

BUILDING WORKERS' STRIKE

KEEP IT IN RANK & FILE HANDS!

BUILDING WORKERS are now engaged in what is probably one of the most important struggles in their history. The claim for £30 for a 35-hour week, with more holidays, is long overdue.

After seven weeks of selected strikes and an overtime ban, the employers last week came up with a new offer. It gave an increase of £3 to craftsmen and £2.60 for labourers now, with another £3 for craftsmen and £2.40 for labourers next May 21, plus a phased-in guaranteed minimum bonus giving £29 and £24.80 respectively.

This offer was at first accepted by the executive council of the largest union, the Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians. However, delegates of the Transport and General Workers Union rejected the offer. Being the biggest union, UCATT could have out-voted the T&GWU and signed the agreement. But the executive of UCATT also had a revolt on its hands from its own Regional Committees. Mass meetings of building workers took place in many areas and voted to reject the offer and call for an all-out stoppage. These calls were soon put into action, all sites in Birmingham, Bristol, Rotherham, Liverpool, Leeds and Southampton were soon stopped.

It was with this massive buildup of support and enthusiasm to see the claim fully met that demonstrations took place in London, Birmingham and other major cities on Tuesday. In London the Action Committee, made up of both full-time officials and elected lay members, went to the UCATT headquarters at Clapham and told the assembled executive to reject the offer.

'ESCALATE THE STRIKE'

The afternoon's demonstration in London was huge, it must have been over 10,000 strong. At the employers headquarters a message from the UCATT executive was read out saying that they had rejected the offer. Building workers then voted

on the Action Committee's resolution to 'escalate the strike'.

This reversal is an important victory for rank and file trade unionists. But the part played by the rivalry between the UCATT and the T&GWU must also be taken into account. The newly formed UCATT is an amalgamation of painters, bricklayers and labourers. The T&GWU has in the past mainly organised labourers. It now has craft sections and competition has

developed between the two unions to recruit members. Up until now UCATT has made most of the running during the strike. But with the growing militancy at site level and the realisation that the selective strike tactic was not working, the T&GWU could be making a bid for the control of the industry. The executive of UCATT are faced with a dilemma that they wish to contain the growing militancy and the control which the rank and file have

gained during the dispute, but they also do not want to be outflanked by the T&GWU.

The claim is evidence, in itself, that organised building workers have forced their executives to make a substantial claim. The campaign through the rank and file paper, 'Building Workers Charter' has given operatives a programme and brought together shop stewards scattered throughout the country. All this spade work is now bringing results.

In the last two weeks the rank and file have taken control of the dispute. Sites have been coming out on their own. Strikers have formed 'flying pickets' who have visited other sites and brought them to a standstill. Whole areas have now stopped in which not a single brick is being laid. This has been accompanied by a huge recruitment of nons and the removal of 'lump' sub-contracting from many sites. The strike has brought to light just how strongly this racket is entrenched and now building workers are flushing it out.

JUNGLE OF 'SUBBYS'

In fact the building industry has become such a jungle of 'subbys' that the unions really needed a strike to re-assert their authority with the employers. With some 'lump' men earning double that of trade unionists they just had to do something. But having involved the lads in dispute, the longer the employers hold out, the more determined the rank and file becomes. The control and the initiative passes into their hands. At a stewards' meeting in London, calls were made to picket brick works, cement works, ready-mix plants and building suppliers. This is the extent that the strike has developed since it started, when the first sixty selected sites struck eight weeks ago.

Because the industry is so poorly organised the selecting of sites for strikes was the correct tactic. The slow buildup has now grown and has made a full national stoppage possible. Those who called for a national stoppage at the start were, I believe, mistaken. Now that a full stoppage is possible the union leaders are trying to regain control. They want the strike to spread on a selective basis and not on the initiative of the rank and file. National union leaders will reach a decision on Tuesday but it is unlikely that they will favour a full national stoppage. In fact union officials have already got some sites to return to work.

The London Action Committee's resolution only reads 'escalate the strike'. Those who voted for that really took it to mean a full stoppage and immediately set up their own 'flying pickets' following Bristol's example and went out and, within three days, doubled the number of sites on strike in London.

In all this strike activity workers on local authorities direct labour schemes have not been called upon to strike. Although they come under a different agreement their rates of pay and conditions follow the national agreement. But there are moves to reach a separate agreement which would isolate and weaken union organisation. At the moment council jobs are being used to place the 'subbys' removed from sites on strike. Already sub-contracting is rife on local authority direct labour jobs but if these sites were involved in the dispute they could clean out these 'subbys'.

Having seized control of the dispute in the last two weeks it is vital that the rank and file spread the strike as quickly as possible to a full stoppage. The demand can be won by bringing the industry to a standstill.

BLACK & RED DRAGONS

THAT WALES SHOULD be East of the Irish Sea is as much a curse as a blessing. While the repression of Welsh workers and farmers has been great, it has, unlike Ireland, not been unique or basically any different from the repression of workers in Liverpool or London. S. Wales suffered solely from the industrial revolution, so did the slate areas of N. Wales, and agricultural labourers all over Wales, as all over Britain, have always been and still are, among the poorer victims of capitalism. The Welsh language, stifled by industrialisation, and an authoritarian and anti-Welsh education system, has all but died in S. Wales, though lives on in all areas North of the coalfield, especially outside the towns. A socialist tradition has always been strong in the South, especially from about the Merthyr riots of 1831, to the depression years of this century. What the Irish Sea has denied Wales is a socialist republican tradition like that of Ireland. It is only in recent years that such a tradition has been seen in embryo, and it has been the product of education and affluence, rather than poverty and repression.

Plaid Cymru—the Welsh party—for democratic means to separate Welsh government, has been going on in its own moderate way since the 1920's. Its aims have been limited to Welsh government, its members mainly middle class and educated, with views from liberal to reactionary.

Cymdeithas yr Iaith, the Welsh Language Society, was started in 1962 and has acted

as the more radical wing of the Welsh movement. Its methods of direct action are anarchistic even if its aims have been limited to the language. These methods include deleting English road signs, or replacing them with Welsh ones, invading television studios and law courts. They have a sort of limited anarchist viewpoint. It is an English legal system which persecutes their Welsh cause, so liberal ethics about 'respecting the law' are out. That at least is something, and, what's more, to stand up and make this point in contempt of a court of law is an act of considerable courage.

