MEETINGS

3rd Wednesday of each month at Jack Robinson and Mary Canipa's, 21 Rumbold Road, S.W.6 (off King's Road), 8 p.m.

3rd Friday of each month at 8 p.m. at Donald and Irene Rooma's, now at 13 Savernake Road, London, N.W.3.

REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND GROUPS

ALTRINCHAM ANARCHIST YOUTH GROUP. Get in touch with Stephen Richards, 25 North Vale Road, Timperley, Cheshire.

ABERDEEN GROUP. Correspondence to Michael Dey, 142 Walker Road, Aberdeen, Kent.

BEXLEY ANARCHIST GROUP. Correspondence to Paul Wildish, 2 Cumbrian Avenue, Barnehurst, Kent.

BELFAST: Contact Tony Adams, 11 Winetavern Street, Smithfield Square, Belfast.

BIRMINGHAM LIBERTARIAN GROUP. All anarchists, syndicalists, individualists, etc., please contact Geoff and Caroline Charlton, top flat, 8 Lightwoods Hill, Smethwick, Warley, Wores. 25 mins. from Birmingham City Centre. No. 9 bus.

RESISTANCE GROUP. C/o Birmingham Peace Action Centre (formerly CND office), Factory Road, Birmingham, 19.

BOLTON. Get in touch with Les Smith, 74 Arnold Street, Bolton, Lancs.

BRIGHTON. Get in touch with 79 Coleman Street, Brighton, 7. Poetry readings every Sunday from 4 to 5 p.m. at the Fishmarket. All poets welcome.

BRISTOL. Contact: Dave Thorne, 49 Cotham Brow, Bristol, 6.

DUNDEE GROUP. Contact Bob and Una Turnbull, 39 Stratheden Park, Stratheden Hospital, by Cupar, Fife.

GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP ONE. Correspondence to Robert Lynn, 2b Saracen Head Lane, Glasgow, C.1.

HARLOW ANARCHIST GROUP. Enquiries to Keith Nathan, 138 Pennymead, Harlow or John Barrick, 14 Centre Avenue, Epping.

HERTS. Contact either Stuart Mitchell at South View, Potters Heath Lane, Potters Heath, Welwyn, Herts or Jeff Cloves, 46 Hughendon Road, Marshalswick, St. Albans, Herts. Friday, September 22 Johnny Funnell on 'Anarchy and Science Fiction', 8 p.m., 48 Lonsdale Road, Stevenage.

HULL ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact J. Tempest, 89 Fountain Road, Hull. Telephone: 212526.

IPSWICH ANARCHISTS. Contact Neil Dean, 74 Cemetery Road, Ipswich, Suffolk.

KILBURN, LONDON. Contact Andrew Dewar, 16 Kilburn House, Malvern Place, London, N.W.6. Meetings 8 p.m. every Tuesday.

LEE, LONDON, S.E.12. Anarchist-Radical Group. Contact 'Paul', c/o Lewisham Group (above).

ORPINGTON ANARCHIST GROUP. Knockholt, Nr. Sevenoaks, Kent. Every six weeks at Greenways, Knockholt. Phone: Knockholt 2316. Brian and Maureen Richardson.

PLYMOUTH ANARCHIST FEDERATION. Contact J. Hill, 79 Underlane, Plymstock, Plymouth, Devon.

READING ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Alan Ross, 116 Belmont Road, Reading, Berks.

ROCHDALE. Please contact Richard Crawford, 4 Hargreaves Street, Sudden, Rochdale.

ROCHESTER ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Eryl Davies, 22 St. Margaret's Street, Rochester.

Fortnightly meetings.

SLOUGH. Contact Sid Rawle, 4 Hillperton Road, Slough, Bucks.

SOUTH EAST ESSEX ANARCHIST GROUP. We would love to hear from fellow-sympathisers in area. All enquiries to M. Powell, 7 Lingeroff, Basildon, Essex.

