

DON'T KNOCK THE POSTMEN

POSTAL WORKERS are really up against the wall. Despite considerable sympathy from large sections of 'the public'—that is other workers—Union of Post Office Workers' members who have been on strike since Wednesday, January 20, are fighting an extremely hard and increasingly bitter battle, not only against an intractable yet inefficient employer, but also an avowedly anti-working-class government and a very slimy national press.

The UPW is claiming an across-the-board increase of 15% for Postmen and Postwomen, PHGs (generally called Sorters), Cleaners, P&TOs (Counter Clerks and others on writing duties), Telephonists and Telegraphists, with a maximum increase of £3 a week for those on the top grade. The Union is also demanding a reduction in the incremental scale, i.e. that Postmen, Postwomen and PHGs reach their maximum at 19 instead of 21; that Telephonists reach their maximum at 21 instead of 28, and that P&TOs reach their maximum at 25 instead of 30.

The Post Office Corporation has offered an overall increase of 8%,

but has not conceded the reductions in the incremental scales. The Post Office and the Government spokesman, Mr. Chattaway, argue that if the 15% is granted, the cost of inland letter rates would have to be raised to 9d. The Union says that this is nonsense, and that the Post Office can't even do simple arithmetic! Moreover, the UPW is not prepared to take the dispute to arbitration, as it feels that any arbitrators appointed by the Government would not be 'fair' or neutral—which, of course, is the understatement of the year. Government-appointed arbitrators, Jack Scamp notwithstanding, never are.

What sort of wages do Postmen, Postwomen, P&TOs and Telephonists get?

At present, a Postman or Postwoman reaches a maximum basic wage outside London of £18 8s. a week. Outer London rates are a little higher, and Inner London rates are a little higher still. PHGs also get more than Postmen and Postwomen. Telephonists over 28 earn a basic £17 8s. a week, and most P&TOs are lucky if they take £25 gross. Of course, Postmen and Post-

women get 'free' uniforms; and in most larger towns and cities (but not in the villages) they get a certain amount of overtime—outside of Central London this is not all that excessive, except perhaps at Christmas time. However, the Post Office Corporation—which, surprisingly, says it keeps no statistics on the subject—accepts a DEP estimate of average postal workers' earnings of around £24 a week. Hardly enough to go to the Bahamas on!

THE UNIONS

The UPW has a membership of between 220,000 and 230,000—an increase of more than 30,000 over the last five or six years; quite an achievement, considering that there has been a slight contraction of the labour force among the manipulative grades, and particularly among Telephonists. The UPW claims to be an industrial union, and its long-term objective is supposed to be the workers' control of the Post Office. Except in booklets given to new members, however, very little is heard of workers' control these days.

Almost every Postman in Britain and Northern Ireland is a member of the UPW; so are most of the Postwomen, Cleaners, PHGs and P&TOs. Traditionally, the Union claims that a majority of female (that is daytime) Telephonists are members, but not male Telephonists who mainly man the switchboards at night. In actual fact only about half the female Telephonists and a very tiny number of male Telephonists belong to the UPW. The Telephonists are the weak link of the Union.

About 8,000 male and 3,000 female Telephonists are claimed by the secessionist Telecommunications Staff Association, formerly the National Guild of Telephonists, a typical 'scab' outfit which at least in the past was largely anti-feminist and was led by members and sympathisers of a well-known sectarian Marxist group. There is also another

small 'union' called the Telecommunications Union, which claims members among the OTOs (overseas telegraph workers), who are also mainly men. Neither 'union' is supporting the present struggle. They are, presumably, well satisfied with the employer's offer.

Over the last ten years or so, the UPW has changed considerably. Gone is the old cap-in-hand subservience to their, then, Civil Service masters. Union members are not receiving strike pay, because there is insufficient money in the kitty. Indeed, until 1964, when Postmen were offered an increase of 4/- a week (honestly!) by the former Tory Government, the UPW had no strike fund whatsoever. For over 40 years of its existence, the UPW never contemplated actually going on strike in pursuance of higher wages and better working conditions. Such things were never done! So, even now, the Union has hardly enough money to pay for the advertisements that it has been inserting in the national and local press.

MILITANT

Following the war, a very large number of Post Office entrants came from the armed forces. But from about 1950 onwards, many came from factory and industrial backgrounds, the building industry (particularly the Southern Irish new entrants) and, some time later, from the West Indies and the Indian sub-continent. Today, there are many Irish and Commonwealth workers employed by the Post Office within the manipulative grades. They are often among the most militant.

During the 1964 industrial action, which included spontaneous walk-outs, work-to-rule campaigns, sit-ins and an official one-day national strike, the UPW really found its feet for the first time. It had become a real Trade Union. Today, UPW membership—at least among the Postmen, PHGs and P&TOs—is even in a more militant mood. That

is why they are prepared to strike without strike pay. Post Office workers are very angry indeed. Had they been less angry, they could have probably caused as much, or even more, chaos and embarrassment to the Government simply by working-to-rule (and allowing the mail to pile up as it did in 1964), selective one-day strikes throughout the country and, again as was done before, by just fucking up the Post Office works in general. This, in my view, should have been the tactics this time. However, now that the UPW has called what it hopes will be an indefinite strike, it must be supported by all other workers within the Post Office, in transport and on the railways and, of course, by Postal Workers abroad—otherwise there may be a certain loss of initial enthusiasm, resulting in bitterness and a drift back to work. At the time of writing, there has been very little drift back, despite the usual lies by the press, and some support has come from other workers both at home and abroad. Moreover, blackleg Telephonists and the two small scab 'unions' must be exposed for what they are—free riders, who if more than the 8% is conceded will, as in the past, accept it in their weekly wage envelopes.

