

What a Way to Run a Railway!

IN AND OUT of the Law Courts, working to rule and then back to normal working, this rail dispute is in danger of becoming the biggest bore in working class history. Railwaymen obviously want more than the Rail Board is prepared to give but, instead of stopping work until their demands are met in full, they are following their leaders in a sort of ritual dance around the Government's Industrial Act.

First they work to rule (and thereby reveal for all to see that the trains only run at all thanks to fantastic amounts of overtime working); then the Government intervenes with its Industrial Relations Act and orders a 14-day cooling-off period. The railwaymen comply with the order and go back to working their rest days, Sundays, and overtime. The 14 days achieves absolutely nothing so the unions put on the work to rule again, and again the Government intervenes. This time they get their Industrial Relations Court to order a 21 days normal working to allow a ballot of the workers on the issue. The union leaders then instruct their lawyers to challenge this order at the Appeals Court but meanwhile instruct the men to go back again to normal working.

The lawyers are making a bomb, the Government is happy, the railwaymen are no nearer to getting their claim met, and meanwhile, the millions of people who have to use trains to get to work are subjected to increasing frustration—especially since they know that, at the end of it all, they will have to pay in the form of increased fares. What a way to run a railway!

POLITICIANS IRRELEVANT

The organisation of a railway concerns only two sets of people; those who work in the industry and those who use it. Politicians and Governments are irrelevant. They just pounce on the industry or, like Richard Marsh, they use it for their

own ends.

So far, however, it is only politicians who have had anything to say about this dispute. What they have to say is useless, but that doesn't prevent them saying it. Mr. Heath says he doesn't want a confrontation; Richard Marsh says the railwaymen are taking on the State; Sir Sidney Greene indignantly denies this; Wilson says it is all the fault of the Tories; and the left, i.e., the communists and various other 'revolutionary' groups, scream for the 're-call of the TUC' which, they say, should now organise a campaign for the overthrow of the Tory Government and the return of another government 'pledged to a socialist policy'. Rank and file railwaymen so far have said nothing.

Nobody bothers to explain how another Labour Government would solve the problem. They all conveniently forget that it was Labour which nationalised the railways and it is successive Labour and Tory Governments who have supervised their running down. Thousands of rail workers have been made redundant, lines have been closed, fares have risen almost every year, and the service has gone from bad to worse. The only people who have gained from nationalisation are the swarms of bureaucrats who now infest the industry and take from it handsome salaries. For Richard Marsh nationalisation is a wonderful thing—for the rest of us it is bloody awful.

If railwaymen are simply interested in getting more money they should end this messing about and stop the whole system until their demands are met. If, however, they are interested in providing a service which is useful both to themselves and to the passengers they could do worse than take a look at what has just happened in rural Norfolk where a group of women have taken over a redundant factory and now run it themselves as a co-operative venture.

These women were all made redundant by their employer. They wouldn't accept it but occupied the factory and carried on making leather goods which they sold in Norwich market. Now they have raised enough money to buy the place outright and it now functions as a co-operative undertaking. The workers actually own and manage their own plant. Why couldn't railwaymen act in the same way?

CO-OPERATION NEEDED

The fact that the railways are a nationalised industry shouldn't deter anyone. The Government is right now busy selling off council houses to the sitting tenants, and it doesn't worry them that these houses have been built with money levied from us all in the form of rates and taxes. If it is all right to sell off nationalised houses, why should they jib at selling off the nationalised railways to their sitting tenants—the railwaymen?

It couldn't in all conscience cost very much. The old owners have already been well and truly compensated and, since the Government claims that the industry is broke and can't afford to pay decent wages, taking them over would be doing everybody a favour.

The first big advantage would be the elimination of most of the present parasitic bureaucracy. Marsh would be redundant if each separate line was owned and run by the railwaymen themselves. There would be no need for a vast centralised system. The co-operative ventures could be small enough to allow of direct democracy in running them, but big enough to be viable. Perhaps the lines previously owned by the old railway companies would fit the bill.

Such a co-operative could invite the passengers to take shares and take part in the administration. Fares and wages could be arrived at by mutual agreement. All the accounts could be made public. The

service could be immediately improved. At the moment, for example, trains run empty after the rush hours. A co-operative railway could take old age pensioners and school children to the sea and country at merely nominal fares rather than let them run empty.

An industry owned by the workers would be in a position to tackle seriously the competition from the motor car. Everybody knows that the car is a deadly polluter and creates chaos in big cities. Railways are a much more sensible means of transport—both for passengers and for freight. The Government knows this but won't do anything about it because they derive huge revenues

from taxes on motor vehicles and from the industries which make them. But a co-operative railway would be very interested in defeating this problem and, by providing a cheap and efficient alternative would win a lot of people away from cars—to everyone's benefit.

To adopt such ideas is surely better than allowing oneself to be used by politicians for their narrow political ends. Recalling the TUC, electing another Labour Government, even making a revolution, won't do a damned thing about getting a decent transport system. That is a job for railwaymen and, in our opinion, it is high time they faced up to it.

JOHN LAWRENCE.

ITALY—A Dangerous Place for Anarchists

VALPREDA WAS No. 1 candidate in Milan for 'Il Manifesto', the group which broke away from the Italian Communist Party at the end of 1968. According to the proportional representation system, if a quorum of 5% of votes cast had been reached in any one constituency, not only Valpreda but several other candidates, among whom were five Manifesto members who had been elected as Communists in May 1968, would have been elected to Parliament. Valpreda would thus have been released from prison, as a member of Parliament can only be imprisoned if he has actually been convicted of a crime. Valpreda had made clear from the outset that he remained an anarchist and did not share the Manifesto political line. The Manifesto group accepted this, hoping that popular sympathy for Valpreda would have given them a 5% vote in Milan, at least, and thus have got other candidates elected under his wing, as it were. But the Feltrinelli case, and the violent attacks by the Communist Party (which of course stood to lose votes to its left), and the presence of candidates from other left groups such as the Workers' Political Movement, the Marxist-Leninists, Serve the People, etc., meant that the Manifesto candidates got only 0.8% of votes in

Milan, and 0.7% nationally; nowhere did they get more than 1.1%. Even the Proletarian Unity Party, which had presented candidates jointly with the Communists for the Upper House, lost all their seats in the Lower House where they had stood on their own. Thus Valpreda remains in prison, and won't be tried until the autumn at the earliest; and the Manifesto group are not represented in the Italian Parliament.

