

THE RED HAND OF THE ARMY

ON SEPTEMBER 11 last year FREEDOM's editorial said: 'We have heard an officer of the British Army say on television that the IRA are "animals". We have heard a young British soldier say that he had had six months "being processed to kill" and that he was ready to do so whenever he is ordered. . . . We have read a statement by a Protestant Works Convener saying that there is to be a mass demonstration in Belfast of workers who will demand that the Army use lead bullets "not rubber ones" to disperse Catholic crowds. We have read all these things and it makes us sick in the stomach. On all sides there is killing and death and maiming and terror. Both sides are becoming brutalized by the killings and the word

"bastards" is used by each side to describe its "enemies". After what happened last Sunday we do not have to withdraw a word of what we have said. Indeed what happened strengthens our convictions and enforces our conclusions.

We shall be treated for some days to justifications and recriminations. The official spokesman for the Army has already given several explanations. The usual snipers fired at and people on the ground were hit and killed, four of the thirteen dead were 'wanted' men — for capital offences? The troops were attacked by hooligans—about one hundred in a 12,000-strong march. The march was illegal — but peaceful. Nail bombs were found on a dead man. We have heard it all before about

Kent State, Sharpeville, Amritsar, Peterloo, Lidice, Guernica — delete the name not applicable — all the lies that comfort when naked power scared or bullying wreaks vengeance upon unarmed civilians.

One of the most comforting utterances is 'it can't happen here' or 'that happens in other countries'. Jean-Paul Sartre wrote an introduction to the revelation of torture in Algeria when he realized that the employment of torture was not the exclusive privilege of the Gestapo but was used by General Massu in Algeria—we have seen from the evasions of the Compton Report that it can happen here too.

Much has been said in the left-wing press (notably *Tribune* and *Peace News*) of the leafleting of soldiers in Ireland by members of the War Resisters' International (see FREEDOM, January 15). The viewpoint has been put forward that the Army is only doing its work and they are exploited too and we should not blame them. Further correspondence has included re-

definitions of 'pacifism' and the need for an army in Ireland to act as a police-force to keep order as between Catholics and Protestants. The WRI leaflet was rather cautious in its approach, and understandably so because sedition is still an offence. Indeed Michael Tobin is going on trial at Maidstone for inciting disaffection among the troops in Northern Ireland (the leaflets concerned exhibit a particularly nasty racist bias' at the same time so we cannot wholeheartedly support Mr. Tobin's stand). We cannot expect them to echo the notorious 'Soldiers Don't Shoot' leaflet which got Tom Mann six months in 1912 for incitement to mutiny. Later Guy Bowman was sentenced for re-printing it.

The IRA has threatened vengeance for these killings, and Bernadette Devlin has physically attacked Mr. Maudling.

We can only repeat what we said editorially on September 11:

... Soldiers can question orders. Of course they can refuse to kill their fellow human beings at the order of some brutalised officer. If they don't refuse then the killings will go on—and on both sides. The violence of the British Army strengthens the IRA and the Irish State. The violence of the IRA strengthens the British Army and the British State. The essential human feelings of the people—both Irish and British—are drowned in hatred and bitterness.

'We don't believe there is any solution other than people acting like human beings and refusing to kill each other at the orders of some authority or other. All the rest is politics—and the people cannot act like human beings when the politicians move in.'

To the British soldiers we say: Throw away your guns and come home! To the oppressed people of Northern Ireland we say: Refuse to obey the IRA! Extend the campaign of non-violent civil disobedience!

J.R.

A Famous Victory

THE BRITISH ARMY have again distinguished themselves in Northern Ireland. Firing with automatic rifles into an unarmed crowd, massed in a city street, they scored thirteen dead, and many more wounded. The British people are proud of their brave parachutists. They will be even prouder no doubt when the self-loading rifles are turned on them. Death is a complete answer to the problem of unemployment.

There seems no doubt that this was a deliberately planned massacre. The soldiers did not just lose their heads. They posted themselves on the corners of the street so as to have as wide a field of fire as possible, and then blazed away, laughing and joking as they did so. There is no doubt that they enjoyed what they were doing.

The parachute regiments in all countries are legalised outlaws. They correspond to the Nazi SS. No doubt the danger involved in dropping from the air by parachute tends to ensure that only reckless and brutal, near-psychopaths are enrolled into these units. They are dedicated killers and torturers, who have no other function.

The French 'paras' showed what they could do in Algeria, and the American Green Berets have shown what they can do in Vietnam. One would have to go back to the Nazis, or the Turkish Janissaries to find some equivalent. They are not part of society, and have no loyalties except to each other, and to their masters. This being so, any kind of appeal to their better nature is probably a waste of time. One might almost say they are on the verge of being outside the human race altogether.

