

CONTACTS

Groups

ABERDEEN libertarian group. Contact c/o 163 King St. Aberdeen
 ABERYSTWYTH David Fletcher, 59 Cambrian Street, Aberystwyth
 BELFAST anarchist collective c/o Best Books, 7 Winetavern Street, Belfast 1
 BIRMINGHAM meet Sundays 8.30 pm at the Fox & Grapes, Freeman St. or ring Joanna 440 5132 (also Anarcha Feminist Group)
 BRISTOL CITY 4 British Road, Bristol BS3 3BW
 BRISTOL Students: Libertarian Society, Students Union, Queen's Road, Bristol 8
 CAMBRIDGE - new contact awaited
 CANTERBURY Alternative Research Group. Contact Wally Barnes, Eliot College, University of Kent, Canterbury
 CARDIFF write c/o One-O-Eight Bookshop, 108 Salisbury Rd.
 CHELTENHAM anarchists see street sellers, 11.00-1.30 Saturday mornings, Boots Corner, High St.
 COVENTRY John England, Students Union, Univ of Warwick, Coventry
 DERBY: Collaborators welcome. Contact Andrew Huckerby, 49 Westleigh Ave., Derby DE3 3BY tel. 368678. No connection with some of the graffiti appearing in the city centre!
 EAST ANGLIAN Libertarians. Martyr Everett, 11 Gibson Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex
 EDINBURGH anarchists meet 8 pm on Monday at First of May Bookshop, 45 Niddrie St., Edinburgh
 EXETER Anarchist Society, Univ. of Exeter, Devonshire House, Stocker Road, Exeter
 GLASGOW Anarchist Group. Initially, weekly meetings. For further information contact John Cooper, 34 Raithburn Avenue, Castlemilk, Glasgow G45
 GREENWICH & BEXLEY. Any trade unionists interested in forming a syndicalist group please contact John Ryan, 47 Binsey Walk, SE2 9TU
 HASTINGS Anarchist Group, Solstice, 127 Bohemia Rd., St.-Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex. Tel. 0424 429537
 HIGH BENTHAM. Ask at the Dragonfly on Saturdays
 HUDDERSFIELD. Mtgs. every 2 weeks. For details phone 0484-38156 (Polytechnic Students Union)
 HULL Libertarian Collective. Pete Jordan, 70 Perth St., Hull, E. Yorks
 LEAMINGTON & WARWICK c/o 42 Bath Street, Leamington Spa
 LEEDS change of address to 189 Hyde Park Road, Leeds 6
 LEICESTER anarchist group: Lyn Hurst, 41 Briarfield Drive, (tel. 0533-21250 (days), 0533-414060 (nights). Bookshop: Blackthorn, 76 Highcross St (tel 0533-21896). Libertarian Education: 6 Beaconsfield Rd. (tel. 0533-552085)
 LONDON:
 Anarchy Collective, 37a Grosvenor Ave., N.5. Tel. 359-4794 before 7 p.m.
 Freedom Collective, 84B Whitechapel High Street, E.1. Tel. 247-9240
 Hackney Anarchists: Dave, tel. 249-7042

Kingston Anarchists, 13 Denmark Rd. Kingston-upon-Thames. Tel. 549-2564
 London Workers' Group, Box W, 182 Upper St., N.1. Tel. 249-7042
 Love V. Power, Box 779, Peace News (London office: 5 Caledonian Rd., N.1)
 West London Anarchists, 7 Pennard Road. W.12
 MALVERN & WORCESTER area. Jock Spence, Birchwood Hall, Storridge, Malvern, Worcs.
 MANCHESTER c/o Grass Roots, 109 Oxford Rd. Manchester M1
 MID-SUSSEX & SOUTH COAST anarchists, c/o Resources Centre, North Road, Brighton, E. Sussex
 NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE. Black Jake, c/o 115 Westgate Road, Newcastle, NE1 4AG
 NOTTINGHAM c/o Mushroom, 10 Heathcote St (tel. 582506) or 15 Scotholme Av., Hyson Green (tel. 708302)
 OLDHAM. Anyone interested in forming an anarchist group in area contact Nigel Broadbent, 31 Cooke St. Failsworth, Manchester (activities to be decided on formation)
 OXFORD anarchist group c/o Danny Simpson, Exeter College. Anarchist Workers' Group: ditto.
 Anarcho-Feminists: c/o Teresa Thornhill, 34 Divinity Road. Solidarity: c/o 34 Cowley Road.
 PORTSMOUTH. Caroline Cahm, 25 Albany Road, Southsea, Hants
 READING Anarchists c/o Ms. Shevek, Clubs Office, Student Union, Whiteknights, Reading, Berks.
 SHEFFIELD Anarchists: c/o Have-lock Square, Sheffield S10 2FQ. SHEFFIELD Libertarian Society, PO Box 168, Sheffield S11 8SE comprising Autonomous Anarchists, Black Cross Group, IWW, Syndicate of Initiative, John Creaghe Memorial Society
 SWANSEA Don Williams, 24 Derlwyn, Durnant, Swansea.
 SWINDON area. Contact Mike, Groundswell Farm, Upper Stratton, Swindon, Wilts
 WESTON-SUPER-MARE. Martyn Redman, Flat 5, 23 Milton Road

national

KENT
 Ramsgate: Peter Ford, 22 Royal Rd. Sevenoaks: Jim Endesby, 70 Bradbourn Road.
 NORTH WEST ANARCHIST FEDERATION
 c/o Grass Roots, 109 Oxford Rd., Manchester, M1 7DU. Groups are: Burnley Anarchist Group, 5 Hollin Hill, Burnley, Lancs.
 Lancaster Anarchist Group, 41 Main Road, Galgate, Lancaster.
 Manchester Anarchist Group
 Syndicalist Workers' Fed. } both c/o Grass Roots as above.
 (NW Fed. has contacts in other areas & publishes newsletter).
 MIDLANDS FEDERATION: Groups include Birmingham, Corby, Coventry, Derby, Leamington/Warwick, Leicester, Nottingham, Sheffield.
 NORTH EASTERN ANARCHIST FEDERATION Secretariat c/o Black Jake, 115 Westgate Rd., Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 4AG.
 THAMES VALLEY ANARCHIST FEDERATION - contact Oxford or Reading

Freedom Press
IN ANGEL ALLEY
84b WHITECHAPEL HIGH ST.
LONDON E.1

SCOTTISH LIBERTARIAN FEDERATION
Contact Nina Woodcock, 74 Arklay
St. (Top R.), Dundee. tel 814541.
DIRECT ACTION MOVEMENT, 28 Luck-
now Drive, Sutton-in-Ashfield,
Nottinghamshire. Groups in vari-
ous places incl. London, Manches-
ter and Leeds.
'SOLIDARITY': a libertarian com-
munist organisation which publi-
shes the journal 'Solidarity for
the Cultural Revolution'. Local con-
tacts: Aberdeen c/o 167 King St.
Dundee c/o Nina Woodcock, 74
Arklay St. Manchester c/o 109
Oxford Road, M/cr. Ml. Oxford:
c/o 34 Cowley Road. London c/o
123 Latham Rd. London E6 and mem-
bers in many other towns.
ANARCHIST COMMUNIST ASSOCIATION
(organisation of class struggle
anarchists who produce their own
paper 'Bread and Roses'). Local
contacts: London Danny Jakob, 88
Speedwell House, Cornet St. SE8.
Birmingham: Bob Prew, 13 Trinity
Court, Trinity Rd., Aston, B'ham.
Burnley: Jim Petty, 5 Hollin Hill
Glasgow: Dave Carruthers, 53
Ormonde Ave., Glasgow G4.

Desires

Accommodation: Lady requires furnished room in Leyton, Leytonstone or Walthamstow. Box C c/o FREEDOM.

Would any anarchists in North London who would like to form a group contact Alan via FREEDOM.

Anyone in Wandsworth/Battersea/Clapham interested in forming an anarchist group contact D. Elder, 28 Swanage Road, Wandsworth SW18.

RED & BLACK Sacco & Vanzetti T-shirts price £2.20 including postage available from 108c Marlborough Rd, London N22. Cheques payable to the anarchist/animal liberationist rock group 'Total Attack'. Four sizes - small, medium, large, extra large. Also sweat shirts price £4.20 including postage, in same colours. T-shirts show the heads of Sacco and Vanzetti with the quote 'Yes I am a prisoner/Fear not to rely my crime/ The crime is loving the forsaken/Only silence is shame'.

Meetings

25 October Mid Herts Peace Group meeting. Gerald Drewett on the arms trade. Friends Meeting House, Handside Lane, Welwyn Garden City, Herts.

27 October Radical Alternatives to
Prison National Conference at Conway
Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1
from 10 am - 5 pm. Open to all. Price
to come in 50p. Open session in morning
on 'Prison: The Prospects for Abolition'
chaired by Stan Cohen and Ros Kane;
including contributions from Mick Ryan,
Geoff Coggan (on prisoners' views on
alternatives, Alan Leader on Newham
Alternative Project and Mike Nellis.

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PERSONS UNKNOWN

the anarchist jigsaw puzzle

"Politics have nothing whatever to do with this case ... Politics comes in in only one way -if the beliefs of a defendant are (such) ... that they were seeking to achieve some political end by violence or other illegal means --- clearly that belief is a motive to commit crime ... The Crown is not remotely concerned with politics". *****

"The Crown say that in the first few months of 1978 there was in being a band of robbers. These defendants are part, but not all of that band ... The Crown say that the object of the robberies, the explosive ingredients, the literature, was in order to effect further ultimate unlawful purposes - attacks on the institutions of this society. In other words ... anarchy!"