Prison is of course a dangerous place for Italian anarchists. While the whole country was thinking about nothing else, politically, than the elections, a young anarchist called Franco Serantini died in prison in Pisa. His skull was fractured in two places, and there was bruising of the brain and lungs. He was arrested on the Saturday morning, was interrogated by the magistrate, and was officially pronounced to be dead on the Sunday afternoon. The autopsy took place on Monday afternoon, and the funeral was rushed through at 3.30 on Tuesday afternoon. Despite the attempt to hush it up, 3,000 comrades were present. The Pisa Anarchist Federation distributed an announcement that yet another anarchist had been brutally murdered by the police. (Il Manifesto, 10.5.72.)

Shop Stewards Under Attack

THE ANTICIPATED DECISION of the National Industrial Relations Court that the Liverpool dockers shop stewards are representatives of the Transport and General Workers' Union will now mean that the union will have to get the dockers to lift their ban on certain container firms. The court says, quite clearly, that if the shop stewards continue their blacking, against the orders of the union, then the union should remove them from office. Failure to do this will mean that the court will impose further fines or possibly sequestration of the union's assets.

The court has now enacted the real purpose of the Act, to discipline militants. It recognises that this could, in the short term, be damaging to the economy, but Sir John Donaldson, president of the court, continued: 'They must be faced in order that in the long term we may have an orderly system of industrial relations of which we can be proud. This will take leadership and courage in full measure. Surely the union has both.'

The onus is now on the T&GWU. The law now says that it is the union's job to assert authority and discipline

those who do not obey its instructions.

At Hull, docker shop steward Mr. Walter Cunningham has been named in a case lodged in court by Panalpina (Northern), a firm which has had its containers blacked. The court has given an interim injunction until a full hearing is held. But Mr. Cunningham, chairman of Hull docks' shop stewards, has said that the ban will not be lifted and he will not appear at the court's hearing. He said he would be prepared to go to gaol rather than obey the court.

Mr. Cunningham is doing no more than what was TUC policy only a few weeks ago. Since then their opposition has collapsed and now the union leaders are rushing to the NIRC to prove what law-abiding citizens they really were all the time. Mr. Feather, general secretary of the TUC, has sent a circular to all unions informing them that they only have to tell him by telephone that they are going to appear before the NIRC.

DIVIDED HOUSE

However the T&GWU membership is a divided house. The container blacking is basically about who does the loading and unloading at the inland terminals.

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SCHOOL IS OUT

THE OUTBREAK of strikes by pupils in London schools has brought renewed publicity to the previously dormant Schools Action Union. Although the SAU leaders make extravagant claims there is little evidence of activity outside London and perhaps a few large cities. The SAU has always been a popular ground for power struggles between various authoritarian political groups. The present incumbents are a group of young Maoists who in true form have expelled the equally power-hungry members of other groups (including IS and the SLL).

Meanwhile, the Young Communist League is proceeding on a more cautious tack and is supporting the embryonic National Union of School Students which is to be created with assistance from the National Union of Students.

Despite the political dogma of the handful of young Maoists who control the SAU, the large number of young people who supported the recent strikes and marches have shown an anarchic exuberance which shows that they are hardly likely to become fodder for

anybody's 'revolutionary' party. All of which makes nonsense of the claims of those who would label the schoolkids revolt as yet another Red Plot.

Libertarian educationalists have always argued that learning is a natural and joyful process totally alien to the indoctrination and forced respect for authority which passes for education in our State schools (and everywhere else in the world). The system is designed to produce an obedient and mindless mass of easily managed citizens: people who will accept without question the dictates of the State. The role of the real teacher should be to assist the child's natural quest for knowledge and understanding, rather than to hinder it with fear, bigotry and limited horizons.

Anarchists support the demands of young people to be treated as responsible human beings. We look forward to united action by pupils, parents and teachers to create an environment in which young people can grow up and develop their full potential for creativity in freedom. And such a society would be revolutionary! TERRY PHILLIPS.

Quebec Workers Revolt

FACED WITH anti-union laws and repression workers in Canada are replying with a resistance campaign of direct action.

Trade unionists in Sept Iles, Quebec, virtually took control of the town recently in protest at one-year jail sentences imposed on three presidents of the Quebec Labour Federation for contempt of court during a Civil Service strike. The workers threatened to strike until the

men are released. Shops were shut, roads were blocked and the town was brought to a standstill until police reinforcements were flown in by the provincial Government. At the time of writing the strikes are continuing.

The solidarity shown by these Quebec workers is what trade unionists in Britain will need in the coming months to resist the Industrial Relations Act.

T.P.

THE HALLS of the British Museum are places of quiet and sober learning where whispering scholars pace with measured tread, and converse with sure knowledge, through these graveyards of history. An attendant rests a tired arm upon an Assyrian god, while an un-hurried clerk pauses to amend an official order upon the glass of a case containing the codex of a wisdom that was ancient when men stoned Christ. This is as it should be, for we who love the Museum are selfish in our love. We can observe, and accept, with our natural pity, the small groups of American-Germanic tourists as they are herded past the wealth and glory of broken civilisations, and we note with a passionate sympathy the look of glazed horror that films their eyes as the guide shovels them into another hall for another battle against instant love of learning. These people are the manifestation of a middle-class affluent society, and as they are forced, as part of the paid Grand Tour, to tread their road into the cultural Gehennas of the world's capitals, so we, by squatter's right, must learn if not to love them then at least to live with them.

