

# SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS ARE COMMUNISTS BUT ....

ON JANUARY 14th, before the great blow-up about the 'Communist conspiracy in the Unions' the Morning Star had a streamer front-page headline: 'Saboteurs are in Cabinet. SAVE COUNTRY FROM TORY WRECKERS'. Inside, in an account of the same party executive statement was the same sentiment. 'Communists defend national interest, says John Gollan'. One can understand the necessity for a patriotic image created for the general public but why, in the party organ, should such nationalist sentiments take pride of place, or indeed, seem to be the policy of the executive? The simple answer is: this nationalism is the policy of the Communist Party. It is as evident in this as it is in the wildly anti-German and anti-American lines pursued by the Party after the war and subsequently.

Mick McGahey, Communist vice-president of the National Union of Mineworkers made a speech on January 27 in which he said, referring to a probable coal strike, "It may be that they will call in the troops to move the coal, but troops are not all anti-

working class. Many of them are miners' sons - son of the working class. As far as I am concerned, if the Government employ troops, if necessary I will appeal for them to assist and aid the miners. You cannot dig coal with bayonets. My attitude is straightforward. This nation requires coal. To get coal you need men. And to get men you must pay. The day of the cheap miner is over." Fair enough. But Mr. McGahey besides backtracking later on some of this speech, failed to emphasise other uses of troops in times of industrial or civil strife.

Full well can working-class historians recall Peterloo (1819) when soldiers rode into a peaceful crowd of Manchester Reformers and killed ten, injuring a hundred or so. Previously the military had been employed to harass the Luddites. As late as 1912 soldiers shot two men during a railway strike at Hannelly; on that occasion the military were called in to 'keep order' by Winston Churchill; previously and later he called in the military for this funct-

ion. Shades of Sydney Street!

In the General Strike of 1926, troops were called in to protect blacklegs driving convoys of lorries. The simple function of troops doing the work themselves is very rare; in 1945 (under a Labour government) troops worked in the docks unloading ships.

It is obvious that the functions of guarding property, of maintaining order and protecting blacklegs are the functions of the troops with the ultimate deterrent of shooting to scare and to kill. It is, of course, necessary to read the Riot Act first.

So it was no wonder that in 1912 in a climate of industrial unrest, Tom Mann (then a Syndicalist, later a Communist), Fred Crossley, a railwayman, Guy Bowman, B.E. and C.E. Buck (the printers) were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, up to nine months, for circulating a leaflet 'DON'T SHOOT'. An extract is:

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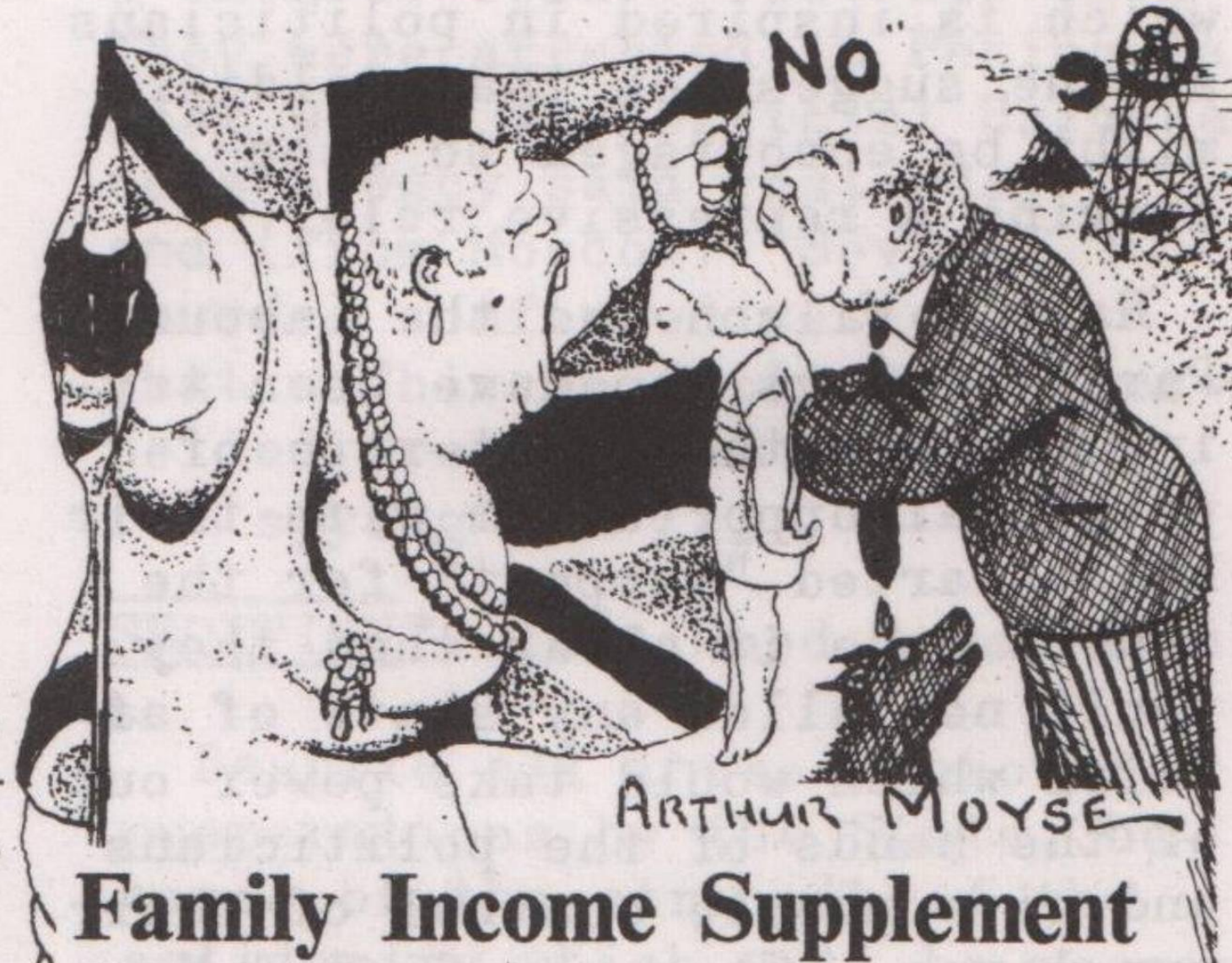
## A REVOLUTIONARY PATH

