

THINK OF A NUMBER!

ON THE EVE of the Party conference the Labour Party has been rent in twain (what, again!) on a soul-searing issue of whether or not to incorporate the nationalization of twenty-five leading British companies in the next Labour Party manifesto. As it is possible that this is the last party conference before the next election it is, claim the protagonists, a vital issue.

Mr. Michael Foot, as befits a former white-hope of the left, is in favour of moderation; Mr. Wilson, it is pointed out by some, is in favour of nationalization but he would not specify an exact number.

The fiery revolutionaries who thought up this one seem to have just sat down and thought of a number, perhaps the extremists doubled it and the compromisers took away two or three but the magic number still remains twenty-five!

Even the Tories would not com-

mit themselves to a specific number in such a case; they would only plea to nationalize those industries which were a social and national service but a dead loss, or nationalize those companies which were potentially bankrupt but which had some useful patents or contracts which could be hived off to private enterprise. They have also been known to sponsor national ownership of research projects providing that the finished production went into private hands.

The Labour Party is, as usual, fighting the last revolution but one. 'Nationalization' is no longer the abracadabra it once seemed. Under nationalization the mines, the post office and the railways are just as exploitative, both to workers and to the public (really the same thing), as they were under private enterprise.

The reasons why the 'right' of the party (i.e. those in power)

are opposed to nationalization is not because it is oppressive or ineffectual (both of which it is) but because it would frighten off voters.

The Conservatives, dedicated as they are to private enterprise - with judicious help from the State when necessary - are opposed to thoroughgoing nationalization. The Liberals in their wooing mood have injected a modicum of worker representation on company boards. The Labour Party in its most revolutionary mood can only count to twenty-five but is unlikely to get even that far --after all, it's only a manifesto.

One recalls the Morning Star (or was it the Daily Worker?) sending out a clarion call 'Nationalize the money-lenders' Similar calls to nationalize banks and building societies sound the same hollow key. If the interest charges of nation-

Continued on back page

THE NATURE OF IRISH REPUBLICANISM

RECENT BOMB explosions in Britain have made people reconsider the nature of Irish Republicanism. NEW EARTH, an Irish libertarian collective, consider that its objectives have little in common with those of us who struggle for a free alternative society.

Historically, Irish Republicanism has been a movement by the radical nationalist bourgeoisie and petit-bourgeoisie to achieve national independence. Because of the economic conditions prevailing in the late nineteenth century, viz. the various Land Acts which transformed a largely tenant and rural labourer population into a propertied peasant class, the radical and social agrarianism of the population was also transformed to reflect the ideology of the peasant proprietors. That ideology was of necessity petit-bourgeois, and the most advanced sections of it were radical nationalists, i.e. Republicans. On the other hand, a weak industrial base prevented the rise of a strong working class.

The Provisionals have not yet escaped from these petit-

bourgeois illusions, vide the social policies of 'Eire Nua', where all are small owners, and workers have a share in the fact factory they work. The Officials on the other hand regard themselves as a revolutionary socialist organisation. Under the influence of the Communist Party, with whom they have similar socialist ideas, they have adopted a Stages Theory of class collaborations, whereby the working class forget their economic struggles and ally themselves with the most progressive factory owners and nationalistically minded employers against imperialism. In this struggle the working class will play a role similar to any other class. It will have no independent position of its own. Needless to say, Republicans have no trade-union or anti-redundancies strategy.

Libertarian socialists do not devote their time to military action. A united Ireland is irrelevant if you are homeless, unemployed or hungry. We believe in the struggle against unemployment, poor wages, bad housing, redundancies. Jim Larkin united

the Catholic and Protestant workers on these issues, and again they united in common action during the ungrateful thirties. This is the only struggle worth dying for, and not some mystical 'nation'.

We also consider the question of unification to be irrelevant even in a socialist context, where society is run by local communities and workers' councils and where all national boundaries and States have disappeared.

Consequently, we condemn any military or bombing campaign by Irish Republicanism or any splinter group, as adventurist. We see it as an attempt by a group of military politicians attempting to speak on behalf of the Irish people, and to force the British authorities to recognise them as the new State.

Libertarian socialists consider that all States and would-be State forces are the enemies of the people.

Irish Correspondents.
New Earth group.

THE RICH ££££££££
 ££££ GET RICHER

WHILE PRICES and rents have continued to rise, wages have been restricted by law. This con-trick has been perpetrated in order to combat inflation, but in actual fact what has happened is that the rich have got richer and the poor, poorer. It has been a time when most employers just couldn't help but make increased profits. They have, as usual, avoided any restrictions placed on these, by legislation by separating their different operations so as not to be tied by profit limitation based on that made in previous years. The Government's so-called "fair rents" legisla-tion has been in operation for a year, and last Monday, October 1, saw further rent increases of 50p for five million council tenants. This vicious piece of legislation was designed to attack the living standards of the working class and give the Government more revenue.