But with the corpse of the late Tutankhamun on paid and public display we have lost a battle, though not a war. The Treasures of Tutankhamun are in the Town's great and honourable tradition of public spectacles, and Tutankhamun must take his place with the hanging of Jack Shepherd, Joe-Joe the Dog-Face Boy, the Burning of the Fleet Prison, the Funeral of Queen Victoria and Peggy Duff shielding the mass ranks of CND loyalists as the anarchist militants roared their Siren songs of break-away marches to the Embassy of the Year, as no more than an excuse for the Town and his frau to assemble in a great and happy mob. All that has been said and written of the rotten corpse of the late Tutankhamun, trapped in his golden husk, has been said and written and the exhibition is now no more than a worthy anticlimax to the Sunday supplements and the cigarette advertising coverage. But school by school and bus by bus and hour by hour the hordes of small children arrive, with their out-riders of neurotic teachers, to view the corpse and the treasures and one can find a genuine pleasure as they sprawl in their hundreds upon the steps and the frontage of the British Museum in a waving waste of abandoned plastic lunch-bags and sweet and icecream papers.

It is within the Museum that the full and happy horror of their invasion is seen and heard, as rat packs of small children surge, company by company, followed by camp followers of screaming teachers, through the once silent, respected and almost empty halls of this great Museum. In our slum childhood

REFLECTIONS OF REALITIES

Museums were places to visit, wherein every handle was turned to its ultimate destruction, moving graphs torn down to be examined and futile attempts made to prise open cases to steal the rare and priceless objects until, in the regular and inevitable confrontation with the uniformed Museum authorities, we were dragged shouting and blaspheming to the entrance to be literally thrown out of the Museum. Until the next appearance.

AROUND THE GALLERIES

All this, then and now, gave and gives the Museum the atmosphere of a noisy happy fair, and when this happens then one knows that a Museum is a living organic part of the community. There is a need for learning and a need for undisciplined childish pleasure, and every society builds only for its servant-scholars, and leaves the children only the streets and the markets for their playgrounds, and once in every while the children take over, and in the matter of the late Tutankhamun the children have won, for the British Museum became their Winter Palace and they stormed it and won.

Yet there are still quiet islands of learning and contemplation within the Museum wherein the work of artist craftsmen can be examined and enjoyed in the serenity the work demands, without the heavy breathing of small and curious brats to mist the glass. Such a place is the Oriental Gallery at the far North Entrance, and Mr. and Mrs. Earl Morse's collection of Chinese Paintings of the Ming and Ch'ing Dynasties. Chinese watercolour painting, by some odd freak of history, appeared, over the last ten years, to have become a profitable small sideline for the Communist Party, and year by year their reproductions formed the basis for the sale of the Communist Party greeting-card industry until one was sated by the pale pink and green washes of the chrysanthemums, and the tinted landscapes within a wiry framework. It is this sweet and cloying wash of transparent colours that makes us reject Chinese painting in its entirety. It is the skilled craft of an entrenched and conservative class, and as subjective as their own narrow and segregated way of life. It is but the tinted reflection of a reality, crude, brutal, stinkingly sweaty, that they choose to and can afford to reject. Within this style of painting

there is neither sap nor sinew. Universal landscapes appear as no more than a handful of flowering moss, and within Chinese painting man never challenges the natural universe as in European painting, but is no more than an exercise in the artist's skilled calligraphy.

It was no accident, and this exhibition clearly demonstrates it, that the painted word became less a means of intellectual communication, and, as we of the West have now accepted, an aesthetic exercise. Tung Ch'i-ch'ang has stated that 'If one considers the uniqueness of scenery, then a painting is not the equal of real landscape. But if one considers the wonderful excellence of brush and ink, then real landscape can never equal painting'. Read life for landscape and the fallibility of this esoteric art is made self-evident. Within this exhibition I hold that only a work by Lan Ying can succeed by its pure organic strength. An undated scroll, painted some three hundred years ago, it can be accepted as no more than a jagged piece of rock, but it exists in relation to ourselves, our age and our future, for it is as relevant as a rock brought back by the space-men from their moon landings.

Leonardo advised that one could create a model for mountains by throwing a crumpled handkerchief upon the table and drawing it. The Chinese painters reversed this, and turned every mountain into no more than a crumpled handkerchief. Wu Li wrote that 'Human affairs, large or small, are like a dream. Is not painting also a dream? What I dream of are mountains, streams, grass and trees, and I dream with my brush and ink, and that is all'. But that is not all, and Wu Li was sadly wrong. Wu Li painted his small output of work about three hundred years ago, and this lonely man who always felt rejected by his fellow men, did as so many of our own age and acquaintance do, he drifted, not from place to place, but from philosophical group to philosophical group. He sought an intellectual companionship within the societies of those who talk and taught any new teaching, for his life was one of rejection and he was by turn a Confucian, a Buddhist and a Christian, for he was such a man, and

this day and rightly we call them comrade, who can only assert their individuality within a minority group, and the moment they are accepted is the moment that they must reject the group cloak of the day.

I would hold that a painter such as Bernard Cohen now exhibiting at the Hayward Gallery, and William Scott exhibiting at the Tate Gallery, are men working in this sterile tradition. I entered the Hayward Gallery with every intention of privately mocking the work under review but the sheer beauty of these webs of coloured lines blinds reason. It is like unto marvellous wallpaper, and it unfolds in huge wall patterns as one walks through the gallery. I bathed in the silent and mindless pleasures of these cats-cradles of coloured lines, and reject them, for they are an affirmation of nothing but creative scribbling. Bernard Cohen reaches the end of his personal cul-de-sac in certain of the work he produced when, on sheets of canvas as large as a wall of a council house kitchen, he paints the entire surface a dead white, and paints on that white surface one single small coloured dot no bigger than a penny. This is in the romantic tradition of a small yellow moon in a black dark landscape, a small red sun in a white world of snow or the mast of a ship lost within a blue green sky and sea. The eye of the spectator is drawn to this small fixed point, and the spectator's own imagination fashions the universe surrounding the dot, moon, sun or mast. In other words it is an ancient and painterly con trick and one enjoys it because, as with all minor art, it demands nothing, intellectually or philosophically, from the artist or the spectator.

Within the Hayward Gallery there is the exhibition of Indian paintings from court, town and village, and this work that spans a period of over two hundred years is of interest in demonstrating how a conservative art form can degenerate by feeding on itself.