Many Cymdeithas members have spent much time in jail for their beliefs; an experience which has given many a vision which transcends that of merely replacing all that is bad in England with a Welsh version. As Plaid Cymru has lately become more and more left-wing (many Plaid candidates talk in terms of a Socialist Republic), some Cymdeithas members are talking in even more positive, anarchist terms. Ironically, however, the society has the cautious support of much of the Welsh establishment—BBC Wales, the University of Wales, etc.—even, as has been seen lately, Welsh magistrates.

A Swansea magistrate was forced to resign by Lord Hailsham (who compares Welsh Nationalists to 'the baboons of the IRA') after she paid the fine of a 'language offender'. All this makes an anarchist very cautious. The whole subject is treated excellently in the current

issue of *Planet**—the magazine for English-speaking Welshmen. In correspondence between Lord Hailsham and Mrs. Davies, she makes a distinction between ordinary offenders and language offenders, and seems to have a particular phobia against 'drug addicts' and 'drop-outs'.

Other views represented in the edition are also very respectable—*Planet* is sponsored by the Welsh Arts Council—though the edition is immensely informative and its discussion is salient. Though its contributors make it quite clear that what they want is a liberal, progressive Welsh Wales—Welsh courts, Welsh police, Welsh government—there are anarchists, and near anarchists, in the movement. They see the struggle as (i) the defence of local language and culture against centralised authority, and (ii) the first stages in a process of devolution of power, more far-reaching than Welsh government. Many Cymdeithas members I have spoken to, are talking about workers' control, and agrarian communes and co-operatives. Further evidence of a broadening outlook and more anarchistic bent in Cymdeithas, is their recent stand against the tourism mania that is going on in Wales.

In the last year or so, there has been a phenomenal increase in the amount of farm cottages bought up and let as 'holiday homes' or kept as 'second homes' for the wealthy. The situation is sickening. Young people trying to live and work in rural Wales often cannot even rent a place all the year round, let alone buy one. Meanwhile, many stand empty most of the year as 'second homes' for businessmen from the cities. Speculators

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Asians from the Colonial Past

THE ANNOUNCEMENT by President Amin that some 40,000 Asians with British passports had just three months to leave Uganda must have shocked those who put Amin in power. After riding East Africa of the former Ugandan ruler, Obote, the objective had been the establishment of a more pliable power structure to those economic forces which still control most of 'independent' Africa.

Now, here is Amin behaving outrageously. Yet if the Powells of the world are not to consider the economic implications for the Third World of their policy of repatriation, it is hardly too surprising that African leaders should fail to consider Britain's economic problems when seeking to place the responsibility for East African Asians where it should lie.

The responsibility is Britain's, not just because of the constitutional position of a British passport holder, but because of the history of the Asian settlement in East Africa. During the 19th century British capitalists constructing railways

in E. Africa, frustrated by the lack of co-operation and the unavailability of indigenous labour, simply transported Asians into semi-slavery. This system of indentured labour worked on a contract scheme.

At the end of these contracts some Asians who had made small savings bought small plots of land and developed a community which attracted immigrants from India hungry for land. Thus a commercial class grew up between the ruling white settlers and the vast majority of Africans.

With the political independence of East African countries the Asians were provided in 1962 by the Conservative Government with the chance of becoming British passport holders. Many became East African citizens, but in Kenya 20,000 took British citizenship. In 1968 the Labour Government introduced a voucher system which devalued the British passport, if you happened to be an Asian from East Africa, thus placating the racialists of right and left.

Since that time only a few Asians have been allowed into Britain from East Africa, whilst the shameful shuttlecocking of desperate Asians holding British passports to anywhere they happened to come from has marked perhaps the depths of recent overt Government policy in race relations.

So our conclusion to this tale of capitalist greed, racist fear and State ruthlessness is that the British government is hearing the words of a supposed African puppet, using a soldier's directness, to let the British administration know that responsibility is something that has historical roots and demands a code of behaviour that excludes colour prejudice.

The Asians from the colonial past are knocking at the door, the crimes of yesteryear are being resurrected and the fact that we live in a world, not a country, is becoming more difficult to deny.

J.W.

**Planet* 12 is available for 30p from: Planet, Llangietho, Tregaron, Cards. It is highly recommended for libertarians and anyone wanting to know more about the Welsh Language and the law.

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P.T.

Hail! Hail! the gang's all here

THE JOURNALS OF ANAIS NIN, Vol. 4, ed. by Gunther Stuhlmann (Owen, £3.50).

COLERIDGE. Poetical Works by Ernest Hartley Coleridge (Oxford University Press, £1.25).

STOLEN APPLES by Yevgeny Yevtushenko (W. H. Allen, £8.00).

A WORLD BEYOND BOOKS by Fang Chao-ling (Moss Ltd., 12 Bruton Street, W.1, £7).

I AM A MEMBER of that diminishing and elitist minority who have never met Anais Nin for Miss Nin has met everyone yet knows no one. As a table-reserving member of the international café society set Miss Nin, or Anais as the boys in the public bars call her, surveys her narrow world with pencil at the ready and the landscape of her barren prose is spattered with the names of the fashionable mini greets like pats of cowshit in the Elysian fields. Alan Brien has written of Kenneth Tynan that 'he loves to provoke in others a feeling of envy that they too weren't present on some exciting occasion. But when you are there, he apologises for the real-life boredom of these figures he has made so superlatively fascinating when writing about them.' For as it is said, or should be said, of God and the Jet Set, if you're looking for them you will never find them. Either you belong or you are born to be the permanent outsider and

Anais is the permanent outsider.

Anais's latest essay into the kultural social register covers the years 1944-47 and name a name from a cover of a secondhand paperback of that period and Anais held his hat. It is sad that this should result in so much wasted writing for this charming, tiny woman moved in the fashionable incestuous world of the four Western capitals and here was her thesis but she is unequal to, or unaware of, the opportunity the age offered her so she gives her readership no more than an inflated catalogue of fashionable third-raters when what the Town, the world and history want is your actual genuine muck-raking, for what use is wealth and fame if you are too pure to enjoy it?

