

The 'Neo-Communist Plot'

NEW BOGEY — OLD PROBLEM

SINCE the virtual demise of the Communist Party as an influence among the workers, following Khrushchev's bombshell on Holy Joe and the crushing of Hungary, the Press has been rather flummoxed when there has been an unofficial strike.

Having gleefully buried the C.P. paper, they could not very well use the old red bogey, since the Party could hardly be finished and still have an influence at the same time. In the absence of evidence of any other 'Black Hand Gang at work, wrecking the good relations between Britain's workers and Britain's employers, the journalists who know what's going on were compelled to discover what the issues were in one of the strikes of this summer—'summer' is the right word.

Now this of course presents some leadership for the working journalist. In the first place he has to serve the political and economic interests of his paper, therefore he has to maintain that a strike is *wrong* whoever is leading it, official or unofficial, and for whatever issues it may be fought.

No Time to Look

Secondly, since strikes are rarely caused by one single incident but are usually the result of an accumulation of grievances, the unravelling of the causes take time and patient enquiry and an honest attempt to understand what the men are thinking and feeling. For most journalists this is a very difficult task since they are not in sympathy with the workers to begin with (for though economically they are workers they like to think of themselves as professional men and women) nor are the workers sympathetic and forthcoming to them in view of the biased reports which the Press usually presents to the public.

Nor, of course, does the reporter have time to get to the bottom of an

industrial dispute. He has a deadline to meet and has to get back to a telephone or to his typewriter to bash the copy out on time. Only when a feature article is demanded by the editor can time be taken for background investigation—and feature articles are precisely the ones which have to pedal the line of the paper, impress the views of its owner upon its readers and are therefore the least likely to be objective.

A Diversion

Thus it is much easier for the reporter to discover a Red Plot. Then he doesn't have to dig for reasons, weigh the pros and cons of a case or sift the evidence from the anger and exaggeration of the workers and the cunning of the bosses. He can just point an outraged finger and scream 'agitators!—wreckers!' and attention is successfully diverted both from the grievances of the strikers and the superficiality of his report.

As we have said, however, the fact of having successfully interred the Communist Party made it difficult to blame that good old stand-by. And of course the 'worst' strike of this year was the seven-week bus strike in London and that was an official strike with the blessing of the Transport Workers' leader, Frank Cousins, who may be a militant by Fleet Street standards but is certainly no Communist.

The solution then, was obvious. Somebody in Fleet Street had read the cleric's reply to Bakunin: 'If God did not exist it would be necessary to invent him', and knew immediately what had to be done. If a Red Menace does not exist it becomes necessary to invent one.

New Revolutionaries, Indeed!

Quick off the mark (and the fact that it is fighting for circulation has, of course, nothing whatever to do with its scare headlines) was the

good old *News Chronicle*, which a month ago ran a feature series on Britain's New Revolutionaries, who turned out to be old revolutionaries operating under a new label.

The *News Chronicle* has discovered (smart piece of detective work) that some of the ex-C.P.-ers who left the Party in disgust after Hungary have banded themselves together to continue the work of building a mass revolutionary working class political party which, they now, at long last, realise, is *not* being done by the Communists—i.e. the Stalinists, or whatever they should be called now.

These new revolutionaries are rallying themselves around Peter Fryer, the *Daily Worker* foreign correspondent whose reports from Hungary were suppressed by the editor, and who took umbrage thereat and resigned from the Party (though in his time as a card-holder he must have zigged and zagged with the party line on many an occasion). Fryer started a bulletin called *The Newsletter*, which presents as militant and direct a line as any bunch of politicians will when they set out to gather the support of militant workers.

Building Workers' Struggle

At the time of the Aldermaston march and the height of the publicity for the Nuclear Disarmament Campaign, the *Newsletter* called for industrial action against nuclear armaments, and since then they have

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More about the Contraceptive Pill

THE 'Lambeth Bishops' having at last realised that sex is here to stay and that it occurs when people are not ready for children, Birth Control has become a 'positive' policy; each couple are now permitted to use the contraceptive methods which suit their individual needs and consciences. Not that they have much choice.