One has a great respect for the paintings of William Scott, for there is an English puritanism about them that halts the jesting tongue. Bleak flat areas of peasant browns fill the canvas, and the

flat shapes of a frying pan, a pot or a saucepan speak of the earth earthy, or big breasted women at dawn doing odd things to cows in steaming stone cowsheds. All rather Cold Comfort Farm. Scott, I would hold, is strictly a one-painting painter, as are so many other good and competent painters, for his retrospective exhibition at the Tate can do little to enhance his reputation, for the work of too many other painters shows through his canvases. One can name Cezanne, Derain, Picasso, Modigliani and, in the ultimate end, Ben Nicholson. But for me I found the bitter echo of Wallis, the old seaman painter, and Christopher Wood, the sad suicide, too much in evidence in Scott's early work, and they do not have the tragic majesty of those two men in their work.

Let Wu Li, Bernard Cohen and William Scott be enjoyed for the pleasure they give, but they reject the harsh and living beauty of the human struggle.

Yet there is beauty among the abstracts, and the work of the American, Paul Jenkins, at 50 South Molton Street, W.1 (and Zurich and Madison Avenue), is a product of the only abstract painter of our time, May 1972, who can be called master. Wonderful huge washes of watercolour flood the canvas in great flower patterns that only a skilled craftsman can achieve, and Paul Jenkins is such a craftsman.

Those who love the art of painting in relation to nature should see the work of Reynolds Stone at the New Grafton at la Grafton Street, wherein a green thought in a green shade is drawn and painted in lovely and exquisite detail, a work of a gentle hand and a quiet mind. While for those seeking new and untapped talent there are the paintings of John Cole on the high walls of Better Books in the Charing Cross Road. John Cole paints men in all his moods and trapped situations, and I can but quote Paul Selby who writes that, 'These current works . . . have been synthesised into expressions of mouth, nose and eyes, faces that document human conditions of vulnerability, loneliness, greed and self satisfaction', and at an average price of £8 a painting it is an easy way for the gelled collector to salve an over-occupied conscience, for the human condition is the basis of all art and all else is but a worthless, though beautiful, reflection of reality, no matter what Wu Li, Cohen, Jenkins and Scott may paint to the contrary.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

OVERALLS BRIGADE

IN ORDER to let the world know the IWW is still alive and fighting for a better society, a number of Wobblies are planning on staging a re-enactment of the famous 1908 'Overalls Brigade'—riding freight trains to the convention in Chicago.

The object is both to publicize the IWW and recruit new members, and dramatically to protest unemployment, poverty and the other ills that beset capitalist America.

Planning is still in the preliminary stage, and an itinerary has not yet been worked out. The Brigade may leave from the San Francisco area, from the Northwest, or from San Diego, depending on where the largest number of people are interested in participating, and on other factors. Or groups may leave from different areas and converge at some point farther East.

It has not yet been decided whether

to have a convention in 1972, or its exact date. Assuming that as a result of the June referendum it is decided to have a convention and that it will be held the (other) Labor Day weekend, the Brigade would probably leave around August 24. We may decide to have some rallies en route to Chicago, as did the original Overalls Brigade.

Participants should have bedrolls and be prepared to feed themselves. Also, if possible, they should be prepared to bail themselves out of jail in case of arrest. In case we are prevented from riding the freights, we plan to continue on by hitchhiking in small groups to the next rally point.

Suggestions will be appreciated.

Interested parties please write to Eugene Nelson, P.O. Box 7037, Santa Rosa, California 95401, or phone 707-887-2785.

SHOP STEWARDS

Continued from page 1

It concerns only a small percentage of the container traffic, but the issue is heightened by the effect containerisation is having on the jobs of dockers. Although haulage workers from Merseyside have travelled to London to express their support for the dockers' stand on containers, those at the terminals and drivers in other areas are worried about their jobs and 'angry' at the dockers' action.

Such divisions obviously suit the employers and the court. But it must be said that if the dockers take over the work at the terminals then their fellow

union members could lose their jobs. This should be avoided and the maintenance of all available jobs should be the aim. Make all those working on containers registered dockers enjoying the same rates of pay and conditions. If there isn't enough work, the remedy is simple, shorten the working week.

Obviously the employers, the Government and the court would not like such a solution. A shorter working week would cut the huge profits employers are making and are expecting to reap in the future from this growing method of handling cargoes.

Dockers are continuing to defy the law. Sir John Donaldson has told Mr. Jack Jones, general secretary of the T&GWU, that if the dockers continue their ban then he should withdraw their shop steward credentials. If he doesn't, then further fines or seizure of funds will follow.

TIME TO SEEK A SOLUTION

The court has given Mr. Jones plenty of time to seek a solution. It gives officials of the union time to regain control. The threat of a national stoppage also expires at the same time as

the court's notice and will act as an added incentive to find a compromise. With the law against them the union will seek a way out. It has now gained the time but it is also possible that it will act against the stewards rather than risk more fines. The Government and the court would rather see the union doing the dirty work than have to impose further fines.

It is no good expecting the union to back the dockers and fight for a reduction in hours. Such a stand can only come from the rank and file. A determined fight by both the commercial and dockers section of the union is necessary to ensure a victory over the law and to prevent the loss of jobs.

The Industrial Relations Act was made law to defend the interests of a minority who own and control the industrial wealth of this country. It is their law and workers should not feel obliged to obey the orders of the NIRC. Although the leadership of the trade unions are in full retreat, rank and file members can still and will have to defy the law in order to gain some of the wealth and benefits created by their labour.

P.T.

VANCOUVER ANARCHISTS

WE, THE VOLUNTEERS Anarchist Federation, are Vancouver's new anarchist organization, in fact we are the first anarchist group in this city since the Libertarian League back in 1964. What happened in the intervening eight years? Most dropped out, some got involved in the student and freak movement, some joined the IWW, but now the black flag presents itself again.

We are followers of the post-scarcity school of anarchism, in fact Bookchin's *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* (Ramparts Press) is our 'bible'. We intend to put a lot of emphasis on the issue of ecology. Our propaganda will be mainly oriented to the 'freak' population since they are the one group in the city most susceptible to anarchism.

Some anarchists talk about the working class but we feel that we should work where we can have some success, besides which we consider ourselves to be hippies anyway.

We will soon be putting out a newspaper called *Earth and Fire* of which we will send you a copy plus any other relevant material.

Although we only have ten members now there are probably twice as many wishing to join since there is a real political vacuum in the city (until we formed, it was join a Leninist sect or do nothing).