The King's Library within the British Museum always wins my praise and my thanks for the civilised and rewarding exhibitions that they mount. While the mob continued to bay in their chocolate-chewing hundreds, at the main front of the British Museum, for paid permission to breathe on the glass cases containing the leavings of the late Tutankhamun, the King's Library exhibition of the works and manuscripts of Samuel Taylor Coleridge culled less than a dozen passers and of the press only three of us arrived to kill the ritual bottle of sherry in the small and crowded office within the gallery. Like all exhibitions within this gallery it can ask for nothing but praise and this exhibition of a man who has been described as 'indisputably

one of the greatest English poets' demands a greater audience. I have little use for Coleridge as a poet for he belongs to the school of two line instant fame and divorce his opening of 'In Xanadu did Kubla Khan / A stately pleasure-dome decree:' and related it to its literary source which was Samuel Purchas's 'In Xaindu did Cublai Can build a Stately Pallace,' (Lond. fol. 1626, Bk. IV, chap. xiii, page 418 for the curious) and we are left, as with *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, with an early-day Kipling-type of ballad-monger making his point in strict dance tempo. Even Maurice Bowra, one feels, was hard put to defend Coleridge, in his book *The Romantic Imagination*, and fell back on a detailed discussion of Cole-

ridge's subject matters.

If one doubts my verdict then let them plod through over 500 pages of Coleridge's collected poems to realise how ghastly his output was. As a poet Coleridge can be dismissed and as a man he can be ignored for he belonged to that liberal strata who cry copper at the first sounds of revolt. With Wordsworth and ever and all the liberal romantics he championed every freedom-loving cause but only as long as the unwashed and freedom-loving mob marched a sea away or were cheered on from behind a barricade of one's own State's bayonets. But men are what they are and must be judged by their own publicly proclaimed values.

In the matter of reputations one feels that Yevgeny Yevtushenko's is now on a permanent downward slide. One admired his courage but there were men with greater courage and with each year and each new volume Yevtushenko appears to drift into the State-accepted world of outraged and ineffectual liberal

platitudes. Within Yevtushenko's *Stolen Apples* we have much of the best of his poetry but one regrets that his finest, nay greatest, poem 'Babi Yar' (on the slaughter of the Jewish people by the Russian and German States) is not included among his own chosen selection of his own poetry. Yet who among us dare stand in judgement on the acts and actions of other men when we too, in our sour fashion, also survive.

And for Madam Fang Chao-ling my thanks for her gift of *A World beyond all books*. Born in 1914 in Wusih, Kiangsu Province, China and, with her father killed in the Civil War, she drifted from country to country learning her craft as a painter. A mother of eight children, an international reputation as a water-colourist, small, petite and so very lovely in her Chinese dress, she adds to the happiness of the Town by her beauty, her charm and her talent.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

The Animal is Vicious

THE NEW STATESMAN, 28.6.72, Great Turnstile, 10p.

THE PUBLISHERS of the *New Statesman* have sent us a copy of a recent issue for review, because it contains a review of three books about the Spanish Civil War and its aftermath, which they feel might be of interest to anarchists. So what follows is a review of a review.

The three books in question are: *In Hiding: The Life of Manuel Cortes* by Ronald Fraser, *Franco's Prisoner* by Miguel Garcia, our comrade recently released from a Spanish jail, and *Lessons of the Spanish Revolution* by Vernon Richards. The author of the article is Edward Blishen.

Most of the review is devoted to the first book, and is concerned with Manuel Cortes' ordeal, thirty years in hiding in his own home, looked after by his devoted wife.

Says Edward Blishen, 'He had little patience with the anarchists. "They'd leave the front in order to fight the Communists in the rearward. Imbeciles!" Which reminds me of the French naturalist who wrote, "This animal is vicious. When attacked it defends itself." The Communists were attacking the anarchists, so I suppose it was logical for the anarchists at the front to want

to go back and help their comrades who were being killed, tortured or imprisoned.

Manuel Cortes was a Socialist, and, although one sympathises with him in his ordeal, one is inclined to think that, had the republic won in 1939, the course of subsequent events would not have been very different. A Left-Wing dictatorship would have ruled Spain, with much the same ruthlessness as Franco. The imbecilic anarchists, who foolishly sought to defend themselves against people who wanted to destroy them, would have been rightly put in their place. The place would have been prison—or the grave. One cannot help sympathising with Manuel Cortes' devoted wife. 'She, Juliana, comes through as an astonishing woman: full of exasperated love for her man—she'd never had much patience with his concern with politics, and he reflects that if he'd been able to lay hands on the books he wanted to read (he had to be content much of the time with women's novelettes), she'd have burnt them.' She had a case.

Of Miguel Garcia's experience we already know. Both Cortes and Garcia were deeply depressed when they emerged into the *dolce vita* of the modern world. What had happened to

all their work and ideals? But a Socialist republic would have had to rely on tourism and so on, just as Franco's regime has done, as the Socialist republics of Eastern Europe are more and more coming to do. I don't know what would have happened if the anarchists had won, but probably an isolated anarchy would have had either to accept Spartan conditions or compromised with the outside world, unless anarchism had spread like a forest fire across Europe.

It is probably heresy, but I suspect that whoever had won in Spain the result would have been much the same, a tyranny mitigated by tourism. Juliana's contempt for politics may have been inspired more by political realism than conservative sentiment.

Vernon Richards' book is dismissed rather briefly, and Manuel Cortes is quoted, 'I don't know how anyone politically formed on the Left can imagine that by destroying the State you can achieve freedom and a new form of society. To destroy the State would mean turning everybody against everybody else, as each one tried to appropriate what he could.' Well isn't that exactly what we have today, in the Capitalist and Socialist countries alike. Chaos, robbery, destruction, exploitation everywhere. It could not be worse without the whole fabric of civilisation disintegrating, and it may yet reach that point the way things are going. Yes, I can well understand why Manuel Cortes was at times an exasperating man. JOHN BRENT.

Our Next Ruling Class

THE COMING BRITISH REVOLUTION by Tariq Ali (Jonathan Cape, 95p).

THE SECTIONS of Marxist torture make this an annoying book, for coming through now and again are lights of liberated thought. Astonishingly with the burden of Marx, Lenin, Trotsky and sectional feuding between IS, IMG, SLL, etc., etc., a number of conclusions are amazingly near the truth. Goodness knows how vital and seminal people like Tariq Ali and Paul Foot would be if they could shake off the ghost of Marx and think independently. Maybe the education of forthcoming actions will give a nudge in the right direction.

Tariq Ali presents a critique of British capitalism and the reformist Labour Party which brings him to the starting gate where all 'thoughtful people now stand: rejecting capitalism and parliamentary politics. With Tariq's views on workers' control, women's liberation (where he is good) and black workers I'd have no quarrel but on Ireland there's little to commend many actions of the armed republicans.