SOUTH WEST MIDDLESEX ANARCHIST GROUP. Meets alternate Thursdays and Saturdays, on Eel Pie Island. Contact P. J. Goody, 36 Norman Avenue, Hanworth, Middlesex.

TROWBRIDGE PEACE ACTION GROUP. Contact P. Weston, Chivele, Butts Lane, Keovil, Trowbridge, Wiltshire. Meetings every Tuesday 7.30 p.m. Friends' Meeting House (opp. Bus Station).

WEST HAM ANARCHISTS. Contact Stephen Higgs, Westbury Road, Forest Gate, E.7.

NORTH-WEST FEDERATION

Regional Secretary: Alistair Rattray, 35a Devonshire Road, Chorley.

NORTH WEST ANARCHIST FEDERATION. BUXTON ANARCHIST GROUP. Secretary: F. A. Gresty, Punchbowl, Manchester Road, Buxton.

CHORLEY ANARCHIST GROUP. Secretary: Alistair T. Rattray, 35a Devonshire Road, Chorley.

LIVERPOOL ANARCHIST PROPAGANDA GROUP AND 'HIPPIE' MOVEMENT. Gerry Bree, 16 Faulkner Square, Liverpool, 8. Meetings weekly. 'Freedom' Sales—Pier Head, Saturdays, Sundays, Evenings.

MANCHESTER ANARCHIST GROUP. Secretary: Dave Poulson, 9 Boland Street, Fallowfield, Manchester, 14.

SOUTH WALES ANARCHIST FEDERATION

CARDIFF ANARCHIST GROUP. SWANSEA ANARCHIST GROUP. All correspondence to: Julian Ross, 11 Wellfield Close, Bishopston, Swansea.

★

LIBERTARIAN TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION. Meetings—discussions—activities. Contact Peter Ford, 82 North Road, Highgate, N.6. (Tel.: M0U 5707.)

HYDE PARK HARASSING

POLICE HARASSMENT of literature sellers at Hyde Park (which is reported in our 'Letters' section) reached a new climax last Sunday. In spite of the fact that owing to poor weather, there were only six literature sellers at the gate who were causing no obstruction, a squad of ten policemen under an Inspector suddenly appeared and ordered them to move on.

The elderly man who sells *Soviet Weekly* was told to pick up the papers he was displaying even though, as visitors to Hyde Park will know, he has been selling there without any police objection ever since the Soviet revolution was a revolution.

Finally an Inspector, accompanied by one PC D29, picked up a duffle bag containing copies of the *Morning Star* and carried it off on the grounds that it was 'lost property', ignoring demands for its

return from a Communist literature seller and refusing to give his name when asked.

In view of the mounting evidence of a major police clamp-down on civil liberties (e.g. the Jagger case and the brutality at the July 2 picket of the US Embassy), this intimidation must be resisted. We therefore call on all peace, libertarian, and socialist groups, to be present with their literature at Speakers' Corner on Sunday, September 17, when it is hoped there will be concerted resistance to this violation of free speech. The National Council for Civil Liberties have taken up the case with the Commissioner of Police but *The Times* (which is never sold at Speakers' Corner) has hitherto failed to publish a letter calling attention to the matter. *The Guardian* did—this morning—in an amended form.

ROGER SANDELL and J.R.

NOTTING HILL SUMMER PROJECT

AUGUST 26 saw the end of the Notting Hill Summer Project, during which over 150 volunteers, under the direction of George Clark, descended on Notting Hill for a month in an ambitious programme of Community Action.

Aimed as a direct attack on the problems, especially those of housing and the shortage of play space that bedevil North Kensington, it began with four days of intensive briefing sessions. During these the volunteers, mainly students, were trained in the use of the questionnaire for the housing survey. This survey is intended to provide the basis of a public housing register and to give the Community Workshop information about the ownership and administration of property in the area.

These briefing sessions were organised in a very authoritarian way, which, though not to the taste of the majority, had the merit of getting the boring details over quickly, and training a lot of students, most of whom had never seen a questionnaire before, to be able to go out interviewing within four days.