Michael Worsley, prosecutor

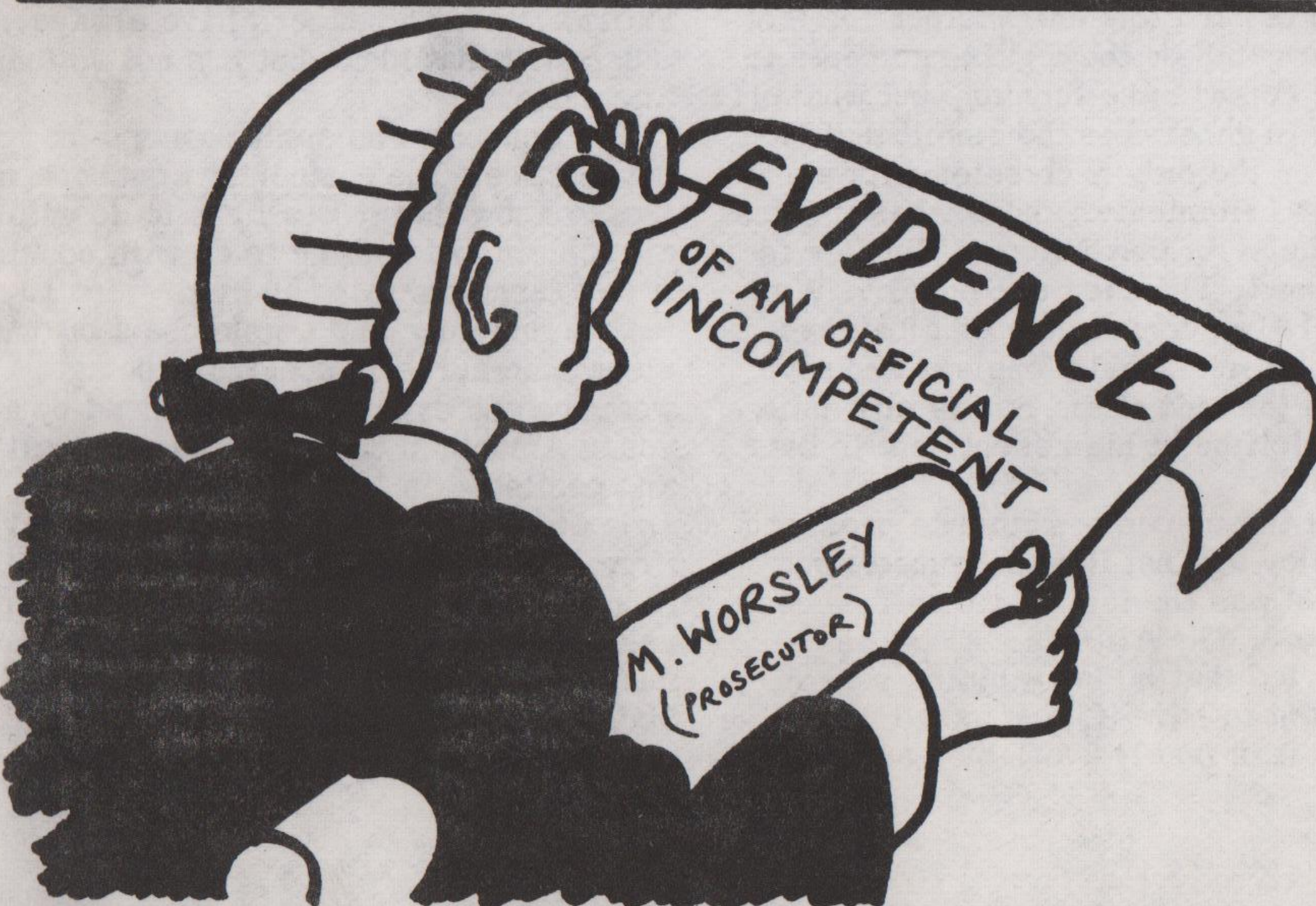
THE prosecution case so far has been laboured in the extreme. The editing of a disjointed film, the fitting together of a particularly difficult jigsaw, is always a painful business.

For if one thing is clear about the trial to date - a thing the prosecution has been forced to admit - it is that all the prosecution evidence is circumstantial. The failure of the defence to get the conspiracy to rob charges altered in favour of concrete robbery charges made this plain from the outset. Our comrades could not have been brought to trial at all were it not for the existence of the conspiracy laws.

But these, or their equivalent, as we have not infrequently pointed out, are vital weapons to all states against political dissent and agitation. They require no proof of any illegal act whatsoever. They exist to create crime from speculation. This is why, time and again, Worsley has had to base his arguments on the Jigsaw Theory. In between a number of phrases like "emerging pattern", "overwhelming connection", "almost certain", "it may well be", etc, he adds like a recurring theme in a trite and boring symphony, "There are many hundreds of details, which in isolation don't mean a thing, but put together, with a vast amount of other detail, the Crown say ..

that the picture is clear". It is a picture made up of fragments of a jigsaw. You can, say the Crown, put together the hirings of cars with the robberies of cash and firearms, as you can put together (and how's this for lyricism?) 'the green grass, the blue sky, the white clouds'.

At the start of his case Worsley handed the jurors a variety of schedules, a Do-It-Yourself Conspiracy Kit, as it has been called, or - more in keeping with the Crown's own terms - a number of unsorted jigsaw pieces. Attempts were then made to **connect the car hiring, the robbery, the robbed property, the cash-investment-in-building-society etc pieces**



ONE of the curious aspects of jury trials is that jurors aren't meant to know whether the defendants are being allowed bail or held in custody during the trial. The theory is that such knowledge would prejudice them, though they can hardly be more prejudiced than by the presence of the defendants in a locked dock or by the prosecution opening speech. In the 'Persons Unknown' case, all the defendants were eventually allowed bail before the trial, as has been described here during the past 18 months. This bail was continued when the trial was meant to begin on 20 September, even though one of the defendants (Taff Ladd) didn't appear in court, and it was continued when the trial did at last begin on September 25. But Judge Alan King-Hamilton suddenly withdrew bail on 26 September, in the middle of the prosecution opening speech. On 28 September he heard arguments

ANARCHO-JIGSAW (CONT)

into one single plot-like picture. Every now and then Worsley asked the jurors to fill in an empty space with another piece - a name or comment - and so began his efforts to build up a complicity with them in the sorting out of the puzzle.

The result of this approach is a morass of paper and a somewhat bemused jury. Colour is added to an otherwise singularly pale affair by a centre table surrounded by Special Branch officers and covered with guns - property allegedly stolen by defendants. On the floor a number of plastic sacks, all carefully labelled, contain exhibits such as false, droopy moustaches, wigs, etc. Shielded from the court on his dais, behind a row of formidable tomes, sits Judge King-Hamilton, recently of the Gay News trial. Among the grubbily-bewigged ranks of barristers and the solicitors sits Ronan Bennett, who is defending himself. En-

THE BOOK BURNER (CONT)

from the defence lawyers and Ronan Bennett, but it was refused.

One moment of light relief in the arguments about bail came when Peter Cadogan, one of the sureties for Iris Mills, was in the witness box. The prosecuting counsel, Michael Worsley, opened the cross-examination by accusing him of believing in 'violent anarchy', on the basis of complete misunderstanding of something in the leaflet Cadogan wrote about her case a year ago. He obviously didn't know that Cadogan was a Communist and then a Trotskyist until the 1960s, when he became a leading opponent of militarism, and that he has always been strongly opposed to anarchism. After Worsley's outburst, it was hardly surprising that Iris Mills' other surety, Nicolas Walter, wasn't put into the witness box at all!

Michael Worsley, the prosecuting counsel, seems extraordinarily incompetent as he plods clumsily through the evidence. The reason is that he is extraordinarily incompetent. In fact he is the only barrister in this country who is officially incompetent - he has a whole law case to himself because he was once sued by an aggrieved client. He won the case, because all the judges at all the hearings agreed with the traditional rule that a barrister cannot be sued by a client for his conduct of a case. (All judges, of course, are barristers). But he lost his reputation, and is reduced to prosecuting for the Crown.

What happened was that Norbert Rondel, one of the bullies employed by Peter Rachman, the Notting Hill property crook, beat up a tenant in St Stephen's Gardens, London W11, in April 1959. Charged

circled by police and screws sit Vince Stevenson, Iris Mills and Trevor Dawton in the dock. All are pleading not guilty to the actual charges.

The actual charges that is, for one gets the distinct impression that in this non-political political trial the actual charges are virtually secondary to the non-stated charge of anarchism. Anarchism is already treated as a crime by most of the media, who persist in referring to 'alleged anarchists'. And anarchism fills the otherwise musty air of Court no. 2. Sureties are asked if they believe in 'violent anarchy'. The Anarchist Cookbook is rapidly becoming a crime in itself. So are booklets on the Red Army Fraction (one of which was also found in Ronan's and Iris' possession). Fingerprints of a defendant on the pages of Woman magazine - a 'detailed' article, mind, on the new Gloucestershire home of Princess Anne and Capt. Mark Phillips (of which we are promised more in a further instalment) must point to some sinister anarchic end. So, of course, must possession of maps of nuclear power stations and reprocessing plants, together with weedkiller. (Here again, the Jigsaw Theory is applied - in isolation such things may be innocuous, as a whole they are not). There was also reference to an address on an insurance document which turned out to be a squat: a squat, members of the jury, which,

with grievous bodily harm at the Old Bailey in May 1959, he picked young Worsley as his barrister on a dock brief, but he was found guilty and sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment. He lost his appeal, one ground of which was that Worsley had conducted the case incompetently by failing to call appropriate witnesses or to ask appropriate questions. (For a literary version of a case in which a defendant wins an appeal because of his barrister's incompetence, see John Mortimer's first play Dock Brief, which made his reputation in 1958. Nature imitates art!)

A few years later, in the intervals of pursuing his criminal career, Rondel tried to sue Worsley for negligence. At first his action was obstructed by the courts, but eventually it went up from the High Court in 1965 through the Court of Appeal in 1966 to the House of Lords in 1967. It is hard to know whether the factual statements or the legal arguments in the long reports are funnier, but what is funniest in general is the result that barristers are the only profession with complete legal immunity, and what is funniest in particular is that Michael Worsley is still around. The case of Rondel v. Worsley will always hang like an albatross round the neck of old Worsley, and after 20 years the butt of the Bar is still bullying the victims of his resentment in the Old Bailey.

One of the pieces of evidence produced by Worsley against Ronan Bennett and Iris Mills was the fact that they possessed a copy of The Anarchist Cookbook. He asserted that no law-abiding person would want to have it, and asked why, although it is freely available, anyone

should you be unsure of the term, means a place where "people live on someone else's property without the owner's consent". (No wonder squatters have been excluded from the jury!) Similarly, pejorative reference is made to unemployment and to the "French waitress, Michelle Poree". (She and the New Zealander Graham Rua are two missing 'conspirators').

At time of writing the prosecution continues its painful way - so slow and so painful that, if one weren't wiser, one could almost pity Michael Worsley. As controversy about jury vetting goes on, the judge continues to make threats about the DPP. (The BBC 'Man Alive' programme on jury vetting scheduled for Tuesday, 9 October is the present object of concern). Security at court has suddenly, inexplicably been tightened. Members of the public are being asked for proof of their identities, and their names and date and place of birth are being noted by the police. Body searches are also made.

A far more detailed account of the prosecution case is contained in 'Persons Unknown Trial Info: No. 1', September 20-28, available from c/o Box 123, 182 Upper Street, London N1. Donations for food etc. for the defendants should also be sent to this address.

would want it other than for an unlawful purpose.