For those who believe in non-violence they pose a considerable problem. How do you appeal to people whose moral sense has been almost completely eroded? Equally to those who believe in armed resistance they pose a problem. How do you fight against people who will literally stop at nothing, without becoming as disgusting as they are?

To me it is quite evident that this massacre in Northern Ireland represents something more than just another chapter in the story of England's cruel oppression of her neighbouring island. It is the first major step towards a fascist-military regime in this country. It is the beginning of the end of liberal, democratic, consensus, middle-of-the-road, sensible-compromise England.

A.W.U.

THE MINERS' STRIKE

THE GOVERNMENT is still determined to use the miners' strike as a platform on which to fight its wages policy. It is putting forward the public sector of the economy as an example to the private. But while the Government is standing firm against the miners, private industry are conceding wage increases above those set by the Government. This dispute is yet another example of the State in its role as a strong employer, determined to keep wage costs down in order to supply the basic needs and services to private industry at the lowest possible cost.

Following the war, the miners were one of the highest paid sections of workers in industry, but now they are the worst paid and doing the most dangerous of jobs. Despite modern equipment, or rather because of it, 595 miners died of pneumoconiosis last year. The modern cutting machinery has made the miners' job perilous because of the high increase in the amount of dust that they now inhale.

Yet miners are supposed to heed the warnings of the Coal Board that many coal faces will be unworkable soon because the men have refused to carry out safety work. The Coal Board cared little about the closures of pits and the disintegration of whole communities and now the miners are supposed to have a conscience about the pits. It is small wonder that out of 289 pits, only 34 have full safety cover, while in 148 there is no safety work being done at all. Both the union and the Coal Board have pleaded for safety cover but the miners

are mostly adamant in their refusal. The fact is that not only are the coal faces threatened, but millions of pounds worth of equipment is also likely to be lost. Already it is estimated that between £3m and £4m worth has been destroyed. The following probably sums up the miners' attitude best: 'We are prepared to let the mining industry slowly decline. If the Government thinks they can manage without adequate wages in the industry then they do not deserve a mining industry and we shall not help to preserve it.'

The miners have kept up a vigorous campaign of picketing, so much so that the British Steel Corporation is expected to lay off workers soon, and three power stations have closed. Miners have travelled to picket power stations in order to prevent more coal being delivered. Lorries carrying oil and sulphuric acid, used for generating purposes, have also been turned away. A picket from Betteshanger Colliery said: 'The only supplies we do not object to are lorries with hydrogen, which is needed for safety precautions.' Another Kent miner said: 'We have had a lot of help from London sympathisers. We need it because most of these power stations are very remote, even though they are inside London.'

STUDENT SUPPORT

Good support has come from students at Essex University. Not only have they assisted Yorkshire miners with picketing, but they have also given them accommodation at the university. An eviction order was applied for in the High Court, but the miners had already decided to leave before they knew of this. The National Union of Mineworkers and the National Union of Students were putting pressure on their members, one to make them leave and the other to make their members end their occupation.

In a statement, the General Council of the TUC said that the Government was taking a 'negative attitude' and that they have 'to recognise that the mine-workers have a strong case which must be examined on its own merits, not by reference to doctrinaire considerations'. With so many meetings between Mr. Feather, General Secretary of the TUC, Mr. Gormley, President of the NUM,

Mr. Ezra, Chairman of the Coal Board, and Government Ministers, one wonders if something is being hatched up. Past experience shows that union leaders are always quick to seek compromise, especially when the rank and file militancy is showing a determination to win. We know little of the behind-the-scenes manoeuvring, but it is taking place. In fact Mr. Feather has cancelled a planned trip to Switzerland in order to be on hand just in case.

One suggestion for such a compromise involves a guarantee on the size of the industry and the number to be employed in it. Such a settlement would mean little to coalminers, but there are signs that the NUM leaders are worried about the effect of a lengthy strike.

They have already resurrected that old red herring of extremist groups infiltrating into pickets lines and fomenting trouble. Mr. Gormley has sent warnings to all branch secretaries about the activities of these groups of 'troublemakers'.

There is nothing surprising in the fact that the manoeuvrings and attempts to discredit 'extremist groups' are taking place. These trade union leaders are really unwilling to make a fight of it against the Government. So far it is the rank and file who have made all the running and who are showing the determination to win. It is important that the initiative remains with the members and that any compromise moves by the leaders are rejected.

P.T.

Those wishing to help the strike financially or by any other means, send donations or write to National Union of Mineworkers, 222 Euston Road, N.W.1.