The basic cause of diversity between anarchists and revolutionary socialists is evident in the advocacy of a revolutionary party. Although Tariq acknowledges that a 'distorted democratic centralism not only leads to bureaucratization . . . but in unquestioning obedience to the dictates of the "leadership" he maintains a party is essential if gains acquired in the revolutionary struggle are not to be lost.

Yet all the gains of revolutionary struggle will be lost if a revolutionary

party, which organises in its arrogance the social revolution, becomes a new elite as authoritarian and exploitative as the present rulers.

It is not only in Russia where revolutionary leaders have betrayed the revolution. In Spain anarchists tied knots in themselves by joining the government and the iron law of oligarchy is not dismissed by simply saying one has faith that the working people won't let a revolutionary dictatorship take over, especially after knocking the parasitical Labour Party so effectively!

Among the dangers that face the present movement of events in British society the emergence of a revolutionary elite is second only to the machinations of the State. This is not to decry organisation in defence of gains captured in the struggle for our libertarian goals, yet organisation that places no one in ascendancy over others.

Tariq Ali talks of the coming British revolution—which surely by now cannot be written off as unlikely—what we need to ask of him and those like him is: After the British revolution—what then?

At that stage our thoughts must delve into areas almost untouched by Tariq's book—sexual politics of Reich, ecological balance, use of leisure (as well as workers' control, etc.). Capitalism is crumbling around our ears, the mistakes of our rulers contributing more than the action of the people: surely our task is to organise for a different type of society. The only way to achieve a society without hierarchy is to organise now without hierarchy.

J.W.

Poke at the Pig

BLACK BOOK OF THE POLITICAL POLICE IN BRITAIN by PIG, 15p.

THIS IS a well illustrated and well researched and documented history of the Special Branch, Special Patrol Group and other 'Political Police' in Britain. Some of the facts and quotes will not be new to those already interested in the activities of 'our protectors', however there are some very interesting revelations. For instance in June at an open Stoke Newington Eight Defence Group Meeting an SB man shouted out 'Who are these people? How much political capital can we make from them?' He left soon after having failed to get an

address list of the Defence Committee. No one knew who he was until later, and conversation was verging at times on seditious.

Unfortunately too little is made of the legal carrying of drugs and weapons by the police 'in the course of their duties'. The well known front page picture of an armed cop was repeated a few weeks back when two women from Hackney Claimants Union appeared at Old Street court. Also the size of the police arsenal has not recently been declared but the ease with which guns are produced during manhunts shows that our police are definitely not unarmed. Perhaps this should be studied too.

There is a fine section on the press and police which shows just how dangerous the newspaper men are. Anyone who has had even a vague knowledge of left-wing activity will know how cameramen virtually photograph anyone on a demo and try sneak photographing in meetings. Recent demos through Malet Street in London have been fully photographed by men on the London School of Hygiene roof. The *Black Book* makes it quite clear that the distinction between police and press photographers is irrelevant. (Note: newspapers print freelance photos and buy them at a 'piece-rate'. A man taking photos of an occupation, a police punch-up, etc., stands to make £50 a time from all national newspapers. Quite an incentive.)

Finally *Black Book* concludes with a section called 'Strategy for Survival'. Well worth reading in itself. D.B.

What shall we do with the Man who won't work?

WHILST WORK is not the unmixed blessing our Puritan, Protestant—and capitalist—forefathers cracked it up to be, there are certain virtues and necessities that even a free society would find through work.

Whether the technological system will be taken over wholesale into the free society (or whether it can be) are subjects for debate which may possibly take place with the advent of the free society. Nevertheless it is obvious that the machine—as a tool—is capable of removing and has removed much of the drudgery from work.

It is probable that by such processes, a degree of rationalization with the elimination of the profit motive and market economy together with the elimination of superfluous occupations would leave a considerable number of people without specific tasks.

Men who will not work are very rare, even in this society, in the upper classes the most strenuous work-like activities in sport—hunting, shooting, climbing, skiing, yachting, etc.—have taken the place of work, their only excuse is that such activities are completely useless and

non-profit-making.

Many who will not work indulge in the most strenuous, ingenious and artistic hobbies. Indeed the effort to avoid work calls for skills of the most complex kind as exhibited by the beggar, the burglar, the petty swindler—the great swindlers are rarely ranked as non-workers.

It is forgivable for a man not to work for the profit of others, or because there is no pleasure in it as often happens in modern society. Modern society has almost fully succeeded in alienating man, firstly by capitalism from the benefits of his labour, then by specialization from the knowledge and skills of his labour, then by mechanization from labour itself. It is easy to say that in the free society men will work (because it is a free society) for the benefit of that society. In fact a free society cannot happen unless people are conscious of the significance to a free society of the work they are doing, or why they are not involved in the industrial-commercial-consumer society.

The man who will not work is a rare specimen because such a state is almost psychopathic. We cannot exclude the work of the brain for from such apparent


'non-work' has sprung the great mechanical and artistic inventions and creations of our time. It was a 'lazy' man who invented or discovered fire and the wheel!

The denial of creativity and purpose in work is one of the reasons for the growth of belief in the virtues of not working. Alongside this there is the constant advertising and propaganda for a wholly consumer (hence leisure) society.

Given a re-allocation of work, the lack of economic compulsion to work at hateful jobs, it is highly probable that individuals would find their rightful work-niches (or vocations) in which they can express themselves. Given control over the work-situation doubtless suppressed talents will flower. It may even be that workers will decide that certain jobs (mining springs to mind) are unfit for anyone to carry out, so society, if it still needs the products, will have to find other ways of getting them. This will give even more scope for the ingenuity and inventiveness of which man is, even now, capable, to be put to greater use and benefit to mankind than present-day society with its work-ethic can do.

To directly answer the question. A free society will do nothing with the man who will not work. It will leave him alone to get over his problem.

GODWIN ALEXANDER.



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Rotton Park, Birmingham 16

**ANARCHIST
FEDERATION
of BRITAIN**

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The Contact Column in 'Freedom' is also available for urgent information.

Groups should send latest addresses to Oxford. 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. (OM, FL.)
Surrey: G. Wright, 47 College Road, Epsom.
Yorkshire: Trevor Savage, Flat 3, 35 Richmond Road, Leeds, 6.
Manchester: Mat Cunningham, 9 Briar Hill Avenue, Little Hulton, Worsley, Lancs.
Scotland: Secretary, Mike Malet, 1 Lynwood 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.