GEORGE SCOTT,
Corresponding Secretary.



Ready this month!

LESSONS OF THE SPANISH REVOLUTION by Vernon Richards

This is not a reprint of the work with the same title published by FREEDOM PRESS in 1953. It is a new and considerably expanded version which the author prepared for an Italian edition published in 1957, and recently published in Paris in a Spanish translation.

Additional chapters deal with such important topics as the Militarization of the Militias, the Cult of the Organisation and of Personalities, the Rank and File's Responsibility.


As well as a Select Bibliography, the author has contributed a 20-page Bibliographical Postscript in which he discusses the most important works that have appeared on the subject in the past twelve years.

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AFBIB—To all Groups.

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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. Herts: P. Newell, 'Aegean', Spring Lane, Eight Ash Green, Colchester. (QM, PL.)
Surrey: G. Wright, 47 College Road, Epsom.
Yorkshire: Trevor Bavage, Flat 3, 35 Richmond Road, Leeds, 6.
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.

REPRESSION IN URUGUAY

URUGUAY IS SUFFERING a deep crisis (economic, social and political), and the government resorts to new means every day in order to suffocate any opposition.

The manipulation of public opinion by the mass-media, the fascist organised activities, persecutions, and terror are now so generalized that the entire population is involved in the process, and no one can possibly consider himself outside of it.

Confrontations are increasingly harsh, and encountered positions harden and become more and more hostile. This situation has led to the present 'estado de guerra interno' (state of internal war, as distinct from state of war with other nations, and also from civil war. Martial law is its approximate equivalent, though there is no curfew . . . yet), which, quite democratically, legalizes dictatorship. Power is now in the hands of the Army, and, consequently, the life of the entire country is being shaped according to military patterns. As the crisis deepens, the action of political groups and significant social classes may become decisive. For this reason, the regime reacts preventively and declares 'estado de guerra interno', in order to support an economic policy whose deliberate purpose is to burden the poorer classes with the expenses of bankruptcy.

This repressive policy, which aims at the symptoms but not at the causes, has launched a direct attack against the many radical groups existing in Uruguay, some of which are armed organizations engaged in guerilla warfare.

A COMMUNITY EXPERIMENT IS ATTACKED

This is the background of the repressive blow dealt at Comunitaddel Sur, an experiment of community life on a libertarian basis. Comunitaddel Sur was founded in Montevideo 16 years ago, and at present is composed of over 40 people—adults and children. They live in an outskirt of Montevideo, possessing and using on a communistic basis all necessary services such as dining-rooms, kitchen, laundry, nursery, housing—for adults, pre-school and schoolchildren—library, playgrounds, assembly rooms. They also have a modern printing office, specialising in the printing of books.

Both dwelling-place and printing office have been repeatedly searched by the police and the military forces—as many as 12 times in 1970—in the course of the last three years, most times without a search-warrant.

In 1970, after one of these searches, Comunitaddel Sur addressed an open letter to their neighbours and friends. The following quotations from the letter may provide a definition of this experiment, intended as a means of creative socialization where people can learn to live real social life: 'We want to bring up our children in an atmosphere of solidarity, therefore free from egoism and competition, we think it very important that the work is done in common, so that we, the workers, can learn that we are the creators of the wealth which society enjoys. This is

why we have no bosses. . . . We don't believe that bureaucrats or politicians are necessary, for they rule over other men and despoil them of the product of their work . . . all of us, men and women, participate on equalitarian basis in the formulation of all our plans. And we do devote a lot of time and work to it.'

But the experiment is not a closed one, nor is it centred in itself. As the letter puts it, 'the principles of brotherhood that inspire us cannot be for only a few people . . . we think society would be better organized if people organized themselves according to their common needs, and if in the places where they live, work, or study, they actively contribute to solve their problems. We know that there is unemployment because factories and land are in the hands of a few. We also know that many a problem could be solved if these means of production were in the hands of workers.'

And they add: 'Therefore, we try to found co-operatives of production, "centros de barrio" (communal centres, where cultural, recreative, sporting and social life of a town district are held), popular libraries, co-operatives for housing and services, that is to say, forms of popular organization which help to build up a different and new way of life. We are also in favour of other social groups such as trades unions, student unions, etc., having the same aims. As we do not believe that responsibilities should be delegated to politicians of any sort or party, or to any other professed representatives of the people, we try to organize ourselves together with the others, in order to get what we need. . . . These are our "subversive ideas". We want a world free from hunger, free from exploitation, free from illiteracy, free from unemployment, free from vice and violence, free from robbery and robbers, free from people who rule and people who are ruled. We live and fight so that all men can live in fraternity and solidarity, without egoism, without private property, without privileges.'

As it can be seen from the passages quoted, Comunitaddel Sur intends to be an integral way of life, as well as one among other means to change society as a whole.

A NEW ATTEMPT TO CRUSH COMUNIDAD DEL SUR

Recently, Comunitaddel Sur was attacked once more. And this attack may eventually be fatal.

On April 18, armed soldiers raided the printing office, which from then on has been occupied by the Army. Seven members of Comunitaddel Sur who work there were put under arrest.

Later on, the dwelling-place was searched twice, and on both occasions at night—the first time from 2 a.m. to 4 a.m., the second time from 10 p.m. to midnight. A new arrest was made there. Though the printing office is very well known, the official information—the only one permitted—said that a 'clandestine press' had been discovered in the search. The press,

radio and TV divulged this information, according to which the 'clandestine press . . . hidden in a cellar, was the central place for the printing and distribution throughout Latin America of all kinds of literature on guerilla warfare, subversive and revolutionary activities'. At the same time, the official information provided by the military forces alleged that the press was related to a Catholic Information Bureau. This Catholic organization and the workshop of Comunitaddel Sur are in the same building—the former in the ground floor and the latter in the basement.

Arrests were made in the Catholic Bureau, too.

The information was widespread all over the country as a means of propaganda for the anti-subversive struggle led by the military forces. But its falsehood was soon put into evidence. The Church obtained the release of the Catholic who had been arrested. But this is not the case for Comunitaddel Sur, for in spite of all efforts made up to now, the workshop is still occupied by the Army, and one of Comunitaddel members is in solitary confinement

Banned Again!

