

Freedom

Anarchist Weekly 6d

AUGUST 23 1969 Vol 30 No 26

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Anarchists invade Base



IRELAND is not susceptible to the clear analysis that can be made in most West European countries. Many who read the columns of FREEDOM will be surprised (although they should know better) that there are many anarchists who appear to be defending the Catholics in the present conflict. So we will have to learn what it is all about.

Ulster is ruled by an oligarchy in the old sense, the landed gentry, who, by the manipulation of religious issues, maintain their rule over the six counties. The usual consequences of oligarchy have resulted; an abuse of privilege, nepotism, injustice and the denial of basic rights to a section of the community. Until the period of the Civil Rights campaign, which started last year, the minority were represented and led by the nationalist MPs, who went through the motions and were satisfied with the gestures.

However the terrible position of the urban working population eventually led to an eruption. Both sets of parliamentarians tried to pretend that the demands of this civil rights campaign were one man one vote. This was recognised as legitimate, as the gerrymandering of representation could hardly be denied. The

A QUESTION OF CONFUSION

real core of the issue, jobs and housing, was reached by the People's Democracy, the young socialists and the anarchists in the six counties. This demand evoked a real response among the Catholic working class, but, together with the demand of one man one vote, aroused the suspicion of two groups. These were the Orange Order which directly controlled the unionists, and the hard core bigots of the Ulster Volunteer Force, mainly consisting of Paisleyites.

It became evident that these demands were justified both in the eyes of the public and the eyes of Westminster. This aroused the fear amongst those sections of the old order that their control was to be destroyed, and the territory of Ulster would no longer be the preserve of sectarian madmen, and the pockets of many would no longer be lined by tax dodges and fiddles and outright grants of money to the deserving rich of Ulster.

The power of these men has an armed extension—namely the RUC and the B

Specials. The Bs are all Protestants, and are generally recruited from traditional Orange families. They are better armed than the regular police, whom they outnumber three to one. When the present trouble started, and these armed supporters of the Orange Order were called to defend their ancient privileges, such as beating up anyone they didn't like and occasionally 'disappearing' someone, they were in a considerable state of panic, and were little more than a mob in uniform. They handed out weapons to the hard core Paisleyites, who were not in uniform, and tried to carry out a pogrom.

This is all known and understood. The question which is asked by revolutionaries in England is, 'What is it to us if the Catholics and Protestants are killing each other?' And with a shrug they answer their own question, 'None.'

Let us understand very clearly what it is that is happening. Firstly: the civil rights campaign was very carefully non-sectarian. There were and are Protestants

fighting alongside Catholics in it. Secondly: the aims and tactics of this movement were directly drawn from the struggles taking place today among the revolutionary movements. Thirdly: unless we help the civil rights campaign, the PD and the other revolutionaries in the North, then we will be capitulating to out-and-out republicanism, as has already occurred in the Sinn Fein.

Our duty to our comrades who have been threatened by burning and murder is to get the armed thugs, the B Specials, disarmed, and the only way that can be achieved is by the overthrow of the Stormont clique. That is our aim now, and for this we must put up with the bigots of the other side. They can be, and are being, dealt with. We, the YS and the PD have been very important in the initial stages of this campaign, and have fought hard for civil rights. The most basic of all civil rights is the right not to be terrorised by a uniformed thug, who is not responsible to anyone for his actions. This it seems will be necessary to get first. And if it requires arms to get civil rights, then so be it.

DIGGER.

OPEN FORUM

Anarchism: An Individualist View

IF I WERE asked today why I call myself an anarchist I would reply: because I am an individualist. This was not always the case. For a long time I thought that anarchism was a school of socialism, sharing with other schools the common goal of a stateless, communist society, but differing about the means to this goal.

About ten years ago, however, I began to seriously doubt the basics of socialism and eventually I came to see that anarchism is not a complement of socialism, but its opposite. Which means: that the anarchist is an individualist, not a socialist. What I had called 'anarchism' could be more accurately described as 'anti-parliamentary communism': the belief that a communist society can be achieved not by the seizure of State power, but by the revolutionary direct action of 'the masses'.

From this perception came the conclusion that anarchism is the concern of individuals, not of any economic class; that anarchists are 'those who deny all external authority over the individual, whether that of the present State, or that of some industrial collectivity or commune that the future may produce' (Tucker); that, furthermore, this denial extends to any interiorized authority such as 'conscience' or 'moral obligation'; and that anarchism is not a creed of social salvation, but the fight for the individual against the authority of the collective—a way of individuation.

Certain things follow from this. For one thing, no kind of economic relationship can be called anarchist that denies to the individual freedom to produce and exchange goods or services in any manner he thinks fit. He must have the possibility to own his own means of production, to use money or any other medium of exchange, even to make a 'profit' if he can—or to put all his goods or services into a common pool if he so wishes. In other words, free trade, free competition, pluralism in the fullest sense of the term, are essential for any anarchist economy—should such ever be possible. The proposal to make the collectivity the owner and manager of the means of life and livelihood would in practice simply substitute the horizontal authority of society for the vertical authority of the State. Unless the individual is free to provide for himself what he needs, he cannot be fully self-determined.

I realise that this view will not appeal to those to whom anarchism is the path to utopia, to that wonderful land where all are equal, work has been abolished and every sheep has been miraculously transformed into a lion. Nor will it appeal to those more practical folk to whom it is the political expression of the syndicalization of industry.

But I no longer have any desire to submerge my individuality into the stagnation of utopia, or under a pyramid of industrial syndicates and territorial communes. Oligarchy would flourish there as elsewhere, even if it called itself 'libertarian' and spoke in terms of 'coordination' instead of 'directives'. How would the individual benefit if the monopoly of the Federation replaced that backed by the State? Would he not be just as dependent as before?

This is one of the reasons why I will not be found marching in demonstrations alongside members of socialist bodies whose record is often more bloodstained than that of those they are protesting against. It is because some confuse anarchism with socialism that they are willing to embrace their future executioners.

Anarchists stand a better chance of survival and expression in a divided society in which different interests compete, than in a unified society in which they are only allowed one choice: integrate or perish. If there is one policy in our favour it is 'divide and survive'. To ally oneself with any kind of collectivism is to dig one's own grave. If allies are needed for this policy one might look for them more amongst what in the USA is called the 'libertarian Right', than amongst the jarring sects of the socialist church.

It is fashionable to talk of power in terms of some economic or ethnic group. Well, I don't give a damn for workers' power, black power, white power, or purple power. I am for individual power, for my self-determination as against determination by the State or society. Anarchism expresses the power struggle waged by the individual against all those forces—institutional, ideological or popular—which aim to make him powerless.

S. E. PARKER.

[Would other comrades please contribute to the Open Forum column expressing their own views about Anarchism but confine these articles to 750 words—EDS.]

ANARCHISTS INVADE BASE

THE INTERNATIONAL Anarchist Camp has been going on for three weeks now, and most people have come here for a rest from their political activities at home. So whilst events in Ulster were reaching a climax the camp has continued its football games and visits to the beach and pub. But on August 14 a comrade interrupted a volleyball game to tell us of a news-flash on the radio, that Wilson and Callaghan were meeting at RAF St. Mawgan, about 20 miles from here, to discuss repressive measures for Ulster, especially the sending in of troops. We held a meeting to decide what kind of action we could take to put forward an anarchist viewpoint on the situation. We hastily made banners and placards saying, 'People of Derry unite and fight your oppressors', and 'Jobs not troops', and others relevant to the situation.

A convoy of assorted cars and vans set off, containing about 60 people, two-thirds of which were French! We reached the base, drove through the main gate, and parked outside the guard-house, and no one batted an eyelid. In fact no one challenged us for five minutes. Then a fresh-faced young airman said, 'Where are you going then?'

We replied, 'To look for Harold Wilson'. We discovered he was in the vicinity of the Officers' Mess, and so we marched along the main drive of the camp, with our banners and kids, escorted by two MPs and a dog. We reached the building in which Wilson and Callaghan had secreted themselves, to be confronted by 20 airmen.

Our way was barred, so we held a meeting to decide our next step. Some of us caught a glimpse of Harold peeping through a window at us, and we waved our placards at his surprised face. Then the local police arrived, accompanied by some Special Branch. The airmen encircled us ominously, while we explained to them the reasons for our presence. We were establishing contact with them, and explaining our position, when an inspector informed us that we might be charged with 'disaffection of HM Forces', under the Treason Act.

After some names and addresses were taken we decided to return to our cars, having made our presence felt to H.W. & Co. We marched slowly back through the base singing the 'Internationale' in English, French and German.

The Price of Freedom

READERS MUST have noticed that the Press Fund's financial statement has been omitted in recent issues. The reason for this is that we are trying to re-assess our financial position in the light of many price increases. These include paper, ink, typesetting and the recent 10% increase in blockmaking charges. It seems to us that we may have to raise substantially the price of FREEDOM because of the present rate of inflation.

We would not like to raise the price without adding further pages and/or issues and we are considering these alternatives and would welcome your suggestions and views.—Editors.

THE SUPPLEMENT

For technical reasons we are dividing the supplement this month into two parts; next week's issue will also be six pages.—Editors.