THE EXECUTIVE of the National Union of Mineworkers now has the authority from the members to embark on a national strike. Rank and file members have clearly shown where they stand on the government's attempt to put wages and collective bargaining into a political straitjacket. All those "tories" and those who say they support the country's "democratic traditions" called for a ballot at the beginning of the dispute, have now got their answer. In fact these same people were quick to grab at any tin-pot report of irregularities in the voting. These people just wanted the miners to accept.

The government and the miners' executive have fought out on the mass media, joined since Christmas by the T.U.C., a propaganda war in which each has tried to seize the initiative. Each is trying to work out a settlement which cannot be called a "sell out" by their respective sup-

porters.

The miners' executive say that there has to be more money on the table before they are willing to negotiate. Now Mr. Heath, following the Pay Board's new report on Relativities, has offered to set up "straight away" a new review board to examine the miners' pay claim. This board would have the status of a Royal Commission; but it would still operate within the confines of the government's wages policies. Mr. Heath has in fact got himself into a corner. His cabinet is divided with his Secretary for Employment, Mr. Whitelaw, favouring a settlement that would avoid a strike. However, while most Tory backbenchers and party workers favour the government's standing up to the miners there is a growing feeling among big business that the strike must be avoided. The Confederation of British Industry has, it is true, said that it supports Mr. Heath's



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SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN

! especially strikers' children !

stand but privately their members like Lord Stokes are obviously worried about the effect a strike would have on their profits.

What big business would really like to see is co-operation between the TUC, themselves and the government. The proposed

...continued on back page Col. 1



\*\*\* "REST ASSURED---IT'S ONLY AN ECONOMIC, NOT A REVOLUTIONARY SITUATION" !!!

## A WHIFF OF SEDITION?

THE HYSTERICAL reaction from Conservative and Labour politicians to the tentative suggestion by Mick McGahey, Communist vice-president of the National of Mineworkers, that he might "appeal to troops to aid the miners" if soldiers are sent in to break the miners' strike underlines the importance of the Army in maintaining the status quo. It also demonstrates the fear which is inspired in politicians at the suggestion that soldiers might be encouraged to stop playing a repressive role.

Harold Wilson and the Labour Party leaders who have been trying to walk the tight-rope of political opportunism with their half-hearted "support" for the miners made it clear that they would not allow any state of affairs which would take power out of the hands of the politicians and give people control of their own lives. They repudiated McGahey's statement which they believed "foreshadowed" an appeal to the forces of the Crown, and earlier statements seeking to invoke the strike weapon as a means of changing an elected Government other than through a democratic General Election. Clearly, McGahey had overstepped the mark in view of the Communist Party's policy of trying to operate as a "respectable" left-wing of the Labour Party. He issued a hasty statement, spread all over the front page of the Morning Star, explaining that he had been misunderstood or misrepresented. Of course, he wouldn't ask soldiers to disobey orders

to break a strike. Of course, he wouldn't want to overthrow the Government other than through the ballot-box. Of course!

Some Conservative MPs concluded from McGahey's original statement that he was contemplating the breath-taking crime of sedition which sends a shiver of delight down the spine of every red-blooded revolutionary, but the legal experts soon put them right and decided that what he was contemplating might constitute an offence under the Incitement to Disaffection Act 1934: Sedition is now generally taken to mean advocating the violent overthrow of the Government but the law is so wide that it could and would be used to suppress any kind of opposition to the Government if it felt sufficiently threatened. Indeed, the existing laws of incitement and conspiracy could be used for the widespread arrest and detention of all militant opponents of the Government. What the liberal (as opposed to revolutionary) opponent of fascism always fails to realise is that fascism can establish itself merely by the more ruthless use of the existing repressive legislation and legal apparatus of "democracy".

Less spectacularly than Mick McGahey but on a practical basis, the British Withdrawal from N. Ireland Campaign has been quietly leafleting soldiers for the last 8 months, providing them with information about political asylum for deserters in

Sweden, etc. Pat Arrowsmith is presently on the run after refusing to appear in Court at Westminster to answer a charge of "incitement to disaffection" (and other lesser charges) following the distribution of the leaflets last year. Many more people are needed to continue this work and to undertake new initiatives.