Anarchists don't pretend to be particularly law-abiding, but the many who also possess copies of this book may be surprised to learn that it may be used in evidence against them. Conspiracy trials already inquire into the defendants' political beliefs and personal friends, but now they include literary tastes as well. What a tribute to the printed word, and what an encouragement to book-burning! But where will this stop? The Communist Manifesto or The Declaration of Independence is evidence of left-wing sedition, obviously, and Mein Kampf or The Protocols of the Elders of Zion of right-wing sedition. What about detective stories and war novels for low-brows, Sade and Stirner for high-brows? What about the Bible? Perhaps the best thing would be to ban all books - an old joke in political satires. British readers have always laughed at that idea, but it's not so funny any more.

Any readers who don't possess or haven't seen The Anarchist Cookbook may like to know that it has little to do with anarchism and nothing to do with cooking. It is a large-format 160-page guide to the manufacture and employment of drugs, electronic surveillance and sabotage, weapons and explosives, produced by a young American called William Powell and published in New York in 1971 by Lyle Stuart, a well-known commercial firm. The only connection with anarchism is a 16-page preface by Peter Bergman relating the themes of violence and destruction with anarchism in the United States a decade ago.

MORE ON JURIES (on pg 4-5).

the MILITANT TENDENCY

THE Labour Party grunted, groaned and agonised its way past yet another milestone on the way to a socialist society - and it is surprising how many conference delegates at Brighton last week actually think Labour is a vehicle for travelling that road.

The 'Militant Tendency' concentrated its militancy on methods of electing candidates for Parliament and scored a great victory for democracy by establishing that said candidates shall be subject to scrutiny, criticism, thumbs-up or thumbs-down decisions yearly during the life of Parliament and shall not, as now, be secure for the full term as long as they do not thoroughly and disgustingly disgrace themselves.

The Labour Party was created in 1906, which means that it has taken 73 years for it to be established - if it is - that Members of Parliament should represent the parties who put them there rather than themselves. Until now, the Executive Committee of the local branch has chosen the candidate, unless he has been handed down from head office in search of a safe seat, the local enthusiasts have voluntarily worked for him at election time and then, if successful, he has gone off to the House of Commons (thought by some to be the best club in the world) joining with his fellow MPs to form the Parliamentary Labour Party.

It is this group, of 200 to 300 MPs, which chooses the party leader, who becomes Prime Minister if the party wins a general election, and he chooses his Cabinet and he, with one or two close buddies, decides which parts of the party's policy statement shall be conveniently forgotten now the election is over.

If your MP is a backbencher and still has to make his way in the party in

Parliament, he will probably keep touch with his constituency party and may hold regular meetings with the voters back home (these are called 'surgeries' and no wonder) until such time as he makes it into the Cabinet, when, obviously, he is much too busy to be able to do that any more.

Meanwhile, every year, the party holds its annual conference, when delegates from all the constituencies gather to tell the leadership where it is going wrong and the trade unions, (founders of the party in 1906 and still holding the purse strings and the reins) win all the debates with their massive block votes.

You may think that what conference becomes party policy and, come the next election, is the basis for the Manifesto on which the party goes to the electorate. Not so. It is the Prime Minister's privilege to write the Manifesto just as it is his job to take the day-to-day decisions in running the country - and he makes it up as he goes along.

Since anybody who gets to that sort of exalted position can only have done so by wheeling and dealing, comprising and conniving, or, at the least, been the lessor of two or three evils when the leadership was up for grabs, it follows that the election manifesto is more likely to be what he thinks will bring in the floating voters than anything to do with socialist principles or whatever the founding fathers - or the faithful supporters today - took to be the real aim of the party.

This strange pyramid of elitism has emerged quite naturally as the party has found its place in capitalist society. Never proclaiming to be a revolutionary party, being founded to represent in Parliament the interests of the trade

articles; well then, there is nothing more individual or more sunny than a real poem. Or for that matter more revolutionary!

Your attitude forces me to the conclusion that the conventional middle-class literacy scene has won the day, and that poetry's revolutionary possibilities are damned; or, (as bad or even worse) that your policy is an integral part of that bourgeois reverence for poetry as a thing apart from ordinary life. Poetry which disturbs the spirit of the proletariat and the consciousness of the bourgeoisie is thoroughly censored in our society. But I had no idea that this censorship extended as far as your publication - whether by default of your editors' competence to judge poetry itself or rather, poets. But just as there are more members of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie so are there more members of the "poetariat" than meets the eye!

unions (after the latter had realised that the Liberals were not going to do that for them) Labour has been dedicated to gradual progress within capitalism. At all times it has sought to do no more than clean up capitalism, to give it an acceptable face by masking the true injustices, softening real hardship by institutionalizing charity, building up the state as an alternative power structure to the traditional ruling-class - and, like Frankenstein, creating a monster.

While 'the Militant Tendency' was baying for changes to make MPs toe the party line, the police were trying to whitewash the murder of Blair Peach by the Special Patrol Group, which grew and flourished during the last Labour Government; the vetting of a new jury for the Persons Unknown trial was going on, according to guidelines laid down by the last Labour Attorney General; the Tories were implementing the programme of cuts in social services squeezing the Fire Service and closing hospitals as planned by the Labour Government ... and so on and so on.

When will 'The Militants' realise that to waste energy on trying to reform a reformist organisation is simply to go back to the beginning and make all the same mistakes all over again?

When will they realise that making MPs subject to party discipline in a power structure has no more to do with progress towards freedom for the workers than the demand for the Catholic Church to accept women as priests has anything to do with the liberation of women.

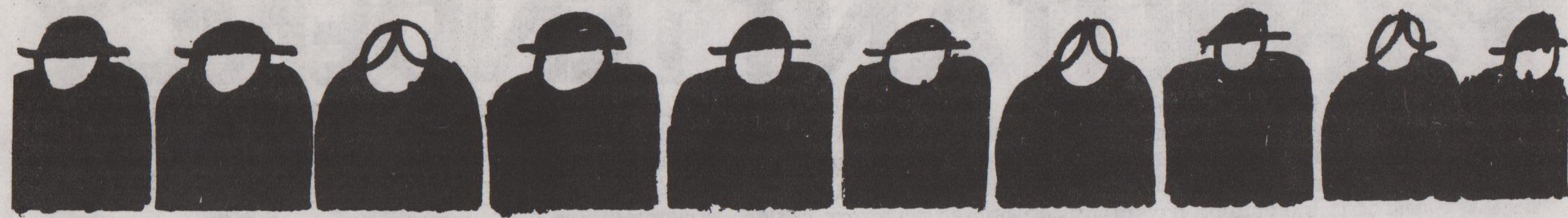
But then perhaps 'The Militant Tendency' is not interested in freedom for the workers or liberation of women. Perhaps it's just interested in power

PS

The literary world takes extreme care to print anything that has whatever current standards of sophistication are and little substance and nothing that has some substance and perhaps little sophistication. The effect is that poetry and poets have got a bad name as being either obscure or irrelevant, or both. I'm amazed that anarchists such as yourselves demonstrate a mute participation in such an indictment, by a policy not to publish poetry. You are aiding and abetting the murder of so many budding Mozarts among us.

You quoted in your review on Surrealism last year (Rosa Luxemburg) "The immediate task is the spiritual liberation of the proletariat from the tutelage of the bourgeoisie". Don't you include poetry in the liberation movement? If not, why not?

Yours,
Alan Collins



VERDICT AGAINST THE JURY

ONE OF the strange things about the strange business of juries is the way that otherwise sophisticated people on the left accept the official mythology. From what is being said in the current vetting controversy by some socialist individuals and periodicals, you might think that the jury is the main guarantee of our civil liberties and the basis of our democratic way of life. Even people who have no faith in parliament seem to have an almost religious reverence for the English tradition of putting twelve amateurs among all the professional lawyers in criminal trials to sanctify the system of organised vengeance called justice.

The fact is that the jury, like parliament itself, is an institution which was created by the establishment to strengthen the establishment, and which still does this job remarkably well. The problem is that, like so many parts of our social and political machinery, the jury is obscured by the informality of the British constitution and the absence of clear rules about its workings. This makes it all the more necessary to examine its history and function.

The jury emerged in England in the twelfth century, as one of the strongest instruments of royal power over the feudal barons. Before then it had been used to help the Norman regime get reliable information about local issues. An inquiry ('inquest' in Norman French) was held, in which twelve men were sworn ('juree') to give a true answer ('verdict'). This was how the Domesday Book was compiled in the eleventh century - as a sort of property census extracted from juries all over the country. But Henry II, the strongest of the Norman kings, introduced the jury into criminal procedure to get reliable results in local trials. As well as such primitive procedures as trial by ordeal or battle, the traditional feudal courts used 'compurgators' or 'oath-helpers', who swore collectively that a man's oath was true, and 'suitors' or 'doomsmen' who decided (sometimes by majority) whether a man was guilty and what the punishment should be. But now the royal courts introduced the jury to decide the facts of the case, leaving the king's judge ('justice') to

decide the law and give the sentence.

The origins of such a procedure may be traced back to the tenth century among the Anglo-Saxons and Danes and to the ninth century among the Franks, but it was perfected by the Anglo-Normans, who developed the strongest centralised regime in medieval Europe. There were two main kinds of jury - the 'grand jury' (finally abolished in 1933), and the jury of recognition, which decided whether defendants were guilty of crimes, and became the 'petty jury'. All jurors were expected to have local and if possible personal knowledge, and they combined the functions of modern prosecutors and witnesses as well as jurors. Outside witnesses weren't allowed into courts for several centuries, and the principle that jurors shouldn't know the facts or individuals in a case was established only in the eighteenth century.

The system of juries was a very effective way of drawing leading local laymen into the administration of centralised justice - like the system of 'justices of the peace', or unpaid magistrates, which was founded in the fourteenth century and it later spread to all English-speaking countries (especially the United States) and beyond. From time to time it has provided a popular limitation on the legal power of government, but far more often it has provided a popular legitimisation of that power. By implicating token samples of ordinary people in the process of punishing criminals, the jury has made the process acceptable to ordinary people.

The myth about jurors acting as champions of freedom derives from the fact that in a dozen or so religious and political cases over the past three centuries juries have refused to return guilty verdicts, in defiance of the law or the evidence or both. This was almost always in a situation where the government was leaning too far to one side in a party political struggle - against radical protestants in the late seventeenth century, for example, or against radical whigs in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries - and London juries tended to be particularly unreliable in redressing the balance. The real point is that in those

days the middle class was struggling for power, and juries were largely middle-class. When the working class began to struggle for power, juries continued to be middle-class and became increasingly reliable even in sensitive cases.