The three areas where all the householders were interviewed were Golbourne, around the top of the Portobello Road and towards Kensal Green; Colville, between Great Western Road and Portobello Road, south of the Metropolitan Railway, and the Lancaster Road redevelopment area.

The first two areas are not zoned for redevelopment, and here the emphasis was on finding out the conditions in which people were living, and the facilities of which they had the use.

In the Lancaster Road area, which is all due to come down in the next few years, in addition to the problems of the national housing crisis, there are the immediate problems of the redevelopment scheme. This ill-conceived plan is designed to provide a shopping centre, offices and a certain amount of housing for the area. Leaving aside the fact that shopping centres already built or started provide for more than the nation's estimated needs for the next 100 years, and accepting the premise

that Notting Hill needs offices rather than housing, the council is faced with the problem of rehousing those displaced by the redevelopment: it is not required to rehouse furnished tenants, nor owner occupiers, though arrangements are being made for the latter, so it is left with the unfurnished tenants. There will not be space in the scheme for all of these, and many may be rehoused far from the area.

Amongst the furnished tenants there are many who, although officially furnished, have little enough furniture provided by the landlord for them to be reclassified as unfurnished, hence becoming eligible for rehousing: and advice and assistance for such tenants is one of the services provided by the Lancaster Road Neighbourhood Centre.

This is one of the three centres, one in each area, from which the housing survey was organised, and which have been established as permanent bases for the mobilisation of the community. They are run by local people, and are a measure of the success of the project, in that it did mesh in with the community: and now that most of the nice middle-class students have gone home, things have not returned to normal, but are being carried on by the local people.

The attack on the shortage of play space has consisted of the staffing and running of a play street, Lonsdale Road, off Portobello Road and an emergency play area in Oxford Gardens (which has now closed for redevelopment), in addition to the established adventure playground in Telford Road, and also in efforts, as yet unsuccessful, to get the property company that owns the derelict land in Colville and Powis Squares to open them for play.

In all, the Summer Project has been a success, and, in addition to support from public figures as different as the Tory Mayor of Kensington and Chelsea, and Michael Abdul Malik, the bane of the middle-class liberal, seems to have been welcomed and accepted by the local community.

SIMON MARTIN.

'Two Off, Sir'

JIM RADFORD and Nicolas Walter were released from Brixton Prison at 8 on August 25, after serving their sentence of two months' imprisonment for their part in the Brighton Church Demonstration last October. They were met at the gate by their wives and children, by a dozen close friends, and by a few reporters and photographers. They gave characteristic replies to questions from the press; Jim said, 'I'd do it again', and Nick said, 'Fuck off'. They were both well and cheerful, despite an unpleasant last hour; when they refused to sign for their property before seeing what they were signing for, they were told they would be sent back to their cells for the rest of the day, but they were rescued by a Chief Officer who hurried them out of the prison so fast that they walked through the gate without any written authority at all. As it happened, two books were missing from Nick's property, and 6s. 11d. would have been if he hadn't made a fuss about that the previous day.

They had both earned full remission, but only just. At the time of the demon-

stration outside the prison on August 12, Jim managed to get into a cell on the road side of C Wing, and during the demonstration he pushed through the bars and frosted glass in front of his cell window a red flag made from an old book cover and a banner made of newspaper. Several screws burst into his cell and rushed him off to a punishment cell, but he wasn't put on report, and nothing was ever said about the episode; perhaps they decided that if he was punished there might be another demonstration, and so on, though another prisoner was in fact put on report and given chokey for shouting abuse through his window during the demonstration, and the landing screw responsible for moving Jim on to that side of the Wing was taken off the landing.