THE LEADERS

Tom Jackson, Norman Stagg, the assistant general secretary, and other 'leaders' of the UPW are very popular with the membership at present. This is only to be expected. But Post Office workers should be wary of them all the same. Leaders, as history has shown, can never be trusted anyway, and UPW leaders are no exception.

Tom Jackson, the moustachioed, genial, general secretary from Leeds, is a former Labour Party Young Socialist and a present governor of the BBC, whose pet saying on almost all occasions appears to be 'God willing'; Norman Stagg is a left-

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THE KISS OF DEATH

IN FEBRUARY 1970, carpenters on the Laing's site of St. Thomas's Hospital came out on strike against the employment of 'lump' labour-only men by a formwork sub-contractor, Whelan & Grant. The union involved, the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, made the dispute official, but this support did not last very long, for the union agreed to the employment of these labour-only merchants so long as they joined the union. The 'settlement' also provided for a negotiated bonus scheme and the operation of the industry's working rule agreement.

Those ASW members who previously had tried to organise the strike and who had taken a stand against labour-only were offered jobs on other Laing contracts. This blatant disregard of members was resented by the rank and file, who on two occasions occupied the union headquarters in protest.*

Now events have shown how right and justified was this anger and indignation, for the ASW has completely failed to bring Whelan & Grant to heel. These facts have come to light, not from the ASW but from an investigation carried out by the employers' paper, *Construction News*. They report that not only is there no agreed bonus scheme in operation, but the working rule agreement has been ignored.

Carpenters working for Whelan & Grant are paid in the usual way on Thursday, but in addition to this, cheques and secret bonuses are paid out on Fridays. These extras are given to the 'regulars' or any workers who have carried favour with the firm. Those who complain are either put on a bad section of the contract or are transferred to another site.

Construction News says: 'Unjustified subsistence and travel money, and straight cash handouts are also used as "sweeteners" to keep the carpenters' gangs working quickly, and to stop union attempts to organise proper bonus targets.' The site was described as 'the most uncomfortable and unpleasant job I have ever worked on' and 'completely chaotic and unaccountable as far as pay is concerned'.

Whelan & Grant have a number of regulars who receive these cheques and who ensure that others do not attempt any union organisation on the

site. They have said in a statement that their carpenters are paid 'on hourly rate in accordance with the working rule agreement and a bonus payment, tool money, etc.' Laings, the main contractor, have denied all knowledge of these practices on the part of their sub-contractors.

ONLY CARD HOLDERS

Building workers are well aware of these practices and Whelan & Grant are only the tip of the iceberg. But the ASW had full knowledge of this last year and yet chose to make a deal rather than see the site organised by their own members. The men they took into the union were mere card holders and nothing else. The blame for the situation now prevailing on the site must be placed squarely on the ASW executive. They were as determined as Laings to prevent the site from becoming organised. When the settlement was made last year it was hailed as a defeat for the 'militants', preventing 'another Barbican'. It was also pointed out that this gave full official recognition to labour-only practices.

However, the evidence presented in *Construction News* proves how right were those strikers who stood for so long outside the site. It also shows how hypocritical Laings have been. The head of the company, Mr. Kirby Laing, is also President of the Builders Employers' Federation and negotiates with the unions the very working rules that his company is breaking in allowing Whelan & Grant to carry on these practices. No notice should be taken of employers when they accuse workers of breaking agreements when they so blatantly do the same.

Official union support was the kiss of death to the strikers. ASW members were sacrificed so that labour-only scallywags could be organised. The executive of the union carried out this dirty deal and are now applying for a conciliation panel in order to work out yet another deal.

Certainly the lessons are clear. It is no good relying on the trade union executives to fight the employers. It must be done by workers, organised with their fellow trade unionists.

P.T.

*See March 9, 1970, Vol. 31, No. 8.

What a way to run a Railway!

AN OLD *New Yorker* joke showed a picture of a rather bored signalman looking out of his box window at two trains, apparently about to collide head-on and all he says is, 'What a Way to Run a Railway'. The *New Yorker* of September 26, 1970, carries an interview with a railway enthusiast who cannot help but notice that the railways of America, like those of Britain, are still embarked on suicidal collision courses. Mr. Frimbo, for that is the enthusiast's name, said to the *New Yorker* columnist, 'The United States of America is rapidly becoming an undeveloped country again. The Post Office is cutting down on Special Delivery, even though it charges forty-five cents (about 3/6) a letter.' . . . It perhaps should be explained that in the United States mail is, in the majority of cases, not delivered as in Britain, it is collected by the recipient from the post office. (Please keep this information from the new Postmaster, he might get ideas.)

Mr. Frimbo went on, 'The railroads, as you know, as I know, as even the members of the Interstate Commerce Commission know, are disappearing. There is no way to get from many American towns to many other American towns these days except by automobile. The Secretary of Transportation seems to think that there is only one means of transportation: the private car. With one person

in it. What mass transportation there is has become centralized on the main routes. Once you get off them you're dead.'