Where juries did - and still do - soften the rigour of the law was far more in areas where particular laws were out of tune with popular feeling. This once applied to the many minor offences which were enforced by capital punishment, when juries often refused to convict or convicted only for lesser offences; and it now applies to such things as motor offences, incitement to racial hatred and obscenity, where juries continue to behave 'perversely'.

Serious research into the way juries actually work is only half a century old, and the main conclusion is that they are extraordinarily inefficient in understanding the issues or discovering the truth. Fortunately, however, they tend to err on the side of leniency, whereas policemen, magistrates and judges err on the side of stringency. This is an empirical justification for seeing the jury as a haphazard form of protection for defendants in some criminal cases, but it is not a theoretical justification for seeing it as a valuable bastion of liberty or as anything more than a typically English improvisation which works not because it makes anything better but because it makes some people feel better.

Until very recently, the jury was in fact an overt instrument of class rule. Like MPs and JPs, jurors were largely drawn first from the upper and then from the middle class. There was always a property qualification for jury service, though never a professional or intelligence qualification (though illiterates are usually discharged). Until only a decade ago, jurors were almost entirely confined to heads of households, including less than 10 per cent of electors, and were described by a judge in 1956 as 'male, middle-aged, middle-minded, and middle-class'. This would have continued if it hadn't caused so many protests, and in the end it had to be changed, not to reform the system but to preserve public confidence in it. So the Criminal Justice

So the Criminal Justice Act of 1972 made virtually all electors under 65 eligible for jury service, which brought in far more women, young people, poor people and coloured people. At the same time, however, the traditional principle of unanimity was also changed, to make 'perverse' verdicts more difficult. The Criminal Justice Act of 1967 allowed majority verdicts of eleven or ten out of twelve. The double result is that a jury is much more likely to consist of ordinary people but is also much more likely to reach a guilty verdict, which preserves the function of the system - and makes it even more objectionable.

How a jury is selected is just as important as whom it is selected from. One current myth is that jurors were impartially chosen until recent years. In fact, despite the principle of random selections, the authorities almost ostentatiously packed or purged juries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the practice was continued into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, though with increasing discretion. When the 'common jury' couldn't be trusted, the authorities (and rich defendants) used a 'special jury', which was drawn from a small panel of high-ranking men and which was better paid; there were even so-called 'guinea-men' who earned a living by serving on special juries. This system wasn't finally abolished until 1949, and it made political vetting almost unnecessary. In sensitive trials juries were in practice packed and purged just as efficiently as in the old days, and they naturally gave no trouble. Even ordinary juries were drawn from panels which were selected in a far from random way by local and court officials, and there has been much anecdotal evidence about various individuals and groups who managed to get particular people off or on to juries without much difficulty, sometimes for serious but often for trivial reasons. (One well-known story is of a junior clerk who picked his girlfriend's mother to keep her out of the way in a long trial.)

Even when the panel comes to court, it has always been further processed to make the final result even less random. Until the fourteenth century the prosecution could challenge an unlimited number of jurors to 'stand by for the Crown', which removes them from the case in question. The defence used to be able to challenge up to 35 jurors without cause, but for more than a century the number was seven, and then the Criminal Law Act of 1977 reduced it to three. Both prosecution and defence can challenge jurors for cause - but the prosecution seldom needs to do so, and the defence seldom can do so. A striking case when the defence tried to do so - Terry Chandler's trial for organising the demonstrations against the Greek royal visit in 1963 - was sabotaged by both court and judge, the former providing very few jurors, and the latter allowing very few questions; that case also established that the defence has no right to ask jurors to stand by.

More recent administrative decisions have reduced the amount of information about and the scope of questions to jurors available to the defence. (In the United

States, the tendency has been in the opposite direction, and potential jurors are subject to detailed interrogation by both sides which has in sensitive cases involved hundreds of people over several months!) Meanwhile the prosecution has had its own sources of information and its own way of using it, though the details have emerged only during the past few years. In 1966 Lord Dilhorne, the former Conservative Attorney-General, revealed on television that he had made sure that a Communist Party member was kept off a jury in a spy trial; in 1972 six men were kept off a jury in an IRA trial on the basis of police information about them; in 1978 two Welsh speakers were kept off a jury in a Welsh language trial. Then of course the whole system of vetting jurors was exposed during the ABC Official Secrets trial in 1978, and the authorities made a public statement that a code of practice had been adopted in 1974 to formalise the practice which had been followed informally since 1948 (since special juries were abolished). The only real change is that what was once objectionable and secret is now objectionable and open. In serious political and criminal trials the prosecution decides which jurors to stand by on the basis of information from the Criminal Records Office, the Special Branch and local police stations.

Since there is no law against the prosecution vetting potential jurors before a trial, there is no way to stop it; but there is no law against the defence vetting potential jurors either, and in the Persons Unknown case this is what the defence tried to do, with the ludicrous results we saw last month. In fact this wasn't the first time, since the defence in Terry Chandler's case in 1963 tried to do the same thing. Members of the London Committee of 100 interviewed members of the jury panel to collect information on which he could challenge them with cause, but the tactic was frustrated by the strategy of the court and judge in limiting the jurors and questions. Another possible tactic might be to use the defence right to challenge the array - that is, to object not to any particular juror, whether with or without cause, but to the whole panel, on the ground that it has been improperly selected or vetted. In logic rather than law, the choice should surely be either that a jury is selected at random, with no disqualification or challenges, or that jurors are vetted and questioned until there is no prejudice either way.

Even when the jury is sworn, there is still uncertainty about its rights. Jurors are told about a 'solemn obligation' to keep their deliberations secret, but this is not imposed by oath and has no legal force. It is probably contempt of court for a juror to discuss a case before the verdict, and possibly contempt of court to do so afterwards, but this is a very grey area of common law and the cases are confusing. It is contempt of court to refuse to attend court, to refuse to be sworn, to refuse to give a verdict, to be drunk or drugged, to impersonate a juror, and so on; but jurors have a right to return perverse verdicts and to dis-

obey a judge's direction, and no one has the right to bully or question them. It is the offence of embracery to attempt to corrupt or influence or threaten a juror, but there seems to be no offence in asking a juror about a case or in a juror answering such questions. So the government's new prosecution of the *Leveller* for reporting jurors' reports of the Thorpe trial is only a test case and may well fail.

What are anarchists to make of all this? We don't care whether jurors are selected from one class or many, except that the former is more likely to expose the class system. We don't care whether juries reach their verdicts unanimously (according to the English tradition) or by majority vote (according to the Scottish tradition), except that the former is more likely to lead to acquittals. We don't care whether jurors are vetted openly or secretly, except that the former is more likely to cause public opposition to the system. We don't care whether individual jurors are carefully interrogated to remove bias or whether juries are carelessly assumed to consist of twelve good men (and women) and true, except that the former is more likely to destroy the mystique of the system.

We don't even care if political extremists are excluded from juries, since this should bring the whole institution into complete disrepute, and it may make sense. In the hearings in chambers before the Persons Unknown trial began last month, Judge Brian Gibbens mentioned that it would be impossible for an anarchist-minded person to serve on a jury. The October issue of *The Leveller* magazine protested indignantly, "Presumably such people as Nicholas Walter, Dr John Hewetson, Dr Alex Comfort or, in their day Sir Herbert Read or Fenner Brockway are thus not fit for jury service". Apart from the fact that Fenner Brockway was never an anarchist and has long been a Labour MP and Peer, the others on the list would probably feel more insulted if they were considered to be fit than unfit for jury service! Under the Juries Act of 1974 those who are ineligible include lawyers and judges, policemen and prison officers, clergymen and the mentally ill; those who are excusable include MPs and peers, doctors and dentists, vets and chemists; those who are dischargeable include mentally or physically disabled or handicapped people; those who are disqualified include anyone imprisoned for more than five years or for more than three months during the previous ten years. Anarchists surely come under one or all of these categories - the only proviso being that an anarchist might be prepared to serve as a juror (or a defence witness) for the narrow purpose of either confusing the issues or getting someone off. Apart from this, we see the jury as an all too successful method of mystification about law and order. Most sincere anarchists will either not be on the electoral register in the first place, or will easily obtain a discharge by explaining their conscientious objection to the legal system. Juries, verdict on the system is unanimous: Guilty.



Brigitte Heinrich

ASTRID AND OTHERS

ASTRID PROLL, the former RAF member extradited from Britain, was released from custody on 19 September. It is doubtful that she will have to return to prison, although the trial (or 'bad theatre' as her lawyer calls it, and he should know) continues.

First reaction to the news was, of course, one of jubilation. There can be no question that, however hopeless it might have seemed at the time, the work of her friends in this country, coupled with the development of a similar campaign in West Germany, played a decisive part in bringing pressure for her release.

There was, however, a second reaction and that was one of anger. Anger on both the part of the defence and the judge, whose professional pride must have been wounded. For when the time came, it was announced that the key witness for the main charge of attempted murder couldn't appear. The reason given by the Minister of the Interior for such contempt of court was that the witness, as a counter-intelligence officer "successfully fighting against terrorists" must not be exposed to public view.

What does this mean? The attempted murder charge - of which the prosecution said at Bow Street, "There was clearly the intention to kill" - formed the justification for the appalling treatment of Astrid from the time of her arrest in 1971, as well as for the tight security which surrounded her after her arrest in Britain, and kept her locked up in Brixton and Risley, both top security prisons. Yet, once the trial began, gone were both the tight security, and the foundation for the main charge.

Why then the insistence on going through with this piece of bad theatre? Probably because of the propaganda exercise involved. On one hand reassurance is offered that terrorists are being 'successfully fought' (and acceptance asked that such reasons override the law). On the other hand, reassurance is made that German justice, after all, has been much-maligned, and that it will be temperate and forgiving to all who denounce the error of their ways.

Well, of course, temperance is always easy in the absence of opposition, and while the campaign to save Astrid has had its success it also demonstrates the extreme limits of liberalism. Appropriate noises and gestures are made to the audience but life continues much as normal behind the scenes. Only ten days after Astrid's release the federal chief prosecutor was calling for more penalties against 'extreme-left' writers who help create 'a climate of violence', and for yet greater restrictions on the rights of the defence. The federal constitutional court has overturned a lower court decision to acquit four students for reprint-

ing the 'Buback obituary' by the anonymous anarchist 'Mescalero' which caused such a furore in 1977. Most unrepentant political prisoners remain in conditions of strict isolation. And while the trial of Astrid continues as a showcase for the regime's mildness (or so we must hope, for it is not yet ended), some very different proceedings are taking place against another alleged terrorist.