PADDIES AGAINST THE POLICE

At the gate our departure was held up as the police harassed us, and unnecessarily looked over the cars.

For all the supposed security screen around the camp, and the extra support of Harold's bodyguard, 60 comrades, most of whom could not speak English, one seven months' pregnant woman and two children, experienced less difficulty in marching through an RAF base with the Prime Minister in it, than in entering the local pub. This shows the ease with which contact could be made with members of the services, and effective demonstrations held inside military bases. Although this one was of short duration we did succeed in making our point to all concerned, and expressing international solidarity with the oppressed of Ulster.

Judging by the news coverage, this spontaneous expression of disagreement with the Government's role in Ulster, arranged at such short notice, was more

MAYFAIR ON SUNDAY

(August 17) witnessed a struggle of the London Paddies against London Police. What began as a peaceful demonstration at the Ulster Office eventually turned into a very dangerous riot involving bottles, stones and sheets of broken glass.

Three separate marches descended on Berkeley Street for the demonstration—one organized by the London Solidarity Campaign and London PD from Shepherd's Bush Green, and two from Speakers' Corner, one by the Connolly Association and the other by Sinn Fein. The mood of the crowd was extremely angry, especially due to the deaths of eight Catholics in Belfast by members of the B Specials; and the gross inactivity emanating from Westminster. As the marches progressed, calls of 'One man—One vote' became 'One man—One gun' and 'One family—One house' became 'One family—One tank'.

Apart from violence and the boiling anger of the Irish contingent, the most important feature of the demonstration was the numbers of ordinary British workers marching in solidarity with their Irish workmates. This will put an end to the much-vaunted concept that the average Ulster 'Loyalist' has, that his ideas are anything in common with the British worker, or indeed that he is being anything at all 'British'.

It is obvious that the struggle is only now beginning in London. Unfortunately

effective than most of the demonstrations we have seen concerning Ulster in the past few months.

The *Daily Sketch* stated: 'An RAF spokesman... said that the demonstrators, who claimed to be anarchists, arrived in cars and vans' (our italics). Why so cagey? Was a sub-editor afraid that it was libellous to call people anarchists, even if they claimed to be so? This is hardly the first time that we have encountered this political illiteracy in Fleet Street. Could somebody explain to these gentlemen with university degrees that anarchism is a viable doctrine, and that it is possible that people may actually be anarchists?

An enquiry was held at the base on August 15 to discover how it was possible that a group of anarchists with children could simply walk into a camp during the course of a Prime Minister's visit, when security precautions were supposed to be at their tightest. No doubt some scapegoat has been found by now!

M.H.

it took death and bloodshed on the streets of Ulster to get through to the pubs of Kilburn and Camden Town that the situation in Northern Ireland was no longer a civil rights problem, a constitutional crisis, but in fact the last act of the Irish Question. The same militancy that was shown by the smashing of the British Embassy in Dublin has found a similar echo in many Irish hearts in London. Once again it now seems that a British Government is to be hit with the dreadful and powerful blast of Irish nationalism. In all of this nobody has stopped to ask a very important question—Do the Catholic Community in Northern Ireland wish to enter the Irish Republic? If the IRA are prepared to wage war in Ulster and even the possibility of the Irish Army entering into the conflict, what precautions and arrangements are being made to evacuate the women and children of the Catholic areas of Ulster before they are butchered in revenge by the B Specials?

From now on a policy in London must be to enlist the help of all comrades to organize meetings, go to factories, building sites and pubs to bring out the British working class, led by the large Irish elements in it, to demonstrate, picket and strike.

Most Irishmen on the march were convinced that the present conflict will not finish until partition is over and done with and Paisley and others are in their graves.

Z.

A question of Volunteers

MANY ORGANISATIONS have been calling for volunteers to go and assist the struggle in Belfast. Reports from the six counties indicate that it would be rather unwise of people to go across to help, if they do not know the situation and the areas affected.

Do not go unless you are in contact with reliable people and can be immediately received on arrival. We would point out that the situation is very dangerous as the B Specials have no compunction in shooting if they are afraid or suspicious and that they have distributed automatic arms to the Paisleyite mobs.

We think it important for comrades to understand that they are not going into a riot situation but a situation of open

warfare. Only experienced persons need apply.

It must be also made clear that the Catholic areas are largely unarmed. Also the people of Derry have enough problems on their hands without playing nursemaids to revolutionary tourists. It is also extremely difficult to enter the Bogside.

We need everyone available to help to put pressure on here as hard as possible; the fate of many people is at stake, and a pogrom is the next step if Stormont is not disembowelled. If Wilson does nothing then he will be faced with the people going on the streets until he does. Be ready to help at a moment's notice.

RING-A-RING-A-ROAD

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one road where traffic can go much over a crawl, even if it doesn't go anywhere, so it is reasonably safe for children. The houses are nothing much to boast about, the people are reasonably cosmopolitan. It is a quiet little backwater, abnormally friendly by London standards, which will be transformed into a feed area for the Motorway, though there will be no one particularly anxious there to be so fed.

This is now an area safe for a child to run and collect its friends for up to a quarter of a mile. Almost all round will be an area where no child can be safe outside his own house's front gate. This is before one considers the householders who are to see their homes pulled down to make way for the almighty car.

On the other side of the High Street there have been built in the last two years one large office block and a number of tower blocks of flats. None on the north side. This can only mean that the Council has warned large developers that the road might come through, even though they assured many surveyors and lawyers concerned with buying houses on the north side that there were no plans to bring the ring road through.

For the Motorway itself—not counting feed roads and intersections—it will be necessary to destroy the best part of 3,000 houses, they already admit. Most, like ours, oldish and never things of beauty, but nevertheless serviceable, some inter-war, some new. The noise will make many others unlivable; the additional drainage from this amount of road surface will not improve the area. In an area such as ours, access to the shops, fairly easy despite one dangerous un-zebraed road, will become extremely difficult. A matter of getting across (over or under) an 150-foot-wide highway before reaching the High Street. In many areas the damage will be considerably greater. One can be quite certain that the inhabitants of the smarter areas around Beulah and Norwood Hill will not quietly sit down under the destruction of their area, but Stansted has taught the Government not to risk a fight with the wealthier suburbs. However, they assume that most Thornton Heathens have got so used to being kicked in this life that they will moan but not shout about this.

L.O.

BRIGHTON Waiting

THE SITUATION REMAINS the same in the Brighton squat. There is still no indication as to what steps the authorities and the Ministry of Defence are intending to take. In the meantime the families and guards are continuing with their preparations for the attack to come.

Comrades who have been visiting the squat are all amazed at the hugeness of the property the squatters are occupying. It is possibly necessary to emphasize again that there are now 16 families safely installed (in about 100 rooms all told) plus an enormous drill hall and a gymnasium which is used as a children's playground.

The local press continues to be fairly sympathetic, even the local *Brighton and Hove Herald* is trying to shake off their 'fascist' image by giving the squatters a full page to put their point of view. In their issue of August 15 they have printed a full page 'Anatomy of a squat' in which every aspect of the housing problem was written and put together by the 'Education Group' of the squatters themselves.

JOHN RETY.

DIGGER AND REG. B.

National (Liberation) Front?

... my father told me you were anti-Zionist of old but, if so, your failure to support our demonstration or ask your comrades is real sectarianism. It is a lie that we sought a united front with the fascists. There were two demonstrations side by side, but as the banners were the same it was difficult to distinguish between the revolutionary socialist one and the fascist one. . . .

—Letter to the writer from an Arab student.

IF ONE CAN UNITE on a demonstration, one can form a permanent alliance—to do otherwise is 'sectarian'. So, at any rate, we have been often told by the bodies around the Vietnam campaign.

It is now, however, possible to deny that International Socialism, the International Marxist Group, Solidarity and the National Front intend forming a permanent alliance following their joint demonstration on June 15.

The facts about this curious incident have just come to light. The IS, together with Isracca (Israeli Revolutionary Action Committee Abroad), called for a demonstration outside the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, against Israel premier Mrs. Golda Meir, with such revolutionary slogans as 'self-determination for the Palestinian people'. (They cannot even talk in any language but that of nationalism.)

Tony Cliff, having forsaken his extreme right-wing Israeli nationalism to become *eminence grise* of IS, is now the most fervent anti-Zionist of them all, and is also associated with Isracca. The IMG could not be left out of it—they recently

ran a Palestine-China-Vietnam Solidarity demonstration all in one—and the Palestine Solidarity Council was also represented. Naturally, Palestine Solidarity, supporting El Fatah, brought along its supporters from the National Front. It thanked Isracca for inviting it. But by this time Isracca and IS had brought along not only the IMG but also Solidarity Group.

Solidarity at any rate has some revolutionary socialist members, though it is said that in the event of a revolution it will have members on both sides of the barricades. . . . to have them there, with the PSC bringing along the anti-Semitic, pro-Fascist heavy mob against Golda, was going to be a bit of an embarrassment even for Tony Cliff.