Gazing at advertising for British Rail and learning of their latest proposals for post-Beeching cuts, one feels that the fate of the American railroad will in due course overtake British Rail. For example, as cited by Alistair Graham in *The Socialist Leader* (2.1.71), British Rail has announced its intention of closing the Inverness-Kyle of Lochalsh line when the present subsidy runs out. Alistair Graham points out that the Mallaig line is in a similar position and that these subsidies were the Labour Government's rather inadequate answer to the Beeching policy of the previous Tory regime (1963). FREEDOMS of 1962 (see *Pilkington vs Beeching*, Freedom Press) carried many criticisms of this crude surgery. It was pointed out then that Mr. Marples (the then Transport Minister) made it clear that so far as the future of the railways is concerned finances are the first consideration and the Minister made it quite clear that decisions to close were Government decisions. His Parliamentary Secretary (in 1962) said, 'Conservative railway policy was not a free-for-all, but it was not to have a rigid control'. The editor of FREEDOM went on, 'We are none the wiser as to whether this means that

the government has a policy for transport as a whole or whether, what is more likely, that it is sold to the interests whose future and profits depend on the development of road and air transport'.

Mr. Marples has departed from the Government but 'look around, you will see his monuments', for example: in the gigantic flyover at Hammersmith Broadway, which one time bore the proud insignia of the contracting firm—'Marples-Ridgeway'. Despite the departure of Mr. Marples for fresh concrete and motorways new, Tory policy remains the same. The years of Labour rule proudly showed an unchanging policy of forgetting the canals, smartening up a few railway networks, leaving the branch lines to wither away, and expanding the giant spaghetti of roadways whilst Mr. Marples and his friends contracted.

To return to Mr. Frimbo, 'I have two points to make. Number One. It is my considered judgement that the boys at the Penn Central [New York's main railway station] decided about five years ago to get out of the railroad business and into the real estate business.' Since the advent of Beeching we in this country too have seen the transformation of railway sites up and down the country into 'developments' by property

Continued on page 2

Industrial Relations Bill Sweeping Dirt Under Rug

IF I REMEMBER right both the columns of FREEDOM and those of *The Economist* have recently suggested that the union bosses secretly favour the Government's Industrial Relations Bill, which they hope will keep the shop floor militants in check; and that most official union opposition to the Bill is really a put-up job to keep the industrial activists happy. This is not the view of Lord Robbins, who has suggested the Bill, far from stifling the militants, will actually play into the hands of the anarchists.

Whichever argument one accepts, the TUC booklet *Reason*,* which attacks the proposed legislation is worth a read.

*Reason—The case against the Government's proposals on Industrial Relations.

The TUC booklet is naturally largely concerned about how the proposed new law will disrupt the existing union organisation and interfere with union practices.

On the question of registration of unions, the TUC is worried that, in order to get a 'State licence', a union will have to have rules which don't conflict with the 'principles' of the Bill. Yet under the proposed new law an unregistered union will be liable to unlimited damages for calling or threatening to call a strike. Not only that, but any individual, if he calls or threatens to call a strike, would be liable to pay unlimited damages. Members of registered unions also would be liable, if they threatened to call a strike without the specific authority of their union.

Any loose talk spoken in the heat of the moment could lead to a militant being hauled over the coals before the National Industrial Relations Court (NIRC) at a later date.

Under the proposed new law it would also rank as 'unfair industrial action' and strikes would be illegal where the worker's (whether registered or not) intention is:

- to try to persuade a boss that a worker should be in a union;
- to try to get a worker sacked;
- to try to get a boss or other workers

to stop delivering goods to a firm where the lads are out on strike;

- to try to get a gaffer to agree to, or continue, a closed shop arrangement where a man must have a union card before he gets a job;
- to induce or threaten to induce anybody who is party to a legally-binding agreement to break it;
- to strike, threaten a strike or other industrial action in support of workers, on strike elsewhere, who have been ruled as committing an 'unfair industrial action' or are likely to be ruled as committing an 'unfair industrial action'.

Anybody tried and found guilty by the Court or an Industrial Tribunal of an 'unfair industrial action' would be liable to pay compensation. The Court could also issue a legal order to stop the strike, work-to-rule, etc., and if this order were breached imprisonment for contempt would, according to the booklet, 'be virtually automatic'.

Workers would have a right to appeal against unfair dismissal. But this would only apply to those with two years' service with their employer. Right of appeal could be withheld from a member of an unregistered union, who was sacked for union activities. A sacked worker would have the job of proving he'd been unfairly dismissed, and even if he won his case, he couldn't claim his job back as a right.

ATTACK ON THE WORKERS

The Industrial Relations Bill is really only part of the Government's overall strategy, which is to lower the living standards of the vast majority and to weaken organised labour. The unofficial strikes of recent years, even though they have often been fought out as hole-in-the-corner affairs, have won the workers better incomes mostly at the expense of profits. It is now clear that the spontaneous small-scale strike, which takes the boss by surprise, is far more effective and damaging to business than the long-

drawn-out official actions for which the employers have time to prepare.

The Government, reluctant at the moment to bring in a direct freeze on wages so soon after the relative failure of the Labour Government's freeze in the '60s, seems set on pushing through less direct measures which should have the same effect. This appears to involve encouraging a squeeze on pay rises in the public sector, backed up by restrictions on growth of the money supply which should, in the spring, effectively confront some private firms with the situation in which they will either have to resist their workers' pay demands or go bust through lack of ready funds. In this respect the proposed new law may make the bosses' job easier, especially when it comes to cracking down on militants.