Brigitte Heinrich is a well-known left wing writer on economics. She has published a number of books on the unacceptable face of German capitalism, and submitted damning material to the 2nd Russell Tribunal on German industrial activities in South America. She was first arrested in 1974 during the 'Winterreise' police operation and, on the grounds of what she describes as 'a number of exotic charges' based on reports from highly dubious witnesses. After being kept in prison for a few months she was released and the arrest warrant and proceedings suspended. But both were resurrected earlier this year. They concern support for a criminal association whose aim was the construction of a RAF-type organisation with supposed international anarchist links, and illegal possession of arms and explosive substances ... Does this sound at all familiar?

But Brigitte Heinrich doesn't even have the chance of questioning the main prosecution witnesses because these, held in a Swiss gaol, are testifying to a rogatory commission in Zurich where she has been refused permission to go, and where her court-appointed lawyer has no right to intervene, even by asking questions indirectly through the judge. If Astrid's trial gives an example of the contempt of 'democratic' governments for their own courts when it suits them, Brigitte Heinrich's gives another of the contempt of 'democratic' courts for their own avowed principles of 'fair trial' What was all that again about recognising the need to encourage one's prodigal sons and daughters to 'reintegrate into society'?

GAIA

LETTERS

PUTTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT NOT NOSTALGIA!

Dear FREEDOM

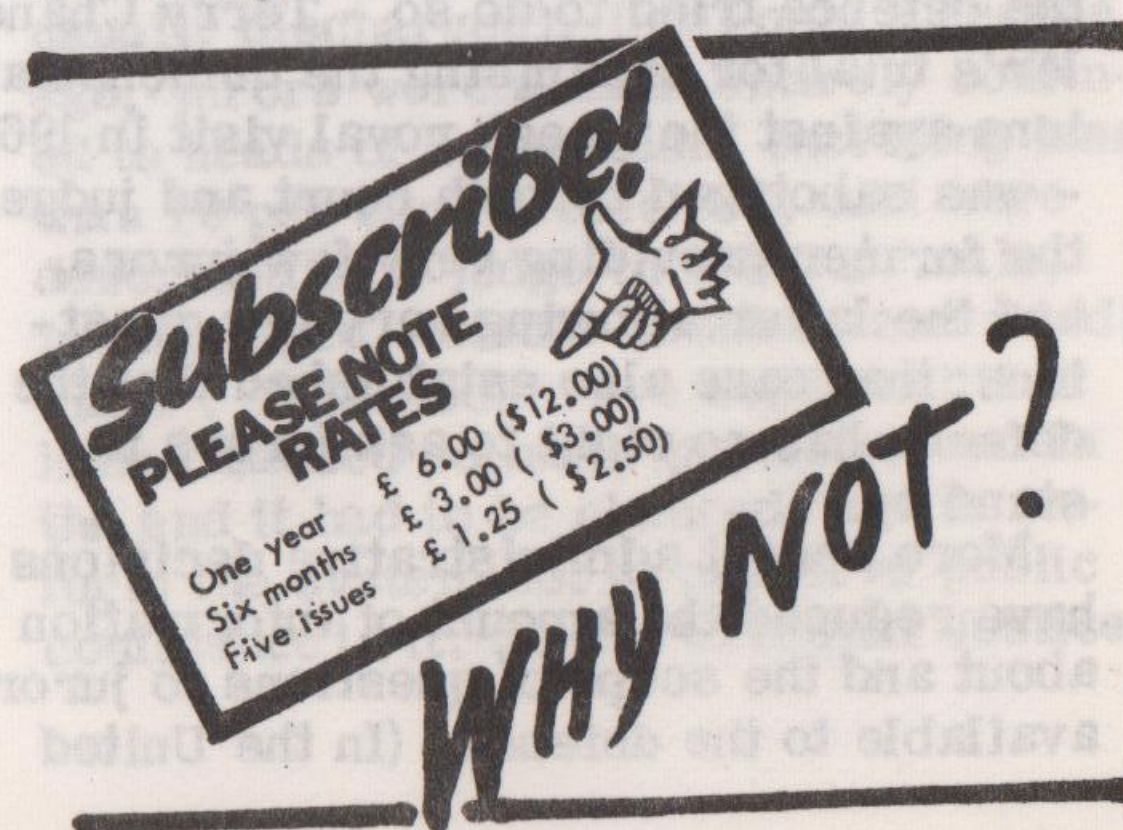
One little point about Winston Smith's letter (8 Sept):- While it's only too true that anything akin to an anarchist nostalgic column about the good old days of Makhno et al should be avoided like the pox, I think articles that set out to straighten the historical record play an important part in FREEDOM - even if the lie that needs fixing is fifty or a hundred years old. Certainly there are good books giving an anarchist view of the past, but not that many, and besides they tend either to be run out by small publishers who charge high prices, or if produced in economical paperbacks to be stocked in some esoteric location next door to a university. In Edinburgh at least the only places where you can go and hope to find anarchist material (though the hope is not always realised) are Slick Better Books up in Forrest Road, which is permanently infected by hordes of trendies and has hideous musak crawling out of the wall, or the First of May Bookshop down in Niddry Street, which could with a little redecoration pass as one of the lower vaults in Dracula's castle (though the presiding vampires are very nice).

OK I'm being unfair. I admit I used to be prejudiced up to the eyeballs and now I'm only prejudiced up to the teeth as far as such issues are concerned, but the point is - even allowing for these exaggerations - that a lot of people anarchism has to reach are simply not in the habit of reading anything in book form, while the very number, complexity, and cluttered language of so many books of political and social theory put off many more. I have only my own personal experience to go on, but I certainly didn't come to anarchism by reading paperbacks about it, and my first acquaintance with the names of Godwin, Kropotkin, Goldman and other theorists of the movement was in the pages of FREEDOM during the past two or three years. So keep on scribbling, comrades. Unless we know what happened in the past, we are not likely to see everything that is happening in the present - and I wouldn't give too much for the future either.

Yours

COLIN MACKAY

Edinburgh



STRIKING FOR NOWT!

IT OUGHT to be called the next to nowt dispute. The current token strikes of engineering workers represent a frivolous manipulation of our shopfloor strength in what seems to be a shabby political struggle now going on inside the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (AUEW).

The issues involved: an £80 basic rate for skilled workers, a 39 hour working week and two days' extra holiday a year does not have much support in the factories. Nearly all workers are already on more than the union basic rate demanded and the only way we will benefit is on our overtime premiums.

How can we justify this when as trade unionists we are against overtime and favour a shorter working week? But even the hour off the working week will most likely be transferred to overtime.

Head Office Strike Call Most workers are sick as parrots about the strike, both because of what little we stand to gain if we win and over the idiotic way it's all been handled.

The loony left press have shown their total failure to grasp this shopfloor reality. These shopfloor sleepwalkers are frantically trying to bum-up a case for the strike.

The Stalinist New Worker claims the claim, if met, "would mean a sizable rise". Rubbish, unless these 'new' Communists are all 'overtime kings'.

Socialist Worker's correspondent tries to be a bit more clever, arguing that an £80 minimum time rate would make incentive schemes "more difficult to operate".

Opposition to the strike has been shrugged off by Duffy, the AUEW president, who, according to Newsline, the daily paper of the Workers' Revolutionary Party, said that the strike had been called "democratically under the union's con-

stitution by its National Committee ..."

Meanwhile, other papers on the left continue to crow about the possibility of a right wing sell-out by Duffy. But neither Duffy nor the left want the membership to decide on the conduct of the dispute through shopfloor ballots or shows of hands or owt else. What the parties of the left want is for the officials and the National Committee to make all the 'militant' decisions, not the members.

The Politics of the Strike What are the issues about this dispute which should concern anarchists?

We should be anxious that here is an authoritarian strike, bungled and bummed-up at union headquarters with very little in the way of principles or material advantage to recommend itself to most workers.

The strike stinks of a political adventure by both left and right wing elements inside the hierarchy of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions.

Duffy, the new president of the AUEW, needs to make a name for himself. Though described as right wing, this only makes it more vital for him to pose as a militant who delivers the goods. He must get wider support.

The need for this became vividly clear at the TUC conference, when Duffy accused his own AUEW delegation of being dominated by communists.

In this situation some of the left in the union will back the strike in the hope that it will fail, so that they can later blame Duffy, and discredit the union right wing.

Card Burning To Come This is the kind of dispute which undermines the work of shopfloor militants. It is a stupid strike lacking strategy and principles. It is a

dictatorial dispute commanded by the union head office.

In the midst of this irrelevant strike called by the union bosses and supported by the lunatic left, one would have expected that the newly formed syndicalist Direct Action Movement would have spoken up for the shopfloor. Surely if the DAM is going to get the confidence of the workers and be something more than a tailor's dummy on the left, it must have a clear policy during dispute such as that of the engineers.

The thing is when union card burning ceremonies are threatened; when Duffy has drained the support of his power base among the Midlands' car workers; when the loonies of the left are caught up in their own crackpot schemes to dump Duffy; what we could best do with is an anarchist line advocating shopfloor control of the strike. Shopfloor control, even if it means a return to work. Any other position shows a contempt for the membership.

Let's face it, Duffy has got to be a dummy to get himself landed with a dispute which threatens his image as a competent trade union leader. "Neither the political nor the economic conditions" writes Peregrine Worsthorne, "were right for a major confrontation with the power of organised capital".

The best thing Duffy can hope for is some face saving formula. But it is not likely to satisfy the shopfloor, because the strike has already been too costly in lost wages.

But if Duffy is dumb, then the left on the National Committee have been cynical. For they most of all are responsible for this deadend dispute. More, one suspects, to achieve their own narrow political ends, than to get us a shorter working week.

B.B.

and I think that anarchists should be beware of imposing new rules and that feminists should beware of encouraging new prejudices in place of the old ones, in language as everywhere else. (Incidentally, on the subject of trivial sexism, why is Howard Ehrlich's name always given before Carol Ehrlich's? Not very ehrlich, old mensch!)

My remarks about the copyright of and profits from the book didn't imply that the editors were making anything out of it, but protested at Ehrlich claiming copyright which belongs to the contributors or no one and at Routledge making profit when the contributors were told there was no money fees.

I made it clear that I was writing a personal reaction to the book rather than an impartial review of it. I fear that a "serious intellectual discussion" of its contents would have been much harsher.

N.W.

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JOE HILL'S LAST WILL

(Written in his cell, November 18, 1915, on the eve of his execution.)

My will is easy to decide,
For there is nothing to divide.
My kin don't need to fuss and moan —
"Moss does not cling to rolling stone."
My body? Ah, if I could choose,
I would to ashes it reduce,
And let the merry breezes blow
My dust to where some flowers grow.
Perhaps some fading flower then
Would come to life and bloom again.
This is my last and final will,
Good luck to all of you,

—JOE HILL.