It is clear that the Government is preparing for a violent confrontation with the miners and other militant groups of workers. Chief Constables have been sent a copy of a speech made by Sir Peter Rawlinson, the Attorney General, last September when he indicated that the Government expected more "vigorous" enforcement of laws against "illegal" picketing. Police dossiers have been compiled on militants previously involved in the organisation of "flying pickets" and the police are ready to arrest them on the slightest pretext. A special control room has been set up at Scotland Yard to control the police anti-picket squads which will be moved from area to area to control the "flying pickets". The Daily Telegraph on 29 January revealed that local police forces already have supplies of CS gas, riot shields and batons. Recruiting campaigns for special constables and the TAVR (Territorial Army) have been stepped up. The TAVR would be very useful for strike-breaking because of the large number of transport vehicles at its disposal spread all over the country. Obviously, an anti-recruitment campaign aimed at the TAVR is an urgent necessity.

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## SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS are Communists but...continued from P. 1

"You are Working men's sons.  
When we go on Strike to Better  
Our lot which is the lot also  
of Your Father, Mothers, Broth-  
ers and Sisters, You are called  
upon by your Officers to Murder  
Us. Don't do it... Don't you  
know that when you are out of  
the colours, and become a 'Civy'  
again, that You, like Us, may be  
on strike, and You, like Us, be  
liable to be Murdered by other  
soldiers.

"Boys, don't do it. 'Thou shalt  
not kill' says the Book. Don't  
forget that! It does not say  
'Unless you have a Uniform on'.  
No! Murder is Murder. Think  
things out and refuse any longer  
to Murder your Kindred. Help Us  
to win back Britain for the  
British and the World for the  
Workers'.

These sentiments, although not  
entirely impeccable with their  
religious, chauvinist - and int-  
ernationalist - mixture were  
felt by the judge to be an in-  
citement or inducement to dis-  
obedience. 'It was quite legiti-  
mate to express the view that  
soldiers should not be employed  
in an industrial dispute,' said  
the judge. But this was another  
matter.

The speech of Mr. McGahey,  
muted as it was, has been used  
as ammunition to attack the pre-  
sence of communists in trade  
unions. It is an undoubted fact  
that communists play a very big  
part in the trade union movement  
in this country but, for the in-  
dividual party member it is not  
done for the motives imputed to  
him by those who hate to see a  
vigorous working-class movement.  
Many individual communists are  
devoted, self-sacrificing, hard-  
working in the cause of improv-  
ing the lot of their fellow-  
workers through and in the trade  
union movement and much material  
progress has been made through  
their efforts.

At the same time, it can be  
understood from the Party's point  
of view that this is a tactic in  
a larger strategy. Indeed, just  
looking at Lenin's Left-Wing Com-  
munism: an Infantile Disorder one  
realizes that even in the 1920s  
Lenin was struggling against Par-  
ties in the West that believed  
that Trade Unions like Parlia-  
ments were reactionary and had  
to be persuaded into participat-  
ing in orthodox trade union  
work. Willie Gallacher and  
Sylvia Pankhurst came in for par-  
ticular reproof for vestiges of  
syndico-anarchist tendencies.

The democratic procedure adopt-  
ed by the trade unions made it  
easy for resolute hard-working  
volunteers to take over many of  
the functions in the unions. The  
boring union meetings and the a-  
pathy of members to the purely  
political aspects of union work  
and the ceaseless quibbles about

fractional payments, demarcations,  
differentials and inter-union  
quarrels have given members the  
soft option of delegating rule  
to those more interested - from  
whatever motive.

Meanwhile, at higher levels  
the struggle for power continues.  
It would be possible to discover,  
were anyone interested, an equal  
case for Catholic Action domina-  
tion and penetration of the  
unions. Nevertheless cases of  
ballot-rigging and concealed  
fellow-travelling continue to  
smear the history of trade uni-  
ons as they will in any organiz-  
ation whose ends are supposed to  
justify any means.

However, the Communists did  
not invent the miners' grievan-  
ces or hardships and the miners  
must know, like many unionists,  
that the Communists are not al-  
lies entirely to be trusted. The  
pattern is repeated in many uni-  
ons as in the N.U.M. of a moder-  
ate President and a Communist  
Vice-President, which operates  
some check and balance.

The miners in particular, are  
a closed community by reason of  
their physical surrounds and are  
used to being betrayed. In 1921  
they were deserted in the 'Triple  
Alliance' by the railwaymen and  
the transport workers; in 1926  
the General Strike, ostensibly  
launched to protect their inter-  
ests, frightened the T.U.C. with  
its success after nine days and  
left the miners to battle on  
alone in a lock-out.

And the Communists? During  
1942-45 the Communists main-  
tained their support for the  
war (and the Second Front) and  
union claims were swept to one  
side. Betteshanger colliers  
were prosecuted like the Trots-  
kyists who organized the Tyne-  
side apprentices, and the Com-  
munists said not a word of cri-  
ticism. Indeed they denounced  
Trotskyists and anarchists who  
opposed the war, or who opposed  
wartime attacks upon working-  
class liberties.

The miners know full well  
that the Eastern Communist bloc  
will scab and the Polish state  
has just verified (as an excuse)  
its coal-supplying contract with  
the Central Electricity Board.  
In the same way striking dockers  
in 1945 were asked by the C.P.  
to unload Russian ships.

The reds may be under the  
miners' bed but their chances of  
getting in are remote. In fact  
some humourist political pundits  
think that the C.P. has been  
roused to political extremism  
by the rivalry of International  
Socialists and the Workers' Rev-  
olutionary Party. Surely the  
miners can't be as badly off as  
that!