Then, during Padre's Hour on August 16, the screws became very angry at the end of a heated discussion of South African apartheid which involved several people arguing with the chaplain himself as well as with each other, and on August 17 both Jim and Nick were put on report for causing a disturbance in the chapel. But the Brixton screws found it more difficult to prove such a charge than the Brighton police had done, and after some confusion over

'Yugoslav Cats Fleeing in Terror Before Huge Army of Yellow Mice'—*International Herald Tribune*

A FORTNIGHT WHEN the obituaries were as interesting as the news. Mr. Lincoln Rockwell, on his way from the laundrette, was assassinated, maintaining white supremacy to the end. Freedom's MP (Mr. Michael Stewart) passed on from invisibility to invisibility. Mr. Harold Wilson, prodded by unemployment figures, took over personal control of the Department of Economic Affairs; hitherto he has only been in charge of the Government. He has appointed his former PRO as Secretary for Economic Affairs and has Mr. Harold Lever (a millionaire socialist) as Financial Secretary to the Treasury. Other Ministers, major and minor, were thrown to the Common Market and Rhodesian wolves.

THERE WERE FIGHTS at the London office of the Chinese Chargé d'Affaires and at the Peking Embassy. Trouble in London seems to have been sparked off by excessive police surveillance and the gathering of crowds of sightseers. For example, the *Guardian* reported that on Bank Holiday Monday two teenagers were invited into the Chinese Mission because they had asked for a copy of the *Thoughts of Mao* (to tear up on the steps). They were treated very politely and given a bulky tract—which they tore up as soon as they got out. When asked for the girl's name, the *Guardian* was told, 'We don't want any rubbish in the papers; we only came here instead of going to the pictures.' A youth from Hong Kong was beaten up by a gang of youths in Kensington.

SOMEBODY MACHINE-GUNNED the doors (two newspapers inform us that the doors were 'crazed') of the American Embassy in Genocide Square at 11.45 p.m. on Sunday, August 20. The raid seems to have been extensively documented, and the police took the occasion to procure (at least) ten search warrants and raided the non-violent Committee of 100, Brian Pottle's non-political twin brother, and a completely non-political, non-violent Mr. Michael Gardiner of S.W.7, who wrote to *The Times* that he was raided on the strength of the story that 'a man with a machine-gun had been seen in the block of flats'. Among those not

which of the two was Jim and which was Nick, the Governor found them both formally guilty but let them do it with a 'caution' (= 'I know you didn't do it but I can't say so in front of my staff').

Nick's announcement of his intention to refuse to work was made before he knew that a two months' sentence was liable to remission, and when he found that he could get three weeks off he changed his plans and shifted from an open strike to secret sabotage. First, when he was put on dismantling telephone equipment in the Workshop, he simply put it together instead; then, when he was put on painting cells in the Wing, he simply put on one coat after another (this was how it was possible to make sure that Jim was still in the wrong cell for the demonstration). Nick feels a bit ashamed of backing out of the stand he had planned, but he says half a loaf is better than no bread.

Just before they came out, the Chief Officer who had rescued them asked if they had any complaints, and when they began listing them he asked them to put it all on paper. They intend to do so, and the result will no doubt be reported in the libertarian press in due course. In the meantime they both want to thank all the people who sent cards and letters to them and to their families while they were inside, and also all the people who contributed to their fund.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

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raided were Mr. Douglas Kepper and Freedom Press. Protests are being made to the National Council for Civil Liberties. The *West London Observer* printed the non-story of the year beginning 'Gunfire shattered the quiet of a select West London street in the early hours... when police arrived they found four [pistol] cartridges... The mystery deepened 24 hours later when bullets were fired from a car at the American Embassy in Grosvenor Square. The two are as yet unconnected,' observes the *Observer*, 'and must remain a strange coincidence, for the Embassy incident was certainly politically motivated.'