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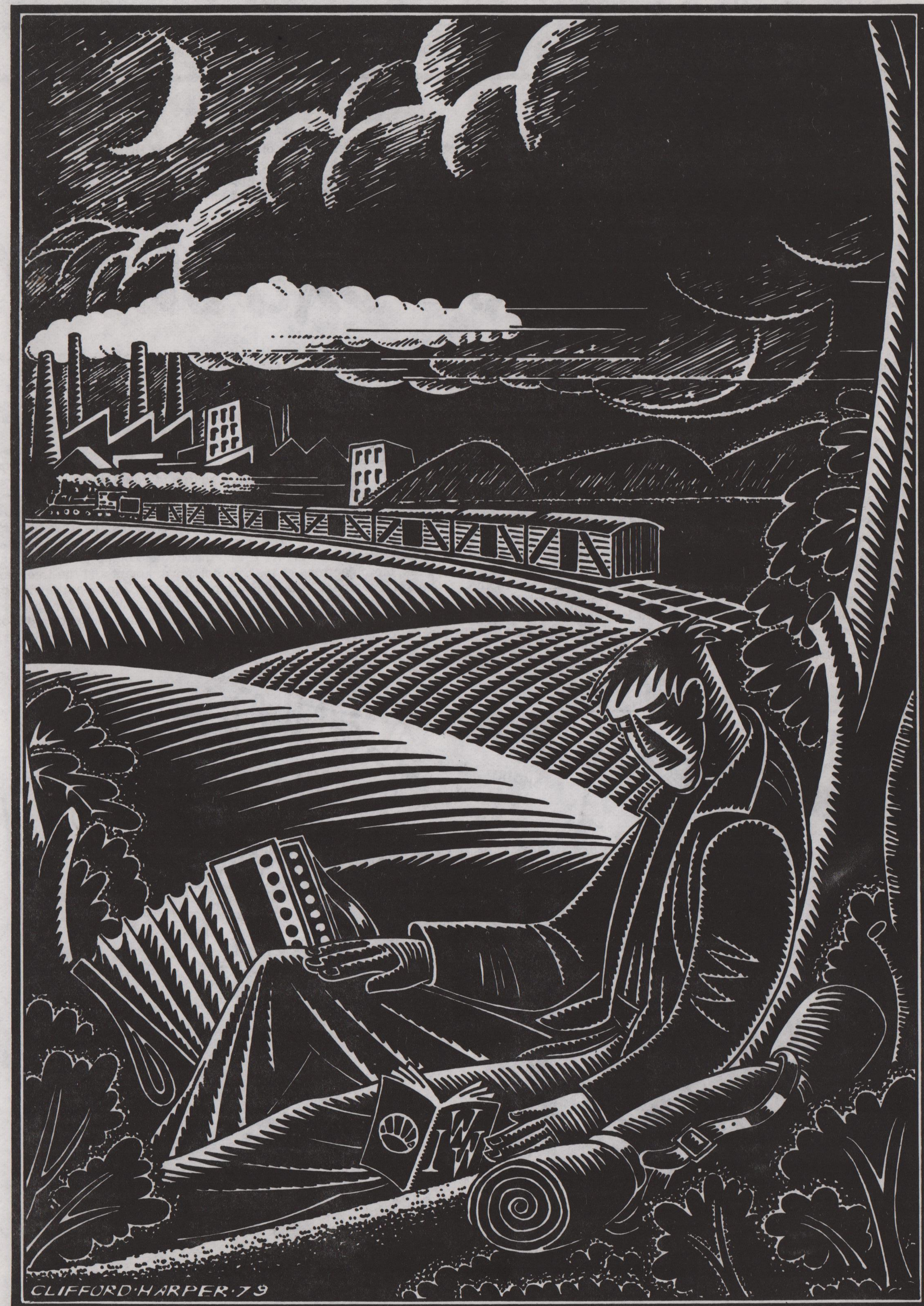
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CLIFFORD HARPER '79

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October 7 is the centenary of the birth of Joe Hill. To mark it this review has a long article on the theme of labour organisation and resistance. It is also appropriate to celebrate Hill himself by including some of his best known songs.

DON'T MOURN-ORGANISE!

The most popular piece of IWW literature was the little red songbook. In box cars, jungles and on the job, its songs were sung, until even the farmers and their boys were singing them too. Many of the more favourite songs were written by Joe Hill. When it became known that he faced death on flimsy and unconvincing evidence public concern developed into international proportions comparable only to that shown in the Sacco-Vanzetti case. A grocer (an ex-policeman) had been shot along with his son by masked men who, according to the remaining son had entered his store at closing time crying out 'We've got you now!' Since no theft was attempted, the obvious motive appeared to be revenge. However, Joe Hill was arrested and convicted on the grounds that he had been wounded at about the same time. Conceiving that the grocer may have shot, the lower, and finally the Supreme, court of Utah proceeded on the strange logic that to have a bullet wound for which no explanation was offered by the defendant was as admaging evidence in this murder trial as the possession of goods from his store had it been a charge of burglary. However it is very doubtful whether the grocer shot at

his assailants. Had he hit Hill, since the bullet went through his body and clothing, the bullet would have been in the store, but it wasn't. Further, the bullet hole was high in Hill's chest but low in his coat, showing that he had been shot with his hands up. Also the bullets that killed the grocer and his son had not been fired from Hill's revolver.

To the IWW—and to many outsiders who investigated the case—there was no doubt that Hill was prosecuted because he was considered a dangerous agitator, a writer of rebel songs that growing thousands sang, and out of vindictiveness for previous skirmishes in the mines of Utah, free speech fights in Salt Lake City and particularly for winning a victory at Tucker against the Utah Construction Co. On November 19, 1915, Hill was executed despite the protest of the AFL, and the labour bodies of other countries, the objections of the Swedish government and the intervention of President Wilson. His funeral in Chicago was attended by an unexpected 30,000 mourners who blocked traffic for their long parade to the cemetery in an amazing demonstration of concern for a framed-up working stiff.



Joe Hill
Murdered by Authorities of the
State of Utah, November 19, 1915

SHOULD I EVER BE A SOLDIER
BY JOE HILL
(Tune: "Colleen Bawn")

We're spending billions every year
For guns and ammunition,
"Our Army" and "Our Navy" dear
To keep in good condition;
While millions live in misery
And millions die before us,
Don't sing "My Country, 'tis of thee"
But sing this little chorus:

CHORUS:
Should I ever be a soldier,
'Neath the Red Flag I would
Should the gun I ever should

THE PREACHER AND THE SLAVE
BY JOE HILL
(Tune: "Sweet Bye and Bye")

Long-haired preachers come out every night,
Try to tell you what's wrong and what's right;
But when asked how 'bout something to eat
They will answer with voices so sweet:

CHORUS:
You will eat, h...
In that ...

SCISSOR BILL
BY JOE HILL
(Tune: "Steamboat Bill")

You may ramble 'round the country anywhere you will,
You'll always run across the same old Scissor Bill.
He's found on the desert, he is upon the hill.
He's found in every mining camp and lumber mill.
He looks just like a human, he can eat and walk,
But you will find he isn't, when he starts to talk.
He'll say, "This is my country," with an honest face,
While all the cops they chase him out of every place.

CHORUS:
... he is a little dippy,

THE REBEL GIRL

Words and Music by Joe Hill

Copyrighted, 1916

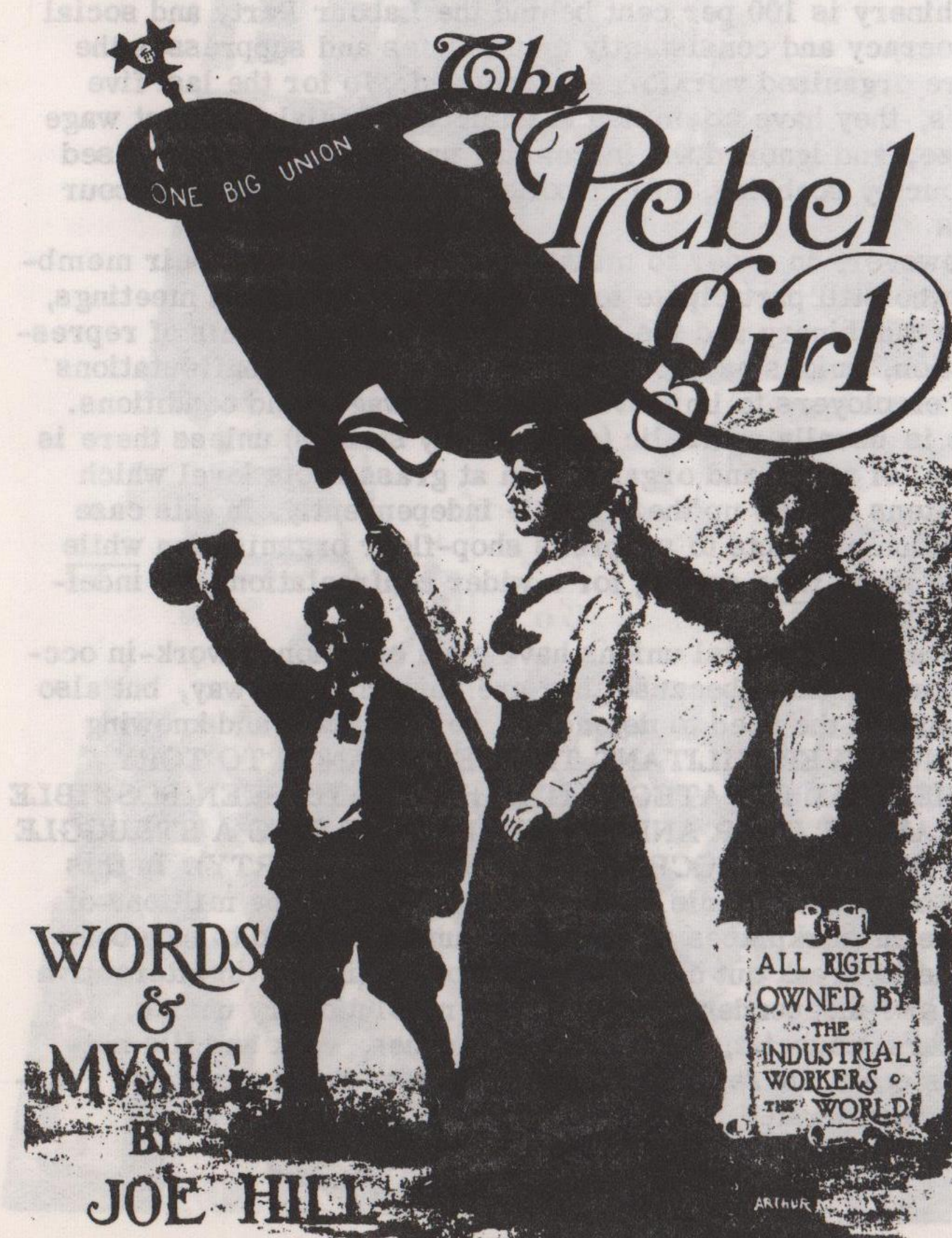
There are women of many descriptions
In this queer world, as everyone knows,
Some are living in beautiful mansions,
And are wearing the finest of clothes.
There are blue-blooded queens and princesses,
Who have charms made of diamond and pearl;
But the only and thoroughbred lady
Is the Rebel Girl.