Asked to explain the matter, Isracca finally came out afterwards with the statement that Isracca 'was not approached or consulted' by the PSC who had brought along 'British individuals who are known to have openly declared their Fascist and anti-Semitic views, in the past'. The PSC hand-out which claimed that they had Isracca's (and

therefore the ISC and IMG) 'co-operation and participation' were not correct, therefore. This was 'a separate demonstration taking place simultaneously a few yards away' (Isracca Bulletin June/July, 1969), which happened to be using the same slogans. There was no united front, but the 'middle-aged, middle-class respectable people . . . inside the theatre . . . reacted hysterically to both demonstrations, and in one of the many scuffles a PSC demonstrator had an arm broken'.

The RISE (Revolutionary Israeli Students in England), 'claiming to be revolutionary Marxists', came along but, seeing the nature of their allies, 'flatly refused to join in the demonstration' (*ibid*). Isracca denounces them as 'playing the same role among the New Left that Mapam played among the Old Left' because of this. But another parallel strikes one. Are IS, IMG, Solidarity et al playing the role of the old German CP in uniting with fascism?

Footnote: How to damn with faint praise . . . the Manchester branch of one of the many pro-Nasser outfits, the Committee for Solidarity with the Palestinian Revolution (CSPR) states quite correctly, 'Many Jewish Socialists have condemned Zionism and those include Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg and even (our italics) Cohn-Bendit.'

A. MELTZER.

The Ilford Settlement

THOSE OF US in East London who started the current squatting movement see it as having both humanitarian and revolutionary aims. Humanitarian because the immediate purpose is to get people from slums and hostels rehoused, and revolutionary because the method used is direct action and the hope is that thousands of ordinary people will be inspired to squat and take direct action generally.

If all the movement achieves is to show that direct action has helped a few families, and to expose the authorities at their worst, then it will have been worthwhile. If, however, squatting really catches on in a big way, then . . . The authorities are not stupid; they realize that housing is the one issue on which direct actionists will obtain widespread support and possibly widespread emulation. For this reason, and also because of what has happened in Redbridge, they are trying to contain the movement. In Fulham a Housing Society rehoused Mrs. Foster; in Greenwich the Council did so; in Southwark the GLC let the family stay; in Lewisham agreement with the squatters was reached.

The humanitarians of course would be pleased at this, and so I maintain should the revolutionaries (after all didn't the poster in Woodlands Road say 'Families First, Politics Second?') not because we have 'limited' aims or want to compromise, but because at the moment there is not a mass movement of workers and homeless behind us. If we are

to achieve this it will be by small successful actions initially—and each example quoted ended with the family getting a house. The message to other families is quite clear—squat and you get a house—it works!

It is by demonstrating this to people that we may get large-scale direct action, and then get ordinary people en masse to challenge the authorities. This is what anarchism and revolution is about: it is not about a few super-revolutionaries demonstrating how super-revolutionary they are.

Redbridge Council was the first to be confronted with squatting. They behaved stupidly and out of blind panic. What did we do? Realizing that we were few in number, and that we did not have 10 million striking workers and 500,000 homeless families behind us, we did not simply declare proudly, 'Right, smash us if you can and dare!' We had to demonstrate that we were not only determined enough to pick ourselves up every time they knocked us down, but also that we were cunning and always one jump ahead of the Council.

We learnt the law and used it. We

avoided injunctions, left a door in the barricades at 43 Cleveland Road, so that the house was not 'forcibly detained', and swapped families round to make a possession order invalid. We also rebuilt houses that the Council had wrecked to keep us out.

Thus we twisted the Council up so much that they were forced to act illegally. It is because of this that we won (and I will show clearly how much of a victory it was) and that other Councils are wary of a confrontation.

We could have fought the Court Order at 43 Cleveland Road and defended the house heroically against police and bailiffs. We are not against fighting Court Orders—when there is no other alternative, and many of us have done so in the past.

The local press could have carried stories of the fight; the nationals may even have given it some space; the Council would have been called 'unreasonable' and come in for mild censure, but we would have been out, smashed, jailed and defeated.

So we swapped the families. The Council either had to back down—or act illegally. We know what they did.

A BOOK ABOUT WAR

NO ALLE ARMI NUCLEARI, by Carmelo R. Viola (Genova, Libreria della FAI, 1968).

RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING of this century both individuals and groups of anarchists have given their lives and suffered imprisonment in their struggle against 'democratic' and dictatorial militarism. This paying for their ideas with their persons has been the mainstay of anarchist propaganda, during both the First and the Second World Wars.

Nations have been sheepishly led time after time to the slaughter and the daring word and example of the few who denounced it has been suppressed by the powerful machine of the State. The State has always emerged victorious and as long as the State is tolerated in peacetime, war will always loom as an immediate possibility. There is no State without an army and no army without a State; the army is the creature of the State and at the same time its support and guardian—the guardian of an order, not the least beneficiaries of which are the arrogant and prosperous hierarchy of the army itself.

A few years ago an appeal was launched by the Libreria della Federazione Anarchica Italiana (FAI) for the writing of a book on nuclear arms, which was answered by Carmelo R. Viola. When his book was published last year, a gap was closed in contemporary anarchist literature.

Viola is a well-known anarchist militant, educated and studious; he is the author of numerous articles and essays dealing with politics, religion and science, published in Italian and foreign anarchist periodicals. In our anxious times, he carries on his cultural battle with passionate devotion.

Viola has put the best of his intelligence into this book which is fairly well put together even though some of the chapters are rather long-winded, because of philosophical disquisitions which spoil a freshness and smoothness of style which would have made them more easily readable. I feel that the reader would have expected to find more detailed statistics about the production of nuclear arms during the last two decades by the great military blocks including Mao's China.

But in spite of its weaknesses, Viola's book remains useful and interesting, both for the arguments it puts forward and for the use that can be made of them for popularizing the anarchist viewpoint.

Democles's sword hangs menacingly over the destiny of mankind in the form of a third world war, the events in Korea, Cuba, Israel, Indo-China and Vietnam having all the appearances of fore-runners.

What then are the means of avoiding this third great conflict? This problem would not seem impossible of solution if those who do not want it saw that the solution lies in the destruction of the State or, at least, in determined resist-

On April 21 we watched and wept while Quartermain evicted three families. We had to pick ourselves up off the ground and nit back. Somehow we managed it. We appealed for help—and got it. Not however from the 'militants', who remained conspicuous by their absence.

We published pamphlets exposing the Council. The *Sunday Times* took up the issue, as did 'Today'. Gradually the word Redbridge became synonymous with violence. When squatting started in Lewisham, the Council said, 'We don't want a Redbridge, take the houses'.

Redbridge however had to be pushed further. We occupied and repaired the upstairs of 25 Woodlands Road. On June 23 and 25 we repelled two attacks by Quartermain. Every national paper took up the story. Annoying pictures of Q. and his men dressed for battle appeared. The name of Redbridge Council stank throughout the country. When a family squatted in a GLC house in Southwark, Cutler quickly handed the house over to a housing association when 'another Redbridge' was mentioned.

Eventually our elected delegates negotiated an agreement with Redbridge Council. A meeting of the group voted to accept it. A few 'militants', most of whom had been active only a short while, declared UDI at 6 Woodlands Road.

The Council agreed to rehouse two families; review and make maximum use of its empty properties; have this review ready in two or three weeks, wreck no more houses (this affects 800 houses in the future); explain to us why any have had to be left empty. In return we agreed to vacate two wrecked Council houses with no families in, and all services off at the road.

A bad agreement? A sell out? Two families from **OUTSIDE THE BOROUGH** have been rehoused. I defy anyone to quote any case where this has happened before. The review is completed. Some of the Council-owned houses (non-wrecked ones) are to be used for homeless families—which means that rather than go into hostels they'll go into houses. These are the good points—and I maintain they are considerable. I want to be honest, however. There is another side—the wrecked houses—32 of them—are not to be relet, but pulled down. As the Council must discuss these with us we intend to oppose it strongly when we meet them.

And if they ignore our viewpoint? But with withdrawal from Redbridge, our public show of good faith, the Council will be isolated and discredited. Already two of the local papers have talked in terms of the Council breaking the agreement. Having tactically twisted the Council up once again we are thus in a strong position to counter-attack in various ways—and appear to be in the right.

Thus I maintain that the agreement has gained the points mentioned and that tactically it has again made the Council appear in the wrong if they do not open up the houses. I suggest

ance to it. It has always been the State which has declared war, never the people.

Luigi Galleani's slogan: 'Against war, against peace—for social revolution' is still valid for anarchists who have to fight a social system dominated by statesmen, politicians and generals, who rule unopposed. Thus Viola remarks that 'they have no feeling for and interest in the good of society; their talents serve only to provide them with a way of living richly and dominating arrogantly, and no amount of reasoning will make them mend their ways'. He adds that 'they think about, write about, provoke, manipulate and declare war or bitter peace against unconditional submission'.

He warns us almost angrily that civilization must be saved from collective suicide, the future from the menace of the present, and the continuation of life from atomic death. And before it is too late. . . . Can this be done? If the joy of living has not gone out of us, we must try to do it. He who really loves life, knows how to love it in others. He knows how to fight for the right to live, as he knows it is his duty to help others to live.

The best passages of the book are those dedicated to the retelling of the drama of Hiroshima and Nagasaki which

Now We Know?