Down on the Farm '72

THE AGRARIAN LIFE has always appealed strongly to the libertarian left, and the desire to get back to the land is as strong now as ever.

Half the population of Notting Hill Gate seem to live in a dream world of rustic cottages, quiet streams and organic gardens. Of course, few will be able to realise this dream, anyway the bustle of city life holds many attractions, as well as some pretty distasteful aspects. But if the contents of the underground/alternative press are anything to go by, the dream is as real as ever.

Everyone knows that the countryside is not solely inhabited by feathered friends and little furry creatures—there are people too. These are believed to wear smocks, are radiantly healthy and as happy as pigs in shit. The truth is a little different. Farm workers perform what is logically the most important work in any society, producing the food, and make no mistake about it, these men are highly skilled. But in spite of mechanisation, anyone who has done a spell of potato-picking will know that the work can be very hard as well as pretty boring.

As reward for all the hardship of performing this vital job, agricultural workers face the worst kind of economic oppression. The problems are complex, but at the root of it all is the tied cottage; the farm worker has a rent-free cottage

for just as long as he keeps his job. There is no security of tenure, so if you lose your job, out you go. Low wages make any other kind of accommodation out of the question. Fear of eviction helps damp down any militant feeling that could give rise to demands for higher wages.

If it ended here, it would be bad enough, but there is much more to it than this; years of economic oppression have taught the rural working-class to keep their mouths shut. Of course, things are better now than they have been in the past. Council estates and nearby industry have helped to break the grip of the landed gentry in many villages, but there are many farmworkers who can remember the days when a completely unquestioning attitude plus plenty of 'Sirs' and 'Ma'ams' in the right places was the only way of keeping a job—and a roof over their heads.

The farmer is not always completely to blame, here in the South West it is the landowner who has the real power. The farmer is out to line his pocket of course, but many of the smaller farmers are only tenants themselves—often working alongside their employees. The landowner, on the other hand, does nothing but rake in the rents, presumably as just reward for being born into the right family.

'Ain't it a groove, man, working on

the farm!' The fact is that agricultural workers, in order to supply the most elemental means of life, have plodded on in all weathers, doing a tough and sometimes dangerous job requiring a variety of skills and being rewarded by little more than subsistence wages.

In spite of all the practical and psychological difficulties involved, the rank and file of the National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers have decided that enough is enough. The present wage of £16.20 for a 42-hour week is not so much a wage but more a bloody insult! The men are demanding £25 for a 40-hour week and are prepared to back this up with the

threat of industrial action if the claim is not met in full! Tied cottage or not, they are going to have a go.

If you live in the country or are an admirer of the rural scene you can do nothing better than support the agricultural worker. Remember these are the people who grow our food for us. If, like myself, you rely partly on casual farm work for the cash when it comes to the crunch, DON'T SCAB. If you're thinking of dropping out to the countryside and forgetting about the people who spend their entire lives doing the things that city dwellers can wax lyrical about—go ahead. You might one day need a farm worker—but he sure don't need you!

R. HULM.

For further information contact:
NUAAW,
Headland House,
308-312 Gray's Inn Road,
London, W.C.1.

Women's Lib in Rochdale

A leaflet published by Rochdale Women's Liberation c/o 218 Upper Brook Street, Manchester

'WOMEN DO MILL WORK TO ESCAPE THE BOREDOM OF THE HOME AND TO GET A BIT OF POCKET MONEY.'

(It says this in a pamphlet called 'The Arrow Mill Sit-in—A Case for Shop Stewards in Textiles' recently distributed by the Lancashire Campaign for Shop Stewards in Textiles)

IS THAT SO????

Do we really slogging away all those hours to get away from the home? Our other job—housewife—is still waiting

Sacked & Blacked

THAT YEAR-LONG FARCE, the campaign for shop stewards in textiles acquired a new dimension last week, when the local women's lib group moved in with a view to organising the female mill workers in the Rochdale area. (See article this page.)

Meanwhile, the local union bosses fool around with the resolution for mill shop stewards, playing for time, while they try to expel one of the main campaigners for shop stewards, Brian Bamford, from the union. The National Union of Textile and Allied Workers seems to be in considerable difficulty, having failed to expel Bamford once before, and legal opinion seems of the view that having 'cocked it up' so far, the union officials are unlikely to succeed now. Local anarchists and other supporters are intending to hold a bit of a picket this week when the local union committee tries to expel him.

A leaflet in Urdu and English has now been issued in support of Mr. Khan and the other workers sacked at Arrow Mill last month during a strike, and who are now being victimised and blacklisted by the Courtaulds combine. The pamphlet, 'The Arrow Mill Sit-in—A Case for Shop Stewards in Textiles' is being reprinted and it is hoped to have copies available in the next few weeks.

TEXTILE WORKER.

RAF LETTER

Dear Comrades,

'D.B.' says (presumably sarcastically) that 'Professor' Meltzer 'initiated a controversy' in *The Times* (he means *The Times Literary Supplement*) over the death of Durruti. All the 'professor' did was to contradict factually some obvious thirties-type Stalinist propaganda put over as impartial scholarship in the reviews of that journal. Perhaps it was wrong to put the learned professors in their place?

'N.W.'s contribution to the now ritual criticism of myself from the pacifist fraction other than complaining of my 'abuse' (has he re-read his own articles on the Angry Brigade? Or seen some of the criticisms of them from abroad you have not published?) is to say that the so-called German 'RAF' is not anarchist. This was precisely the point of the original article, which added, however, that they were 'libertarian'.

A. MELTZER.

Reply:

I am not, and never have been, a pacifist. I did not complain of, but welcomed, Albert Meltzer's abuse.—N.W.



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Please send foolscap (9" x 4") S.A.E. if you would like to receive booklists.

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UPW—STRIKEBREAKERS

YOU DON'T have to go to the top management of the unions to find officials ready to crush rank-and-file action.

At Wood Street international telephone exchange in London, a meeting was to be held on Friday, July 28, of the male (nights and Sundays) telephonists to discuss proposals about changes to their rotas. Earlier in the week, when the five dockers were still inside, a motion (not this writer) put forward a motion for a one-day strike on Sunday, July 30, in support of the dockers. By Friday the dockers had been released but the motion was still discussed at the meeting and, as an action against the Industrial Relations Act, was overwhelmingly passed by the meeting on a vote.