ACCORDING TO THE *Evening News*, the Duchess of Bedford said that the Festival of the Flower Children at Woburn Abbey was the result of 'a bit of a mistake... We thought they were having a flower show'. However, despite the hopes of the press for a 'punch-up' and the complaints of one flower person that it seemed more like a 'cash-in' to him, it was a financial success. Chief Inspector Rex Upchurch of Dunstable said, 'I have never seen anything like this [the Festival]. There has been no trouble with the flower children. When I asked them to do something they complied.' The Chief Inspector is retiring from the police force—any connection with previous events is purely a coincidence. One hundred and one football spectators have been arrested for unsportsmanlike behaviour since the season started. A controversy marred the peaceful close of the English cricket season.

MR. TED HEATH, Leader of the Opposition, was told to move on by a policeman. He complied. Flower people at Brighton, including John Upton, an artist, and Dr. Josephine Klein, a reader in social relations at Sussex University, were arrested for painting on a blank wall on the lower promenade at Brighton.

A TEAM APPOINTED by President Johnson's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice has suggested that America's rising crime rate may be partly due to the expensive legal system. The chairman said that bail costs, lawyer's fees and other expenses

often drove the habitual criminal to commit further offences. This was the only way he knew of raising the money.

MR. W. G. TEAGLE, an amateur naturalist, has reported the increase of foxes in the suburbs near London. Travel has been made easier for the fox by road and railway cuttings. A reason for migration is the lack of food due to myxomatosis in rabbits and the decline of hunting in developing suburbs. Millions of mice are reportedly on the march in Yugoslavia. They have been seen to swallow poison without any ill-effects. Crops in ten villages in Bosnia have been destroyed. Villagers have appealed to the authorities for help. One group said, 'We will be left not only without food but will be swallowed up as well.'

VILLAGERS IN WORMINGFORD, ESSEX, decided to oppose a proposal that a permanent gypsy camp be established by the county council on a disused airfield. Some villagers claimed that the establishment of the camp would reduce property prices and harm the village's chances in the annual Essex best-kept village competition. One of the two people to vote for the camp plan asked one of the objectors if he had any evidence proving that gypsies were 'bigger pilferers, wife rapers and thieves' than any other section of the community. 'Why can't we live and let live? The idea of these camps is to get the gypsies off the road. Why don't we show them a little sympathy, and try to help them instead of being so hostile?' After the meeting he said he felt most of the people in Wormingford were being selfish. 'They were thinking more about house prices and plaques for tidy villages than about itinerant people in need of decent sites on which to live.' The *Irish Independent* reports the death from extensive burns of a tinker mother and her three daughters (nine, two and three) in a fire in their tent home in Sligo, started by a candle.

THE SAME PAPER carries a report from an American professor, speaking in Prague, that civilised beings exist in bodies on the Milky Way.

JON QUIXOTE.

LETTERS

fine is so small.
'Yes,' said the Inspector, 'but you can hold them for an hour to verify their address, that's what hurts.'

It appears to me that it is the intention of the police to stop all political literature selling at Speakers' Corner, by one means or another.

I wonder if any comrades have any suggestions as to how we can best combat this?

London, S.W.2

MARTIN PAGE.

Brent Show this Weekend

Dear Readers,
The Kilburn Anarchists will be leafletting and selling anarchist literature at the Brent Show at Roundwood Park, Harlesden. They have a stall in the 'Social Service' tent.

On September 9 and 10 we will be there from 10.30 a.m. We will welcome help from anarchists wherever they are in the London area, as this show attracts an average of 10,000 people. What a propaganda opportunity! Bring your own posters if you have them, if not we will supply you with one. The Show is within easy walking distance from Willesden Green/Dollis Hill and Harlesden Station, also several bus routes pass close to the Park. Come and join us.
Kilburn, N.W.6 ANDREW DEWAR.

Anarchism in East Anglia

FOR SOME WHILE now there has been a considerable amount of Anarchist and Libertarian Socialist activity in East Anglia. A number of us now feel that these activities should be co-ordinated. We are, therefore, proposing the formation of an Anarchist Federation of East Anglia. There are, as far as we know, active, not-so-active and embryonic groups in the following areas:

Bury St. Edmunds (Suffolk), Ipswich (Suffolk), North West Essex, Colchester-Tiptree (Essex), Basildon (Essex), Chelmsford (Essex), Harlow and Epping (Essex), The Hadhams (East Herts.), and Cambridge (Cambridgeshire).