Something called 'wage inflation' is the current excuse for this attack on working people. 'Wage inflation' is it said, hits people living on small fixed incomes, pensioners and the non-militant low-paid workers. This, however, is not the Government's chief complaint about the phenomena, for the fact is that 'wage inflation', unlike 'demand inflation', increases the workers' pay but also tends to squeeze profits.

This is the main moan in the Treasury's recent evidence to the Wilberforce inquiry into the power industry. Company profits, it seems, have not risen at all during the past year, resulting generally in narrower profit margins, which in turn is having an 'adverse effect on investment plans by reducing the expected profitability of new investment'.

Most other industrial countries are, as it happens, struggling with similar inflationary pressures, and nobody seems to have a ready answer to this problem. Certainly the recent experience of the recession in the USA tends to suggest that the idea of creating unemployment to combat inflation is no longer a reliable method of tackling the question.

Certainly no amount of Governmental fiscal fiddling or messing with the multiplier appears to work in this situation. The State, therefore, unable to manipulate the economy by tinkering with the tax system, is increasingly being forced to take direct political measures against workers in the form of compulsory wage freezes and legislation against strikes.

This new direct role by the State is bound to influence the attitude of the workers, who may, if the Government is heavy-handed, become openly hostile to State interference.

WILL THE WORKERS HIT BACK?

Experience of English workers tends to suggest that the vast majority of workers won't worry about political legislation, until it starts to bite. This is roughly what happened with the Labour Government's wage freeze, and it will take time before this Government's industrial laws become unpopular and meet widespread opposition.

At the moment most workers don't know what's happening, and even the experts don't know how the proposed new law will work out in practice. There are indications, however, that may well increase industrial disruption.

The Government, concerned as it is with the surface appearance of industrial life, considers that English people being basically law-abiding will fall in with the law once it's been passed. This is a possibility of course, but it is in my view more likely that the very real anarchistic tendencies among workers will, if they are denied expression through official action, find another perhaps more damaging outlet. This possibility has not been overlooked in the TUC booklet. Luddism and machine-breaking positively flourished under the shadow of the Combination Acts, and it seems reasonable to assume that the unofficial strike is only one of the more obvious signs of something menacing which runs deep in our way of life.

It does not particularly please me to say this, for there is no telling where this kind of thing will end, but a largely hidden increase in industrial sabotage, pilfering, and fiddling, will almost certainly be one outcome, if the Government introduces the proposed new law.

Once again we will have another State exercise in sweeping the dirt under the rug, which may improve appearances until the rot sets in. B.B.

Anarchists' Homes Searched

IN THEIR QUEST for clues to the perpetrator of the bomb attack on Robert Carr's home, the police have cast their net far and wide. So far they have not come up with any answer but several people have, in their picturesque phrase, 'been helping them with their enquiries'. It is obvious that such an important 'victim' and the wide publicity given to the attack would make it urgent that something should be done about it.

Colin McInnes on one occasion described the police as 'historians', and with their true respect for historical records and *modus operandi* it was put about that they were looking for a young Scots anarchist who had not been seen at his home or at his place of work for some days. This information was duly given piecemeal in the *Evening Standard*, by the BBC, and in the *Daily Express*. It was given out as emanating from Scotland Yard but at one time it seemed that the Yard had been reading the *Evening Standard*.

However all this speculation was set at naught by the individual concerned having an alibi, by his still being at home and at his usual place of work. Additionally, the police had not even visited him!

Last week the police visited Ross Flett and Phillip Carver, friends of Stuart Christie. According to the *Guardian* they searched the premises and took Ross and Phillip to the station for questioning. They were questioned for four hours and refused, despite continual requests, opportunity to phone their lawyer. Finally they were released without any charge being made.

Also last week a well-known contributor to FREEDOM was visited, apparently without a search warrant. There also they conducted a perfunctory search but also asked questions about his contributions to FREEDOM, etc.

The nature of the questions suggested that they were interested in getting information rather than finding clues. The naivety of expecting anarchists to become police informants is staggering.

It has been said in the *Guardian* recently that the police had decided to be more harsh to the anarchists. It is probable that the kid gloves are off, but really we never had the illusion they were on! J. ROBINSON.

Freed

Anthony (Buzz) Ballarin who was sent to Borstal last year following the Brighton squat is to be released on February 3. During the period of his confinement he studied for his 'A' levels, and played on the Borstal rugby team.

ESN - If you're Black, get back

THE THREE LETTERS ESN stand for educationally sub-normal and ESN schools exist throughout the country with special facilities to deal with children who are of very low intelligence. Although this system is open to criticism for the harm this type of labelling does to the children and the wrongness of cutting them off from their fellows, it can be defended on the grounds of the greater time and care that can be given the individual child.

Now, through a series of accidents, a number of people in the field of community relations have obtained information as regards ESN schools of shattering impact on all who care for human justice. A secret report by the Inner London Education Authority has been obtained by people in the race relations business and *Race Today** in its January issue publicises just some of the information that is now currently in circulation. I shall just quote from the most relevant paragraph contained in an article 'ESN Children—Labelled for Life': 'Perhaps the most striking features of the ILEA report concern the number of West Indian children classified as ESN. In 1967, 28.4 per cent of children in ESN schools in ILEA were of immigrant origin; of these, 75 per cent were of West Indian origin. Heads felt that 28 per cent of their immigrant children were wrongly placed compared with 7 per cent of their non-immigrant children.'