What happened? Within two hours of the meeting the union branch officials (the branch covers male telephonists in the whole London complex of international exchanges) had written, typed, copied and circulated to all telephonists at the exchange a leaflet stating that this action was against the law and against the union rules and that no support would be given by the branch. Thus the seeds of disunity were sown, weakening the solidarity of those who were at the meeting (a cross-section, not an unrepresentative radical minority) and turning those who had not been there against the decision of the meeting.

The next day, Saturday, an emergency

meeting of union members (actually or nearly 100% of ordinary telephonists) was called during working hours and attended by all members working that day and addressed by a branch official who mouthing sentiments about preserving the unity of the exchange, actually seemed to revel in the probable outcome of a strike (sackings and the dismissal by the union of the exchange representative, i.e. steward) and seemed proud of the fact that it had been arranged (probably by the union) that in the event of a strike, calls would be diverted to another exchange (the engineers' co-operation had been secured) thus minimising its effect. The outcome was scarcely surprising, a 3-1 vote against the strike.

If the original strike decision had been properly supported by the exchange membership (even without branch backing), mass sackings could hardly have occurred and even the representative's dismissal could perhaps have been reversed by popular support. In this situation, however, any individual action would indeed have been unproductive and self-destructive, and was, I believe wisely, not taken.

In this bid to keep all decision-making and initiative in the hands of the branch officials (or, at a higher level, of the executive), the union appears to have worked hand-in-glove with the management throughout. The lesson should be clear enough.

PLUGGER.

Watchdog - or Guard Dog?

AT FIRST GLANCE the Post Office Users Council appears to be yet another of democracy's finer institutions, set up as an independent body whose sole functions are to represent the Post Office-using public against the Post Office, investigating complaints made by the public.

Like most fine-sounding institutions, it seems o.k. at first BUT when you dig a little deeper, you discover little oddities and anomalies.

Little oddities like the girl at the POU who eventually and reluctantly admitted that her wages were in fact paid by the Post Office. . . . Does it fit, does it? Independent?

So now we know the POU is not a watchdog or a critic. Its function is just to act as a Post Office excuser which is nothing short of a department to tell lies to the public, and as the department was set up when the Government directly owned the Post Office that must leave a lot of room for thought!

And before our critics say, all very well but ain't the Post Office allowed to have a complaints department? We'll answer . . . YES!, and they've got one . . . it's called the Post Office Public Relations department. Thus proving all the more conclusively that this is one department set up by the Government to tell lies to the public and that means YOU!!!

One specific instance is their admission of a 1% decrease in the efficiency of first class postal services. Doesn't more than 1% of your mail go astray or get delayed?

The POU, whilst admitting this decrease, claimed that it was not the division of Postal Services or the Post Office that was at fault . . . it's those nasty strikers' fault . . . a year ago mind you, but still their fault!

To back up these conclusions the POU has a report. I'd like to see it, BUT, being only a member of the public, I can't for some reason, because this public watchdog, this critic for the people, does not consider that this report should be made available to us, the PUBLIC. I WONDER WHY?????????

Is it possible that this wonderful institution is merely another siding to divert and nullify public discontent with State-serving organisations?

So folks, make your complaints personal in future, very personally!

We at Atlantis News Agency believe that there are many more such Government and Public Corporation Liar Departments around, and we are going to find them, but don't wait for us to do all the work, be on your guard and/or let us know about any that you find.

ATLANTIS NEWS AGENCY
SPECIAL RESEARCH TEAM.

Spreading Anarchy in Aberdeen

THE PRESS is always regurgitating yesterday's events for our consumption, but one theme recurs—the spectre of anarchy. The strangest thing is that this spectre is feared by most 'educated people', who cling to their caricature of anarchy—a state of lawless disorder in a country; confusion; opposition to all government.

The only common ground we have with this caricature is our loathing of governments and their blurb that the authorities know best. We aren't out for chaotic banditry, but neither for Heath's, Wilson's or Jack Jones' Laws.

Bolshevik Worker and Workers' Mess are pushing for their own political parties to take over the state and some day then handing over to the workers. Have you ever heard of 'leaders' voluntarily giving up power? They're still hanging on to it in Russia. These revolutionary generals looking for an army all splutter 'workers' control', but for us power to the people does not mean fabricating another elite from the workers, but rather for workers to occupy the factories, and to elect their management from among themselves—which can be kicked out at any time if it is unsatisfactory. At the same time, technical, management and general education on site at the factory for knowledge is power. There is a big difference between 'revolutionary' political parties pimping for their own leadership of the workers, but taking power itself, and our idea of 'leadership'—which is giving out

what we know and letting the workers get on with it themselves. We want to expose 'revolutionary' political parties as well as the rest of the bureaucracy.

'The right to work', 'the dignity of labour', 'the sanctity of full employment' is a load of crap. Let's face it, most work is a bore—it's bad for you, physically and mentally. This work ethic has its roots in Protestant morality (and the best thing to do with churches is to convert them for communes or kids' in-door playgrounds).

The vast majority of working people in Britain do pointless, or worse, anti-social work. It is clearly better that they should not work squandering limited natural resources, such as iron, copper, etc., on excessive production. Capitalism is rapidly exhausting them—only if the people take control and budget the use of these materials sensibly will we be able to still have some of the benefits of industrialisation in 100 years' time. 'Socialism' might help, but then again it's much the same whether you consider Russian Communism or German

National Socialism—the USSR wastes a fantastic amount on its missile systems and armed forces—(both in resources and energy).

On a different tack—the abolition of the family:

The P&J plasters Monday's brides over its pages or a pic of a couple of sexless octogenarians celebrating 50 years of sex repression. So the media inform us of the great, stable, secure bastion of decency, the family. We reckon it to be evil and a major root of the myth that 'daddy knows best', whether this daddy also takes the form of professor, manager, expert or government. We learn later that he doesn't know better, but by then the principle of deference is embedded.

An immediate alternative is communes where adults of different backgrounds must interact, dispute and work out agreements, and which is fertile ground for children's developing minds. There is a sexual atmosphere and more experiences for the child to draw upon. A major advantage over the family is

that if one parent disappears, the responsibility is not left totally to the other, and the psychological reactions in the children will be reduced.

Conditions in Britain have been particularly bad for the past 200 years. For this time we have had the wage slavery of industry and a general subservience to money. This has justified over-production and accentuated the divisive nature of society. The rural, feudal culture was based on extended families, but at least OAPs didn't exist in shit heaps. We don't recommend a return to specifically peasant life—our example is Anarchist Spain in 1936, where they took land from the great estates, destroyed the churches, threw out the managers, and ran their own militia and factories.