A FRIEND telephoned the BBC and asked for Mrs. Mary Whitehouse's* address and telephone number. After a pause and some rustling of papers he was told: 'I am sorry, it is the BBC's policy not to reveal addresses of its employees.'

*N.B. for overseas readers: Mrs. M.W. is the founder of the right-wing 'Clean-up TV Campaign'.

that the agreement then was a tactical bit of cunning—in the same way as our swapping of families had been earlier. The need for this while we are few I have already explained.

A number of other things in Comrade Rety's article ought to be cleared up.

1. I am accused of 'evicting the occupants of 6 Woodlands Road amidst scenes that professional bailiffs would have been proud of'. What in fact happened was that Chris Fleming was about to move into his new house (which is very good) when the Housing Manager arrived and stopped him, because someone from Woodlands Road had been to the Town Hall to say they were not moving out. Chris went mad: 'I've fought fucking bailiffs and the council to get a home, now I've got to fight the squatters.'

He stormed round to Woodlands Road, and in a very heated way, explained what had happened to those in occupation. When I arrived all except one had been entirely misled by the 'militants' and hadn't realized the position. The barricades were thus removed. This was the position when the 'militants' arrived back from Fulham.

2. 'A leadership emerged on the outside who wanted to settle with the Council at all costs.' Leadership? I defy Comrade Rety to name one thing that was done without the authority of a general meeting. A leadership to my mind is a small group who impose their will on the rest by not being accountable to the majority. It was the 'militants' who, over the previous few weeks, had done just that (and if challenged I'll quote examples).

Anarchism may not be about the majority imposing its will on the minority, but it's certainly not about the minority sucking up the wishes of the majority, either.

3. 'If the East London Squatters have only limited aims, they need not have involved the militants.' I have explained that our aims are far from limited—and how we hope to achieve them.

But let's clear up this idea that the dispute was between the 'militants' and the not-so-militants. In fact it was between the real militants (the 'sellers-out') and the exhibitionists; between those who realize that the revolution depends on building a mass movement, and those who want revolution in two weeks, because in a month's time they'll be back at their talking shops.

We in East London will stand on our record. Where were most of the 'militants' at the time of Abridge, Durham Buildings, Birmingham, Coventry Cross? Or during the first eight months of the squatting campaign? How many direct action struggles involving ordinary people have the 'militants' ever stirred up?

4. Yes, 'the Campaign continues', and we still need help from all people: all we ask is that comrades who arrive on the scene do not form cliques and hold the rest of the Campaign to ransom.

RON BAILEY.

I find very moving. As if to exorcise the repetition of such dramatic events on an unimaginable scale, he says: 'The age of the atom is the final scene in the history of civilization. A body of "responsible" people must be created from below, capable of neutralizing the power of the irresponsible above.'

MICHELE CORSENTINO.

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Swift Action by Redbridge Council

The following news-story appeared in the *Evening News* (12.8.69, page 5).

HOMES THAT BLOCKED SQUATTERS TO GO

THIRTY-TWO ILFORD HOUSES which Redbridge Council partially wrecked to keep out the squatters are now to be pulled down completely.

The sites will be used for car-parking, the Town Clerk, Mr. Ken Nicholls said today.

The decision was taken at a joint meeting of the Highways and Town Centre Redevelopment Committees and will be recommended to full Council on August 26.

Costs of repairing homes would be between £1,000 and £1,400 'which is prohibitive'.

The Council will also be recommended to keep 40 other houses they acquired for new ring road and not make them available to outside voluntary housing organisations.

Monitor: J.R.

DEPRIVED OF HIS LIVELIHOOD

WHEN THE BRITISH Government obtained the release of the three British seamen arrested in Greece for distributing anti-Government leaflets, did they promise the Greek dictatorship to make life rough for them?

Judging by the treatment of them since their return, it seems quite probable.

Phil Ballard, who publicly admitted distributing the leaflets, has been particularly harshly dealt with. Not only has he been expelled from the union (and so deprived of his living as a seaman) but also had his unemployment benefit stopped by the Government.

His expulsion from the union was so obviously against the wishes of the rank and file that it leads to the suspicion of strings being pulled from above.

The decision was taken by the Executive Council by the narrow vote of 25-19. A member of the EC, Mr. Ballard did not exercise his own vote.

Also seven of those who voted were not elected members but hand-picked by paid officials to take the place of lay members who were at sea. As Bill Hogarth (General Secretary) made the charges, it was obvious what the union leadership wanted and so it would be natural for a union official wishing to curry favour to pick a man whom they knew would vote with Hogarth.

Even so it only needed three to vote the other way and the result would have been 22-22.

Another highly significant fact is that, of the 21 sea-going rank and file members, 14 voted against the expulsion and 7 for it.

The general support for Mr. Ballard was also illustrated when, the week before, he charged Hogarth with acting against the union's best interests by his actions. The vote was 18-18 and the chairman saved Hogarth with his casting vote (surprise, surprise). This issue was not considered important enough to replace members at sea on the EC. Even so, with the moderates tending to support the leadership on such issues for appearance's sake, it is quite an achievement to get a draw.

Mr. Ballard was charged with causing hardship to other members of the crew who were detained for seven hours by the Greek authorities. One would have thought the Greeks were guilty of causing the hardship but Mr. Ballard chose to admit the charge although a union rule that the person making the charge originally must be named was ignored.

The decision is completely hypocritical because, two weeks before Mr. Ballard handed out the leaflets, the union's annual conference had declared itself against the military junta and urged action against it.

The leaflet he distributed contained resolutions including one from EASKEN, a Greek seamen's group leading the fight against dictatorship.

Roughly translated it urged workers 'to

abolish martial law, restore trade union liberties and the right to strike, to curb terrorism, liberate the prisoners and abolish the measures which deny the democratic seamen the right to work.

'Brothers, manifest as you can your opposition to the regime of the junta and struggle with the whole people so that there should be no third anniversary of the dictatorship—so we can celebrate the victory of democracy next May Day.

'Brothers, the workers of the world are backing us, long live workers' May Day. Down with dictatorship. Long live democracy.'

At recent meetings Mr. Ballard has explained the reason for his action and pointed out that the unions have been completely shackled by the government in Greece. Strikes are illegal in practice—all union meetings are attended by the police by law.

This has completely shattered the workers' bargaining position and their standard of living has slumped drastically

—by as much as 60 per cent in extreme cases.

This cheap labour has naturally attracted foreign companies including British Petroleum (49 per cent owned by the British Government). Although British ship repairers have been unemployed, BP (temporarily forgetting patriotism) have sent their ships to Greece for repairs and so supported the regime.

In fact *British Commerce*, in which Mr. Ballard sailed into Greece, is owned by BP and was taken there to be repaired. By doing so the British Government is in fact supporting the only Government which is known to run a concentration camp for women (at Alikarnassos in Crete).

Mr. Ballard's reward for this is expulsion from the National Union of Seamen. This has given the shipping employers the chance not to employ him and blame the union for it.

The union will hear his appeal against

expulsion in May of next year. But as his name will be removed from the seamen's register on October 6, even if the union accepts him as a member again the employers do not necessarily have to re-enrol him. In this case the union will be able to blame the employers and so both can deny responsibility.

After being forced out of a job, insult is added to injury by stopping his dole. All he gets is £3 15s. a week from the Ministry of Social Security.

Mr. Chris Norwood, MP, gave a written question about this to the Department of Employment and Productivity in Parliament and received the reply: 'I regret I am unable to answer my Honourable Friend's question without further details. If he will write to me I will have the matter investigated.'

Meanwhile one of the other seamen arrested in Greece, Terry Alder, has been blacked by BP and after being allocated to an Admiralty-owned ship he was returned to the pool without reason.

PORTWORKER.

[Readers can help Phil Ballard by making a collection at work or by sending a donation. Send all monies to Workers' Mutual Aid, 29 Love Walk, London, S.E.5. All donations will be acknowledged.—EDS.]

Anarchism Without Tears

ABOUT ANARCHISM, by Nicolas Walter. Freedom Press, 2/-.

THIS IS THE 100th issue of *Anarchy* reprinted as a pamphlet. Nicolas Walter believes that, although we have a large body of anarchist literature, a lot of it is either out of print or out of date even if it is available. Here he offers us a simple exposition of what anarchism is all about from William Godwin to the present day. His own views might be described as 'mainstream', anarchist-communist-syndicalist, but without dogmatism. In practice he believes modern anarchists tend not to bother too much about doctrinal differences. In their personal lives they are all individualists, in their social relations communists.

In their attitude to property most anarchists are in favour of those personal possessions one accumulates as one passes through life. What they oppose is the kind of property that is used to exploit others. Farms and factories should belong to the community, or should be small enough to be worked by one or two people who would be friends and equals.

Anarchists tend to be anti-militarists rather than pacifists. They are prepared to use violent methods if all else fails.

They consider violence sometimes necessary when faced with conditions of intolerable oppression, but they see it as something fundamentally undesirable. They don't believe that it helps to create a free society, rather it hinders it.