Since that time the situation has worsened to a position where 70 per cent of immigrant children in ILEA ESN schools have been found to be wrongly placed. In some Boroughs just outside the ILEA area the situation is thought to be even more alarming and there is said to be proof that it is deliberate educational policy to push a high percentage of coloured children into ESN schools. In this way a coloured proletariat is assured which has been kept educationally sub-normal, since once placed in an ESN school it is nearly impossible to get out.

The way in which the IQ tests measuring intelligence which decide on the children who should go to ESN schools have been compiled is the factor which has led to the present situation. It is already known that IQ tests are asking questions with a middle-class bias, it is even more marked with coloured children. In many cases they have just left an agricultural environment and they are asked questions about the industrial urban environment which are simply outside their experience. Other factors involved are the fact that teachers find

West Indian children 'difficult' and an ESN recommendation is a good way of getting rid of them, the parents are sometimes encouraged by headmasters by being told their children will be going to 'special' schools. Then there is the linguistic and social deprivation of the coloured children prior to school. At the moment West Indians, due to long housing waiting lists, are very keen on buying their own property; this means a severe drain on financial resources so that the wife has to go out to work. The children are not always properly cared for and tragic fire accidents are one result of this, with snarling policemen pointing to the love the parents have shown towards their burnt children. Yet our educational system has a maniacal gap between the ages of 3 and 5 when there is a severe lack of nursery school education; the middle-class play groups are for women who can get along to collect their children at lunchtime. West Indian mothers with the over-burdensome mortgage repayments (and the second mortgage involvements of some which are with them for life) cannot do anything but work all day, leaving children often

to fend for themselves or with 'baby minders'. The resultant lack of educational opportunities is another stepping stone on the path to ESN schools. Added to all this we have to remember the tremendous adaptation to a hostile environment needed by the immigrant community.

The Government fabric of community relations which is supposed to be helping with this situation is constantly afraid of getting the Tory chop and is starved of cash. In the local situation the community relations officer has to find money by hook or by crook to help with the appalling problems of the coloured community. In addition the local authority and the police keep an eagle eye on every move made and the West Indian militants fear a sell-out to the Establishment. Race is the major problem this country is going to face in the next decade and the Government response is to plan the introduction of an Immigration Bill which is likely to infringe on every human right known and to strengthen the reactionary element in society by selling arms to South Africa.

KALI.

**Race Today* is published by the Institute of Race Relations, 36 Jermyn Street, London, S.W.1, at 4/- monthly.

Aid to Italian Militants

THE BERTRAND RUSSELL Peace Foundation is supporting an international campaign to raise the large sums of money that are needed for the following purposes:

(1) To give financial aid to the hundreds of militants of the Italian left who are on trial for political reasons, in gaol or exiled, and who have no means to secure an effective political defence.

(2) To help meet the legal costs of the Valpreda trial. These will be very expensive. Copies of the reports of preliminary investigations and other papers can be afforded only by wealthy people. In the Valpreda trial copies of the report on the judge's preliminary investigations alone (about 20,000 pages) cost 4 million lire (over £2,500).

Furthermore to be able to put forward an effective political defence, it is necessary to bring evidence of the links between the bombing of December 12, 1969, and a long series of crimes that preceded and followed, of the responsibilities of Italian reactionary forces connected with the CIA and the Pentagon, who either plotted the bombing or at least utilised it for large-scale repressions. To be able to

bring this issue into the courtroom, it is necessary, at the very least, to have access to all the acts of the preliminary investigation carried out by the judges, and of all the previous documentation in connection with bombing taking place before the events of December 1969 in which appear, as accused, a vast number of people mentioned in the Counter-Investigation.

(3) To finance leaflets, posters, records, films, public meetings, etc., and any other means of diffusion of the truth about the actual repressive policy, with particular reference to the Valpreda, 'Lotta Continua', Calabresi and Marrone trials.

(4) To allow the continuation of the counter-investigation, in order to determine who was really responsible for the bombing of Milan. It is vital that the counter-investigation be continued.

(5) A committee is being formed from representatives of socialist groupings in England, to organise the work of this appeal. It will be convened by Stephen Bodington, of the *Spokesman* editorial board, who can be contacted at the Foundation's offices, 3-4 Shavers Place, Haymarket, London, S.W.1.

SECOND HAND NEW

Books

Any book not in stock, but in print can be promptly supplied. Book Tokens accepted. Please add postage & cash with order helps.

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Another 4-page leaflet. Two articles from FREEDOM: *The relevance of Anarchism today* and *Anarchism and Nationalism*. Available from Freedom Bookshop for 5/- a hundred, plus 1/4d. postage.

WHEN A TERRORIST act is done, the concerted expressions of horror and unqualified condemnation from all quarters are likely to cause in anarchists a dulling of the shock, a seeking for excuses and justifications in reaction against the presentation of the total blamelessness of the victim and the absolute lack of grounds for the violent act of the perpetrators. It is a reaction we should guard against; not to let our judgement, moral and political, be betrayed by sympathy for the doers who, being hunted by the police then become victims, or by the need for solidarity should they turn out to be anarchists or others opposing the unjust arrangement of society which we are opposed to.

This is of course evoked by the bomb attack on the home of the Minister for Employment. We don't yet know who thought it up or carried it out, or how serious they intended the result to be, or how they hoped it would affect the man concerned, the present Government, the members of the trades unions, the general public, and the 'Revolutionary Left' in general and the anarchists in particular, if the bombers are anarchists.