THE LITTLE RED SCHOOLBOOK has been banned in Melbourne, Australia. The magistrate, Mr. J. McCandle, after ruling that the book was obscene, ordered the destruction of 171 copies, which had been seized by the vice squad, from six shops on April 16. Apparently what confirmed the magistrate in his belief that the work was obscene was a passage which advocated the installation of contraceptive vending machines in schools, the fact that 'two notorious Anglo-Saxon words are used freely in these pages', and that 'when dealing with homosexuality, the book asserts that this should not be illegal'.

What a pleasing picture of Australia this conjures up! A land where children

are born by parthenogenesis, where nobody uses 'Anglo-Saxon' expressions, and where homosexuality is as unknown as it is said to be among the Trobriand Islanders. A utopia of gentle, sexless, simple creatures! I had no idea the country was like that, as most Australians I have met have not conformed to this picture.

The Democratic Labour Party was delighted with this act of democratic book burning. The party's acting State Secretary, Mr. J. D. Brosnan, said the ban was not made on the grounds of the DLP's objection, 'but it will have the effect we desired'. If a democratic society votes to destroy democracy, what happens then? Australia seems to be very democratic, but there does not seem to be much freedom there at present.

April 28, 1972.
THIS COMMUNICATION IS INTENDED TO PROMOTE A SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN.
Late, on May 2 at 8 a.m. the community suffered a new search, this one with the aid of the comrade under arrest (in evident bad physical condition) looking for some radio set. The Army took another member of the community with them. He was then released on May 4, but the former is still under arrest. And the workshop is still in the hands of the Army. (May 5, 1972.)

SOLIDARITY!! URGENT SEND—
COMUNIDAD DEL SUR, CASILLE DE CORRES 528, MONTEVIDEO, URUGUAY.

are born by parthenogenesis, where nobody uses 'Anglo-Saxon' expressions, and where homosexuality is as unknown as it is said to be among the Trobriand Islanders. A utopia of gentle, sexless, simple creatures! I had no idea the country was like that, as most Australians I have met have not conformed to this picture.

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Second Revolution in Chile?

SINCE ALLENDE WAS ELECTED to the Presidency of Chile most British Socialist newspapers have stood open-mouthed. Now the words are beginning to flow. Eric Heffer writes in *Tribune* of how impressively legal, just and, above all, 'democratic' Chile is. 'Chile is a bright star on the socialist scene,' he declares. The article, however, smacks of raw comparisons between Allende and Wilson from 1964 to 1967. Heffer really sounds as if Allende was a second Wilson, a kind of continuation in Chile of Wilson's coitus interruptus with the British people.

Socialist Worker is less enthusiastic. Allende is portrayed as a Kerensky, and great play is made of the militancy of Chilean workers, particularly the copper miners. Sad to say this, but the copper mines are 1,000 miles from Santiago and stand alone in a desert with nothing at all near by. The real 'revolutionary hotbed', the Chilean central valley, is almost completely agricultural and is in turn isolated from the coastal industrial towns by a mountain range.

Socialist Worker, however, ignores a third of Chileans—the *inquilinos* or landless peasants, and also the huge number of slum dwellers who exist on the periphery of the towns and the national economy. Allende has pursued some very clumsy agricultural policies over the last two years. Firstly he ordered

the traditional spring slaughter of sheep for refrigeration to halt. 'We shall have fresh meat this year,' he stated. Unfortunately the summer drought killed off the majority of this food source. Secondly Allende has spared farms under 200 acres from redistribution. This is an obvious sop to the middle classes, upon whom he relies so strongly to run his bureaucracy and man his nationalised industry.

Such moves do not ingratiate him with the peasants. Last week they seized many Land Redistribution Offices and demonstrated over the imprisoning of 40 Union members. This is just the latest in a series of land seizures and frequently anti-state activities. Generally the MIR (Movement of the Revolutionary Left) has been held responsible, but in *Tribune* Heffer says, 'We saw one such (illegally seized) farm, which was flying the flag of the Anarchists.' All we can be sure of is that a huge sector of the population that is used by the state merely to feed its beneficiaries, is acting in a revolutionary way. A lesson for all statist is that in most third world countries a majority of people exist outside the national economy and have little appreciation of the programmes of nationalisation or any other move made by a central government. We may yet see a second revolution in Chile.

DAVID BROWN.

Help Brighton Police Fight Major Crime!

ON SATURDAY, MAY 6, tenants of St. Michaels Place, Brighton, a dingy, overcrowded, terraced street, decided to hold a party for their children. They always play in the street—the only difference was this Saturday we decided to join them and make it special.

The party began at 3 p.m. with a procession led by a dragon, and followed by adults and children in party dresses and masks, which had been prepared with much enthusiasm by the children. Trestle tables arrived, soon replete with toffee apples, biscuits and cakes. Within minutes the street was ablaze with balloons and silver streamers; a street theatre group appeared, musicians played and soon adults and children were dancing in the street.

At 3.30, a policeman drew up and demanded that the party disperse immediately. He said we were causing an obstruction, and complaints had been made about the noise. We explained that no cars had come down the road (none passed throughout the afternoon except the police vans, cars and motorbikes). Residents said to him that the kids are only enjoying themselves, his reply was—

'I think children's parties are a good thing, but Brighton Council are a bit funny about giving permission.' Well, perhaps there are commercial interests at stake. Traders don't like it . . . ! At this point he reverted to 'I'm only doing my duty . . . !'

Two minutes later a dozen policemen and a female police cadet appeared in patrol cars, trying to move people on, and telling them to disband, but no one wanted to break up the festivities. We attempted to reason with the police, and offered them cakes, which were thrown back in our faces—we soon realised the futility of our effort, and started to move back onto the pavement. One woman however, who resented the aggressive attitude of an officer, who had told her to move on, remained standing in the street with her three-year-old child in her arms.

She tried to explain that no one was doing any harm. The cop refused to listen and told her to move on. He then charged her with obstruction and as she moved away grabbed her, with the help of a female police cadet, who was trying to drag away her frightened child. She screamed and several people gathered round to try and protect her.

A.W.U.