Already two million tenants are receiving rent rebates because they are unable to afford existing rent levels. With the new in-creases this month this number is expected to reach over 2,500,000. This Tory legislation has cut back subsidies from council ten-ants and only subsidises the needy. However, what the figures show is that the needy form over half of the council tenants in this country. Those who have not been granted rebates have obvi-ously had to make sacrifices in their family budgets to pay these increases. The Government also thought that these increases would make the "better off" council tenants buy their own homes and so enlarge on the Tories' dream of a "property own-ing democracy". But the astron-omical increases in the price of property has meant that these people are either unable to af-ford a mortgage or are mortgaged up to the hilt. It is true that those who are buying their own homes get tax concessions but the rocketing prices now asked for put them out of range of working class families.

As in all societies based on class divisions it is the working class who take the brunt of governmental measures to ensure the continuation of the profit-making system. It was recognised long ago that the private land-lord couldn't provide enough decent homes for working class families. The growth in council housing after the Second World War was the result of a great need for housing following the effects of bombing. Private housing just couldn't cope and now it has declined further with the increased number of people owning their own homes.

But in all these categories there is profit. Profit that is

made from a basic human need for shelter. It was the general abuse of people's needs that Proudhon described as "Property is Theft". As the Guardian said last week (29 Sep.), "the ways in which people amass fortunes at the expense of other people's suffering add to the feeling that rottenness is working its way through the capitalist system". Anarchists would agree that the private renting of property is a part of the rottenness of the system. However, we would also be against the "nationalisation" of private rentings. Such nationalisation as set forth by the Fabian Society would be no different from council housing. It would create further bureau-cratic frustration among those seeking homes when the simple fact is there just are not enough homes available to go round. Or rather, if the number of empty homes were taken over by the homeless we might be approaching a solution to the housing problem. At the moment property brings profits to people out of the ex-ploitation of the misery of others. With increasing infla-tion the exploitation will get worse because fewer homes will be built. The property sharks will make even bigger killings.

Anarchists believe in the aboli-tion of property in that this ownership gives one an advantage or profit over another. People should have free access to satis-fy their needs and that includes a decent place to live. Although people's needs may differ, through co-operation and mutual aid such problems could be overcome. The Association of London Housing Estates has recommended to its members that they organise a withholdal of the 50p increase. This association represents well over a hundred tenants' associa-tions in the London area. If su-such a strike was supported by its members, the government would find it very difficult to enforce the law. If such rent strikes could be linked with industrial action, the class interests of workers would be set against those who stand for profit and privilege. We must no longer be led up the different political paths, own ownership, national-isation, etc., or seek leader-ship from other people, no mat-ter how wonderful their solutions may sound. But find confidence in ourselves and what we can achieve from our own efforts.

P.T.

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LAVROV & RUSSIAN ANARCHISM

PETER LAVROV (1823-1900) occupies a prominent position in the history of the Russian revolutionary movement. He exerted a profound influence on the Populist movement of the 1870s, both within the Russian empire and in West European exile, competing with Bakunin for the allegiance of the revolutionary youth. He is widely regarded as the foremost systematizer of Populist thought. His writings, which span the second half of the nineteenth century, helped to shape a broad range of radical opinion, from Struve's liberalism to Plekhanov's Marxism and Kropotkin's anarchism. His Historical Letters, while neither original in content nor distinguished in style, captured the mood of the radical intelligentsia and became, in the words of a contemporary, a "revolutionary gospel". His emphasis on the "critically thinking individual" as the driving force of human progress, and on the "debt to the people" incurred by the privileged minority in Russian society, had an immediate impact and released a flood of moral and revolutionary enthusiasm among the younger generation.

Exiled to Vologda for his radical activities, Lavrov fled to Western Europe in 1870, joined the First International, played a small role in the Paris Commune, and founded the journal Forward!, which, though lacking Herzen's literary brilliance, acquired a reputation second only to The Bell's as the most respected emigre journal of the period. Lavrov, however, lacked the aura of revolutionary heroism which clung to so many of his contemporaries. The underground conspiracies, the terrorist adventures, the dramatic prison escapes of which revolutionary reputations were made--these largely passed him by. Next to Bakunin or Kropotkin he cut a rather dull figure. Teacher and poet, mathematician and philosopher, he was never a man of action. His radicalism, rather, was primarily intellectual and moral. He was, in Turgenev's description, "a dove trying to pass himself off as a hawk. . . . The words are terrible, but the glance is gentle, the smile is most kind, and even the enormous and unkempt beard has a tender and peaceful character."

Yet Lavrov claims our attention as a figure of major importance. In recent years several new editions of his writings have appeared, among them James P. Scanlan's translation of the Historical Letters and a two-volume collection of Lavrov's works edited by his Soviet biographer, Ivan Knizhnik-Vetrov, a

former Anarchist and Tolstoyan and one of the few libertarian survivors of the Stalinist purges. In 1970 Boris Sapir of the International Institute of Social History edited Vpered! 1873-1877, a two-volume collection of documents from the archives of V. N. Smirnov, a former Bakuninist who became Lavrov's personal secretary. And in 1972 Philip Pomper of Wesleyan University published Peter Lavrov and the Russian Revolutionary Movement (University of Chicago Press), the first full-length biography in English, based on printed sources as well as archival materials in the Soviet Union, Amsterdam, and the United States.