The police appear to have made anarchists their first guess; the *Evening Standard* (14.1.71) described an unnamed anarchist 'leader' in his twenties strongly suspected of plotting other bomb attacks in London, and said detectives believed the date—the day of protests against the Government's Industrial Relations Bill—significant, but not the choice of the Employment Minister (my italics), and filled most of the rest of the story with details of attacks on the Spanish Embassy and bombs placed on Iberia Airlines' planes last year in London, Paris and elsewhere (that in London was found before exploding, I do not remember whether any at Continental airports exploded). The report also referred to the questioning of a man and the holding for 48 hours of a girl-friend of his after the Iberian Airlines incident, which coincide with a report from Anarchist Black Cross printed in *FREEDOM* (20.6.70) of police attentions paid to equally unnamed anarchists.

What we can try to assess, and for this it does not matter whether or not this particular act was the work of anarchists, is the value of this kind of act in attain-

Why Terror is not an Anarchist Means

ing the ends desired by anarchists, its rightness or wrongness in any context, and whether it fits any interpretation of anarchist philosophy.

Because I am setting out from the premise of the specific attack on Robert Carr's home, let me state that I am not suggesting it was intended or thought possible to cause death or injury to any occupant of the house. But any attack on property using explosives is liable to cause injury to a living being if anyone is there, and death if the amount of explosive used or damage caused is great enough; therefore it becomes a terrorist act against people. And, although anarchists have a lesser record of killings and terrorism than adherents of other political creeds, and immeasurably less than any government one might select unless one could exclude the smallest republics and newest-established states, assassination and terror are historical ingredients of anarchist activity. Is it essential to anarchism, or alien, or irrelevant?

AS A MEANS TO AN ANARCHIST END

Plainly, it is not essential to anarchism, since the essence of anarchism is that it is possible and desirable for human beings to provide each other with all the physical and cultural necessities of life, no individual or group having power to deprive others of these and thereby forcing by fear and necessity those others to provide them with an unjust share and by a form of work and style of life they have not chosen. The obstacles to this are the absence of a lively enough sense of injustice, a passion for freedom and awareness of possible alternatives on the part of the subjugated, and the all-too-lively consciousness of the value of privilege and the sweets of power on the part of those who hold wealth and wield power. How are these obstacles to be removed?

Of the two, the first seems to be the heaviest to shift. It is not even possible to guess its weight. The fact that about half the adults in this country voted

Conservative seven months ago, the fact that the proliferation of rebellious and protesting movements of the last few years have been peopled by a minority of the population, and that even the plight of the squatting homeless did not stir to compassionate help or self-help any numbers of those in the same need or in a position to help, all combine to give an oppressive feeling that the weight is leaden and dead. Yet this is belied by the amount of mental breakdown, the unremitting industrial unrest and unofficial strikes, and the critical attitude to some of the present Government's approaches and the sympathetic coverage given to minority movements and their self-protective organisations in the 'establishment' press; all indications that all is not for the best in the best of all possible worlds. The effect of continued activity and withholding of consent and co-operation by the disparate dissenting elements must be to modify the pattern the present Government seeks to impose. We have yet to see what the only widespread and powerful section, the trade unions, will do when the provisions of the Industrial Relations Bill are imposed by law; to make any change more fundamental than putting the Labour Party back in the next election, requires, if the change is to be in a libertarian direction, a vastly greater spreading and acceptance of libertarian ideas and programmes among the people who appear to be unsatisfied but unaware of alternatives. The sporadic bomb attack seems to have little connection with or effect on this. In the absence of mass support, when it would be unnecessary, it is merely a demonstration that somebody, somewhere has stronger feelings on the subject or a larger portion of hate in his make-up than other people, which seems to qualify the act as irrelevant.

TERRORISM RIGHT OR WRONG?

Is it a proper or successful means of removing the second obstacle, the desire to hold on to power? This is more problematical, as there are no recorded instances to my knowledge of despots

resigning or secret police desisting from torture because they were asked. In Czarist Russia despotism was tempered with dynamite for many years but the revolution did not occur until external factors changed circumstances and a very large number of people were possessed of similar or related ideas and desires. In Cyprus British soldiers went in terror and eventually the British left, but the majority of the predominant population wanted independence. It is not proven that the terrorism was a necessary expression of the will. The killing of the police chief which resulted in the persecution of the six Basques who recently aroused the sympathy of nearly the whole world can be clearly understood as a rational act, if he was in fact killed by a political opponent, because this was a particular man who was persecuting and torturing people who had no hope of his removal by any other means. Maybe this kind of terror does work by imposing some restraints on the behaviour of successors. What thirty years of guerilla action and attentats have not done is to remove the hated regime. Even supported by the most courageous strikes by quite numerous sections of workers such as the Asturian miners. Why? Is it only because the regime has sufficiently large regiments of armed soldiers and police? Or is it in addition that a large section of the population is doing well enough under the regime, having regained their pre-revolutionary status, and an even larger section had enough of blood and terror during the revolution and civil war, and would rather settle for a degree of 'liberalisation' and 'prosperity', drawing nearer to that of the rest of capitalist Europe?