The trouble is that anarchists differ so much from each other in their views that generalisations of this kind are always unreliable, and I can imagine that in some of the remarks made above there would be enough matter to make some anarchists very cross. Nicolas Walter does his best to expound the views of anarchists with whom he does not agree in a sympathetic manner, but you cannot please everybody.

In the matter of religion for example most anarchists are freethinkers, and many are bitterly anti-clerical, or at any rate were, for the power of the churches has declined in the last half-century, and many anarchists virtually ignore religion now. However there are a certain number of religious anarchists, like Tolstoy or the group around the *Catholic Worker* in the United States. And an effort nowadays is being made in this country to stress the difference between the individualist anarchists and the communist anarchists. I can imagine some individualists snorting with indignation when Stirner is dismissed as

'rather unproductive'. 'This is an anarchism for poets and tramps, for people who want an absolute answer and no compromise.'

In the width of its range, and its skilful compression of much into a small space, and its clarity, this book rather reminds me of George Woodcock's *Anarchy or Chaos*, the book which (along with an ancient copy of Kropotkin's *Memoirs*) made me an anarchist. It is an excellent introduction to anarchism, and would be the sort of thing to put into the hands of someone who had read nothing about anarchism before.

Will we ever see an anarchist society? 'What most anarchists have been involved in during the last century may be described as permanent protest when it is looked at with hindsight; but it is just as dogmatic to say that things will never change as to say that things are bound to change, and no one can tell when protest might become effective and the present might suddenly turn into the future. The real distinction is that permanent protest is thought of as a rearguard action in a hopeless cause, while most anarchist activity is thought of as the action of a vanguard or at least of scouts in a struggle which we may not win and which may never end but which is still worth fighting.'

A.W.U.

KROPOTKIN AND HIS DOG

Kropotkin was of course imprisoned in both Russia and France for his political activities, but while he lived in England—from 1886 to 1917—he was never bothered by the authorities for political reasons. He did however have one brush with the law in this country, as I discovered when I began to investigate his residence in Harrow, where he lived from 1886 to 1892. The local history librarian, Mr. R. W. Thomson, drew my attention to the following item in the 'Harrow Gazette' of May 30, 1891, which is so amusing and so revealing that I think it is worth rescuing from oblivion. ('Kropotkin' was a common spelling of his name; the 'little child' was Alexandra, who was then four years old; the court hearing was at the Edgware Petty Sessions on May 27, 1891.)

N.W.

PRINCE KRAPOTKIN IN COURT

PRINCE PETER KRAPOTKIN, of 17, Roxborough-road, Harrow, answered to a summons for keeping a dog without a licence on the 6th May. He was also summoned, at the instance of Mr. Villar, for allowing a dog to be in a public place without being muzzled or wearing a collar with the owner's name and address, on the same date.

P. C. Burroughs, 19 XR, deposed that about seven p.m. on the day in question he saw a brown dog on the high road at the end of Roxborough-road, with no collar on. There was a lady with it, and he asked the lady her name and address. She would not give it, but referred him to her husband, the defendant. Witness went to the defendant's house where he

saw the defendant, who was very indignant, and said that he had no right to ask the name and address of his wife in the street. Three days previously he had cautioned the lady about the same dog.

The defendant said the dog was given to him by an English lady, who said he would have to pay 7s. 6d. Being a tax, he thought some official would call for the money, as in the case of the other taxes. He had been living in the country five years, but he never had a dog before last summer. The day after the constable came to the house, the tax-collector called and mentioned to him that he would have to go to the Post Office for the licence. It never occurred to him that the Post Office had anything to do with dogs. When this was told him he immediately took out a licence. As to the second summons, the dog was not in a public thoroughfare, Roxborough-road being a private street.

The clerk said it was a public place within the meaning of the Act.

The defendant went on to state that the dog was in the garden when his little child threw a ball into the road. The dog jumped over the fence, and ran after the ball. The constable then came up and said 'What is your name?' to his wife.

Mr. Johnston: He was only doing his duty.

The defendant: I am accustomed to more polite behaviour, and I asked the constable if he had never been taught by his mother or anybody else to be a little more polite when talking to people whom he did not know.

The Bench fined the defendant 6d. and 5s. costs in the first case, and 2s. 6d. and 5s. costs in the second.

CIVIL SERVANTS AREN'T ALL FASCISTS

Dear Comrades,

I have no argument with the 'One and All' article about Special Investigators employed by Government departments (FREEDOM, 26.7.69) but I hope it doesn't encourage the perpetuation of the prejudices about civil servants.

It seems widely held that all civil servants are overpaid, sexually perverted, tea-swilling, incompetent fascists. Whilst it must be admitted that examples of the stereotype do exist in abundance, civil servants as a group differ little from comparable groups of individuals in any other employment. The same mixture is to be found of ignorant prejudices, enlightenment, hard work, laziness, frustration, hope and, of course, widely differing political and philosophical viewpoints.

Of course as an anarchist I am fully aware of the incongruity of my role as a servant of the State (however harmless my particular job may be) but I am also aware that like any other worker I am forced to compromise with capitalism and the State in order to eat. But you are going to say that I reap a fantastic reward for selling out to the State. You've all read in the capitalist press about all those civil servants earning £10,000 a year. You probably haven't read about

me and the other clerks of my age (22) who have a pay of about £15 a week before deductions. The more unfortunate of us have to support a wife and kid on a take-home pay of about £13 (or less if we are younger). Of course we receive a handsome increase every year and by the time we are 32 (only 10 years to wait) we will receive the maximum of about £22 a week before deductions.

We are fighting the anachronistic incremental scale system through our unions in order that equal work may receive equal reward—regardless of age. We are opposed by the reactionaries within our unions and by an employer which is very happy with a system which keeps down its labour costs by exploiting young workers.

Northants

TERRY.

URGENT

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THE RUSSIAN INVASION

THE SEVENTH NIGHT, by Ladislav Mnackno. London, Dent & Sons. 28/-.

THIS TITLE REFERS to the seven nights which the author spent in Czechoslovakia after its occupation by the armies of Russia and her imperial dependencies in 1968. In actual fact the book has not a great deal to say about the actual events in the way of eye-witness reporting, and contains nothing new to add to what has already been reported in the West. The greater part of the book is taken up by the author's commentary and personal anecdote concerning the events in Czechoslovakia since the Communist seizure of power in 1948.

The style of the book is highly personal and hence it is important to understand something about the nature of its author. Ladislav Mnackno is a Czech Communist journalist, one who occupied positions of power right through the worst of the Stalinist terror in his country. He is remarkably frank about the nature of the regime in the years of terror, the flourishing of bureaucratic corruption, the gross bungling, the murder and imprisonment of innocent people, the edifice of lies which he helped to maintain. It is evident that he himself was up to the elbows in filth like the worst of them, a Squealer to the Stalinist pigs. It is not clear why in latter years he has tended to fall into disgrace in the regime. For most of the book I imagined that he was a Jew, for he describes the anti-semitism of the Communist regime very bitterly, and he spent ten months in Israel in a barely explained exile. However, as he explicitly denies being Jewish, there must be other reasons for his fall from grace.

What is irritating about the book is

that he fails to explain *why* there was a liberalization of the regime in 1968. Russia had her thaw after the death of Stalin, but if the spirit of the old tyrant flourished anywhere it was among the Czech Communists. When the Russian tanks invaded Hungary in 1956 to crush a libertarian rising, the Czech Communists applauded. Even now Mnackno will not admit the parallel between that event and the 1968 invasion. He admits all the cruel farce of Russian imperialism now that his own country has become a very direct victim, but is not this a species of old-fashioned nationalism? He still repeats the old cant about 'Leninist democracy' as though the father of bolshevist dictatorship had not had faithful inheritors.

Seen through Communist eyes there is indeed no solution, no hope for the

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colonial peoples of Russia's empire. Either they are in the grip of endlessly subservient and enthusiastic imitators of the Kremlin who rise among their own nationals, or if comparatively liberal rulers like Dubcek come into office, the country is invaded. In spite of the massive opposition to the Communist regime which appears to exist in Czechoslovakia, especially among the young, the whole apparatus, the machine for this particular type of tyranny exists. The colonial power merely needs to put the right figures into office. In contrast, we may look at Finland, a small and helpless country which used to be part of the Tsarist empire, which maintains her freedom from the present Russian empire by recalcitrance to Leninist cant throughout the population. Were the Russian big battalions ever to come to Britain we know very well just who would flock to lick their boots, and such eager aspirants for office would not be confined to members of the British Communist Party. If the peoples of Czechoslovakia and other Eastern European countries are ever to escape from the Russian stranglehold on them, they must first overcome the ideological sickness to which they succumbed after the war.

This book is written by a soured man. He is ludicrously boastful about his physical toughness, his courage and his intelligence, so that one cannot quite believe in the truth of some of his self-glorifying anecdotes. He is, to quote a well-worn phrase, a 'running dog of (Eastern) imperialism'—but for reasons which we do not know, his masters lost faith in him. Now in Vienna he licks his wounds and spills the dirty beans. One would have more respect for him if he had escaped to Vienna in 1948.

G.

Toot Toot Tootsie Goodbye

PASSENGER TRANSPORT PRESENT AND FUTURE, by Professor C. A. O'Flaherty. Published by Leeds University Press. 6/-.