CHORUS:

That's the Rebel Girl, that's the Rebel Girl!
To the working class she's a precious pearl.
She brings courage, pride and joy
To the fighting Rebel Boy;
We've had girls before, but we need some more
In the Industrial Workers of the World,
For it's great to fight for freedom
With a Rebel Girl.

Yes, her hands may be hardened from labor,
And her dress may not be very fine;
But a heart in her bosom is beating
That is true to her class and her kind.
And the grafters in terror are trembling
When her spite and defiance she'll hurl;
For the only and thoroughbred lady
Is the Rebel Girl.

—wlv—



Sheet music of Joe Hill's "The Rebel Girl."

The Core of THE CLASS WAR: Direct Action

JOE HILL was murdered by the state for his beliefs. Since his death many people have claimed Joe Hill as a symbol while conveniently forgetting his ideas. His belief in organisation and direct action have been ignored by a lot of anarchists and also by people like the Communist party, who had no time for him while he lived but also hailed him after his murder.

The philosophy of direct action has existed as long as workers have been in struggle. It was always the first method of struggle. The early history of the labour movement is one of bitter struggle with direct action as the centre. The bitter violence of those times has slowly been replaced by the present parliamentarist approach of our unions today as the class struggle has become blunted by a gradualist approach to social questions. The problem for our union leaders, who would wish otherwise, is that a basic belief in direct action has not been destroyed. The idea of taking immediate action to solve any problem, without going through "established channels" of strikes, sabotage, occupations still appears despite the wishes of our rulers that we should play by their rules.

A few years ago at London airport, an attempt was made to bring in an American company called General Air Services to take over the handling of baggage. It was decided by the baggage handlers that this was an attempt to bring in non-union labour in order to destroy the existing structure. The handlers organised a joint shops stewards committee of all airport workers, outside contractors involved in construction work, taxi drivers and many others who were totally uninvolved in baggage handling. Meetings were held and with the arrival of the first aircraft that was to be unloaded by G.A.S. employees the workers went out onto the runway and surrounded the aircraft. The airport police attacked the people, who retaliated by switching off all power on the airport and sabotaging conveyor belts. All this led to G.A.S. people not being allowed onto the airport.

This was a perfect example of direct action, it united usually divided elements, people usually considered unconcerned with the issue became involved, fought hard and took personal risks for what they saw as a basic injustice against one section of the workforce. Such an example shows the power of workers who become involved in concrete action instead of letting their "leaders" debate the issue with their employees. By getting involved in direct action everyone contributes and can see the result of unfed action. If they had gone through the "established" procedure the dispute would probably have been lost, but by all being involved, everyone wins ... Direct action is controlled by those people involved in it. It is their decisions that control their activity. In fact, many sections of the Labour movement use direct action most of the time - e.g. the construction industry and the miners are all very involved in "unofficial" actions constantly.

Naturally our rulers want to curb this sort of activity - proposed legislation over the past four years has centered itself on the narrowing field of "legal" direct action. This is in fact self-defeating since workers en masse have before, and will again, ignore any law that tries to tie down their means of struggle.

The philosophy of direct action does not really exist since it is a reaction to events, taken generally without reference to any political implication. It should be the role of anarchists within the labour movement to expand these ideas of direct action into a part of a complete theory that will bring about the downfall of the existing capitalist order. Attempts to apply the ideas that surround direct action have taken a downward path since the times of Joe Hill. Many people are now trying to put the ideas of class struggle anarchism back into the working class with direct action as the centre of activity around which will be built a mass anarchist working class movement.

Clem Turff. Secretary, Direct Action Movement.

RESISTANCE & ORGANISATION

THE general atmosphere in workplaces, and amongst most working people seems to be a mixture of fatalism and acceptance of 'our lot', with a deep rooted cynicism and disillusionment with all politics. The urge to escape (sports, TV, cards, working for next year's holiday) dominates and nowhere is to be found any libertarian vision of possible social change. People are afraid of challenging the system, mainly due to the lack of confidence and strength which would come from being independently organised. People are divided industrially and in all manner of modern categories and sub-cultures, and sexism and racism abound.

Despite this there remain strong class feelings, a growing anger at worsening standards of living, and a nihilistic rejection of 'loyalty to the job', especially amongst youngsters. When pressed, most people will agree that an anarchist society is desirable, but insist it isn't possible. They identify with the system through their property or family structure, and most hope (despairingly) for reforms or benevolence. In this they still support Labour against 'the Tories'. We are all now on the defensive, seeking to stand our ground against the present profit seeking onslaught.

THE SYSTEM MAKES PREPARATIONS

A careful look at what has been happening in the last few years reveals a strong pattern. There is the trend towards corporatism as pushed by the Labour Party, which is attempting to smother class conflict by institutionalising it through a growing representative bureaucracy, arbitration, CBI-TUC joint strategy, participation schemes etc. The welfare state is seen as vital to the stability of the workforce, but not at the expense of profits or more urgent public spending (eg. the military).

The other sort of competing trend, pushed now by the Tories and industrialists, is to allow the free movement of capital in order that profitable industry expand and the rest be disposed with. Nationalisations, the state managing of vital but unprofitable sectors of the economy, are recognised as a necessary evil, as is the welfare state. But faced with a profit-level crisis, there is no hesitation, as we can see now, in slashing public services and nationalised or unprofitable sectors. In the short term there is bound to be a rise in profits, but in the long term there looms a destabilised economy, class confrontation and a possible depression.

Of these two tendencies, the technobureaucracy of the Labour Party has until recently seemed the most stable and logical development for capitalism. Free market capitalism seemed worn out in the modern world, but in Britain at least, is asserting itself a little at the moment. This is either because there is a genuine economic crisis and class polarisation is inevitable, or it is a temporary measure both for quick profits and for disciplining the workforce. I think the fact that the process has been well under way during the last few years indicates that we could be facing a major capitalist crisis.

The forces and institutions which are entrusted to maintaining the necessary levels of repression and order are definitely on the move. We are witnessing the militarisation of western Europe by the police (with increasing use of arms, technology and military-style organisation), the introduction of a whole battery of laws designed to wipe out the liberal reforms of the last 100 years or so, especially in the 60s, and worsening prison conditions. It seems that all this is a recognition of the increasing need (beyond the usual desire) to strengthen social control, before any social or economic breakdown.

Much of this increased policing is directed at restless minorities (in Ireland requiring an army occupation to suppress) or against political activity such as squatting, demonstrations etc. It is attempting to keep opposition marginal. But we have seen also increased policing against picketing (Grunwick's, bakers' strike, NUJ) and of course the army brought in more and more to break key strikes. During the long drivers' strike last year the state was worried enough to set up 'Emergency Councils', then just for propaganda but actually precursors of military control.

It is not as if the system is certain to collapse or that it will happen tomorrow, it's just that the system, in order to survive, has to prepare for any eventualities and adapt. An energy crisis is foreseen and so nuclear power is being developed, although irreversibly lethal. At the same time, energy is central to any economy, and by centralising and militarising it, the most powerful groups of workers, power workers (who brought down Heath, Stormont and the Shah of Iran) can be weakened. The same is true of micro-technology which both increases profits and reduces the strength of industrial workers. A double-edged sword.

THE UNIONS

What is the role of the trade unions? They have always been the mechanisms which involve workers in negotiating concessions from employers, and a massive bureaucracy of representation and control has been built up and integrated with capitalism, from the low-level officials to the executive. This machinery is 100 per cent behind the Labour Party and social democracy and consistently manipulates and suppresses the entire organised workforce to this end. So for the last five years, they have attempted to enforce a Social Contract wage freeze, and ignored the increasing undermining of organised Labour by scabbing, use of police and army and anti-Labour Laws.

However, in order to maintain the allegiance of their members who still participate to a large extent in branch meetings, union machinery and the mandating of various levels of representation, unions have occasionally to organise confrontations with employers to improve and defend wages and conditions. This is usually symbolic (eg. one day strikes) unless there is a level of anger and organisation at grass roots level which threatens to take up the struggle independently. In this case the union attempts to suppress shop-floor organisation while at the same time calling for a wider confrontation (eg. indefinite strike).

Recently, hospital unions have even sanctioned work-in occupations, mainly because they are happening anyway, but also because of the need to defend the welfare state and knowing that HOWEVER MILITANT THE RESISTANCE TO TORY INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY, IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN POSSIBLE TO TAKE IT OVER AND MANIPULATE IT INTO A STRUGGLE FOR SOCIAL DEMOCRACY (i.e. LABOUR PARTY). In this way the vicious circle is maintained. And we the millions of people in workplaces around the country have up to now been unable to break out due to the lack of confidence in alternative forms of independent organisation (revolutionary unions, workers' councils, unofficial assemblies, rank and file networks etc). These alternatives have been suppressed and gradually recuperated into the union structure.

RESISTANCE AND ORGANISATION

However, after four years of Social Contract, with steadily worsening standards of living, a series of angry and determined strikes across the whole of industry broke out. The unions as architects of the Contract had great difficulty in controlling them, attempting to impose productivity deals (eg. miners) or 'special case' arguments etc (i.e. firemen). For this reason independent forms of organisation and resistance have flourished, which we must learn from if we are to influence the class struggle in the coming years. Let's look into some of these important struggles.

A) Breakways

In an attempt to negotiate directly with the employers thousands of skilled carworkers in Leylands and around the country broke away from their unions forming their own craft organisation. Although setting up a representative hierarchy and arguing for the maintenance of differentials, they faced a massive attack from the press, unions and company. Their success in surviving and taking united action has shown that mass breakaways from unions is a possibility for sections of workers.