And Spain has a heritage of anarchist thought and aspiration (as well as aristocracy and political communism). 'Accepted' as anarchism has become here in recent years, and real as the anarchistic rejection of our tawdry material society has been on the part of so many young people, we are a long way from an understanding and acceptance of anarchist ideas by a large enough number of

people to make them work. We know the workers could run their factories and produce food and decide what are our real needs without a Minister of Employment; the task is to pass on our confidence to them—adding shareholders and bosses to the list. Surely no one imagines that even if one Minister could be terrified out of his job there wouldn't be another to follow, or that the Government would fold up the Ministry and their Industrial Relations Bill under anything less than massive, concerted pressure from the workers and trade union members affected by it. The official protest of the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party might have rung a bit hollow on Tuesday, January 12; the marches and rallies of several thousand trade unionists held in working hours and in rejection of the TUC advice may have had more reality but indicated that really determined militancy was not evident throughout the millions of trade unionists of the country; the bombs directed at the Minister of Employment seem to demonstrate only that a few people have left the world and taken up residence in a bad television film.

16.1.71

M.C.

Contact

Contact Column is for making contact! Use is free, but donations towards typesetting costs are welcome

Room or flat wanted in London for young woman Anarchist from Scotland with young child and another baby due. Due to take up voluntary social work. Douglas Kepper, 23 Sutton Court Road, London, W.4.

Contact wanted with comrades in West London. Phone Richard Callis at 603 0757.

Leeds Conference. Pre-Conference Bulletin, an information service giving views, dates of conference, views wanted, etc. Send to Ray Brooks, 79 Norfolk Street, Lancaster, Lancs.

Dave Smith, formerly of Southall, can now be contacted at 10 Berwick Avenue, Hayes, Middlesex.

Help Required for Community/Social Action, Hammersmith (Barons Court, West Kensington, Shepherds Bush). Several Projects under way. Comrades who live locally needed. Plenty of work to do. All interested phone Reg 603 0550.

1971 World Anarchist Congress, August 1 to 4 in France—exact place will be notified. Contact CRIFA, 132 Rue de Paris, 94—Charenton, France.

Stop The Cuts Campaign against the attacks being made on our Social Services. To Plan our Campaign against the implementation of these cuts we are organising a Public Meeting, Central Library, Bancroft Road (off Mile End Road), Thursday, February 4, at 7.30 p.m. Support and financial assistance are needed to: M. Houlihan, 85 Swaton Road, Lincoln Estate, E.3, phone 987 8665.

Meetings at Freedom: Every Wednesday at 8 p.m. For details see 'This World' column.

Socialist Medical Association. A Day Seminar on the 'Social Causes and Consequences of Addiction' — to Drugs—to Alcohol—to Smoking—to Gambling on Sunday, March 28, 1971, at the NUFTO Hall, 14 Jockey Fields, London, W.C.1 (off Theobalds Road), Holborn. Two sessions: morning 10 a.m. to 12.45 p.m.; afternoon 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Fees: 5/- per session, 10/- per day, per person. Send to 54 Finchley Court, London, N3 1NH.

History Workshops. Saturday and Sunday, February 13 and 14, 1971. Send for full details to: Ruskin College, Oxford.

Exeter Group. Anyone interested in getting a group together contact: Nigel Outten, Westeria House, Cullompton Hill, Bradninch, Exeter. If possible, please write first.

George Foulser, now squatting as No. 090123, HM Prison, Jebb Avenue, Brixton, S.W.2. Letters, books welcome.

Urgent. Help fold and dispatch *FREEDOM* every Thursday from 4 p.m. onwards. Tea served.

NO POST—NO PRESS FUND

But we shall still get bills EVENTUALLY so please let us have your contribution after the strike.

But don't blackleg!

What goes on

WE STILL NEED any amount of help to get our Wednesday night meetings (all welcome, every week at 8 p.m. in Freedom Press) off the ground. Not only speakers are required but ideas for less formal activities such as the evening with Julius. If you can help phone Freedom Press or come to the Marquis of Granby, where anarchists meet every Sunday 7.30 to 10.30 p.m. and ask for me. Scheduled right now are:

- February 10, Tony Gibson on 'Living through a Revolution'.
- February 17, MEET THE EDITORS: The Editors of *FREEDOM* will be present to answer questions and explain their work.
- February 24, Sebastian Scragg on 'Towards the Abolition of Money'.
- March 3, Tomasina on 'Wilhelm Reich'.
- March 10, Julius: 'An evening with the Ranters'.

Others who will give talks include Arthur Uloth, Philip Sansom, S. E. Parker ('Reflections on 1984'). Firm dates will be given as soon as possible.

Antediluvian Britain

Rudi Dutschke had sunken into oblivion (partly of his own choosing) as a minor university tutor when our primitive politicians decided to resurrect him as a major threat to British society. It has taken the Danes to demonstrate how ridiculous the whole affair is.

They were given a complete dossier on Dutschke by the British authorities and declared there was nothing 'to justify a refusal of his request' to take up a teaching position at Aarhus University. The court Danish announcement concluded:

'Work and residence permits are given in Denmark irrespective of political convictions'.

Poverty and Revolution

Frank Field, Director of the Child Poverty Action Group, in a recent study supported with overwhelming statistical evidence, states that there are a million children living in poverty in Britain today compared with half that number in 1966. We all knew that there is still considerable deprivation in our affluent society but it now transpires that this is being rapidly intensified.