* * *

Though Lavrov never espoused a thoroughgoing anarchist position, he was, as Pomper says, a "socialist with anarchist leanings" who "despised the pettiness and corruption of the bureaucratized commercial-industrial state". For all his disagreement with Bakunin, they had a good deal in common. Both believed in "going to the people", both envisioned a decentralized society based on voluntary cooperation and mutual aid, and both opposed representative government, rejecting parliament as a talking-shop designed to safeguard the interests of the propertied classes. Both called instead for direct grass-roots democracy, for local self-rule based on the urban and rural commune. Both took part in the communal movement in France in 1870-71 and welcomed the Commune of Paris as a model of the future libertarian society.

Lavrov, interestingly enough, dedicated his first important work to Herzen and Proudhon, whom he admired for their moral integrity, their devotion to individual freedom, and their federalistic conception of socialism. In London during the 1870s he met Sergei Kravchinsky-Stepnyak and wrote a preface to his Underground Russia. He also became acquainted with Kropotkin who, though an adherent of Bakunin in the Chaikovsky Circle, was deeply impressed by Lavrov's ethical qualities and his insistence on education and propaganda as a primary function of the revolutionary. It is worth noting that Kropotkin's older brother Alexander was a disciple of Lavrov's, as was the mother of the well-known Russian anarchist Maria Goldsmith, who herself published a French translation of the Historical Letters in 1903.

In common with Kropotkin, Lavrov ranged himself with the libertarian populism of Bakunin and Herzen against the authoritarian revolutionism of Nechaev and Tkachev. He felt, as Kropotkin was to feel about Lenin and Trotsky, that Nechaev and Tkachev could not inspire a true social revolution because they lacked a genuine socialist morality. Upholding sincerity and truthfulness in relations among revolutionaries, he denounced Nechaev as "one of the most harmful elements in our emigration" (letter to Natalie Herzen, 19 July 1870). With Bakunin and Kropotkin, moreover, he firmly rejected Jacobinism and revolutionary dictatorship, warning that the seizure of power by a revolutionary elite would merely result in the transfer of power to the hands of a new privileged minority "acting under the red flag of social revolution". Every dictatorship, he wrote, "is called upon to suppress not only reactionary opponents but also those who disagree with its methods and ambitions," and will therefore spend "more time and effort in retaining its power and defending it against its rivals than upon the realization of its program". A half-century later these words were echoed by Kropotkin when he said that the Bolsheviks, like Nechaev and Tkachev before them, lacked a guiding moral idea and so were powerless to create a free society based on justice and equality; they had shown, on the contrary, how the revolution was not to be made--by authoritarian rather than libertarian methods.

Paul Avrich

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FORD STRIKE IN COLOGNE

THIS ARTICLE CONTINUES (from last week) ON THE FOURTH DAY OF THE STRIKE INITIATED BY IMMIGRANT WORKERS IN THE FORD, COLOGNE FACTORY.

PRESS CAMPAIGN OF LIES

Monday 27 August....That night about 300 slept in the G and A shops. Next morning we formed another demonstration and marched through the whole factory. This time however there were very few Germans. The press and TV had already begun their campaign of lies against the strike. The press tried to portray the strike as it hadn't been started by the mass of the workers but by a group of 'infiltrated communists, students and troublemakers [who] had incited the Turkish workers". This put a lot of German workers off the strike.

The demonstration ended as usual in front of the Administration Block. We began a discussion. All of a sudden a loudspeaker van from the Works Council arrived. A Turkish Works Councillor tried to get the strikers back to work. They should be sensible and wait for the results of the negotiations between the Works Council and the management, he said. He was whistled and booed and shouted down. After that the car disappeared but it showed up again. During the shift changeover it was in front of the main gate. Over the speakers the Works Council chairman asked the workers to go home and not take part in the strike. That day the factory gates were closed by the police. They wanted to prevent the next shift from taking part in the strike. The workers from the morning shift pulled down the gates and the afternoon shift workers marched in as a body. On this occasion the police and security jostled people, which the press took advantage of to report fictitiously about the fights between German and Turkish workers. But the foreign workers didn't want to fight the Germans, they wanted them to join the strike. They couldn't understand why the German workers were taking no more part. They said that these demands were right for Germans too. The lie campaign against the strike continued. The press wrote about sabotage, taking hostages, etc. Nowhere could a fair report be found. The press always portrayed the strike as purely a Turkish affair which the Germans could have nothing to do with. But a headline in one paper admitted that the opposite was really the case, "German Workers Support Turks at Ford". This was true at the beginning of the strike but the more the press lied the more distrust was spread among German workers.

On Tuesday afternoon the Works Council demanded that the committee negotiate with them again. The workers didn't want to let the strike committee go as they feared that they might be arrested there. SO THEY DEMANDED THAT TWO WORKS COUNCILLORS SHOULD BE DELIVERED UP AS HOSTAGES TO THE MASS MEETING OF WORKERS TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THE STRIKE COMMITTEE. THE DEMAND WAS CONCEDED. The press later made the most of this incident (wrongly slanting it as a conflict between German and Turkish workers. In fact there are Turks on the Works Council too). The two Works Councillors were not harmed in any way. Upstairs the strike committee put forward the same demands and demanded that the Works Committee support the strike. This was refused for a third time. Downstairs they told the workers what had happened. After that the committee asked the workers to decide whether there should be any further negotiations. The workers decided that the strike committee should decide itself. The strike committee then voted to break off all negotiations with the Works Council. Everyone agreed. The result was put to a vote of the workers and accepted. That night they slept in Y shop. A police attack was expected but didn't take place.