I have already proposed that an informal get-together of all readers of FREE-

DOM be held in Ipswich, probably on a Saturday afternoon some time in October. The Ipswich Group are prepared to provide the venue. Before making arrangements, however, we would like to hear from all groups and individuals who wish (1) to form a Federation, and (2) who would be able to meet in Ipswich during October. One comrade is preparing a possible pamphlet/leaflet for distribution and/or sale by the Federation and over £10 has already been pledged towards its publication.

Write to: P. Newell, 'Maybush', Maypole Road, Tiptree, Essex, or: Carl Pinel, West Suffolk General Hospital, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk.

P.E.N.

Roberts-Arundel Demonstration

ROBERTS-ARUNDEL is a small factory set among a network of narrow streets and nineteenth-century terrace houses in the heart of Stockport. Workers there have been on strike for nine months against a viciously anti-trade union management. The firm, incidentally, is American-owned.

On Friday, September 1, many workers in Stockport went on a half-day strike in sympathy, and a demonstration was called for outside the factory. Workers from various factories marched to Roberts-Arundel, arriving at different times. As soon as the first group came on the scene, scuffles broke out with the police who tried unsuccessfully to block the road. Later, while waiting for other contingents to come, a meeting was instigated by the 'leadership' (complete with megaphones) on some waste ground

near the factory. It was claimed that 20,000 workers had struck.

As soon as all the contingents had arrived, we marched back to the factory where many windows were broken with banners and stones, the wire grating on the windows was torn down and an attempt to storm the gates was foiled by the police. It would have been difficult to get into the factory with such small numbers as the windows were high up; the only weak spot was the gate.

Three times the workers marched around the factory and there was frequent fighting between police and workers. Then the march set off for the town centre, Communist leadership to the fore. By the time we reached the town centre, the size of the demonstration had trebled and there were cries of 'Burn down the factory!' Several attempts were made by militants to get the march to return to the factory while feelings were running high, but the men with the megaphones persuaded the people to wander through the wilderness of Central Stockport at

the pace of a funeral march until such time as revolutionary ardour had dampened and the demonstration was back to its original size. Then, on the way back to the factory, a certain member of the Communist Party decided to get on his soapbox and give a speech in which he said that the numbers were too small to go back to the factory (surprise! surprise!) and we should return at 7 a.m. on Monday morning.

Uproar broke out. 'What do you want, a seat in Parliament?' someone yelled. The matter was put to the vote. Half the meeting decided to go home and the rest wandered off to the factory.

'Don't go across the road, ducks, the police will get you, there aren't enough of us now. Look, they've got someone. Isn't it a shame?' said two old women as we drew near.

And so it all came to an end. Who knows, the factory might have been burnt down. After all, if the workers cannot run the factories, why should anybody else?

BOB BLAKEMAN.

Contact Column

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

Anarchistic Accommodation. Anarchist needs room or flat cheap. Please leave name at ARC 1239. Lenny Payne.

Literary Contributions. Poetry, extracts of prose and short polemical articles on current literary themes required for an expanding (but still primarily duplicated) SOMETHINGS MAGAZINE. All MSS and correspondence (with s.a.e. for return) to the editor, Geoff Charlton, 8 Lightwoods Hill, Smethwick, Warley, Worcs. Original, previously unpublished work only, please.

Accommodation: East Coast. Teacher (m. single) seeks unfurnished apartment/accommodation Hull. Any leads welcomed. Box 65.

Accommodation. One or two comrades offered share of country cottage (West Country) in return for few hours work weekly. Own transport essential. Box 63.

Accommodation, London, S.W.5-S.W.10. B/s. No petty restrictions. If possible mother who is home in mornings, minding people. David Ian Scott, 25 West Cromwell Road, S.W.5. Ring bottom bell three times.