The most impoverished form of anarchism—introverted individualism—maintains that the individual's primary concern is with himself, that the majority of the population can be written off as far as anarchism is concerned and that the latter is strictly for a small group of elitists to enjoy in the sanctuary of a

THIS WORLD

campus or, perhaps, a government department.

Anarchists who want revolution—freedom for all—cannot take such easy refuge. The problems of social change and education must not be underestimated—but they are problems to be solved. The massive poverty that exists in Britain is a challenge to anarchists, who must be both educators and agitators, to proclaim to the underprivileged that submission to their lot is a badge of slavery. When men have the confidence in themselves, individually first and collectively as a logical development, to change the world they can do it. Confrontation with authority is happily becoming a frequent occurrence and, make no mistake about it, every occasion weakens it and, sometimes only subconsciously, strengthens the realisation in ordinary people that they can control their own destinies. Those who enter into this struggle without illusions—such as the imminence of revolution—will realise that the work calls for painstaking devotion and constancy, that progress often consists of tiny steps forward or even sacrifice today for effects not immediately assured. Is it worthwhile? Well, I think, if you believe in the justice of what you are doing the work itself will bring its own rewards and, given the thirst for a society where men will be really free, one does not really have a choice. Durruti once said, 'We carry a new world here in our hearts, that world is growing this minute', and it is this very spirit that is necessary if we are to carry the revolution to the people—to the people who also happen to need it.

Mini Scabs

The yellow press, conspicuously the evening papers, have been singing the praises of the mini-skirted beauties who have braved the picket lines of their fellow workers to 'play the game' as Sir Halford Reddish put it in a letter to 'The Times'.

Many of these girls come from families that are staunchly conservative and no doubt believe they are 'standing up for Britain', threatened by workers who won't stay in their places. Their membership of a trade union is a formality for which, unfortunately, the unions themselves are often to blame. Some of the more coherent strike-breakers have pointed out that there had been no consultation on the part of the union leadership. The Union of Post Office Workers has been highly conservative in the past

—which apart from an absence of militancy means that the rank and file are merely due-paying numbers on a computer card while the aloof union leadership play their power games—usually chasing office in the Labour Party.

It is, however, the rank and file who are now manning the picket lines and it is in this situation of emergency that there is opportunity for workers to learn solidarity—not at the hands of a bureaucratic leadership but in practical exercises of mutual aid. The strong union is that in which the membership plays an active role, where officials are directly responsible to the general meetings of workers and delegated to attend to the affairs of the union as fellow workers and not as a new ruling class.

Who needs cops?

Full page advertisements are currently appearing in our daily press calling for recruits for the police force. It seems that today's policeman must be a sociologist, psychologist, political scientist as well as a limb of the law. 'Social upheaval, organised crime, road congestion, community problems' are amongst their daily chores. A more heady task is the obligation 'to maintain the balance between the needs of the community and the individual's rights. By doing so, they help to preserve our freedom'. Perish freedom!

Even the critics of the police maintain they are a 'necessary evil'. The establishment see them as 'a fine body of men' and they are, as the advertisement clearly shows, represented to the public as an essential and vital civil force. Anarchic critics are asked 'what would you do without them?' and harrowing tales of rape and murder are painted to support the objection. Now the police in New York city have provided an answer to their indispensability. There has been no increase in crime in the city. Obviously the forces that produce crime in society are quite independent of the existence of police. Of course the police are indispensable to the establishment. Their absence would ultimately bring about a radical change in the structure of society as people would need to negotiate with their fellows rather than dictate or obey. All societies find the road to survival—chaos, arising for example from the absence of authority, is a myth that governments propagate to their advantage. And for anarchists it is this very myth which represents the greatest obstacle to winning the faith of the vast majority.

Impartial Arbitration?

Frank Chapple, spokesman for the electricians' union before the power dispute court of enquiry, has called the bluff of the government as to its vaunted impartiality. Lord Wilberforce, a High Court judge, had his close and active association with the Conservative Party thrown in his face. And how was the second member, Sir Raymond Brookes, chairman of Guest Keen & Nettlefolds, to give impartial judgment on any pay dispute? The third member is Mr. Jim Mortimer, an eminently successful trade union official ('I was a worker once') who is taking up a senior executive position with the London Transport Authority on £8,500 p.a.

The Post Office workers have rejected arbitration on the grounds that it would be impossible to obtain impartiality. The salient point is that the parties, workers and employers, are in a position of utter inequality and nobody is impartial. The government appoints the court and whatever decisions are arrived at they must never conflict with the interests of the powers that be. Employers are a fundamental element of the establishment—their interests are inviolate. Arbitration boards are established for the primary purpose of maintaining stability in society as presently constituted. As such they are clearly indicted as a weapon in the perpetuation of injustice, poverty, exploitation and industrial slavery.

BILL DWYER.

POSTMEN

Continued from page 1

wing, but completely loyal, member of the Labour Party, and the other top and very dominant (and dominating) leaders such as Maurice Styles and Jeremiah 'Dick' Lawlor are typical 'undercover' Communist henchmen of many years' standing. Indeed, the Communists, particularly within LDC3 (that is among the London Postmen), have been trying to get control of the UPW for years. To some extent, they have now succeeded. Such men as Lawlor and Styles were yesterday's rebels; today they are part of the Union Establishment. Postal workers should no more put their trust in them than in the bureaucrats who supposedly run the Post Office Corporation. If they do, they may yet get shopped.

RANK-AND-FILE TRADE UNIONIST.