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL was a political thug but he belonged to that aristocracy of power who treated the technical experts of the moment as no more than hired clerks. He demanded and it was their function to fulfil that demand for, in the grand scheme of major politics, one should not have to turn to some drear creature for an endorsement for one's planned action. Having attained the summit of power as the architect of history, one should not allow oneself to obey the mewings of some sad drab whispering that, in the opinions of the university common room, the dream was not technically feasible.

This has surely been the tragedy of the Social Democratic governments that when out of power they have preached the fervent and visionary message of prefabricated socialism, but once in office they have allowed themselves to become the puppets of the dim-witted dons preaching the heresy of gradualism in social advancement, conservatism in economics, and a cold-hearted and infamous betrayal of all those ideals for which so many good men and women have given of their lives.

If we believe the experts then let us ring down the black curtain on history for all is as nothing for they are the Doctor Panglosses of the human race gloating over human failures with the dedicated pleasure of a dog smelling shit.

C. A. O'Flaherty as Professor of Transport Engineering chose as his inaugural address the theme of *Passenger Transport Present and Future*. I am not a member of the faculty of the University of Leeds therefore I missed Professor O'Flaherty's well-documented and well-illustrated lecture but the University of Leeds has deemed fit to print it so one is free to comment.

As a common labourer employed by London Transport I have a take-home pay of £14 a week vested in Professor O'Flaherty's subject but despite that I will examine his limited case with a completely biased mind. It is nothing more nor less than a demand for the acceptance of a policy of *laissez-faire* capitalism in regard to Britain's public transport in that it should be allowed to dry up like a drought-stricken river while our towns and our countryside shall be redeveloped to accept the crawling army of private cars that Professor O'Flaherty sees pouring from the factories into a society frantically attempting to build more and more roads, for O'Flaherty

talks of a population of 70,000,000 in our lifetime and the 1,000-mile motorways increasing to 2,000 to 3,000 miles by the turn of the century and all on this tiny fertile island, while his answer to the problem of human mobility is every man his own motor car.

But, intones Professor O'Flaherty, speaking with the voice of the liberal-minded conservative *'there will always be people who have no car or who will not or cannot drive, as well as children, the old and the disabled; these people must be provided for by the public transport facilities'*—driven, one assumes, by a flying corps of Sisters of Mercy with the Mother Superior collecting fares, for O'Flaherty cannot conceive of a transport system that does not operate on a personal payment means of financing.

O'Flaherty loves the motor car and his published lecture is a page by page appeal for its greater use for, as the expert points out, if *'there were no cars... on the roads, there would be no congestion and so buses would be able to provide a better service and to travel quickly, safely and efficiently. Fortunately... this approach has no chance of being seriously considered.'* For, states O'Flaherty, no government could be expected to ban the motor car for *'the motor car industry is a factor vital to the economic well-being of the nation'*. This is the economics of lunacy, for the same argument could be made for the tobacco industry that its £1,105,000,000 taxes pay for the armed forces and the other social luxuries.

The economics of lunacy, Professor O'Flaherty, for the peoples of these islands are hourly exhorted to work harder to pay for our imports yet we watch the fruits of that labour literally burning away in our mouths and on the car-galton roads for every cigarette and every gallon of petrol must be paid for in human sweat for that smoke haze, Professor, is the end-product of your argument. The motor industry and the tobacco trade are our economic cancers and it would be cheaper and healthier for the peoples of these islands if we paid the workers in those industries not to produce but to stay home for, when surplus money is flowing, then anything that does not consume imported materials is desirable. Therefore, honour the barons of the football pools syndicates for they neither add nor subtract to the wealth of the nation but only circulate the money in existence at that particular moment.

It is here that one faces the constant dilemma of the anarchist of what advice to offer a social system that he condemns. O'Flaherty produces 52 experts in support of his plea for the greater uses of the private car and the death of public transport but I dismiss his witnesses as valueless for I could offer the 800 delegates from countries throughout the world who, at the 38th Congress of the International Union of Public Transport, echoed the words of Lehner and Pampel of Hamburg, Thoreau of Liege, Latscha of Zurich, Cirenol of Milan or Tchebotarev of Moscow and others when they hymned the praises of public transport but though these men support my plea for a good and efficient public transport system I reject them as I reject O'Flaherty. He is a man, it would appear, without vision in his eye or poetry in his heart for he fails to understand that the very arguments he uses against community transport are simply difficulties to be overcome.

The people of these islands have been betrayed so many times even in this matter of transport. It is in our social and their economic interest to build our towns free of the motor car. That a 'free' transport system whose maintenance cost comes out of general taxation is cheaper, more efficient and easier to operate. That a vast national underground railway system should cover the whole of this country so that two men can transport a thousand people from one end of the country to the other in perfect safety, irrespective of weather, and that our local bus services should operate day and night, minute by minute, to within walking distance of any habitation, as surely and as simply as our sewers and our water suppliers or our gas or electricity do, for, Professor O'Flaherty, we are the people and it is our labour that must provide this, for these things are no gifts. But I am afraid that Professor O'Flaherty will never understand these things for, like all experts, he believes that the future is a cheaper version of the past.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

Ring-a-Ring-a-Road

IF YOU EXAMINE a map of South London, and draw a line from Norbury Station to Lower Sydenham Station, it will run more or less East by North East (grid North). It will pass through a fair amount of open land, and a number of middle-class suburbs. If instead you draw your line South East to the Woodside area of Croydon, and then turn sharply Nor-Nor-East, your road will run through working-class and immigrant owner-occupying suburbs. With the sole exception that between Thornton Heath and Birkbeck Stations, they chop the top off the triangle with a road parallel to the desired initial route, this is what the planners have done with the proposed South London ring Motorway link.

FREEDOM has said much in the past about the desirability or otherwise of the private car. England (Britain?), it was revealed the other day, has an overall car/road ratio of one car to every 12 yards. Unless you are going to choke up the whole of our agricultural countryside with trunk roads, and knock down all the towns to make room for town roads, the proportion will always be abnormally large. Free public transport could, with very little difficulty,

even in a capitalist Britain, be supplied, and the cost of the subsidy would be enormously less than the annual road-making bills.

Many of us have argued that the private car is symbolic of the pseudo-individualism encouraged by class society as a way of hampering relationships between workers, which might otherwise lead to radical combination. The private car is the very essence of the anti-social nature of our society; and it is responsible for ever-increasing numbers of deaths.

But let us leave this apart, and assume for the sake of argument that it is desirable that a road be built from Norbury Station to Lower Sydenham, and on from there. Let us agree that there is little enough open parkland and common in London already, and it would be a pity to destroy or spoil what exists (though in fact we are probably better off in South London in this respect than North Londoners).

There is a line of hills running North through the Norwoods, and no doubt this presents certain problems—though it would be possible to dig a tunnel under them, and therefore disturb fewer people that way than any other, though

no doubt it would be costly—but not problems that were considered insuperable 200 or even 2,000 years ago when roads were built through more difficult terrain, and so should not be beyond the competence of engineers of the Space Age.

The road is at Norbury, meeting a new south coast-bound Motorway, and so it is strange if it should need to pick up more south coast-bound traffic in Thornton Heath; but anyway it in fact avoids all close contact with the existing main Brighton road (although it also cuts this at Norbury). There is, it is true, an alternative route from Lambeth down to Croydon, which it will cut, as the new road cuts, across Crystal Palace's football team's ground, but it could hardly avoid this road anyway, and it will not involve any extra coastal traffic.

Though at South Norwood it will intersect roads southwards from Lambeth and Lewisham, neither of these run further south to cross the North Downs, nor indeed directly does the A214, which it will cut at Birkbeck, and any connection with the A21 seems to be still undecided—or perhaps Croydon papers are just not bothered with it.

The 'Boer War' area of Thornton Heath is an exceptionally quiet area, at present no roads cross it going anywhere in particular, and there is only

Continued on page 2

Anarchist Federation of Britain

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FINCH'S ANARCHISTS. Regular meetings. Contact P.P., 271 Portobello Road, W.11.
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S.W. LONDON ANARCHISTS. Meetings alternate Wednesday. Correspondence c/o Freedom Press.
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FARNBOROUGH. 81 Mytchett Road, Mytchett, Camberley, Surrey. Tel: Farnborough 43811.
HERTS. Contact Val and John Funnell, 10 Fry Road, Chells, Stevenage.
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LEICESTER PROJECT. Meetings/lectures action and debate. Every Wednesday at 8 p.m. at 1 The Crescent, King Street, Leicester.
MUTUAL AID GROUP. c/o Borrowdale, Carriage Drive, Frodsham, Cheshire.
NORTH EAST ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Peter Ridley, 4 Rockcliffe Gardens, Whitley Bay, Northumberland. Phone 25759.
NORTH SOMERSET ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Roy Emery, 3 Abbey Street, Bath, or Geoffrey Barfoot, 71 St. Thomas Street, Wells.
NOTTING HILL. Meetings at John Bennett's, Flat 4, 88 Clarendon Road, W.11. Every Monday evening, 8 p.m.
ORFINGTON ANARCHIST GROUP. Knockholt, Nr. Sevenoaks, Kent. Every 3 weeks at Greenways, Knockholt. Phone: Knockholt 2316. Brian and Maureen Richardson.
READING. 26 Bulmershe Road. Tel: Reading 65645. Meetings every Thursday.
REDDITCH ANARCHISTS AND LIBERTARIANS. Contact Dave Lloyd, 37 Feckenham Road, Headless Cross, Redditch, Woxcs.
WEST HAM ANARCHISTS. Regular meetings and activities contact Mr. T. Plant, 10 Thackeray Road, East Ham, E.6. Tel: 552 4162.
WOKINGHAM ANARCHIST GROUP. c/o Larry Law, 57 Kiln Ride, Wokingham.