Anti-Internment League

THE OPENING of the new internment camp at Magilligan, Co. Derry, shows that Stormont and Westminster are intent on continuing their present policies of repression in the North of Ireland. Such military oppression can only serve to whip up further resistance on all levels to the Stormont regime. This is clearly illustrated by the situation in Newry, Co. Down, where the government have had to take over the local authority with its £500,000 debt accumulated as a result of the civil disobedience campaign.

It is crucial that the Irish in Britain and those members of the British public alarmed by the situation in the North of Ireland express more forcibly in the coming months their opposition to Tory and Unionist policy.

The Anti-Internment League, a United Front of 40 Irish and English groups and organisations will act as a focus for protest activity. The AIL is campaigning on the two demands—release the internees and withdraw British troops.

Fifteen major public meetings have been organised in London and the Home Counties during the next two months. On March 5 a Conference for Trade Unionists is being held and on March 26 a mass demonstration will take place in London. This will involve five separate marches converging on Westminster. On October 31 last year the AIL mobilised over 20,000 people in its first mass demonstration.

For further information, ring John Gray, 603 3085 or Press Officer AIL, Wynford Hicks, Tel. 622 8961.

DETERMINATION TO WIN

TRIAL NOW SET FOR FEBRUARY 23
PUBLIC MEETING, MARCH, STREET THEATRE

Free Valpreda!

PLANNED FOR SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20
Help Needed — Contact ORA, 68 Chingford Road, E.17
(Publicity material available Freedom Bookshop)

The 'Angry Brigade' Case

The eight defendants in this case have been committed for trial. Three of the defendants were given bail. There were no major developments but we hope to have a fuller account next week.

J.R.

The Even Holier Barbarians

THE GREENING OF AMERICA, by Charles Reich (Penguins, 40p).

I DON'T KNOW if this is something that happens in the end to all people who review books for long enough, or whether it is just something that is the matter with me, but I seem to keep meeting books I read years and years ago, only written anew by someone else.

About a dozen years ago I reviewed in FREEDOM a book called *The Holy Barbarians*. It was about the American beatniks. The author compared them to the barbarians at the gates of the Roman Empire, only these were non-violent barbarians who were going to undermine the American Empire rather than overthrow it by force.

More than a decade has passed since, and to all intents and purposes here comes the same book again. This time it is the hippies and the freaks who are going to undermine the American Empire by rejecting its ethos, rather than by fighting it.

The approach taken by Charles Reich is somewhat more sociological than that taken by the author of *The Holy Barbarians*. The message is the same.

Charles Reich distinguishes between three forms of consciousness. Consciousness I is the old American, pioneering,

buccaneering, work-ethic, individualist consciousness. Beginning perhaps as an appropriate response to a vast wilderness, it ended by creating a hideous dog-eat-dog society. This called into being Consciousness II. This was a managerial consciousness. It attempted to control capitalism and eliminate its worst evils by instituting a form of social control. Its heyday was the era of the New Deal.

Consciousness II did not wholly succeed in controlling the evil consequences of Consciousness I, and in addition brought in some new evils of its own. It helped to create an American version of the Corporate State, where business and bureaucracy have come to form a single vast organism, in which the individual is crushed.

Consciousness III is that of the modern youth who reject both Consciousness I and Consciousness II. They drop out of the rat race, let their hair grow, wear jeans or bell-bottoms, smoke pot and live from hand to mouth.

Since the economic system can only function if everyone is working hard, and buying consumer goods, this movement strikes a deadly blow at it. And the movement is growing fast. It is not only the young. Children are radicalising their parents. For Charles Reich 1967 was the turning point.

In the summer of 1967, when Consciousness III was just beginning and the forces of repression had not yet moved in to create an atmosphere of tension and hatred, one could see the new community in the streets and shops of Berkeley, near the University of California. For just a few months at the very beginning of Consciousness III there was a flowering of music, hippie clothes, hand-painted vehicles, and sheer joy to match nature itself. It seemed to be everywhere, but perhaps one could see it best of all in a vast, modern co-op supermarket in Berkeley, open late at night, almost a community centre with a self-service laundry, a snack bar with sweet fresh doughnuts, a highly intellectual selection of books, and a community bulletin board. It possessed an amazing variety of goods . . . and genuine, old fashioned, unhomogenised peanut butter, the very symbol of the world that has enjoyed technology and transcended it. If the foods gave the supermarket its sense of gleaming opulence and richness, the people gave it the sense of community. There were hippies looking like Indians, with headbands and proud, striking features; ordinary middle-class families doing their shopping late at night; Hell's Angels of California, in their black leather jackets; frat men with block letters; very young couples in some

stage of transitory housekeeping; threesomes, foursomes, fivesomes, all possible varieties of housekeeping, in fact; people going on camping trips and returning from trips; and the checkout clerks, very much a part of it all, joining with smiles in the general scene. For the atmosphere was one of mutual respect and affection—visible and, even more, felt in the vibrations that a casual visitor received. Somehow, all these people were together. The checkout lines, with beards, old ladies, mothers with perambulators, and hippies whose purchase was a single carrot or turnip, resembled nothing so much as a peace march where all kinds of people are joined by a common cause. The scene as a whole, though, was not a march but a kingdom—the peaceable kingdom of those old American paintings that show all manner of beasts lying down together in harmony and love.