Robin Lovell. Please contact Sheffield Radical Group (see P.2).

Flats and Houses Cleaned. Simple redecoration and gardening jobs wanted. A. W. Uloth, 75 Templars Avenue, London, N.W.11.

National Committee of 100. Sat./Sun., September 9/10. London, N.W.3. The Three Horseshoes, Heath Street. Quarterly Meeting. Saturday, 2.30-5 p.m.; 6-8.30 p.m. The Future of the Peace Movement with special reference to 'Peace News'. 8.30 p.m. Party (2/6 at door). Sunday, 10.30 a.m.-12.30 p.m. and 2-4.30 p.m. Details—13 Goodwin Street, N.4.

Accommodation—London. Any kind of accommodation wanted from Aug./Sept./Oct. for anarchist-inclined student (male). No petty restrictions. Apply Paul Kidney, 1 West Hill Way, Totteridge, London, N.20.

Free University: Manchester. Any interest in forming one? If so, write to me with any questions or ideas. Box 66.

Broadmoor patient soon to be released needs job. Replies to A.R. Reading Group.

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

Accommodation. Comrade seeks accommodation in West Country. Box 64.

Musicians. Required for a South-East London Anarchist Social on September 23. Enquiries and quotes to Lewisham Anarchists address.

Blues. Piano player wishes to join/form R & B group. Please phone Eddie, 722 9188.

If you wish to make contact let us know.

SHOWDOWN IN THE PRINTING INDUSTRY

The TUC are to be congratulated. They are doing a far better job than the Government could hope to do on the question of the Wage Freeze. At the last meeting of the Hatchet Committee, 30 claims were rejected as being incompatible with the present 'incomes policy'.

The Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions were summoned before presenting their package claim to the employers. As was to be expected, the leaders of the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation (PKTF) were summoned with reference to their claim for 150,000 workers in general printing and provincial newspapers.

The print union claim has been in the pipeline for many months because of failure to agree with the employers. The most important point of disagreement is the continuation of the sliding scale cost of living agreement. The employers have had enough of this agreement; they believed they were on a good thing when the agreement was first made, but since the failure of any Government to hold the cost of living steady, the agreement has cost the employers a few bob. They claim now there is very little money in the kitty to pay out.

Generally speaking, this statement by the employers is a load of eyewash. Whilst it could be true to say that some small firms feel the pinch, the majority of general printers and provincial newspapers are the same employers who own the national newspapers. The two employer federations, British Federation of Master Printers (BFMP) and the Newspaper Proprietors Association (NPA), are an attempt to make it look good as far as FREE enterprise and competition are concerned, i.e. King and Thomson Empires.

The PKTF have stated that industrial action is quite on the cards unless the employers improve their claim by Tuesday, August 22. The 'workers parliament', the TUC, have already declared their interest; they say the printworkers can expect NO support from the TUC unless the 'Printworkers' modify their claim. 'Big deal'. Since when have the TUC helped any dispute except towards a compromise and sell-out?

Gunter wants to refer the claim to the Prices and Incomes Board which,

WE GO TO PRESS ON MONDAY. LATEST DATE FOR RECEIPT OF MSS., LETTERS, MEETING NOTICES IS THE MONDAY IN EACH WEEK OF PUBLICATION.

under Part 2 of the Act, will freeze any payment for seven months. So far both the employers and print unions have resisted this course of action. Whether the employers will continue to do so in view of threatened industrial action is very doubtful.

It has been stated in FREEDOM on many occasions that a showdown in print has got to come, compromise is a limited evil. Rationalisation of labour is the all-important word in Fleet Street, one hears of nothing else. 'How many bodies did you sell?' is the common question between chapel officials (shop stewards). Then we all cover up and kid ourselves that none have been sold. Because we know deep down that such a policy is a complete antithesis of trade union practice and principles.

BILL CHRISTOPHER.