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Money to pay for legal costs, to:—
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LETTERS

Anarchism and Non-Violence

i.

Dear Editors,
I read with interest Carl Chatfield's criticisms of Laurens Otter's article and my recent letters. His case against us is not entirely without merit, though he spoils it when he descends to abusiveness.

Basically, he is trying to point out that there is no absolutely inevitable connection between anarchism and pacifism, which I accept—all I ever said, you will remember, is that 'if an Anarchist tells me that he is not a pacifist, then I can only reply that he has not thought out his position sufficiently carefully'. Yet the 'anarcho/pacifist' link remains, and the reason for its existence is that either standpoint is really somewhat dependent on the other. If you believe in the perpetuation of governments, then you cannot really object to their use of 'violence' (I prefer to give it its proper name, murder) to maintain their position of power and control. Similarly, and here I know many of you will disagree, if you reject the exercise of coercion—the authority of one over another—then you can hardly turn around and condone the ultimate exercise of authority, the killing of those who disagree with you. Pacifism and anarchism spring from the same humanitarian roots, one is, in Carl Chatfield's words, 'a doctrinaire refusal to use violence', the other is a doctrinaire refusal to exercise or submit to authority. To say that it's all right to kill now but we'll all become anarchists after the revolution seems to me to be arrant nonsense. Revolution of the old kind may achieve socialism, liberalism or indeed totalitarianism, but (perhaps regrettably) it will never bring about anarchism, because it is a negation of anarchist principles. Revolution of the new kind, the actual building of the alternative society on the fringes of this one, has I believe every chance of success, despite my comrade's pessimism. If it is seen to be better it will succeed, if it is not better then it does not deserve to succeed. The next decade or so will tell.

To come down to smaller points, it was not my intention to brand every non-pacifist with the mark of Cain, nor to saddle the Worcester anarchists with a moral responsibility for the bombings in Belfast. I was merely attempting to bring them face to face with what violence means—just what it was that they were talking about—for I had a feeling that they didn't know. I was using the actual, current event as the analogy to the sort of action that they were to some extent defending. Perhaps what the IRA see as their 'Glorious

Struggle' is not ours, but we cannot turn around and say that because our cause is RIGHT, everything that is done in the cause of anarchism is also right. Even Marxists had to invent Historical Inevitability et al to help them over this bit of double-think. This is also the main criticism I would have made of Otter's article—his tacit assumption that any means which gets results is OK—almost that 'might is right'.

Finally, Carl does not like my summary of the anarchist ideology. But he lifts it completely out of context, and ignores the fact that a society which 'exists to care for and keep all its members, strong and weak alike, in happiness and comfort' was offered as an alternative to a capitalist society which exists to provide ladders by which one man can climb to power and prestige by kicking back his fellow men. Socialist societies, while a little better, have amounted to much the same thing. Anarchism is still the only ideology which acknowledges the actual, not theoretical, equality of all men and aims to bring about their happiness by investing them with dignity, responsibility, self-respect and FREEDOM.

Peace and happiness,

DAVID GARDINER.

ii.

Dear Comrades,

Your correspondent, K. Bryhizynski, said: 'No revolution has ever created a society based on co-operation and mutual aid for any length of time.'

If it is true that a social revolution cannot be achieved without the active support of the worker it is no less true that it cannot be achieved without the active or passive support of farmers, technicians and professionals. Above all the social revolution cannot be achieved without the support of youth, from which the ruling class recruits its armed forces. If the ruling class retains its armed might the revolution is lost, no matter how many rally to its support.

This has been vividly demonstrated not only in Spain in the thirties but also in Hungary in the fifties and Czechoslovakia in the sixties. The revolution of the future, by its very nature, indeed will take the line of least possible physical violence, since almost everybody will support it.

Those who feel the burdens of the contradictions of capitalist society, poverty, racism, imperialism and frustration, will desire a classless, propertyless, hierarchyless and wholly libertarian society.

In any case surely history proves we will never get a sane and rational society by depending on, or expecting power-seeking politicians to achieve freedom. I personally would not expect the various Marxist groups to lead us to Utopia, neither do I expect Utopia to come of itself.

The sooner we have free schools the better. It is my belief that we shall have to start with 'education' before we can achieve any worthwhile kind of a sane system because power is at present getting into fewer and fewer hands. I can see the time is not far away when Slater-Walker, with ever-increasing take-over bids, will dictate how this country must be run, perhaps with Sir Charles Clore, not forgetting 'Dick Feather'.

Sincerely,

GEO. H. LEAF.

Please Teacher

Dear Friends,

I find it interesting to read that Trevor Bavage's unfortunate pupils tell him to 'piss off'. 'From out of the mouths of babes...'

London, N.W.4

NIGEL WILSON.

Are you a university student? Get your professor to recommend for the university library a set of

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Forgotten Anarchist

Dear Editors,

Terry Phillips article on Lev Chernyi was a welcome tribute to a much-neglected man and like him I hope that someone some day will give us a full account of his ideas in English. However, Phillips tries to soft-pedal the influence that Stirner had on Chernyi and in doing so gives a false picture of anarcho-egoists.

He distinguishes between the revolutionary and the egoist, stating that the latter is simply 'day-dreaming'. Yet had he taken the trouble to consult further Avrich's book, *The Russian Anarchists*, he would have found an account on pages 66-67 of the activities of an anarchist-individualist named Matrena Prisiazhnik whose exploits were hardly those of a 'day-dreamer'. (She was accused of 'taking part in a raid on a sugar factory... murdering a priest and attempting to kill a district police officer'.)

I could also mention such individualists and egoists as Renzo Novatore in Italy or E. Bertran in France who spent a lifetime in militant defiance of authority.

What anarchist-individualists do depends upon their temperaments, capacities and opportunities. Their activities may range from 'day-dreaming' (presumably a dig at 'theoreticians') right the way through to violent opposition to Society,

but they cannot be pigeonholed in either of these 'extremes'.

Finally, Terry Phillips writes that 'other writers have minimized Chernyi's debt to Stirner'. According to Avrich only one writer has done this (Dolinin) and he was 'a disciple of Apollon Karelin', a rather day-dreaming libertarian communist.