# THE GLORY ROAD

Review

EACH OF US has, or believe we have, a sounding board of our society. The political meeting, the canteen, the public bar or the factory bus. There within that interlocking kaleidoscope of the visual and the vocal we formulate our opinions and from that our actions. My sounding board is the neurotic and egotistical world of the visual arts for in the leg-work in search of the ultimate in truth or beauty one has to travel through the complete social and economic strata that the Town has to offer. From Wellington Barracks to the Everyman Cinema, from the Physics Building of Queen Mary College in the Mile End Road to the latest avant garde gallery among the abandoned warehouses of Covent Garden. Major Christopher Miers of the Royal Greenjackets has an exhibition of paintings that he painted from sketches he made while serving in Northern Ireland. One went, in the fashion of the mode, to inspect them and on entering the gates of Wellington Barracks one found that one had to halt before a table before the guard room. A pretty Military Policewoman was seated at the table and behind her three Military Policemen and two or three fashionably dressed, middle aged, James Bond types. I was asked to lay all the papers I was, as always, carrying onto the table and I spread out my copy of the Evening Standard, FREEDOM, Socialist Worker, Lucian Freud catalogue, Muhammed Ali handout for the fight and the NCCL publication Civil Liberty onto the beige cloth covering the table and each and every one of them was examined individually by the Military Policewoman while I, the three Military Policemen and the middle aged James Bonds watched the whole process with genuine interest. All the papers were then handed back to me and I was told, politely by the pretty young Military Policewoman, that I could now continue into the barracks to view the paintings in an adjacent hut, and turning up the collar of my dirty mac that small bit higher, pulling down my trilby that bit lower over the right eye and picking up my papers I walked on conscious of the gaze of six or seven pairs of military eyes map reading my back.

Within the hut hung the painting of Major Miers and standing at the table were three Royal Greenjacket other ranks in regulation battle dress and a fresh set of middle aged James Bond types. But one has viewed exhibitions under more adverse circumstances so with my sheet of paper and my ball point pen I proceeded to do my duty by the Muse of Truth and Beauty only to have a James Bond type walking behind me from painting to painting even when I criss-crossed the almost empty hut. But in the name of the absolute I did my duty, formed my opinion of the work and walked out of Wellington Barracks, passed Buckingham Palace and to the ratrace of Victoria.

## No morality in art

Christopher Miers' paintings are good visual reportage of a situation that he has been physically and emotionally involved in and their value is historical and not aesthetic for at their best they are good Sunday Paintings and out of context would be of slight merit. He lacks a sense of depth for his foregrounds are too heavy and there is no middle distance, while his solid objects are coloured outlines filled in with paint. In a closed area such as soldiers in a bus depot this can work but not in exteriors and especially not in a scene such as Belfast where the grey working class terraced houses merge into the rain-misted hills enclosing the town.

As with all amateur, and I use the word kindly, painters his colours are too brash and one has only to compare the camouflage battle jackets of the soldiers within the exhibition with their dull greens to accept the obvious faults of so many painters obsessed with the bright colours in their box thereby giving the lie to nature, to art and to truth. With Wilde I say there is no morality in art and I reject these paintings as indifferent works while approving of Miers' handling of a wet road in "Fusiliers in New Lodge" or the rare and delicate painting of distant hills in the top half of "Operation Ashburton", for in the day to day living or in one of the many final confrontations that is the penance of the working class, our enemy will not be Major Miers' indifferent but enthusiastic journey into art but well-dressed middle aged James Bonds waiting to see which way we wander in our halting search for moral absolutes in the matter of human dignity.

\* \* \* \*

And I pioneer the town for the Town and his frau into the bleak brick jungles of the Mile End Road and into the ugly Queen Mary College. Those awful corridors recalling the hell of childhood. Peering into small rooms at earnest young men gazing at an instructor and a blackboard full of alien symbols, the room with two young men watching dials while a blue liquid bubbles, spelt out all the horrors of higher learning and there at the end of the corridor was Oliver Gollancz's "Variations on the Square". Gentle paintings that owe more to Vordemberge-Gildewart than Mondrian, they are what their title states, a minor exercise well executed.

And it is there on the rattlee to Phil Greenwood's landscape prints in the foyer of the Everyman Cinema. That and the Classics of the German Cinema. Greenwood's joyful exteriors as opposed to Teutonic interiors: Caligari, Dietrich, Josef Von and Lang and all them shadows man. With Allen Barker's mind-resting strips of colours dividing his golden mean now on display in the Leicester Art Gallery it is back to the heartland and Kasmin's new Garage gallery at 52 Earlam St., Covent Garden. It was the Judy Clark exhibition that told the Town that Kasmin was back in business. For only he could mount an art exhibition of pieces of lint stained with blood and pus and a neatly framed wall piece of used menstruation cloths but Kasmin did it for he is back in business with a new stable of young colts and old broken backed stallions all eager to toss paint onto canvas for a price. Meanwhile one wonders what Judy will do with her exhibits after her closing date.

## The camera always lies

But in the end the final accolade is to exhibit in Bond Street and the ultimate honour is an exhibition in one of the State's galleries. The late Lewis Carroll, of Alice in Wonderland, has made it at the National Portrait Gallery with an exhibition of photographs of various worthy worthies that he studied with at Christ Church (for the lumpen it is the college). They appear to be good solid career men who have crawled to the top of the educational racket of their time but as ever the camera tells us nothing. Carroll or Cecil Beaton of our own wrist-waving age, the face before us is no more than a mindless mask be it fool or wit, mystic or realist, for the camera always lies. Drape me in the robes of

high office, sit me in the alley of your choice and the camera will record only that for it cannot analyse.