For all the idealism we fall back to practicalities. Can we kick out this State of Destruction; have you any alternative to anarchism?

If you're interested contact Ron Clerk at 65 Rose Street (top floor), or 'phone Julian Turner (44521).

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.

100 Years of Libertarian Revolution: A Progress Report. Meeting to commemorate the St. Imier Congress of the First International. Sunday, September 10, 7.30 p.m., at the Centro Iberico (Trinity Church Hall, Holborn—opposite Holborn Tube). Libertarian Communist speakers from UK and the Continent. Organised by North London ORA.

'The Fight to Live' by Keith Paton. On Dole, SS, Welfare State, etc. 10p a copy or 9p for over 10. From 102 Newcastle Street, Silverdale, Staffs., ST5 6PL.

Anarchists near Poole, Dorset, contact R. Mander, 86a Albert Road, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset. Can also offer accommodation for any comrade moving there.

'Peace News' for theory and practice of non-violent revolution. £4.95 p.a. (students less 10%). Trial sub. 7 weeks for 50p with free M. Duane 'Biological Basis of Anarchism'. 5 Caledonian Road, N.1.

Voice — Wrekin Libertarians' paper — No. 3 out. From 13 Albert Street, Wellington, Salop.

Other Branch Libertarian Bookshop-Centre, 7 Regent Place, Leamington.

Libertarian Aid Committee for the Hyde Park '3'. Visiting: Phone 677 1526 (Mrs. Carty). Letters-gifts (must have Prison No.): 110305 M. Callinan, 110281 L. Marcantonio, 110280 Stan Quinn. Donations: Mrs. Callinan, 59 Bronesbury Villas, London, N.W.6.

Commitment. Val & Colin (22 Kitchener Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey, 01-653 6910) setting up farm in N. Wales to grow chemical-free foods and publish results. Any interested 'science qualified' people please contact.

ORA N. London. 113 Cazenove Road, N.16, is no longer contact address. Contact ORA, 68 Chingford Road, E.17.

Roadrunner No. 37 out. Articles on WRI, Helder Camera, Gay Equality. 8p, or £1.25 for 12, or 65p for 6. 28 Brundretts Road, Manchester, 21.

Syndicalist Publications from Syndicalist Workers Federation, BCM-Box SWF, London, WC1V 6XX.

Black and Red Outlook No. 6. Articles on Anti-Recruiting, Rents, Unionism, I.R. Act, Free Education. From A. Portus, 116 Gilda Brook Road, Eccles, Lancs. £1 for 10 issues.

Stoke Newington 8 Trial. Send all aid to '8' Fund, Compendium Bookshop, 240 Camden High Street. Meals, fruit, papers, books (new ones only), cigarettes and money needed.

agriculture is lost and people become apathetic and dependent on outside wealth for survival.

The Tai Gwynedd housing association, in the heart of Cardiganshire, is trying to counter this by buying houses and letting them at economic rents to Welsh couples who live and work in the area. Personally I would change the Welsh qualification to an income one, but, nevertheless, I give all my support to an organisation that is doing something about this really urgent situation. It is not quite a radical tenants' association yet, but it could go that way.

I certainly give wholehearted support to the Cymdeithas members who recently invaded and effectively halted an auction of cottages in Caernarvon. Next time I hope to be right in there with them.

There are enough urgent reasons for immediate anarchist activity in Wales, namely preservation of an independent economy, of rural communities, and of a rich and beautiful language. Other than anarchist and other leftist groups in the industrial cities of the South, Cymdeithas yr Iaith is the most promising, and the language is a valid and effective focus for activity outside the South. Cymdeithas are no grass roots revolutionaries, but they are generally sincere and courageous people, many of them being pacifists, socialists and anarchists. They deserve all our support.

N.J.

Anarchist Conference Reaches Decisions

REPORT ON
3rd ANARCHIST SYNDICALIST
ALLIANCE CONFERENCE,
SHEFFIELD, JULY 29-30

BEFORE A WORD IS SAID about the conference itself, a word of appreciation must go to our comrades from the anarchist communes in Sheffield who did so much to help organise the weekend, and provided us with places to crash and food for our grumbling syndicalist bellies, as well as putting up with our undoubtedly disrupting influence. We cherish their quiet loving hospitality, and are glad they brought their ideas into the conference as well. Right on, comrades, a glow-worm is small but its light can be seen and felt for miles.

If the conference can be said to have had a theme, then it was the building of contacts. The ASA Industrial Network was extended. International contacts are to be encouraged by the exchange of magazines with fraternal anarcho-syndicalist groups abroad, and particular attention was given to the strengthening of contacts with libertarians in Ulster, the Buddhist Peace Delegation from Vietnam in Paris, and the exiled Namibian national liberation movement. At the same time a proposal from the IWW in America that we set up a General Recruiting Branch in Britain was turned down. While we wanted to maintain the best possible relations with the American comrades, their method of organisation did not suit the mood and direction of the British working class. It would have been futile, even dan-

gerous, to have advocated alternative trade unionism, when British workers were by their actions showing their determination that THEY were the unions and not the soft-suited smooth-talking bureaucrats.

Out of the discussion on the Wobblies and allied topics, there began to emerge a clearer idea of what direction ASA was going, and how the Industrial Network could function in practice. Following the example of Lancashire comrades in the textile industry, the aim was to work to build rank and file movements to put the workers in control of their own struggles and smash the union bureaucracies, stressing all the time the basic syndicalist aims of one union for each industry, and a class solidarity stretching through all the struggles of the class, both in and out of the factory gate. Bob Lees and other comrades from the textile industry gave a run-down on the struggle for shop stewards, and it was suggested that it would be useful to develop contacts with the Building Workers' Charter group in order to benefit from their experience of rank and file organisation.

A major feature of the conference was discussing ways to put ASA printing capacity on a sounder footing. From October, *Black and Red Outlook* will go monthly, editorial responsibility circulating issue by issue, under the coordinating hand of Ron Marsden. An assessment was made of existing and potential printing and typing capacity, and it was decided to set up a printing equipment fund to assist in the further growth of this aspect of ASA work. To

help groups take on the responsibility of printing *Black and Red Outlook*, Ron Marsden is to produce a set of instructions on the technical aspects.