Wednesday 28 August. Probably the best day of the strike. Already in the morning a large demonstration had marched through the factory. When the afternoon shift came, between 8,000 and 10,000 were on strike.

Weyer, the Minister of the Interior of the State of North Rhine/Westphalia, flew over the factory in a helicopter. There was marvellous solidarity and unity among the workers. Around evening the strike committee was asked to meet the management and they were confronted with the results 'worked out' between the management and the Works Council:-

280 marks (just over £50) for all as a lump sum payment
full pay for the period of the strike.

* * * *

This was a bad offer, but at the same time it marked the first real gains. The offer was turned down by the workers. This small degree of success encouraged them to go on striking. Huge demonstrations were staged in the factory. Strikers had begun to develop new forms of taking action together; workers danced, sang, told jokes, and felt the confidence to make speeches for the first time in their lives. In the evening we marched again to Gate 3. There a group of foremen had gathered, pretending to be normal workers. They shouted, "We want work", "Communists Out", etc. It was an omen of what was to come.

STRIKE BROKEN

That night between 1,00 and 1,500 workers slept in 'Y' shop. Thursday morning we again formed a huge demonstration. The morning shift arrived and immediately joined the strike again. When the demonstration went from 'Y' shop to Gate 3 they were met by a counter-demonstration. These people shouted "We want work". Later we found out that they were mainly foremen, supervisors, security men in plain clothes, and a group of thugs brought here from Ford Genk (who had been allowed in when they said they were coming in solidarity with the strikers). First the Turkish workers formed a gangway and let them through. The counter-demonstrators wanted to lynch the few German workers who were still supporting the strike. They chased them but didn't succeed because the Turkish workers protected their German fellows. The fighting gave the police an excuse to break into the factory and club the strikers. 35 workers were arrested. Some were injured. ...The strike was broken.

[The next day there was a submissive return to work. The 280 Marks and the pay for the period of the strike was the only material gain. The Turks involved in the strike committee - at least so far - are to be deported. Ford is trying to make up its mind whether to launch legal proceedings against the German strikers under Germany's equivalent of the 'IRA act'. A witchhunt against the left in the factory has begun. All known political activists have been sacked. --English editors.]

A. S. NEILL

IT IS SAD to hear of the death of A. S. Neill. The present writer met him once or twice, but knew him mainly through his books, of which he must have read almost all, except the very latest ones. Beginning as a quite ordinary Scottish "dominie", Neill rapidly came to be convinced of the cruelty and futility of corporal punishment, and, by extension, of all coercive methods of teaching children.

His earliest books, A Dominie's Log, A Dominie in Doubt, A Dominie Dismissed and so on, now long out of print and, alas, unlikely to be reissued, are superb, humorous, vivid, lively works. They take us through his early days of doubt of conventional methods of education, his dismissal by the Scottish education authorities, his first free school at Hellerau in pre-Hitler Germany and finally to Summerhill. His later writings are still good, but tend to repeat themselves. Neill found it necessary to rebut, over and over again, the objections raised against his methods.

In the twenties and thirties the extremely Puritan attitude to children still persisted. Indeed the enthusiastic reception given to William Golding's The Lord of the Flies shows it is by no means dead yet. Summerhill became notorious as the "crank" school, "that dreadful school where children have no manners and are allowed to smoke". All sorts of absurd and fantastic tales were told about it. Progressive, libertarian people everywhere united in its support, and Neill's influence spread all over the world. One of the countries where his ideas are most popular is in fact Japan.

In Summerhill the children have their assembly, which includes everybody. The staff are included in the decision making, and are bound by the rules decided upon. Neill had a vote like everyone else. From what I have heard from people who have had experience, either as teachers, pupils or parents, of Summerhill life, it was not always entirely consistent. Neill himself admitted that in certain situations he had to make a decision not strictly democratic, or some other adult had to. Small children will not always put themselves to bed when they should. Some person has to see that they go.

In the pre-permissive age the school was vulnerable to the accusation that the teenage pupils were having sexual relations. Homer Lane, from whom Neill had derived many of his ideas, had

his Little Commonwealth closed down as result of such an accusation. So on this matter Neill was forced to be strict, although believing that such relations are harmless in themselves provided there are no unwanted babies.

Neill was never very political. During the forties and fifties the anarchist movement took him up with enthusiasm. Unfortunately the enthusiasm was not mutual. Neill did not wish to involve himself with any movement or party, after his disillusion with the Soviet Union when, under Stalin, it turned away from experimental education and reverted to old-style authoritarian methods.

Now Neill's ideas are influencing education everywhere. No doubt the full Neillian ideal is seldom realised but at least a step in the right direction is being taken. Education is becoming "child-centred", and formal teaching methods are being discarded, while even more radical proposals, "de-schooling", etc., are being made. The militancy of school children, of enlightened teachers and sympathetic parents are changing the educational scene. Neill mapped out the road.