Similar scenes are described in *The Holy Barbarians*, which deals with a period before Consciousness III had even begun, according to Charles Reich. He

dismisses the beats in a cavalier way, saying that they found themselves in a dead end. Well perhaps they did, but their attitude to life was the same as that of the Consciousness III people he so much admires. He is obliged to dismiss the immediate past because he wants to believe he stands at the very beginning of a totally new epoch. I would like to believe so too, but, although I do not doubt that the American Empire will go the way of all previous empires, and that the hippies will help it on its way, I cannot see anything new in this book, and I cannot work up in 1972 the same feeling of enthusiasm as I could in 1960.

I'm all for Consciousness III, make no mistake. I like this book. I believe that truths often have to be repeated and repeated. But . . . well, suppose somebody rushes into your house to pour into your ear, in excited tones, some piece of information that you had known for days already. The most you could probably manage would be a kindly smile.

Puritan Beatnik

LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE, by Henry David Thoreau, with foreword by Dennis Gould. (Books and Things Pamphlet No. 1, 6 Penryn Street, Redruth, Cornwall. No price given.)

ONE OF THE THINGS which struck me most when reading this pamphlet was how little things have changed, except to get worse, or at least more extreme, in the hundred years or more since Thoreau wrote it. Although the language is nineteenth century, what he writes does not date at all. This may well be due to Thoreau's extreme detachment from ordinary life. He was not affected by fashion to the same degree as most people, and his teachings have a timeless quality.

His writing is a series of epigrams. There is no uncertainty in him. He knew what was what, and had complete self-confidence. He was a difficult man to get on with. He lived simply and so was able to live on very little money and did not have to work much, and thus avoided the rat-race. He described in *Walden* how he did this. He believed that such a way of living was within the reach of all, if they would only make the effort.

His interests in life were philosophy, poetry, the observance of nature and writing. For these interests a great deal of equipment is unnecessary. It is perfectly possible to live in a hut, as he did for some time in the woods by Walden Pond. (The place is now over-run by tourists.)

His only intervention in the politics of his day was over the question of slavery. He would not pay taxes which went to support a government which upheld slavery. He addressed meetings and came out in support of John Brown; although he had preached the doctrine of Civil Disobedience he believed that in some cases violence was inevitable.

John Brown had attempted to start an armed uprising of the slaves. Thoreau said:

'I speak for the slave when I say that I prefer the philanthropy of Captain Brown to that philanthropy which neither shoots me nor liberates me. I do not wish to kill nor to be killed, but I can foresee circumstances in which both these things would be by me unavoidable. We preserve the so-called peace of our community by deeds of petty violence every day. Look at the policeman's billyclub and handcuffs! Look at the gaol! Look at the gallows! Look at the chaplain of the regiment! We are hoping only to live safely on the outskirts of this provisional army. So we defend ourselves and our hen-roosts and maintain slavery.'

Life Without Principle is an exhortation to people to take a look at their lives, at the futility of them. They are passed in a scramble for money.

'If a man walk in the woods for love of them half of each day, he is in danger of being regarded as a loafer; but if he spends his whole day as a speculator, shearing off those woods and making earth bald before her time, he is esteemed an industrious and enterprising citizen. As if a town had no interest in its forests but to cut them down!'

'The ways in which you may get money almost without exception lead downward. To have done anything by which you earned money merely is to have been truly idle or worse.'

What Thoreau wanted was for people to eat and dress and house themselves simply. Then they would be able to de-

vote their energies to thought and study and the observation of nature. Horrors like slavery would no longer exist.

He did not preach syndicalism, or libertarian communism or social revolution. Even in the anti-slavery campaign he spoke for himself alone.

'A man once came a considerable distance to ask me to lecture on Slavery; but on conversing with him, I found that he and his clique expected seven eighths of the lecture to be theirs, and only one eighth mine; so I declined. I take it for granted, when I am invited to lecture anywhere—for I have had a little experience in that business—that there is a desire to hear what I think on some subject, though I may be the greatest fool in the country, and not that I should say pleasant things merely, or such as the audience will assent to; and I resolve, accordingly, that I will give them a strong dose of myself. They have sent for me, and engaged to pay for me, and I am determined that they shall have me, though I bore them beyond all precedent.'