Report from Gibraltar

GIBRALTAR Transport & General Workers' Union has begun inquiries as to whether a Consumers' Co-operative Society would get local support. Union leaders have stated the case on Gib. TV, in the press, and a widespread application for shares is believed to be taking place.

The co-op scheme, which has long been a policy of comrades here, now looks like it'll get a try. The main idea is to keep prices down and cut out excessive profiteering locally.

Money is needed, as opposition is expected from local businessmen to the scheme. Co-op shares are therefore being offered at 10/- each. A share is enough to admit anyone to full membership and entitle one to buy in at the store, which will sell stuff at reduced prices.

The Co-op is not expected to imitate in detail the English CWS movement, though there will be fraternal links. The society here will be run on a one man-one vote basis! Quantity of shares held by a member will not affect his voting strength. This prevents the chance of a takeover by local speculators, which could happen if voting was based on shares held. Control of the Co-op will be carried out by a committee elected by the members.

Libertarians here have a larger following amongst the local people than those in Britain and this accounts for

Freedom For Workers' Control

SEPTEMBER 9 1967 Vol 28 No 27

STEWARDS WIN APPEAL

THE TWO STEWARDS who were expelled from the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers for continuing to picket the Myton's Barbican site against union executive instructions, have successfully appealed against their expulsion. Lou Lewis and Rolph Langdon appealed to the lay general council of the union, who found in the men's favour. However, instead they have imposed a £3 fine and banned them from holding shop stewards' credentials for three years. This decision comes only a week before the report of the Court of Inquiry by the Ministry of Labour is to be published concerning the Myton and Sunley disputes.

It is only a few weeks ago that Jack Rusca, the London District Secretary, was reinstated after being sacked from his elected position by the executive. This and the latest successful appeal are a considerable defeat for the ASW executive who have attempted to smash any militancy by the members.

One would think that after these reversals, George Smith, the General Secretary, and his executive would resign, but this seems unlikely, for I am certain they will hang on just as long as they possibly can. In fact, an example of the sort of thing they are capable of, is that even though Jack Rusca has been reinstated, he will not be paid for the next three months. The executive says that this is because he received three months pay when he was sacked in May, but the point is that the general council reversed this decision to three months suspension, which ended in August and it is common practice, even with employers, that men under suspension are paid.

It remains to be seen what will happen when Lou Lewis and Rolph Langdon finally resume work. I am certain that carpenters will want them as stewards

and whether the credentials are issued or not, these two will in fact represent the ASW members on their site.

The ASW executive has been the most reactionary of all the unions involved in these two disputes. It has continually tried to discipline its militant members. The *Financial Times*, which has often applauded these efforts, has this to say about the latest successful appeal. 'These developments mean that the ASW leadership's efforts to rid the union of its militants who act unofficially is being continually thwarted by left-wing elements on the lay general council, who are aiming to gain control of the union and want their supporters inside the organisation.'

Unions are becoming increasingly bureaucratic, some more than others. The Electrical Trades Union, for instance, has changed its Executive Council from a lay group to a full time one, the members being elected every five years now instead of every two. In the Amalgamated Union of Building Trades Workers, the leadership is so worried about its financial position that it has recommended to its members that certain elections of officials shall be done away with, because of the cost.

Executives are trying to gain more power, leaving the members without any say in the running of their unions. Agreements are made by executives and employers, without consulting the members. This was the case with an agreement between the ASW and Tersons, from which the executive got 100% trade union membership, but for many workers it meant a cut in their site-negotiated bonus earnings.

Union executives want dues-paying members and that is all. The Government and the employers would welcome this, but trade unionists should ensure that this does not happen. The actions of the ASW executive has been an eye-opener to the members. They have seen just how far their executive is prepared to go in its attack on militants and just how much power it wields. Whether members will see the answer in just a new leadership is doubtful. There is a strong possibility that some of the power will be taken back by the members and that any new executive will not be able to do what Smith and his cronies have done.

P.T.

Help!

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