The Tate Gallery has managed to carry the Coffee Table Art Book one step further by mounting "Landscape in Britain c.1750-1850". It was the period when the townbound artist was discovering the countryside and the new and wealthy middle class were taking a romantic interest in the birds and the bees. For all that however one feels that those who dreamed up the exhibition were hard put for material for the 17th Century Rosa, Rembrandt, Claude and Rubens fill wall space. But as a Readers Digest introduction to Instant Art the exhibition is enjoyable.

### Honouring the defeated

Everyone should, nay has, a gallery of the mind and one or more remembered paintings form part of one's emotional living. Of my generation it could be Picasso's "Guernica", a primitive by Kit Wood or a seascape by an unknown hand but always there were the German painters and the works of Edvard Munch, now on massive display at the Hayward. Munch died in 1944 and despite Kenneth Clark he was not "the greatest painter in northern Europe" but a tormented artist who, in a few canvases, mirrored the misery of his own middle class closed society and his own neurotic anguish. Out of his own wealth of work the one painting that I feel will survive will be "The Scream", painted in 1893 when a single isolated and

badly painted figure screams out in mindless and uncontrollable horror. In the far distance are two approaching figures garbed in conventional middle class black and beyond them the earth and sky is torn into a whirlpool of crude and unrelated colours. It is a great emotional painting of a felt emotion and then one continues up and into the gallery where Lucian Freud is having his major exhibition.

When one views Freud's work one realises that he is the finer artist of the two for in the context of these two exhibitions Munch becomes too theatrical. Freud's work has always been part of my gallery of the mind for his art gives a beauty and an understanding to the dispossessed of this world. He appears to me to speak for the middle class who never made it within their own society. And their gentle faces are forever lost in a hopeless melancholy for entering the broken doors of N.W.1 and Paddington are we the barbarians with our dirty macs, our union cards and our cycle clips. Freud's 1950's painting of women gives them a raddled beauty that few other painters could achieve and in his handling of paint the face appears to be of colour stained marble. There is John Minton who committed suicide for he was of that holy battalion who can never survive. The Mellys, the Connollys, the Briens will flow with the tide of aging fashion with their small gifts still intact but Freud's people do not possess the coin and Freud does them great honour. Arthur Moyses.

## SPANISH RESISTANCE

F I L M As announced in FREEDOM  
S H O W last week, we are organising a filmshow on behalf of our Spanish Resistance Fund.

On Sunday, 17 February at 7 p.m. and in cooperation with the CENTRO IBERICO, our weekly paper will sponsor the projection of the film "Dawn Over Spain", which was made in 1936 by the Cinematographic Collective of the C.N.T. (Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo, the anarchist syndicate)

Our comrade Miguel Garcia, from the Centro Iberico, will introduce this film. (Miguel Garcia has written a book, Franco's Prisoner, on sale at Freedom Bookshop £

After the show, we shall collect donations (anything from ½ pence to ½ million) and the proceeds will be divided between our SPANISH RESISTANCE FUND and the BLACK CROSS'S POLITICAL PRISONERS' FUND. So, donate generously.

Refreshments and snacks will be served at modest prices. We think this film-show will be an excellent occasion to socialise, to meet new faces and old friends, and more particularly, to show our solidarity with the Spanish comrades in struggle against fascism and with those who have lost their liberty in this fight.

Please come along. Bring your family and your friends with you. EVERYBODY IS WELCOME. Let's dedicate this Sunday, not to an invisible god or any other dogma,

but to the courageous struggle that the Spanish anarchists have waged since 1936 against the harsh and inhuman reality of Franco's fascism.

LET'S DEDICATE THIS DAY TO SALVADOR PUIG ANTICH (militant member of M.I.L. sentenced to death by the Tribunal del Orden Publico) and other comrades, victims of international fascism in Spain.

The International Libertarian Centre/Centro Iberico will open its doors at 6.30 p.m. and the film-show will start at 7 p.m. sharp. The address is: 83A Haverstock Hill, London NW3 (tube Chalk Farm or Belsize Pk) buses 31 & 68) side entrance in Steele's Road (second door).

Meanwhile keep sending in donations to the Spanish Resistance Fund (c/o T.P. & P.T. at Freedom, 84B Whitechapel High Street, London, E.1.)

Claude.

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### IN BRIEF

A man condemned to death in 1955 has served 16 years in a death-row cell; he is now eligible for parole and the Supreme Court has ruled that capital punishment was unconstitutional. The Jamaican Chief Justice has ordered that a boy claiming to be seventeen should be X-rayed in an attempt to verify his age, since he has been found guilty of murder and no one under the age of 18 can be sentenced to death in Jamaica. An authority at the Institute of Child Health in London says that such a test was virtually useless.

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A survey carried out during the postal strike showed that few regarded social security payments as a decisive factor in their willingness to strike.