This detachment from 'the collective' was both a strength and a weakness. Thoreau did not struggle to construct a new social order, or a theory of society or of history. He was no Proudhon or Marx. In consequence his writings are easy reading and do not go out of date.

On the other hand people usually do things in groups. The thought of a world of Thoreauan drop-outs is a pleasant one, but it is hard to imagine such a situation ever developing. Most people lack Thoreau's self-assurance. Even living alone in the woods (even though in fact Thoreau was not far from other people and had frequent visitors), would be too much for most people. They would be frightened by the loneliness.

So it looks as if Thoreau's kind of anarchism—of course he never used the word—is a kind to appeal only to a special kind of person, the solitary. The beatniks, and even some behaviourists (see *Walden Two*, which is supposed to apply Thoreauan ideas to a group, Thoreau would have detested it), claim to be disciples of Thoreau, and perhaps a few are. But it is like Zen. The thought of a hippy as a samurai or a Buddhist monk is incongruous, and the thought of a hippy Thoreau is also a trifle quaint.

Thoreau was terribly austere, and the drop-out of today is hedonistic and prefers to be in a group. He is none the worse for that I hasten to add. I think for most of us Thoreau is someone by whom it is possible to be influenced to some extent, but few among us can claim to be living according to his teachings. And this probably is as it should be. Thoreau urged people not to imitate him slavishly but to find themselves.

So many things he said still apply today, even in quite small details. Instead of Fidel Castro, or Che Guevara, the popular hero was the Hungarian national leader Kossuth. He travelled across America, and was feted by his admirers. Speeches were made, but the people did nothing practical for the cause of liberty, and all that was left behind was 'the Kossuth hat', as we have the Castro beard and the Guevara badge or poster.

He was scathing about the goldrushes in California and Australia, which we are today inclined to regard as romantic. Will our own age be regarded as a bawling, lusty epoch by future generations (if there be any)? Very probably.

ARTHUR W. ULOTH.

Music and Revolution

Dear Comrades,

Some people seem to believe that there is, or could be, or should be, such a thing as anarchist music. One 'folk song' enthusiast I know told me I OUGHT to like 'folk song', 'because it is anarchist'. Another acquaintance of mine made a similar claim for 'progressive pop'. And there are always people ready to say that jazz is anarchist, though I doubt if Kosygin or the King of Thailand would agree.

LETTERS

It seems reasonable to assume that, even in a free society, some musicians would want to go on performing classical works, and that they would get an audience. And if the only way to ensure that what is played is what Sibelius, Beethoven, or Wagner actually wrote is to have an authoritarian figure waving a stick, then we'll just have to put up with it.

Fraternally,

D.C.

Paddington Day Hospital

Dear Friends,

The State Mental Health Services mostly provides shock treatments, drugs and conditioning therapy. There are a few places where really personal, humane and freedom-centred help is offered in genuine therapeutic communities — all members having a full part in the work of the community. Self-help and mutual aid are at work. One of the most free

of these communities (most of which survive under pressures) is now under direct threat of closure. This comes under the heading of 'rationalization'.

They are a very special bunch of people and their needs are going to be crushed unless they can win a very unequal struggle. They are asking for help. . . . The Paddington Day Hospital, Harrow Road.

Peace,

JOHN TIBBITTS.

Rip Van Winkle's War

AGEING WAR VETERAN Ryk Aad Nyx Ong staggered from the jungle last week to tell correspondents that he had found out that the war was over and his country had lost it. Fingering his dark stubble he said, 'I felt there was something wrong when I didn't come across any American combatant soldiers. I've been told that we lost the war years ago but nobody ever told me nothing.'

'I kept firing at the enemy but somehow it didn't seem real. My old dead and gone buddies Eik, Jai Eff, and El Bei Jai all kept up the War Game with me, but I guess it's played out now.'

When told that undoubtedly his country had not won the war, but peace was not yet possible owing to technicalities, and others would, for the moment, carry on the struggle, he said, 'I thought we'd made it with Kissing.'

He said he had come out of the jungle because he hoped to get elected as dog-catcher. However if he did not succeed in this he'd set up in business as a second-hand car salesman.

UP Corres. JACK SPRATT.

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**ANARCHIST
FEDERATION
of BRITAIN**

AFBIB—To all Groups.

The next AFBIB will be produced in Sheffield at 4 Havelock Square, Sheffield, 10. Send material to Secretary, Peter Le Mare. Also needs offers of help from Groups to bring out further issues.