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Support wanted for numerous activities in area. Secretary: Anthony Matthews, 35 Mayville Road, London, E.11. Meetings fortnightly on Sundays at Ron Bailey's, 128 Hainault Road, E.11. Ten minutes from Leytonstone Underground. Active groups in: LEYTONSTONE, STEPNEY, NEWHAM, ILFORD, DAGENHAM, WOODFORD and LIMHOUSE.

OFF-CENTRE LONDON DISCUSSION MEETINGS

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REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND GROUPS

BIRMINGHAM ANARCHIST GROUP. Secretary, Peter Le Mare, 22 Hallowell Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, 16. Meetings every Sunday, 8 p.m., in the smoke room of St. Martin pub, corner of St. Martin's Lane and Jamaica Row.
BLACKBURN. 'Global Tapestry', c/o BB Books, 11 Clematis Street, Blackburn, BB2 6JP.
BOURNMOUTH AREA. Local anarchists can be contacted through Nigel Holt, Rossmore, Harvey Road, Canford, Wimborne, Dorset. (Wimborne 2991).
CORNWALL ANARCHISTS. Contact Arthur Jacobs, 13 Ledrah Road, St. Austell, Cornwall. Meetings on the second Friday of each month at 42 Pendarves Street, Beacon, Camborne. 7.30 p.m. Visiting comrades very welcome.
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EDGWARE PEACE ACTION GROUP. Contact

BLACKPOOL. Contact Christine and Graham, Top flat, 4 Ruskin Avenue, South Shore, Blackpool.

BOLTON. Contact John Hayes, 51 Rydal Road, Bolton.

CHORLEY. Contact Kevin Lynch, 6 Garfield Terrace, Chorley.

LANCASHIRE AND MORECAMBE. Contact Les Smith, 30 Dunkeld Street, Lancaster. Meetings Monday at 8 p.m., Phil Woodhead's, 30 Dunkeld Street, Lancaster. Regular literature sales.

MANCHESTER ANARCHIST GROUP. 'The Secretary', Felix Phillips, 6 Draycott Street, Manchester, 10. Regular weekly meetings. Contact Secretary for venue.

MERSEYSIDE ANARCHISTS. Contact Roly Pollock, 6 Jermyn Street, Liverpool 8. Meetings Tuesdays, 8 p.m.

PRESTON ANARCHIST GROUP. Rob Wilkinson, 73 Trafford Street, Preston. Meetings: 'The Wellington Hotel', Glovers Court, Preston. Wednesdays, 8 p.m.

STOCKPORT. Dave Crowther, 1 Castle Street, Edgeley, Stockport.

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GUILDFORD. Peter Cartwright, 33 Denzil Road, Guildford.

MERTON. Elliot Burns, 13 Amity Grove, London, S.W.19. Tel. 01-946 1444.

SUSSEX FEDERATION

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BRIGHTON & HOVE ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Nick Heath, Flat 3, 26 Clifton Road, Brighton.

CRAWLEY ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Richard Ashwell, 87 Buckswood Drive, Gossops Green, Crawley, Sussex.

SUSSEX UNIVERSITY ANARCHIST GROUP (see details under Student Federation).

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HARROGATE. Contact David Howes, 16 Park Parade, Harrogate.
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KEIGHLEY. Steve Wood, 26B Cavendish Street, Keighley.
LEEDS. Direct Action Society. Contact Martin Watkins, 6 Ebberton Terrace, Leeds, 6.
SHEFFIELD. Dave Jeffries, c/o Students Union, Western Bank, Sheffield, 10.
YOULK. Keith Nathan, Vanbrugh College, Heslington, York.

WELSH FEDERATION

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ganshire, Wales. Aug.-Sept. correspondence only.

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SWANSEA ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Ian Bone, 18 Windsor Street, Uplands, Swansea. Meetings at the above address every Sunday at 7 p.m.

LLANELLI. Contact Dai Walker, 6 Llywynnedy Road, Llanelli, Carm. Tel: Llanelli 2548.

SCOTTISH FEDERATION

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The Power to Win



For Workers' Control

AUGUST 23 1969 Vol 30 No 26

DUNLOP DROPS A CARROT

THE eight-week unofficial strike of blastfurnacemen at Port Talbot continues, despite the failure of the executive of the National Union of Blastfurnacemen to make the strike official, an appeal by the Chairman of the Inquiry for a return-to-work and even after Mr. Feather, Acting General Secretary of the TUC, had made the unprecedented move of addressing a mass meeting of strikers. The 1,300 blastfurnacemen remain united and determined to stick it out until they win their demand for the full National increase of £1 per week for the 140 labourers.

Last week, at the Court of Inquiry, they were able to voice their grievances, which ranged from 'the slum conditions' in which the management expect them to eat their food in the mess room to the unwillingness on the part of the management 'to do any valid bargaining with us'.

'We were forced into this situation against our will. I don't think one man on the blastfurnaces at Port Talbot wanted to go on strike, but

it was inevitable because of the state of industrial relations. The position at Port Talbot was explosive. The company had been procrastinating for so long. We are a very tolerant group of people, but people can drive that tolerance too far. . . . We have all felt over the last four or five years that the company had not been prepared to do any valid bargaining with us.'

BACK TO SQUARE ONE

Every week for a year, the terms of a manpower productivity agreement were discussed, with proposals and counter-proposals being put forward. After all this the management turned round and said that the proposals were no go in the first week of the discussions.

Mr. Millar, for the British Steel Corporation, told the Inquiry that 'the management cannot accept that there are grounds for suggestions that relations between the men and the management are fundamentally bad'. It is plain to see, and the eight-week strike bears it out, that the blastfurnacemen have had enough. The good relations that all managements talk about are the situations where the men either accept their terms or a compromise devised to suit the management. The BSC thought they could equalise the earnings of labourers in the industry and they came unstuck.

But we read and hear so much about 'labour relations' today. In the past employers did not want 'relations' of any sort with their employees and it was only because of the workers' solidarity, which gave them collective strength, that the employers were forced to bargain with their employees. Now 'labour relations' are set out in procedure, a code of behaviour that favours the employer and which is so devised that it really should be called procrastination. Managements do not really want to hear or accept other views on their proposals. Therefore, 'labour relations' are not valid because any relations must be on an equal basis and no employer, whether private or public, will accept that.

ACCEPT OR FIGHT

Managements control industry and when it comes to it, you either accept or fight the decisions which adversely

affect you. The decisions which have been taken at Port Talbot affect not only wages and conditions, but also the jobs of the steelmen. The NUB, the bricklayers' union, and a section of the Transport and General Workers' Union, have only a minority of members at Port Talbot and it is these who have not agreed to the redundancy plans of the management. The Iron and Steel Confederation has signed the productivity-linked wage increase agreement which will mean a huge reduction in the labour force. Blastfurnacemen, many of whom have already come from other run-down industries and have reached an age when prospective employers look twice, naturally fear these redundancies. Their struggle is not just for the increase, but also against the threat of the sack and being kicked around according to the economics of a particular industry. For them, it is also a fight for some dignity.

Managements and the State only see workers as production units. Sometimes you have enough, other times you have too few or too many. However, it is interesting that there has been no big outcry about 'wild-cat' blastfurnacemen 'holding the country to ransom', no attacks on the TUC for not getting them back to work, and no calls for fines or expulsion from their union. Everyone is keeping very quiet.

The reasons for this are very clear. Not only have the strikers got a good case but, more important, how do you deal with 1,300 determined men? I am certain that they would not worry about being expelled from their union. Everyone knows there is not a thing that can be done. Jack Jones, a Lodge official, was quite wrong when, after hearing of the refusal of the union to back the strike, he said, 'We have been left naked and powerless.'

The determination and solidarity of the strikers is their power. The obvious sympathy of other steelworkers at Port Talbot, now laid off, and of the townfolk, gives them the power they need to win. They do not need the official sanction of Jim Barry, the General Secretary of the NUB, for they can gain their demands with their own strength and the support and sympathy of other workers.

P.T.

COURT OF INQUIRY

AS PREDICTED by P.T. in FREEDOM last week, the Court of Inquiry into the Port Talbot steel dispute decided to show its impartiality at the outset by beginning with an appeal to the strikers to return to work. This appeal having been rejected by a mass meeting of the men on Tuesday, the Court began to hear evidence from the management. Every speech from a set of 20 identical managers began, 'In this technological age . . . productivity . . . rationalisation . . . etc., etc.'

