

ON complacency. Last Christmas I bought a puppy for my daughter - an attractive Irish red setter we christened Rudi. The pedigree's price: thirty guineas.

That sum would have paid for the food and education of one child for one year in some part of the hungry side of society in Asia.

The money could have been donated to the Save the Children Fund, who operate a scheme for adopting a child and giving him or her a chance in life which could make a difference between happy survival or horrible starvation.

In the first three months of this year, it cost me about £30 to feed Rudi and board him in kennels while we went on holiday. That's the second child we could have adopted for one year.

The cost of feeding Rudi for the rest of the year would have fed and educated two more children.

I could, of course, sign a gift cheque for £30 and keep Rudi. But the fact is that I would still be putting a dog before a child's welfare.

The moral issue is clear, and one which I - along with thousands of other dog owners in animal-loving Britain - failed to face up to.

In case anyone wants to, they can send their cheques to the Sponsorship Controller, The Save the Children Fund, 29 Queen Anne's Gate, London, S.W.1.

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*According to the last population census report, 100,000 homes stand empty in London. The Government says it can't do more to find homes for the poor. If it really cared, full site-value rating would work wonders on those empty houses.*

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SHAREHOLDERS nominally own our large industrial corporations, but until now it's been the self-perpetuating bureaucratic managers who have been the decision-makers.

Shareholders have largely been treated with contempt. To put it bluntly, the managers regard them as a nuisance who need to be pacified once a year at the annual meeting, when they are honoured

## Thin end of the wedge

— BY FRED  
HARRISON

with a prepared statement by the chairman telling them next to nothing.

In the past two or three years, however, the boardroom bosses have received a few calculated jabs which have shaken some of them out of their inertia.

This is due to a few pressure groups, mainly left-wing. They have bought shares, and with them, the right to ask awkward questions.

Questions, for instance, about investment and wages in South Africa. Questions about environmental spoliation, the social costs of which are not borne out of corporate profits.

The latest example of this attack on the big combines was the *Guardian's* investigation into working conditions of black labour in southern Africa.

Not surprisingly, there's been the usual reaction. The "trouble-makers" have been branded as extremists seeking sinister political ends.

Latest into the fray is Aims of Industry, with their "Organised Political Pressures on Companies," a document they call an anti-anti-report.

The pressure groups (and what

## A Personal Column

is Aims of Industry if not one such enterprise?) which have taken strictly legitimate direct action against particular companies are all tarred with the same brush:

"One thing that all the groups have in common is that they want companies to change policies or activities to conform with the militants' political beliefs which are extreme. Some of the immediate aims being pursued may, at a quick, first glance, appear beguiling. What the groups really want, however, is the downfall of the whole free enterprise system."

ALL VERY sinister. And there are a few suggestive quotes which imply (but don't actually demonstrate) that the militants want to undermine the whole capitalist system.

What the report does not explain is why the political *desire* to retain the capitalist system must be right and the political *desire* to change (or, more dramatically, overthrow) it is wrong.

What their quotes do show - and what Aims of Industry has to admit is wholly laudable - is that the pressure groups want a code of morality to guide decision-making.

The code, for instance, which forced the Polaroid Corporation to improve pay and conditions of black workers in South Africa, forced them to plough back some profits to educate them, and stopped them selling film to the government for the "instant pictures" for passes that Africans must carry.

Pressure groups, left or right, only become sinister when they operate covertly, like ITT in its attempts to subvert Allende's Marxist powerbase in Chile.

The pressure groups have not operated in sinister fashion, but they have had the effect of inspiring Aims of Industry into proposing fuller information from corporations for their shareholders, and led them to urge that greater responsibility should be exercised in practice as well as in theory.

Those left-wingers, it seems, are having success on the right-wing!

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LAND & LIBERTY