The future will lie with militancy in the ordinary schools, to which most children go, rather than with experimental, middle class boarding schools, however good. If I have a criticism to make of A. S. Neill it is that Summerhill, despite its freedom, was still basically that traditional English institution, the boarding school. I have never been able to understand why people go to the trouble to have children, and then pay strangers to bring them up. It is a status symbol, like burning widows alive in old India, and has just about as much sense and humanity in it.

We are moving into an age of chaos, but also an age of opportunity. Neill's ideas will, I believe, continue to influence the development of education for many years to come.

John Brent.

Beware of a 'Bit-Recommended' Rip-Off Artist using name 'Paul Vander Weete'.

A Pretoria, South Africa, woman was shot in the chest by a .22 calibre pistol which she kept under her pillow. She was not seriously wounded. The weapon apparently discharged when she turned over in her sleep.

Sancho Panza

IN BRIEF

One of The Observer's sayings of the week was from a municipal gardener in Santiago, Chile. "Some win, some lose, but during revolutions green plants don't get enough water."

French Trotskyists abandoned a rally in support of the workers at Lip to be held at the Paris Mutualite. Instead they dedicated the evening to "The Chilean Workers".

The International Union of Police Professional Associations meeting at Royan in France, claimed the right of policemen 'to disobey orders which are manifestly illegal or abusive'. The Union includes police from nine European countries. The British police (who are not allowed to unionize) sent an observer.

The trial of Pietro Valpreda has been set for March 18th 1974 in Catantaro. On trial with him will be members of his anarchist group, says The Times, "and several fascists". Two right-wing extremists who are in jail pending a separate investigation of charges that they organized the Milan bank explosion, will not be among the defendants.

The first visitor to the Chinese Archeological Treasures exhibition at the Royal Academy waited eighteen hours, was also the first at the Tutankhamun exhibition last year at the British Museum.

The trial opens at Shrewsbury Crown Court on Wednesday (3 Oct.) of 24 pickets on charges arising from incidents during last autumn's building strike.

BITMAN 8 has belatedly appeared. It is available from Bit Information Service, 146 Great Western Road, London, W. 11. 68pp. price 28½p minimum. Subscription minimum £1. for four issues. Full of information on alternative society, including overmuch on 'pot'. Not a revolutionary scene.

Contains an appeal for GERALDINE GORE who disappeared from home in June to make known that she is all right; confidence respected.

BITMAN reports that the Yippie who threw a 'cream' pie at Guru Mahara Ji was attacked by two men identified as followers of the Divine Light. They fractured his skull. The Divine Light Mission has stated that the assailants "were over-zealous. They loved the guru too much". The Guru was stated at one time to be ill with ulcers. He should worry?

One of the communes winning a prize in the Bit ideals pool has received notification from the B.B.C. that the Corporation has received outline planning consent to erect Radio Manchester transmitter on the Commune's land.

LETTERS

TACTICS FOR TODAY

Dear Comrades,

I would like to thank Harry Bickerstaff for his reasonable, and reasoned, reply to my article on "British Anarchism - Tactics for Today" (FREEDOM 1/9/73). This was the kind of criticism I had expected.

I would agree with him that some of "the areas of most interest were short on specific details". This was partly deliberate, as I wanted to encourage discussion; it is also inevitable with FREEDOM's shortage of space. I did not want to be accused of going on and on, week after week! I also accept the point that I may have tended to overestimate the role of an anarchist/libertarian organisation in the revolutionary struggle. This, too, was deliberate. The so-called anarchist "movement" in this country has more than tended in the opposite direction. Reliance on spontaneity, small and generally isolated face-to-face groups and an abhorrence of permanent, structured organisations have been the order-of-the-day in our "movement" hitherto. Moreover, it has resulted in what has recently been called the "star system". Indeed, the very point is brought out by Pete Turner with regard to Rudolf Rocker. A structured anarchist/libertarian organisation does not of itself eliminate the "stars" or leaders (vide the FAI/CNT), but a properly organised movement can lessen the opportunities for leaders to take over, or to manoeuvre with authoritarian and reformist power-seeking groups. I will try to be a little more specific on this issue.

A libertarian organisation should be a membership organisation. Where possible, members should form groups. The groups should be autonomous, but at the same time linked with all other groups through elected representatives such as a membership secretary, treasurer, group secretaries, a production collective for the organisation's paper(s) etc. All its "officials" should be elected, and be recallable. Names and "stars" should be discouraged (the present practice within the ORA, for example, is for all articles published in LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE to be unsigned, and, generally-speaking, surnames not to be used in Internal Bulletins and like documents). Some people will always be more active, perhaps more talented, than others; but the whole aim of the organisation must be to encourage a high level of commitment as opposed to passivity (this was the sole reason for my quota-

tion from Tyndall, though I would agree that it was open to mis-interpretation - viciously deliberate in the case of one writer).