The Contact Column in 'Freedom' is also available for urgent information. Groups should send latest addresses to Birmingham. New inquirers should write direct to them or to the AFB information office in Birmingham.

AFB REGIONAL GROUPS

There are now anarchist groups in almost every part of the country. To find your nearest group write to:

- N.E. England: Mick Renwick, 34 Durham Road, Gateshead, Co. Durham.
- Essex & E. Heris: P. Newell, 'Aegean', Spring Lane, Eight Ash Green, Colchester. (QM, FL.)
- Surrey: G. Wright, 47 College Road, Epsom.
- Yorkshire: Martin Watkins, Flat D, 90 Clarendon Road, Leeds, LS2 9L.
- Manchester: Mat Cunningham, 9 Briar Hill Avenue, Little Hulton, Worsley, Lancs.
- Scotland: Secretary, Mike Malet, 1 Lynnewood Place, Maryfield, Dundee.
- Wales: c/o P. L. Mare (address above).
- N. Ireland: c/o Freedom Press.
- The American Federation of Anarchists: P.O. Box 9885, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55440, USA.
- S. Ireland: 20 College Lane, Dublin, 2.
- University and Student Groups: c/o P. L. Mare.

THE FOLLOWING article may surprise some comrades, but feeling has been mounting in Ipswich against the student support of the Miners.

From an Anarcho-Syndicalist viewpoint we can clearly see the aims of the Trotskyite students. They view the Miners struggle as a chance to recruit more morons into the 'holy' Party.

We know the truth behind the myth of the Party. It seems that the Miners will soon learn the hard way about Trotskyism.

The following article comes from the Ipswich and District Trades Council newsletter *Voice*, and is typical of local feeling.

This was to be an article in support of the NUM strike and their pickets in this area, but due to the actions of their self-appointed allies this can no longer

Miners & Students

be possible.

I went to some pains to contact the Miners pickets in Ipswich, as no attempt was made to contact us. Eventually I had to go to Essex University where I received a very cool reception.

The Miners themselves are not to blame, they are Workers, the same as

ourselves. The difficulties are being caused by a group calling themselves the United Front for the Defence of the Miners Strike. These people have neglected to make any contact with Ipswich Trades Council, or any Trade Union here. Hence some of the Miners have got the impression from their 'friends' that Ipswich is totally devoid of Trade Union activity.

As soon as I approached the Miners, I was intercepted by a party of students who denounced me as a 'Police spy' and an agent of the *Daily Express* (despite the fact that I had come straight from work and was still in my overalls!). A brief talk with these students identified them as agents of the OGPU or Trotsky's 57 varieties (all unfit for human consumption).

As far as I can see, this United Front is just using the Miners struggle to further some obscure political cause. They do not want to help the Miners they only want to use them. If they really want to help the Miners, they would have asked for all available assistance. Surely, if we wanted to plan the picketing of a factory in Colchester, the first thing we would do would be to contact Colchester Trades Council and the Unions concerned so that (a) we would get maximum support (b) we would not tread on anyone's toes. We would not barge in without telling anyone and expect the locals to contact us as this United Front have done.

No, they want all the credit for themselves at the expense of the success of the struggle. In an effort to score a political point they have neglected any sympathy we may have in Ipswich.

The Miners would do well to look into their own history before gathering such allies. In particular I would recommend reading *The Miners Next Step* published in 1912. On political parties: That the organisation shall engage in

'Only the Usual Manoeuvres'

IT USED TO BE one of the stock responses of the British *raj* when faced with a colonial crisis or 'unrest among the natives' to send a gunboat. Last week, an aircraft carrier group including the *Ark Royal* was despatched to the Caribbean. Furthermore a battalion group of the Grenadier Guards was being flown to British Honduras for 'exercises'.

The Ministry of Defence claims that they handed out a press release a week ago notifying that the *Ark Royal*, a guided missile destroyer, two frigates and other craft were going to the western end of the Caribbean and the coast of British Honduras. This was ignored, they claim, by the Press.

About that date (January 21) the *Guardian* carried an article by Edward de Benito reporting that the recent council elections in Belize, the capital of British Honduras, whilst confirming the Prime Minister's party (the PUP) in council power, saw the rise of the United Black Association for Development—a Black Power movement—who gained 30% of the votes in its first election. British Honduras, soon to be 'independent' is claimed by Guatemala, its products are in American or Canadian hands with the sugar controlled by Messrs. Tate and Lyle. British Honduras is a less-developed-country member of Cifta (the Caribbean free trade area). UBAD (the Black Power association under Evan 'X' Hyde) has other plans.