Sincerely,

S. E. PARKER.

Freedom & the ILP

Dear Comrades,

I was interested in your report about the ILP (in the last issue of FREEDOM). While obviously the ILP will differ from the Anarchists in its politics, I personally can see no evidence of the right-wing having managed a takeover of the paper.

I read *Socialist Leader* regularly, and in my opinion, since the ascension of Jenkins to the editorship the journal has improved in quality and orientation. Now it is far more consistent, and far more revolutionary than it was under previous editorial control. It is more readable and better presented.

If the paper reflects a similar qualitative change in the membership and politics of the ILP, I can only view this as a change for the better. In fact I wish that FREEDOM would emulate its example, in terms of a consistent and revolutionary orientation not, of

course, in terms of following the specific politics of the ILP.

Yours fraternally,

Lancaster

LES. SMITH.

Thanks

Dear Comrades,

I want to thank you very much for your publication. It is most interesting to hear how your opinions are compared to what I read here in Shelton, Washington, and in the American underground circuit.

I'm really very sorry about what's happening in Ireland (similar to the US in Vietnam). But that's the price one must pay for having a government. As Thoreau so aptly said, 'The best government is one which governs least.'

Peace, brothers and sisters,
USA
DAVID WERNER.

Contact

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

Help Fold and Despatch 'FREEDOM' Thursdays from 2 p.m., followed by discussion at 7.30 p.m.

THIS WEEK IN IRELAND

Dublin

SO IT, the referendum on the EEC, is all over bar the shouting, and you may rest assured there will be a mort of that. A 70% poll voted and I am afraid the 'Yesses' have it, for many reasons. They had far more money to spend on advertising than all the 'Noes' put together, they got twice as much space and time on the media, and the country people of Ireland are just terribly conservative and still stuck in 1916, if not 1916 or earlier. I am afraid it brings the 32-county civil war nearer.

Yesterday about 3.30 I went up the road to post letters. I was stopped because there was a bomb scare in the big offices at the corner and the road was cordoned off, so I turned me about to go to the post office south, but I was stopped because the road was cordoned off because of a bomb scare at the big offices at that corner of my road. I ended by missing the post. True no bombs were actually found but coming events cast their shadows before.

I must say a section of anti-marketiers did NOT help their cause by going out with yellow paint and painting two four letter words over the glass that protected the Fianna Fail advertisement to vote yes. I know quite a number, whose minds not made up said, 'After that I shall vote yes. I could not stand being governed by people with such a mentality.' One never wins converts by offending people, a basic truth some agitators cannot grasp. Had they just painted NO over the YES it would have been different.

Meanwhile up in the six counties the Belfast Co-op has been blown up at a cost of £1 million which means more redundancies and hits hardest at the poorer members of the community. A fifteen-year-old girl has been kidnapped, held for five days and severely beaten during those days before finally having red paint and feathers poured all over her. The Official IRA claim the 'credit' and say she was a spy for the special branch, an accusation stoutly denied by

the RUC. Whatever the child had done or not done such a punishment is out of all proportion and is merely sadism, and I can't think a fifteen-year-old living in Andersonstown could have been much of a spy, even if she were one at all, and I just don't believe the branch paid her in drugs. The six counties must want an enlarged drug problem about as much as I want a hole in the head.

A Vanguard member (I think it was Craig but cannot find the paper) threatens to poison the water of Poulaphouca with cyanide if there is any question of a united Ireland. That would wipe out all the South East of Ireland and would be very easy to do. It seems to me as if both sides are desperate and cannot accept it is stalemate and they must STOP. Arson, murder and torture is getting no one anywhere at all.

Meanwhile we have a plague of strikes. Some completely justified. Some I feel half-and-half, and a bit of give and take on both sides would solve all the problems, while to my old-fashioned ideas some seem just greedy and lazy and unjustified. Everyone needs a reasonable wage and reasonable work hours, but beyond that it becomes unreasonable and defeats its own purpose as it leads to redundancy and inflation.

To give you a mini-example, recently a strong lad of fourteen came to my door begging. I said I would give him a hot dinner and 25p if he would help me weed the path. He refused with indignation. This after telling me he had eaten nothing but bread and tea for days, etc. I asked him what he did want then? It appeared to me he wanted a soft job for 30 hours (at most) a week and to be paid £20 to start, and he as green as a cabbage and untaught. I CAN'T sympathise much with strong youth like that. Why should I work 18 hours a week to provide for him? Liberty is one thing but surely it depends on everyone pulling their weight? Even Stone-Age men and women had to work, hunt, skin the beasts, etc. I don't know. We live in a tragic world.
H.

Nightmarish Sentences

A TOTAL of 81 years imprisonment faces William McPherson, John Doran, Matt Lygate and Colin Lawson. Matt Lygate and Colin Lawson have no previous convictions.

The sentences are the highest ever meted out in a Scottish courtroom and in effect mean that McPherson aged 30 faces 26 years imprisonment, Doran aged 23 faces 25 years imprisonment, Lygate aged 34 faces 24 years imprisonment, Lawson aged 34 faces 6 years imprisonment.

McPherson, Lygate and Lawson were members of the Workers Party of Scotland who were strongly opposed to the Establishment.

There seems little doubt that the savagery of the sentences was caused by their political commitment; the men were sentenced for their political beliefs rather than the crime alone.

During the course of the trial several charges were dropped and finally both Lawson and Lygate were associated with the robberies only on the evidence of a single witness.

Throughout, Lygate had argued that while he had received stolen money to use for political purposes, he had not participated in any robberies himself and that Lawson knew nothing at all about the matter. Appeals are being made on the grounds of misdirection of the Jury, the severity of the sentences and insufficient evidence for conviction.

The 81 Years Appeal Committee has been formed for the initial purpose of raising money to aid the Defence lawyers further this appeal. We are informed by them that a considerable sum of money is needed urgently if the first stage of the appeal is to be successful.

Surely no matter one's attitude to the politics of the trial, the sentences are nightmarish.

We urge you to give generously to the appeal.

All donations to: Bank of Scotland, 464 Victoria Road, Glasgow, S.2. No.: 00350646.

81 YEARS APPEAL COMMITTEE, Secretary: John Carlyle, 36 Albert Road, Glasgow, S.2

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TOTAL: £11.15

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