B) Occupations

Not always successful; this is a tactic which is beginning to get on the agenda, especially as a way of opposing closures and redundancies (which we will be experiencing on a mass scale in the near future). Hospital workers (especially at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson work-in in London) seem to have been the first to really take this up and much depends on active support from those on the outside. The Greenwich Steel factory occupation collapsed due to lack of support, because they had to either spread the struggle into other steel plants or look like keeping control of the factory for a long time. It is vital that shipyards, steel factories and other workplaces facing closure are OCCUPIED and supported, for striking will

be useless. The beauty of occupations is the ability of the people involved to retain control of the struggle.

c) On the Job Actions

In April this year 140 of the 180 London GPO offices took their own action, coordinated London-wide against a rumoured union/PO 'efficiency' agreement as part of a shitty wage deal. Within a week there was a backlog of 40 million letters and almost total seizure of the country's mail (60 per cent goes through London). Yet no-one lost more than four hours' pay. (Most lost two hours). The rotating shift stoppages, decided on the shopfloor, combined with work to rules, non-cooperation and anything that was fancied, hid by the appearance of work, was the most effective action ever taken by postal workers. Their 1971 all-out strike had been a disaster. Union and management were shitting themselves and the atmosphere in the offices was electric. Three thousand demonstrated at 48 hours' notice outside Union of Postal Workers headquarters. Involved myself I would say that it was like a great weight off our backs, the potential was endless. There were no demands and just as there was talk of continuing our effortless disruption and formulating our own wage demands as the action spread to other towns the UPW executive organised a national ballot and the London district council of delegates (mostly officials) which had supported the action managed to call it off 'until after the ballot'. The union lost 6-1, the deal was scrapped (a real victory), but the shop floor initiative had been institutionalised and killed. However, this form of organised, localised resistance based on shift decision making, immeasurably boosted the combativity of postal workers. This form of action has been well used by public employees and civil servants, although uneasily controlled by the unions.

D) Independent Agitation

The first major defeat of the Social Contract was the seven-week national strike throughout Fords. There existed across the country a network of small groups and individuals in each car factory called the Ford Workers (UK) Combine, which had consistently agitated against the Social Contract, for action to be taken for a living wage, and attacking union bureaucracy.



On the day and at the place that the employers/unions met to seal a pathetic 5 per cent wage rise, 200 Combine supporters angrily picketed and heckled outside. This scene was on the news and WITHIN HOURS ALMOST EVERY FORD FACTORY HAD SHUT DOWN DUE TO AN INSTANTANEOUS WALK OUT BY DISGUSTED WORKERS. The strike became solid and indefinite and a terrified Transport and General Workers Union had to leap into action, blacking all movement of Ford parts and cars in Britain and at ports. Meanwhile the Combine continued to issue thousands of leaflets, hold meetings, produced 'FRAUD' T-shirts, its own record and held marches and pickets. They also countered the press-inspired wives-against-the-strike movement. The strike was a total victory.

The Combine then tried to do a regular, popular paper for Fords. An autonomous organisation, its members included people from different parties and some anarchists and many independent militants, with some outside friends helping out. The value of this sort of organisation is unquestionable and there exist similar ones, if less effective for the moment, in other industries and workplaces.

E) Support Activity

In any dispute, people not industrially connected can nevertheless play a vital part in supporting and extending the struggle. Getting involved in occupations, mass pickets, parallel campaigns, blacking, collecting money, taking more direct action against employers etc. With the growth of the women's movement support campaigns have been occasionally organised, such as equal pay strikes, EGA hospital for women, support for homeworkers. Also some Asian workers' struggles are being taken up by the Asian community. The Grunwick strike was turned into a virtual battle between supporters and the state (Special Patrol Group) and was a total defeat for the strikers due to the inability of those involved to defend themselves (because they accepted control by the left and unions). However, support committees, often unaligned, organised blacking and transport to picket lines, etc. Same, on a smaller scale, at the Garners strike.

The conclusions must be that there should be outside support for all struggles but it must generate industrial solidarity, or other activity beyond 'normal channels'.

F) New Areas

A brief mention must be made about the development of class conflict in new areas of industry - we have seen struggles of

civil servants, hospital workers, social workers, computer staff and elsewhere. Their newness to industrial action could bring fresh tactics, although unions are recruiting and strengthening themselves in these areas. At the same time, unorganised workers are joining unions and going for recognition, discovering the two-faced attitudes of unions who welcome them but sabotage their struggles. It is also clear that there was absolutely no solidarity between the thousands of London Ford strikers in the TGWU and the 80 Garners strikers trying to join. 'Union'? However, the attempts to organise have been determined and imaginative, and it is possible that frustration could lead to the setting up of new independent unions (eg. in catering), or some sort of works committee or shop stewards. In this event, the unions would steam in with an apologetic and militant face, to take over. Surprisingly, the old-established sectors - miners, dockers, rail, engineering etc - have been kept exceptionally well under control (until recently anyway).

G) Workers' Councils

One of the most important events for years was the lorry drivers' strike in 1978, which brought the British economy in some sectors to a standstill, in others UNDER CONTROL OF THE INDEPENDANT STRIKE COMMITTEES - i.e. essential goods and services. Whole towns could only function with the supervision of the lorry drivers, for example Middlesbrough and Warrington, where no goods moved in or out without authorisation of pickets et up on all routes. They also sent pickets to all distribution centres. The Union (TGWU) hierarchy was never in control of the members although it tried, and it and the Labour government virtually begged them to return, not to work, but to 'normal' strike tactics. They didn't issue orders, send in the army or the police because they were terrified of two things - a) The seemingly unlimited determination and power of the strikers, b) The escalation of the dispute into a general shut-down of industry: this would have caused an emergency social situation which could have been solved by the development of the lorry drivers' committees, joining with other groups of workers, into WORKERS' COUNCILS to take over the management of each town and area. And fuck me if that's not what we've wanted for 100 years. A dual power, revolutionary situation! Suffice to say they got their demands in full.

In the huge Scott-Caledonian shipyards in Port Glasgow, there is a widely read regular bulletin, started by anarchists, which is trying to agitate for the abolition of the shop stewards' committee (the union officialdom is irrelevant and hated anyway) and turning the assemblies into a works council. Facing mass redundancies, and with a need to occupy, this is no mere dream.

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So working people are increasingly employing new forms of organisation to resist their exploitation by the ruling class and manipulation and representation by unions. We have to.

Out-the-gate strikes, for a day or indefinite, have been the traditional form of struggle, but are now either extremely poor weapons against a well-organised capitalism, or they are turned by unions into a merely passive and symbolic show of strength (and weakness). In the second case they rarely scare the employers, and anyway only serve to strengthen union machinery controlling us.

THE LEFT

You may be getting the impression that revolution is about to break out any minute. Unfortunately, not true! Most of the above struggles are strictly economic, those involved are rarely interested in general social change, wishing only to defend their standard of living. In any case, revolutions have up to now been transformed, taken over and crushed by statist organisations and institutions, because THEY MAKE CONTINUOUS PREPARATIONS for seizing power, and for spreading

their ideas and strategies amongst the workers. We have to analyse and counter their influence, and fight their organisations for they are masters of manipulation. The Left, including the Labour Party, are a fifth column among the working class, controlled by a rising bureaucratic middle class which represents the logical continuation of the system - State Capitalism.

The Labour Party controls the unions. The various Marxist parties seek to gain influence within unions by taking control of the branches and shop stewards' committees. To this end, they create any amount of front organisations which work hard both on the shop floor and within the union hierarchy and conferences, to push their line and transitional strategies. Their influence in workplaces comes from the consistent work they do to present their ideas as the only alternative opposition to the employers or to 'the Right' within the unions. They are capable, through this influence and their organisations, of adapting - should unions be replaced by workers' councils, or other such organisations, they will be there to try and take them over.

Anarchists and councillist ideas are almost non-existent amongst workers. On the one hand, libertarians tend to be drawn into various leftie fronts and so neutralised. On the other hand, most working people drawn into such groups are involved in wage struggles, for example, and have begun to reject only certain aspects of their conditioning, and are not committed revolutionaries. This is why Marxist groups support social democracy as 'transitional' to some socialist future or other, and recruit on this basis. Their members therefore never mature to revolutionary ideas. To cooperate with or work within 'the Left' is disastrous. We will be consistently used and manipulated. If in reality we feel we have to work with the odd SWP member or so in our workplace, with the Rank and File within our industry, or with the local party in our town, it is entirely because of a lack of our own alternative strategy.

REVOLUTIONARY AGITATION

So what should revolutionaries be saying and doing, apart from the day-to-day individual discussions with colleagues? Firstly we have to create our own autonomous groups and organisations, and develop a realistic and consistent modern strategy, for ourselves and for sympathisers and for the class struggle in general. Slogans are mere rhetoric. It is obvious that new forms of organisation in the control of the shop and office floor are being discovered and employed, along with traditional ones. Assemblies, councils, support groups, mass

pickets, secondary picketing, autonomous industrial networks - involved in occupations, strikes, work-to-rules etc. It is our task to encourage, explain and strengthen these and other similar developments around the world, and to agitate effectively to spread them throughout all the workplaces and in each struggle. At the same time, we have to stimulate the weak, often buried, political ideas and conclusions, and spread the vision of an anarchist future. As our activities and ideas begin to be seen to be relevant, people will become interested in working with us. We have to create a consistent presence, with a network of local and industrial agitational groups and organisations, all welcoming and involving new people. We must not only influence events and people in the short term, but prepare for any future situations.

There are two main groups operating in London who are beginning to create such a movement - the Direct Action Movement (DAM) and the group I am involved with, the London Workers Group.

The DAM is a national anarcho-syndicalist organisation with 60 members after only six months, and already beginning to produce and widely distribute effective material. It is firmly industrial and working class in orientation, yet also committed to other areas of activity. Many of its members would like to create a CNT-type Industrial Union, but others, like us in the LWG, rightly see the function of anarchists as supporting the various forms of organisation which are created by workers themselves to express the needs of their struggles.

To attempt to organise to replace trade unions with revolutionary industrial unions, is impossible because the existing unions can recuperate and destroy such a movement, and nowhere will it be allowed to negotiate. At the same time, an organisation which is set up to negotiate will be institutionalised and forced to create a bureaucracy. It will then be a barrier to progress. The DAM is, however, a recruiting organisation.

The LWG is working closely with DAM (London) and has decided to remain an independent organisation, although there is an overlap of membership. We do not recruit, aiming to spread our ideas by example. We aim to encourage the formation of similar autonomous groups in every town and industry, not necessarily anarchist, or permanent, but contributing to a consistently growing libertarian workers movement, uncontrolled by dogma and structure, but responding to the immediate and long-term needs of the class struggle. It's about time anarchists put their theories into practice. As Joe Hill said - 'don't moan, organise!'

DAVE, London Workers Group



Full size, hand printed linocut poster of the above design is available (40p inc. postage) from the artist: Peter Ford, 22 Royal Road, Ramsgate, Kent.



from FREEDOM late 1940's