Among the THIRTY-FOUR practical decisions made at the conference, practical arrangements were to be made for defence to libertarian prisoners, and for use of the AFB Information Bulletin. And still there was time for plenty of theoretical discussion. Audrey Beacham gave a splendid impromptu exposition of the practical demands being made by libertarians in the Women's Liberation Movement to get MORE PIE NOW for working-class women. A heated argument on decision-making about production and distribution in a free society led to an alteration in the statement of Aims and Principles which hopefully but doubtfully clarified the position. At least there was less of an air of dogmatism in the new wording.

It's hard to reduce the full extent of our deliberations into a short article, which should at least convey the impression that a hell of a lot was done. But like any anarchist conference there was the usual occasional patch of rambling, aimless discussion when items came up that nobody had really prepared, and attendance waxed and waned over the weekend. Conferences are still faced with the dilemma of finding a halfway house between total aimlessness and the production of long, boring formal papers for discussion. But with over thirty decisions made, plenty of time to roust and booze, and still time to get pissed off, we came damn near to an anarchist conference Utopia.

Another word for our friends at the Commune. Tikka mentioned in passing that they were setting up a library in the loft. I'm sure that if any comrades can help out in any way, they would be pleased to know. But for chrissake don't just dump all your old books on them or they'll kill me for even mentioning this. They hang out at 4 Havelock Square, Sheffield, 10.

Finally, owing to the resignation of the previous secretary, the new office boy of the ASA is myself, Martin Bashforth, 23 Needwood Close, Wolverhampton, WV2 4PP.

M.B.

Wales

Continued from page 1

buy up crumbling cottages, renovate with the aid of local improvement grants, and let or sell them at fantastic profits. The result is that you can't buy a cow-shed under £5,000 these days. With famous show-off and dangerous driver Gerald Nabarro making statements like 'people should be encouraged to have second homes in the principality', it's enough to make a Welshman see black and red dragons.

Caravan parks are rapidly replacing farms and the last general meeting of the Farmers' Union of Wales was addressed by the chairman of the Welsh Tourist Board, who urged farmers to use fields for caravans rather than farming. It is all very well to argue that tourism is a source of income to local people, but, besides the fact that most of it goes to the land-owning bourgeoisie, in the long run it is destructive. It is destructive of culture and, more importantly, of economy. All hope of local self-sufficient

H.

The Congress of St. Imier

To commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the CONGRESS OF SAINT-IMIER of the International Association of Workingmen (September 15, 1872), the anarchists of Switzerland invite their comrades to an OUTING AND PICNIC on Sunday, September 17, 1972, at Saint-Imier (Swiss Jura, between Bienne and La Chaux-de-Fonds). There will be a sign on the Place du Marché from ten o'clock to midday to show the way to the scene of the picnic. In case of rain a shelter will be provided. Bring something to eat, to drink, to read aloud and also bring some musical instruments. No official entertainments have been organised. Impromptu speakers will be welcome. Comrades coming from a distance will be able to camp. For all correspondence: Case postale 44, 1211 GENEVA 6 Eaux Vives, Switzerland.

This week in Ireland

AUGUST 9. Exactly one year today since the troops swooped on the Catholic ghettos of Belfast and Derry and bore away the menfolk to internment. At 4 a.m. today whistles blew and the women banged dustbin lids in reproach and remembrance.

Alas it did not stop there and there were three fires in Derry. A lorry from the 26 counties carrying four tons of butter was hijacked and burned near Armagh, and various other violent actions. We must wait and see how the day progresses.

The SDLP have talked with Whitelaw, and been condemned by Bernadette Devlin, but if they obtain the release of all the internees still held and a withdrawal to a large extent of the troops from the Catholic ghettos I think their action right.

In the 26 counties all guns have been called in except for .22s and airguns such as farmers use. It is the one sensible thing our Minister for Justice, O'Malley, has done. He hoped it would lead to a reciprocal action in the six counties, but Faulkner and Craig scream at the mere idea. After all, the murder gangs of ex-B Specials must have their weapons with which to ride round in cars killing innocent Catholics presumably.

Children threw stones at an army ferret and it overturned. The driver was killed. Whitelaw then went on wireless to say they had stoned the ambulance taking the corpse away. This is denied

categorically by the people who not only saw the accident but rendered first aid and sent for the civilian ambulance. Whitelaw DID NOT go on the air condemning when a soldier made a 'rude gesture' at the hearse of an IRA man and spat at it.

Down here it is Horse Show week and all the nastiest people in the world come out from under their stones. I was outside the RDS yesterday giving away literature about vivisection and the humane and more reliable alternatives to this barbarous custom. Never have I known such rudeness from men and over-dressed women swathed in mink and dripping with jewels. These people do not attend the show because they are interested in horsemanship and love animals but to show off their grandeur and go one better in hats, etc., than anyone else. Ugh!

Good news. Some months ago the furniture factory at Crannoc Navan was closed and the 400 men declared redundant. They staged a sit-down strike. Now they have raised the money to buy the factory themselves and are working it as a co-op, choosing their own Chairman and Management Committee. More power to their elbows.

There is chaos going on in O'Connell Street outside the GPO, where three different groups are staging their anti-internment protests and indulging in sectarian quarrels. I kept well away. This is NOT the way. I'm right, you are

wrong', so beloved of all the way-out organisations in Ireland who bicker and hate each other and are jealous of each other all the time.

Martin Meehan who escaped long ago from Crumlin gaol has been arrested by soldiers in the Ardoyne. A German ship was boarded by marines, the crew shut up in one room (or whatever you call it on a ship) and the ship searched for non-existent guns. The master is complaining to the German Embassy in Dublin. There has been a sit-in by the visitors to Long Kesh, including Pat Arrowsmith, but it was called off when other arriving visitors were not admitted.

August 10. Two enormous explosions in Armagh wrecking city centre. Parade of UDA across Belfast to Crumlin Gaol, wearing para-military uniforms. Army stop them and a tiny bit of fisticuffs and then they are allowed to proceed. No rubber bullets or guns. Kennedy is right. The law only works against one side in the six counties and Britain is disgraced in the eyes of the world. Whitelaw flies to talk with Heath today, and the SDLP are confident internment will be ended. I'm not. One man shot yesterday. The army fired many times. By shot I mean killed, others are wounded and in hospital or being nursed hidden. The house in which Meehan was captured is riddled with bullets. Had she not run out, the woman of the house might well have been killed, as they just fired into it recklessly. So the sorry tale goes on. If there were a God and, I he, I would sink Ireland to the bottom of the sea for a year and then bring it up, shake it and start again. A plague on EVERYBODY'S houses.