The *Sunday Telegraph* (30.1.72) says these 'manoeuvres' 'without prior warning' have heightened political tension in Central America. It has infuriated Guatemala and dismayed the Prime Minister of British Honduras, Mr. Price. 'Mr. Price wants independence,' says the *Telegraph*. 'But he believes this can only be achieved with safety by coming to an understanding with Guatemala about the latter's long-standing claims in the colony.' Of course Evan 'X' Hyde has different ideas.

As is now well known, in 1954 the US Counter-Intelligence Agency carried out a coup supplanting President Cuzman, who had just expropriated land belonging to the United Fruit Company. He was replaced (aided by US planes) by Colonel Armas who was later assassinated, it is said, with US connivance. In exchange for his successor, Fuentes, giving US training grounds and bases for attacks on Cuba, US promised to back Guatemala's claims to British Honduras.

A BLOT ON SECURITY

THE THROWING of ink over the Prime Minister in Brussels has raised again the question of the protection of heads of state against possible attack. In fact it is impossible to protect a head of state against an assassin if the assassin is prepared to be caught or killed. This fact was understood in the Middle Ages by the Hashishin, the fanatical Moslem sect who set up a government-by-assassination. The very word 'assassin' derives from them. Usually the threat of assassination was enough to secure compliance from a ruler. They could penetrate any castle or palace, however well-guarded, indeed they often were among the guards. F. A. Ridley, the well-known socialist historian, has written an excellent brief history of the Assassins.

It is thought by some that their methods were copied by the Jesuits. Certainly the American CIA are their

Guerilla warfare, of course, developed. In January 1968 two American military attaches were shot dead in Guatemala, in August of that year, the American ambassador was assassinated and in 1970 the German ambassador met a similar fate. Last June as many as eighteen political assassinations took place on the streets of Guatemala City. Secret right-wing execution squads have been formed which have killed people considered to be left-wing intellectuals. Obviously Guatemala is ripe either for left-wing revolution or a right-wing adventure against British Honduras.

Honduras is a notoriously backward country. It is virtually a colony of the United Fruit Company and the Standard Fruit Company. Its railways are 90% banana company lines, it has only 250 miles of paved roads in 43,000 square miles, 70% of the population do not possess shoes and the water itself is undrinkable. It was governed by a military junta which overthrew the Liberal Progressive President. In 1969 2,000 people died in a war Honduras fought with San Salvador over a football match to decide which country should qualify for the Mexico World Cup!

In such a climate it is obvious why Britain should send a gunboat—or rather an aircraft carrier. But this pretext of long-arranged usual manoeuvres is a smoke-screen which is easily pierced when one looks at the advertising colour supplements of our two posh Sunday papers for January 30, 1972 (produced in advance of this date). Among the utterly resistible advertisements is one for joining the Navy, headlined in the *Sunday Times*—'It's Not Every Job that Offers You the Earth'. Billed for the *Ark Royal's* tour is 'Jan.-Feb., Devonport; March-April, Devonport; May-June, USA'. The advert finishes up '... the chance to travel. All pretty tempting reasons for filling in the coupon. And seeing where it gets you'. But wait! In the *Observer* a different advert for the same firm is headlined, 'What in the World Are Naval Officers Doing these Days?' A map of the world is arrowed for 'HMS *Ark Royal* "On flying exercises between Malta and Gibraltar"'. Which advertisement do you read?

The late unlamented Lord Haw-Haw used to sneer from Hamburg during the War, 'Where is the *Ark Royal*'? Only the 'usual manoeuvres' is the answer. J.R.

spiritual descendants, whether they know it or not.

At any rate no ruler can enjoy complete security. The only way for this to be brought about would be to imprison him in a fortress, heavily guarded by utterly reliable guards, and even this might not work. But what would certainly happen in this case would be that he would be so cut off from actual events that the real power would pass into the hands of his agents. He would become like some Oriental rulers, merely a figurehead.

Probably, in spite of all the fuss, nothing much will happen, because in fact nothing can. A ruler must be mobile. He must be seen. He must be able to be on the spot in some situations at least. Otherwise he loses all influence.

A.W.U.

political action both local and national, on the basis of complete independence of and hostility to all political parties...

The Working Class has the strength to fight its own battles (if we only knew it). We only need the solidarity. We can do without the diversion of budding politicians who only want to use our struggles for their political ends. Finally, just so that no one gets the wrong impression, I suggest that we pledge our full support for our Miner brothers, and that we do all we can to help them. If they can defeat the Tories incomes policy, all sections of the Working Class movement will benefit.