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# REVOLUTIONARY LEAGUE **first divsn.**

ACCORDING TO Gerard Kemp, the Daily Telegraph's Conservative Specialist in British Revolutionary Affairs, "the Communist Party is leading the extremists in their attempt to penetrate the Trade Unions, manipulate industrial power and overthrow the democratic..." It appears, according to the same expert, that at this stage of the working class struggle revolutionary "game", the classification table of the "extremist" contenders reads as follows:

- 1 - Communist Party (pro-Moscow)
- 2 - Revolutionary Workers Party (Trots)
- 3.- International Socialists (Trots)
- 4 - International Marxist Group (Trots)
- 5 - Communist Party-Marxist Leninist (pro-Peking)

"Of all the groups currently battling against each other to woo the workers, the Communist Party has undoubtedly been the most successful. How long it will take the International Socialists to compete with the Communist Party at this level of influence is irrelevant. What matters now is the number of youngsters in industries distrustful of the Communists' policies and past records who will join the ranks of a movement which believes in 'mass meetings' decisions."

But surely this well-informed journalist working for the most reactionary paper in Fleet St. should not lose one night's sleep on this account.

Although the contenders believe in "mass meetings' decisions", all the "extremist" parties are, with the exception of the Maoists, already urging the workers to vote Labour at the next general election, the order to the masses emanating from the Marxist-Leninists being, at this stage, DON'T VOTE, ORGANISE (to build up another Revolutionary Party, of course).

Among the hysterical denunciations of REDS IN THE BED by Fleet St., the Sailor-Grocer and other patriotic antiquaries (Mr. Wilson prefers to sell "Reds under the Bed") - we are glad to notice that Mr. Gerard Kemp does not mention on his Red List published 1.2.74 the name of any anarchist "organisation" or individual, as honestly we would not like to go down in the working class history of this country as having, in these "revolutionary" moments, misled the workers into a false revolutionary path.

Contrary to what Mr. Kemp's "extremists" believe, we anarchists say that the working class will become indeed revolutionary

but only when workers in this country take power into their own hands, to freely shape, as they wish, without outside interference, be it Capitalist or Marxist, their own lives and their own destinies.

Mr. Kemp knows it as well as we do (but the authoritarian Left just won't listen): for his capitalist paymasters to function according to the Parliamentary book, their bourgeois democracy NEEDS a ruling party and an opposing party (Tories . . . Labour) as a fish needs water to survive, and more so the mouches à merde (the extremists) in order to apply, from time to time, small doses of "democracy of fear" (De Gaulle used them in 1968 with expertise); doses which miraculously bring back to the fold any section of the working class daring enough to "experiment" with Direct Action tactics, by-passing emancipatively "workers leaderships", "revolutionary Parties" and other reformists and anti-revolutionary "props" of the class struggle game, played according to the economic rules and framework of this capitalist system. Claude

## Letters

### Letter from Germany

(Part of a letter to Peter Newell from a former member of the Colchester Anarchist Group)

Dear Pete,

...Mark and I are very interested in Yugoslavia because of its historical background, the grouping of so many races together, its Workers' Councils, the independence of the Russian block and open defiance of Russian domination, yet its strength not to be drawn into the Western United Front. We are hoping to find work there although we are aware (and have met many Yugoslavs) that there is much unemployment, and many of the people get work in the richer countries especially in Western Germany.

England certainly is in a dreadful state. The Government is so corrupt, holding the miners up as the scapegoat for their mistakes. I'm glad the miners are refusing to step down, but can only see them having a partial victory. If only the unions believed more in solidarity and less in their own grievances. A surprise General Strike, which had been carefully organised, could bring about revolutionary

change. Before such action can be taken, however, the workers' movement must be ready to take over, have the knowledge and know-how to be able to run industry, etc., immediately.

From the articles we have read in Anarchy, Freedom, Libertarian Struggle, etc., Mark and I think that the revolutionary movements are talking more positively with far more sense than a few years back. The Flower Power period swept us all along for a while.

It has been an education working in a German factory. The unions are so pathetically weak. Managers intimidate workers, especially foreigners, treating them like slaves. My manager discourages talking, joking and going to the toilet. I've had several clashes with him. After six months at Telefunken, I am no wiser about the union. There are no shop stewards, no notification of meetings, no addresses to contact if you wish to join. The capitalists have got it all their own way.

Jane.

Dear Editors,

Donald Room appears to have misread my letter. I wrote that "there are differences between one government and another but they are differences of degree, not of kind". He interprets this to mean that I regard such differences as "insignificant". I don't if the difference means, as Arthur Uloth once said, the difference between "having one's finger nails torn out and a five pound fine". I prefer living in Britain where I can get such letters as this published to living in Russia where I cannot.

I do not, however, confuse the "accidents" of political power with its "essence". The Allende regime only made "slight difficulties for the opposition" because it could not command enough power to "repress all dissent with the utmost vigour". The difference between it and its successor was one of degree, not of kind, hence my refusal to join Sam Cohen in his bathos.

Room's last paragraph is a curious one. Am I to understand that the amount of power I have - short of utopia - depends on the government of the day? For someone who knows The Ego and His Own as well as he does an individual's "opportunity" is surely dependent on what that individual is powerful enough to conquer in defiance of governmental or any other authority? A weak government plus a strong "social consciousness" may mean more opposition to my power than a strong government minus such a "consciousness". To confine the anarchist critique of authority to its political form is to pay politicians a compliment they do not in the least deserve.

S. E. Parker

# THE BIG CON

(Parts I & II appeared in our two previous issues.)

Of the 53,000 children 'received' into care in 1971/2 some at least can be identified:

- 5,714 were the children of lone fathers;
- 2,046 were the children of single mothers;
- 2,988 were from homeless families;
- 925 were children whose only parent had been imprisoned
- 21,132 were children whose parent(s) were ill or in hospital.