The more, and better, anarchists and libertarians are organised, the more efficient their industrial and other networks are, during a revolutionary struggle, during a social revolution or upheaval, the less opportunity there will be for authoritarian organisations and parties taking the initiative. We may not be able to stop them, but anarchists and libertarians, if they are themselves well-organised, will have more influence on, and within, the working-class. Organisation for organisation sake, I agree, is useless. Moreover, even anarchist and libertarian organisations (like the CNT-FAI) which, for historical reasons I cannot go into here, based to a large extent on the "star" or leader system, is probably worse than no libertarian organisations at all.

Therefore, I would largely agree with Harry Bickerstaff when he observes: "Any activity which extends people's understanding of human solidarity brings them closer to anarchism. And it is the extent of anarchist consciousness among the people, not the strength of anarchist organisations that will be the safeguard against the counter-revolution". Anarchist consciousness, however, should also give rise to strong anarchist organisations. With both we may yet win through.

Let the debate continue.

Your's fraternally,

Peter E. Newell.

C O O L I T

C O M R A D E S !

I

Dear Editors, Friends
and Comrades everywhere,

May I be permitted to say that, in my opinion, the bitter and acrimonious factionalism which is taking up more and more space in FREEDOM is getting a little ridiculous. One quarter of issue No. 38 was taken up by rude internal bickering. Can you imagine what anyone buying the paper for the first time would think? I couldn't possibly presume to tell the editors what to print or what not to print but can I appeal to my friends and comrades in the movement to exercise some restraint? Why not write news instead of abuse? Is it because nobody is doing anything? Jack, Peter, Laurens, Tony et al -- what's going on? Is the only time you bother to write now when you get solidly up-tight?

I've already threatened to write 5,000 words a week in an effort to squeeze out nasty let-

ters but if I fulfil this horrible threat I'm sure FREEDOM's readership will dwindle drastically. So get your fingers out, comrades, especially those of you whose perceptive articles contributed so much to my own political education in the past, and let's have some decent anarchist analysis of current events from you once again.

Fraternally,

Taunton. Dave Poulson

II

Dear Comrades,

I was dismayed to read Jack Stevenson's letter in FREEDOM 22 September, firstly because I never believed FREEDOM would sink so low as to print such tripe, and secondly that anyone could condense so much self-righteous stupidity into so few words.

Jack Stevenson should be happy that FREEDOM exists as a vehicle for anarchist discussion. If Jack Stevenson wants a blood-and-thunder paper complete with recruitment adverts for a new International Brigade for Chile, then he should look elsewhere than FREEDOM.

Whilst I have pen to paper, (a rare occurrence for me) I will also reply to Mary-Rose Bannon's sad comments on "What are anarchists doing?" -- how many times have we heard that cry before?

It is unfortunate that she writes from Ipswich, for she will get a false impression from there. I spent 3 years getting nowhere, and when I left Ipswich, all the libertarians went with me! I think if Mary-Rose Bannon cares to look further than that large East Anglian puddle she will find anarchists active in most districts. Admittedly, anarchists are an elusive breed - we don't all go round waving flags, or wearing badges, we don't all jump up at meetings and declare our anarchist beliefs. We usually work quietly in the background, "gnawing away at the roots of society" as someone said.

Again, most anarchists I have ever met spend 99.9% of their time doing sod all but living, but it is the 0.1% that is important, and we should be thankful for small mercies!

Dedham

F.R.

PRESS FUND

Contributions 20 - 26 September

LLANRWST: M.B. £2; LULEA, Sweden: H.P. 20p; Arkansas: B.M. 30p; CARDIFF: B.A. 50p; LIVERPOOL: R.E. 14p; SUTTON: B.R. £4.06; IPSWICH: M.R.B. £1.75; STOCKPORT: J.M. £1; WOLVERHAMPTON: J.L. 40p; J.K.W. 10p; PRUDOE: M.L. 40p; GUILDFORD: J.N. 50p. TOTAL: £11.35
Previously acknowledged : £951.69
TOTAL to date : £963.04

THE FOUR a.m. RAP

PROTEST VIGIL

Herbert Morrison, Labour Home Secretary in the 1940-45 War Cabinet, once said in one of his exhortations, "In England, when there's a knock on the door at four a.m., you'll know it's the milkman". Habits of milkmen have probably changed, the habits of policemen certainly haven't changed much but the circumstances have given police opportunities to be their natural selves.

Last week on the excuse of tracing IRA bombers they raided Charrington Street, Camden Town squat employing 250 police, detaining thirty people. "But none of the people detained was able to help the Bomb Squad's enquiries". This is a sequel to hundreds of raids carried on up and down the country. On Saturday, according to the Sunday Telegraph, "London's 100-strong bomb squad sifted through descriptions of people seen at Cromwell Road air terminal shortly before the bomb explosion on Friday in which eight people were injured. In Hertfordshire 60 police raided addresses of known political 'activists'. They wanted to trace a youth of 18-20".

This story is interesting in its brevity. How does one know who to raid from a vague description? (Not even the phantom-like Identikit). Who is a political 'activist'? And in which direction... Left or Right? How many Conservatives were roused from their beds? Were youths of 18-20 the only ones questioned? Did they find out anything about the IRA? Did they want to?

It is not known whether they had search warrants for all of these raids. In Charrington Street they certainly did not have sufficient warrants. Not that that is any help, seeing with what ease magistrates hand them out and on what trivial grounds they are issued.