THEIR FIGHT IS ALSO OUR FIGHT

After the writers attempt to speak to the Miners on Wednesday, an approach was made to the Eastern Region of the Labour Party by the students. They asked for help in providing accommodation for the pickets in Ipswich. No, repeat No, official request has been received by the Trades Council, although the Secretary has tried at the request of the Labour Party, to assist. It is unfortunate that there is no hall in Ipswich that is owned by the Labour movement that could be made available for the pickets. Do you know of one? It is a pity that the correct procedures were not carried out in the first instance, as by now we could have probably have made some arrangements to help. We must not let the Miners stand alone like the Postal Workers did last year. The Government is quite content to pick the Unions off one by one if we let them.

One further comment: I do not want to discourage non-Trotskyite students from taking an interest in industrial affairs, as I recognise that they may be Workers themselves one day. I would just ask that they do the necessary enquiry into the situation and find out how best they can help, before rushing in and pouring polemic onto the shop-floor.

I would be more than willing to help in the wording of a leaflet to be put out at the factory gate. Their help can be invaluable in putting over points which I am unable to put over myself, either due to lack of academic training or because of hounding by the boss.

Students and Workers should work together, but please, not for the Party. F.R.

Running Riot

IT BEGAN WHEN a patrol of soldiers passed under the neon lights in front of the chapel shortly before midnight. A crowd of youths lurking in the shadows of the Catholic ghetto opposite began to stone them and the patrol retreated, those at the rear pointing their guns towards the ghetto mouth—and the signaller chattering frantically into the mike of his radio set. They move out of range of the missiles down the road towards their billet. They will be back shortly with reinforcements; the rioters wait.

Meanwhile someone is using a pickaxe to lift up flagstones. A couple of blows from the pickaxe shatter the flagstone into about six pieces. Other hands raise these and they are crashed repeatedly against the sharp edge of the kerbstone until they are reduced to chunks of the right size. Another group can be seen in the darkness their arms moving like those of a barman mixing cocktails—Molotov cocktails. The familiar sounds of a riot in preparation are heard; a saw cutting through the base of a wooden telegraph-pole; scurrying feet; whispered voices. The pole crashes across the roadway and a lookout signals that the Army are on the way back.

Here they come! First the armoured personnel carriers followed by a mixed assortment of lorries and land rovers. Under a barrage of stones they form up broadside across the mouths of the streets leading into the ghetto. The soldiers jump out wearing steel helmets with plastic visors and armed with rifles, batons and riot-shields. The metallic ring of the missiles against the sides of vehicles mingles with the taunts and jeers of the rioters. The Army snatch squads crouch behind the Saracens until suddenly a rubber bullet is fired. It strikes the ground and the friction of its passage along the street sends out a shower of sparks and fills the throat and nostrils with the stench of burning rubber. The youths skip nimbly evading it. After it has spent itself someone will collect it as a souvenir.

The snatch squad emerges from behind the Saracens, batons rattling against their riot shields and obscene oaths and yells coming from their throats. They are greeted with more missiles and three or four petrol bombs. This breaks up their attack and they crouch in doorways or

hug the wall until the bursts of flame die down and there remains only a thin red glow carpeting the roadway and the smell of petrol hangs heavily in the air. The rioters retreat now. They know that the Army has orders to shoot petrol bombers and they fly along the street seeking refuge in the shadows and alleyways. The snatch squad does not pound around corners after them but advances cautiously. By the time they have peered around the corner the street is deserted.

In less than half an hour the rioters will have regrouped in this street but further down the road there is other activity. There are a couple of muffled explosions and the eyes, nose and throat begin to sting. CS gas. Unmistakably English voices are heard a couple of streets away. The snatch squad have caught someone who could not run fast enough or who was temporarily paralysed by the effects of the gas. Retreat once more; and so the game of blind-man's-buff continues in the darkened streets. It is about 2.30 a.m. and suddenly a group of rioters stand frozen, their heads inclined towards the direction of a sound they have been waiting for. It is an automatic weapon firing and it is joined by the voice of another one; then a rifle; and a gelignite bomb.

It is time now for the petrol bombers and the stone throwers to leave the scene. Time for them to wend their way through the shadows of the lonely streets. Grimy hands that have been hurling bricks or that reek of petrol have to be washed. Then a cup of tea, a filter-tip and into bed. But there will be no immediate sleep. The firing outside continues and the blast of a gelignite bomb rattles the window panes and sends a tremor—through the bedroom. The gunfire and the bombs will continue until daylight and soon it is 7.55 a.m. Time for the Northern Ireland news and the voice of the announcer fills the room: 'there was heavy rioting in the Ardoyne area of Belfast throughout the night. Four soldiers were wounded in shooting incidents and the Army claim that they shot at least one gunman who was seen to be dragged away by his companions. Several arrests were made and a number of men and youths are assisting the security forces in their enquiries.'

HENRY BELL.



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