WHAT CAN these parents in difficulty do as an alternative to asking a local authority to look after their children? They can't do much unless they organise and they can't act without solidarity from other organised groups.

For many of these families the issue on which they would want to organise is undoubtedly housing; for many others (often the same families) it will be distribution of resources (wages and benefits, etc.); some others simply need more support from other families in times of emergency, e.g. when one parent is ill and the other cannot cope alone.

Of course, if a child wants to go into care, it is a different matter, but one West Indian girl told me how she was "lured" into care by promises of a better life than her mother would give her.

The West Indian population is particularly at risk, making up a quarter of the children in care. The Association of British Adoption Agencies and various local authorities are now advertising in West Indian World for adoptive and foster parents for these children. Whilst the above issues also concern the immigrant population, their main concern naturally is racism and if the establishment saw black and white acting jointly on these issues it would shake its morale considerably.

## Rights and Law

One most difficult challenge is that of children in care under Court Orders. Here one has to deal with the whole gamut of repressive state machinery. These children are in care because they are being ill-treated or neglected, they are either considered to be in moral danger and are beyond the control of parent or guardian, failing to attend school, believed to have committed an offence, or are the subject of custody proceedings in a divorce case and the court has decided it would be in the child's interest to be with neither parent.

To succeed in getting these children out of care would not be a solution by itself. Many of these children are very unhappy and as a result have developed such anti-social tendencies that even those who wanted to help them without using the same repressive tactics may be rejected. Youth workers who try to befriend 'rootless adolescents' outside the accepted framework are continually harassed by the police. Tony Calman, of "Protection Prevention" believes he has found a successful way of confronting the courts. He counter-attacks every allegation put forward by a Social Service department by challenging them to implement their own laws in the form of powers to assist the family in question. So far this seems to have resulted in getting children out of care quite legally, the only cases that failed, in his opinion, being those where the parent did not strongly want the child out of care.

Social Workers, the agents of the State, could, if they wanted to, become increasingly involved in these issues, by refusing to receive or take children into care. But the community must support parents in difficulty.

Parents should know in which situations local authorities will use their powers to take children. Even libertarian parents wouldn't want to stand by and see their children whisked away to a children's home because they had confused 'children's rights' with political expediency. A child has even less rights in a children's home than in his own home, and children do not choose their foster parents or adopters any more than they choose their biological parents.

## The Children's Bill redistributes children, not resources.

Once the establishment realises that parents are not alone and will fight to keep their children, it will introduce more and more restrictive legislation. For instance the Children's Bill introduces a new offence - 'assisting a child to run away from care'.

Even BASW (British Association of Social Workers) which is regarded by radical social workers as useless, is unhappy about being given more powers because they know they couldn't cope with any more children. The transfer of responsibility for young offenders has given them a headache because they haven't got the necessary facilities to deal with them and some have to

go to prison because there is no room in a remand centre.

The Children's Bill may be the last straw as far as many social workers are concerned although they are not necessarily united. Even some Case-Con social workers who are supposed to be radical, left-wing, etc., and have supported housing struggles, think adoption a good thing. One social worker has said she supports anything that 'smashes the family'. She should start with the families of well-to-do suburbanites, not the families who have already been mercilessly crushed by low incomes, housing shortage and bourgeois morality.

There will never be enough financial assistance given to Social Service departments to enable them to carry out the 1963 Act. If it were, it would represent a substantial shift of resources which can only come from higher taxes and that brings us back to the basic issue - the balance of power and wealth in society.

One group in the Women's Movement is devoting itself to alternatives for the nuclear family. If there are alternatives, and there must be, the isolation which many families experience would be alleviated. It is in times of stress and difficulty that the nuclear family system is sharply felt and it is felt even more sharply when there is no money to cushion the effects of the divisive society in which we live.

Shirley Frost  
Mothers in Action

The Daily Telegraph reports (Jan 24) "Russian Embassy personnel were making contact with a Chinese-born Soviet spy when they were arrested in Peking last week, the official Hsinhua news agency said yesterday" and (from Moscow) "Soviet sources confirmed yesterday that a Chinese diplomat was expelled from Moscow last week for spying". \*\*\*

SEDITION?..continued from Page 2

Despite all these elaborate preparations by the State, because of the strength of the solidarity which will be received by the miners and other strikers it is highly unlikely that the police will be able to cope and, therefore, the Government will bring in the Army. The brutal techniques and weaponry of repression have been tried and tested on the men, women and children of N. Ireland. If the Army is used for strike-breaking it will be the first step towards a military dictatorship. In that case the only hope for the workers in Britain will be to organise for their own defence --and to do what Comrade McGahey never intended to do : make a social revolution.

Terry Phillips

Relativities Board is an opening for such co-operation. Such co-operation would not mean that the T.U.C. accept Phase 3 but it but it has opened the way for an agreement for vetting further pay claims when the government works out its Phase 4. All sorts of solutions are being voiced, like back-dating, the Relativities Board, and Mr. Gormley, president of the N.U.M. has even resurrected the "waiting & winding time" solution.