ITALIAN COMRADE PERSECUTED IN JAIL

In FREEDOM 14/7/73 we reported the plight of Giovanni Marini, in jail over a year awaiting trial following the death of a member of the neo-fascist M.S.I in a fight when Marini and another anarchist were attacked in the street by a band of fascists. We reported the difficulties caused to his legal defence by continual removal from prison to prison and also the consequent deprivation of visits. We now receive the following appeal:

"Just today we hear that Giovanni Marini...has been ferociously manhandled in the prison of Caltanissetta (Sicily), the very concentration camp of the state system.

One has never felt happy about the conventional blanket emotional reaction to the police as 'bastards', 'pigs' or 'fuzz'. Apart from habitual avoidance of the expression 'bastards' and a liking for pigs (not to mention 'po' 'pork' at this point) one feels that the police are highly legitimate products of society as it is today. Laws are passed that give them excessive powers with consequent inevitable abuse. Such are the Criminal Damage Act 1971 under which the police raids were carried out, and the anti-drugs legislation which have given the police powers to stop and search.

Any excuse, and the IRA bombings like the 'Angry Brigade' manifestations can quite easily be used as an excuse, for a crack-down on political 'activists' which, being interpreted mean anybody that the police disapprove of. The rights of search and the material taken during searches have no limit and addresses taken during searches can swiftly be copied and used for further raids if needed.

Voices have been raised from the NCCL and Release to Mr. Arthur Latham, M.P. for North Paddington. Mr. Latham proposes an independent panel attend police raids so that there is a neutral eye-witness to any allegations made either by or against the police. There is little hope that Mr. Latham's utopian proposal will meet with police approval and, in the present state of national security (one can almost hear the words) it would be unadvisable to take such measures.

If one places power in the hands of the police one must expect it to be abused and in directions concerned neither with the Irish question or drug abuse. J.R.

"His relatives, who have gone to see him, have found on his body the signs of the violence he has suffered, a violence which could cause the loss of his sight. Moreover we know that they have tried anyhow to annihilate him, even by exasperating him beyond measure.

"While awaiting trial, Marini has been transferred from one jail to another thirteen times, and his latest move has been carefully chosen by the state and its servants [timed for] when it could pass least noticed and the denunciation of the violation of the most elementary respect for the prisoner's person couldn't have a large following in public opinion. As we are in vacation time they thought that comrades wouldn't mobilize themselves, nor

The Middle East Research and Action Group, largely composed of people of Jewish origin, plans to hold a vigil outside a central London Synagogue on Saturday, 6th October (Yom Kippur) to witness against "the blatant hypocrisy of utilising the Jewish New Year and Day of Atonement...in order to raise massive funds in support of Israel - a state based on continuing oppression of the Palestinian-Arab people; a state pursuing policies of domination (e.g. massive confiscation of Arab-owned lands), exploitation (e.g. transforming the Arab population under Israeli rule into a commuting reservoir of cheap black labour) and violation of human and political rights (e.g. preventive detention; blowing up of houses). Like all such policies of oppression in Israel and elsewhere, these can only be defended by massive armament and military occupation."

The emphasis of the press release is heavily upon Sin, the word surprising to anarchist ears but the definition "the domination of man by man" comprehensible, and the day appropriate to bring to their compatriots the thinking they need to do about their position of yesterday's oppressed become today's oppressors. And judging from the talk by the British Chief Rabbi on the BBC to introduce the Jewish New Year the thought could profitably be put to him.

For further information contact MERAG, 5, Caledonian Road, N. 1. M.C.

protest.

"Today we denounce the state and its prison system; we denounce its bloody and cruel repression of individual and collective free freedom; we denounce state gaolers, the squads which cudgel our comrades; all the instruments serving...legal authority and violence.

"We demand that Giovanni Marini be transferred to a prison nearer Salerno [where he lived and the affair happened], where his parents, his lawyers, his comrades can regularly see him; we demand that he undergo medical examinations to avert the consequences of the violence he has suffered; we ask for the suppression of prison instruments such as isolation cells, the cudgelling of prisoners, provocations by superiors, the psychological violence leading to exasperation and to the so-called "cases of death".

The comrades of Federazione Anarchica Livornese, Via E. Rossi 80, 57100 LIVORNO

'NEW EARTH' STATEMENT

NEW EARTH, an Irish publishing and bookshop collective, was formed this year with the objective of introducing more Irish people to libertarian ideas by publishing and distributing socialist, anarchist and syndicalist literature. We have gradually moved from our situationalist-trotskyist origins to a precise libertarian socialist perspective. Our last publication The Sheep Will Reveal Their Fangs will be followed by a reprint of Malatesta's 'En periode elettorale'.

Coincident with this, we are forming a national network across the country of various libertarian socialists. It is hoped that Northern Ireland contacts will enter this libertarian federation.

Such a federation will be marked by:

- 1) An orientation to industrial activity, as well as other forms of popular action.
- 2) Independence of all other political movements.
- 3) The development of antiauthori-

tarian societies and culture in the form of adventure playgrounds, free schools, communes, free universities, street theatre, rock liberation bands, workers control, and many other projects.