Thanks to some untypically astute questioning by the Chairman of the Inquiry, Professor Robertson, it soon emerged that no one on the management side could conceive that the men working at the Magam works could possibly have any valid fears about redundancy. When questioned on this, one of the managers said with great surprise that it could concern anyone, 'but technological development makes this inevitable'.

Surprisingly, however, the star turn of the Inquiry was not the management but the TU leaders present. There were three of these in all. Firstly Jim Barry, Secretary of the NUB, who, it emerged, had told local union officials that if they left it to him he would 'crucify the management' in negotiations. As it was, Barry himself was almost crucified in discussion with the strikers and may not last out till his retirement in six months' time.

The second and most amazing TU performance came from Dan McGarvey,

President of the Boilermakers' Union. McGarvey admitted he was very concerned about the 'image of a union' that was being presented. He closely questioned members of the strike committee as to whether they were 'loyal members of the NUB' who would 'always obey the union's rule book'. When the strikers replied that they would obey the union's rules and follow the union's leadership only so long as they thought that such rules and leadership were in the interests of the rank and file trade unionists themselves, McGarvey was seemingly amazed and obviously genuinely alarmed.

'But this is attacking the whole concept of a union,' cried desperate Dan, 'you can't have a union without an executive or a rule book, can you?'

There was no reply to this.

McGarvey then asked the strike committee members when they intended to return to work. Quite properly they replied that they themselves could not say when as they were only spokesmen, and that it was up to the 1,300 blastfurnacemen themselves to decide. McGarvey genuinely could not grasp this concept of rank and file control. 'You're undecided then,' he said sharply, thinking he had found a weakness.

'No,' replied the strikers, 'it is not up to us to decide, but for the strikers as a whole.' This was repeated about five times before it finally got through to McGarvey what was meant, and then he was so shocked that he gave up questioning. After all he might find himself in

FOR MONTHS the Dunlop tyremen have been sweating it out waiting to get in the Transport & General Workers' Union. Since the Dunlop lads left the union of General & Municipal Workers in disgust, they have been without a union.

The Dunlop lads are being stopped from joining the T & G.

The Dunlop bosses are refusing to recognise and negotiate with their own workers.

The firm and the local leaders of the union of General & Municipal Workers are trying to force the tyremen into a union which they have rejected.

Next month the workers expect to get the OK and join the T & G.

COOKING THE CARROT

But what's this?

It's the dynamic duo.

Featuring Brown the buffoon and Foster the foul, the firm is now reported to be collaborating with the Municipal Workers' Union in cooking a carrot. Reaching an all-time low in industrial negotiations, this pair, with Foster for the firm and Brown for himself, are said to be ready to serve up a tempting rise on condition the lads rejoin the General & Municipal.

This barefaced bribe has already been used to keep the 20-odd workers in the Regent Department in this useless union. Will the Dunlop lads be bought?

I think not. The Dunlop lads are pig sick of all the shadow boxing, and the loaded one-sided agreements which the Municipal Workers' Union has let Dunlops get away with.

But, keen to get control, the Municipal Union officials, Brown and Race, even invited the lads down to the Windmill 'for a quiet drink'. What's this, free beer for joining the union?

But, let's face it, the Dunlop lads are not on their own in wanting out of the Municipal Workers' Union, some ware-

the same position as Jim Barry one day—the union members taking decisions for themselves, instead of waiting to be told what to do from on high, then he'd be out of a job, wouldn't he?

The other union man was in fact Ex-Post Office Union leader Ron Smith, but now on the other side of the fence, with a nice lucrative management post with the British Steel Corporation. It was, however, quite obvious that Barry, Smith and McGarvey were all quite interchangeable on the positions they held. They all wanted good careers. It just so happened that for Smith his career was now best advanced on the management side. No cause for raised eyebrows, surely? But enough of trade union bureaucrats, the stand of the strikers has been, and still is, with the rejection of Vic Feather's appeal Mark 2, magnificent.

It was obvious that the non-implementation of the pay award for the lower-paid furnacemen was only the last straw that brought the men out. As one striker said, 'This is a composite strike' against the management, and having listened to the evidence of the Inquiry one man said, 'We must have been bloody mad not to have come out months ago.' Another said, as the Inquiry ended, 'Even if we go back now we'll be out again in three months.'

There's a lot more trouble to come at Port Talbot yet, the management and trade union bureaucrats are groggy—a few more blows could make a real breakthrough.

IAN BONE.

house workers at Turners, Rochdale, have also been after a swop to the T & G.

BLOOD MONEY

Since the lads broke with Brown's union, Dunlops have sacked some for lateness. And the manager Burke, a jumped-up clerk, has refused to recognise the newly-elected shop steward or the works' committee.

The firm was, however, forced to meet the workers when they stopped the job to hold a meeting, and it must be only a matter of time before they must come to terms with the freely-elected representatives of the men.

The Municipal Workers' Union has already tried to get the firm to force the men to pay their union dues. This has failed, but will the union get out if it hasn't got the men's confidence by next month? This is the promise it was supposed to give to the T & G.

But the latest suggestion is that the Municipal is desperately dabbling in dirt. Is it possible that one Dunlop lad owes the union money and the union is using this to keep him in line and keep control at Dunlop?

This shocking news sent one of our North-west reporters to see Brown to find the facts. Brown at first denied the existence of blood money. Then, when further questioned, he broke into a ranting war dance, threatening to sue our reporter if the matter was reported to FREEDOM. When pressed about the union swop he began raging like a man obsessed and threatened to call the police. Then he must have thought he was in the commandos as he tried to throw our reporter out.

The point is, if there is any truth in these rumours, then we must be prepared to pay off the debt to get the union and the firm off the back of a good militant. Furthermore, the Regent tyremen must now consider where they stand, for if in their view the local union officials have acted improperly, they will feel obliged to send Brown and his union packing.

The Regent lads could do worse than support the Dunlop crowd and join the works' committee. If a firm like Dunlops is to be tackled and better conditions got, it is best that we all stand together and if possible contact the blokes at other factories inside the combine.

This is important and readers should now get ready so that if it comes to the crunch, the Dunlop lads don't stand alone.

INDUSTRIAL FREEDOM

It is a good thing in a lot of ways that the lunacy of politics is not the Englishman's cup of tea. In not being potty patriots nor mad militants, so that even when we go to war we go more to get away from the wife than to fanatically fight for a cause, we workers show some sense.

Nobody can say we're not easygoing, but we would not be men if we didn't detest the ruthless and even immoral behaviour now being credited to the Dunlop bosses and the officials of the General & Municipal Workers' Union.

We live in what is reputed to be a free country. We will do all we can to see not only that it stays that way, but to increase that freedom.

The freedom to organise at work and have the union of our choice is a basic freedom and perhaps the most vital difference between us and the dictatorships. If we are not to descend to the level of a communist police state, we must not only resist Dunlops obstructive actions, but make them answer for them.

NORTH WEST WORKERS.

Contact Column

This column exists for mutual aid. Donations towards cost of typesetting will be welcome.

University Anarchist Group invites speakers for lectures, public meetings, etc. We can pay your expenses. Please write: 2 Bedford Street North, Liverpool, 7.

Mid-Sussex Anarchists based on Lewes, Haywards Heath, etc. Anyone interested please contact Adrian Howe, 10 Silverdale, Keymer, Hassocks. Tel. Hassocks 3458.

Going on Holiday? Send a postcard to Alan Barlow, 069707, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs, Du Cane Road, London, W.12.

Leaflet: 'Remember Czechoslovakia — Anarchists Protest Against Russian Occupation', 3/9 per 100. Bernard Miles, c/o Freedom Press, 84B Whitechapel High Street, E.1.

Ernsthaft Interessenten für eine anarchistische Gruppe in Deutschland gesucht. Cornelius Wankel, 8562 Hersbruck, Orchideenstr. 1, W-Deutschland.

London Schools Anarchist Group. T. Swash, 49 Popham Road, London, N.1. Regular Friday meetings.

S.A.G. token squat. Assemble at Islington Green open air art sale (nr. tube Angel), Angel, N.1, at 10 a.m., Saturday, August 30. Followed by demo.

Manchester Schools Anarchist Group. Sylvia Lerner, 15 Chandos Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester 21.

What's Free in London—for free from 70 Princedale Road, W.11. Worth double the price.

Boris Yelensky, life-long anarchist who took part in Russian Revolution and has since been living and writing in the USA, would like to meet comrades while visiting London. Will be at Freedom meeting hall for informal talk on Sunday, August 24 at 7 p.m.

Dave Saksena would appreciate letters, tobacco, literature, etc., at Cheadle Royal Hospital, Cheadle.

Voluntary work team. Now team at: The Poplars, The Broadoak, Newnham, Gloucestershire.

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Oppose Germ Warfare. The Chemical Biological Warfare Action Group are campaigning against the manufacture and use of chemical warfare agents. Contact: 77 High Street, Penze, S.E.20. Tel. SYD 0940.

Birmingham discussions. Every Tuesday 8 p.m. at the Arts Lab, Summer Lane Peace News. Six weeks trial offer for 5/-, 5 Caledonian Road, N.1.

If you wish to make contact let us know.