Even with the authority to call a strike, a union executive doesn't necessarily have to take this course. The pressures have been on to seek out some sort of compromise in which both sides in the mines dispute can save face and withdraw from the brink. But that brink is a capitalist one which has nothing to do with the interests of the working class. If such a strike leads to disorder and economic collapse of the system it will bring great hardship to many but it is possible for a new social order to be created from a conflict of general strike proportions. For this we need enough people who desire such a transformation and who are willing to struggle for a free society? None of the political groupings or the Communist Party "plotters" which are always found under some bed by the popular press to try and discredit any strike, can bring about the necessary change to give working people control over all aspects of their lives. Such a change can only come from people themselves and cannot and must not be imposed from above. The working class is not a revolutionary class but it does have the revolutionary potential to bring down the capitalist system and build a society based on mutual aid and the free association of workers to produce the goods and grow the food necessary to satisfy everyone's needs. It is true that we do not see any great desire among workers for this basic change in relationships, but nevertheless the potential is there and a general strike situation could create and focus the attention of those in conflict onto a revolutionary path.

P.T.

Workers at Lip have succeeded (to some extent) in restarting the works as part of a new company. The agreement guarantees the re-employment of 300 workers in March and 200 more by September; the re-engagement of the remaining 400 will depend upon the development of the new company...and the size of the market. All charges for selling 80,000 watches will be dropped. The wages the employees paid themselves from sales are being considered as redundancy compensation. The Guardian

# sensational first night

Anarchist Cabaret

Some obscure phony Dutschke characters invaded the first night of the Anarchist Cabaret intending to disrupt by provocative means.

They demonstrated their solidarity for the political prisoners by not expropriating the contents of the donation box, containing anyhow no contribution of theirs.

One exhibitionist couple tried to steal the show by seating themselves in the limelight on stage.

But the highlight of the star performance came with the vocal explosion of the ringleader, the powerblast of which might have made the Bank of England's wall collapse if he had dared to issue his warcry there. His well exercised attack on the audience and 'bastard' anarchists culminated in a call for action which - to his surprise - was promptly fulfilled. A colossal mountain of flesh, much resembling the figure of old Bakunin, came at him like an avalanche, followed by swift, spontaneous chain reaction of the audience, whereupon the intruders found themselves catapulted through the exit into the cold outside.

And the show went on with Don Pedelty reciting poems of anarchist old-timers and some of his own. Old John Olday was great and his young mate Escott brilliant.

The animated visitors were also much intrigued by the current exhibition "Justice", cartoons and oils by John Olday, displayed on the walls of the makeshift Cabaret.

The organisers wish to make it known that the entire first night performance has been recorded, including the comical act of the uninvited performers, which might come in handy as a playback one of these days.

Hamid Chakroum

says "It is too early to determine whether the agreement is a victory or defeat for the Lip staff...but their unusual action during the conflict will serve as a model for other workers".

The court judge in the case of Sergeant Dan Pruitt (see last week's 'In Brief') said in sentencing Pruitt: "You chose to try to change a regulation, and I find that admirable - if you are right. But the method you chose was a criminal act of defiance of the laws of the United States."



HELP fold and despatch FREEDOM on Thursdays 2 - 8 pm at Freedom Press.

INT. LIBERTARIAN CENTRE/CENTRO IBERICO meets on Sundays 7 p.m. 83A Haverstock Hill, NW3, entrance Steele's Rd. (second door) tel. 586 2038.

SAT 9 Feb. CABARET OF THE MINORITIES "Gay Chansons". Feb. 16th ANARCHIST CABARET. At 83A Haverstock Hill, NW3, entrance in Steele's Rd (second door) Perfs. start 8 p.m. (doors open 7.30)

LONDON SCH. OF NONVIOLENCE at Crypt of St. Martin in the Fields 6.30-9 pm Mon. 11 Feb. "Democracy in Danger", Tony Smythe. Wed. 13 Feb. "Chile", Steve Parry. Mon. 18 Feb. "What Kind of Social Organisation?", Jimch Omo-Fadaka

New York: LIBERTARIAN BOOK CLUB 1974 Lectures: Alternate Thursdays 7.30 pm at Workmen's Circle Center, 369 8th Ave. (SW corner 29 St.) admission free. Feb. 28 Sam Dolgoff "The Spanish Collectives". Mar. 14: Nuncio Pernicone "Errico Malatesta: The Formative Years". Mar. 28: Sharon Presley "Anarchism and Feminism".

MENTAL PATIENTS UNION Sats. 2pm Robin Farquason Hse. 37 Mayola Rd. Clapton E.5 (tel.986 5251) mtg. open to all mental patients & ex-patients, followed by coffee & work group.MPU News 10p + post, from same address. CANDLES made by community residents. All shapes, sizes, colours, scents. Catalogue 5p from Walnut Cottage, Moorland, Bridgwater, Somerset.

ART TEACHER recently arr. from Australia (active in free school movement) needs place to live. Also wants become involved in community &/or free schools' movmt. Dick Haley 01-402-8531

CCREBY ANARCHISTS. Discussion mtg. first Friday 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 tel.226 0817 for info.

INDUSTRIAL NETWORK - W. Allin, 9 Wood Road, Manchester 16.

N.W. SINDICALIST WORKERS' FED. for details of membership contact J. Moorhouse, 559 Didsbury Rd., Heaton Mersey, Stockport, Ches.

SPANISH RESISTANCE FUND c/o T.P. & P.T. at FREEDOM (84B White-chapel High St. London E.1.)

Some London Anarchists meet socially Sundays 7.30 at Finch's The One Tun, Goodge St. W.1. (don't ask at bar).

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