But we need help. If you are a subscriber to FREEDOM and are interested in the work of New Earth, then write to us. If you have a contact in Ireland, let him/her know about us. If you would be prepared to come over as a speaker or give some form of aid, let us know. If someone can spare leaflets or pamphlets, send them on. We also need information on street theatres.

(see Contact Col. & front page)

T H I N K...continued from P. 1.

alized money-lenders, banks and building societies still continue it will be the same old exploitation under a new name, and indeed given the indifference to public relations and the talent for exploitation by the State we shall merely exchange King Log for King Stork.

Also a key slogan of the peace-makers of the thirties was to nationalize the arms industries; when one recalls that the atom

bomb and the hydrogen bomb are completely nationalized one feels the merely retail merchants of death were preferable.

In the struggles for power within and between the parties the abstract ideas of nationalization assume great importance. They are just pawns in the game. At their most vivid they are swear-words or magic formulae to chant in order to hypnotise the voters to make the sign of the cross in the right place. "Start counting, but only up to twenty-five. Beyond that we couldn't be responsible for the consequences."

The real power in industry is not in the name over the door, whether it be private enterprise or belongs to the nation. The power lies in the hands of the workers who create the product, the foggy concept of nationalization with the substitute of the State as an intermediary obscures the real power, which should be in the heads of the workers.

Whether twenty-five or twenty-five thousand business are nationalized, profit will still be the motive of the bureaucrats and service will still be lacking.

Jack Robinson

Contact

THURSDAYS 2 p.m. onwards
help fold and despatch
FREEDOM at Freedom Press



PATCH

PATCH, who marched on many a demonstration from CND to the Windsor Free Festival and gave it all a sense of fun, died on the 29th September 1973.

OXFORD Festival of Peace (Peace Pledge Union). Cartoons and short films on Peace and War at Friends Meeting House, 43 St. Giles, Oxford. Wed. 10, Thurs. 11, Fri. 12 October, 2-hr. programme twice nightly 6-8 p.m. and 8-10 p.m.

HISTORY WORKSHOP in London, on Family, Work, Home at Old Theatre, L.S.E. Sat Oct 20 & Sun. Oct 21. Papers include: Catherine Hall: History of the Houswife; Anna Davis: Shop Girls in later 19thC London; plus videotape & discussion of Half Moon's play on schoolchildren's strike 1911. Tickets £1 from Sarah and Sid Wills, 49 Elder Ave, London N.8.

PROPOSED AFB CONFERENCE in Leicester end November. Write Black Flag Bookshop, 1 Wilne St. Leicester.

CORBY ANARCHISTS. Discussion meeting First Friday in every month at 7 Cresswell Walk, 7.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL ASA contact May Stone, C.32 Summerfield, Tower Hill, Kirkby, near Liverpool.

LONDON ASA for details of meetings phone 226-0817. Black & Red Outlook by post 5p + 4p from 3 Grange House, Highbury Grange, London, N. 5.

INTERNATIONAL LIBERTARIAN CENTRE/CENTRO IBERICO
83A Haverstock Hill, London, N.W.3 Phone 586-2038
Meets Sats/Suns 7.30 p.m. ALL WELCOME.

IRISH LIBERTARIAN SOCIALIST Federation being formed - write New Earth, 112 Thomas Street, Dublin 8.

STOKE NEWINGTON FIVE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE is at 54 Harcombe Road, London, N. 16.

BELFAST TEN DEFENCE COMMITTEE, 88 Roslyn Road, London, N. 15 (tel. 800 9392)

Sits. Vac.: RETIRED MUSIC HALL OR LEGIT. PERFORMERS (3) sought to work part-time with "OAT'S" (Old Age Theatre Society), ensemble being formed to work for and with the elderly, under direction of Ed Berman. Inter-Action, 14 Talacre Road, London NW5 3PE. 'Phone Marina Kurtovich (01)267-1422.

A LIMITED SUPPLY of photo-copies of the very first issue of FREEDOM - October 1886 - now available at Freedom Bookshop. Price "at least" 20p inc. post.

STREET RESEARCH BULLETIN No. 1 Housing, No. 2 Researching an individual, No. 3 Local Authorities 15p each. 86 Railton Road, London, SE24 OLD

REVOLUTIONARY THEORY AND PRACTICE, Anarchism, Marxism, Leninism, Trotskyism, "Socialism with a Human Face" - What sort of society do we really want? : Evening course at Dept. of Adult Studies, Goldsmiths' College, Lewisham Way, New Cross, S.E.14, Monday 7-9 p.m. (started 24th Sept.), fee for course (2 terms) £2.25. Enrol any weeknight 5.30-7.00 p.m. in Room 57. (We have some leaflets at Freedom Press - looks like a good occasion for anarchist participation.)

THE COMMUNE MOVEMENT for people and groups who want to build a federal society of communities. To join send £1 for journal sub. plus 20p and seven SAE 9" x 4" to Richard Secombe, 3 Longfellow Ave., Bath, Somerset BA2 4SJ.

INFORMATION PLEASE on small-scale vegetable growing (home/allotment), also on educating children outside the institutional educational system. Write/ring M.-R. Bannon, 24 Heath Rd. Ipswich (tel.79238)

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