The most reliable method available is that of a mechanical barrier (cap or condom) and a spermicidal jelly or cream. This method requires good plumbing and a fair amount of 'sophistication', which limits its use to that of the more industrial societies. Various trials using creams or foaming tablets without a mechanical barrier are continuing in many countries, particularly in the East, and results, although not conclusive, are promising.

The ideal method is the much talked of oral contraception. It has at last moved from the theoretical to the experimental field and trials have started. In Puerto Rico a Dr. Pincus, in collaboration with the island's Family Planning Association, is investigating the possibility of hormonal control of conception.

The menstrual cycle, which is controlled by the hormone system, can be divided into two stages. The first, the follicular stage during which the graffian follicle matures in the ovary (ovulation), is brought about by the oestrogenic hormones—oestrodial being the main one. The second stage, the luteal stage, is controlled by progesterone which prepares the uterus for the descending egg. Progesterone will only act if preceded by oestrogen and excess of either will suppress the effect of the other. If progesterone is given in sufficient quantity it will prevent ovulation. This is the principle of the method tried in Puerto Rico.

A synthetic hormone, Enovid, having similar properties to progesterone, was used, as progesterone taken by mouth has a short-lived effect. Each woman took

one 10 mgm. tablet of enovid daily from the fifth to the twenty-fourth days of her cycle. The results after two years, expressed as the pregnancy rate per hundred women years was as follows: Of those who took all their tablets regularly no pregnancies occurred. Of those who missed taking one to five tablets the rate was 9.2. Where five to nineteen tablets were missed it was 25.9. The rate before treatment was 62.5 approx. This is considerably better than results obtained using other methods.

There were cases of patients who dropped out of the trial due to moving house, and other unforeseeable factors. Others were due to side effects of enovid; nausea and headaches. These were investigated and antacid tablets were found to reduce considerably these unpleasant side effects. Another trial in a different district is under way and the experience gained has obviously been considerable as there has been only one per cent. defaulters.

This is probably the first properly controlled trial of oral contraception and the results are very encouraging although there are many doubts. Much needs to be known about the long-term effects; will the hormonal balance of the body be disturbed? Will ovulation occur normally when the method is discontinued after years of use? Some medical people are worried about the possibility of foetal abnormalities if conception occurs during the hormone course—although babies born of women who became pregnant after stopping the tablets have so far been normal.

Only time can settle these doubts. The most serious drawback, particularly for the underdeveloped countries, is the need to take a pill for twenty days of each cycle. It seems unlikely that this can be overcome so that this method might be limited in its application.

But, at last oral contraception has arrived and its perfection will we hope be rapid now that a 'breakthrough' has been achieved. J.N.

Reflections on a Mine Disaster

Coal and the Common Sense Society

LAST week in Springhill, Nova Scotia, 87 miners lost their lives when they were trapped, some at a depth of more than 13,000 feet down following an underground landslide. Gas hampered rescuers and it is probable that many of the trapped men died from suffocation. Of the 77 who were rescued thirteen were injured, but Press reports do not say how seriously.

Last week's issue of our American contemporary *l'Adunata dei Refrattari* contains a short obituary of a comrade who had recently died at the age of 69 years "32 of which, as a result of a mining accident, had been painfully spent immobilised in a chair or in bed".

THE spectacular mining disasters, which hit the headlines and set

in motion the Royal and V.I.P. Sympathy Telegrams Service, represent a relatively small percentage of the deaths and injuries of this most dangerous industry. Every year in Britain hundreds of miners are killed by explosions, by falls of ground, shaft and haulage accidents. The seriously injured are counted in thousands and every year one miner in five suffers some injury or disablement which keeps him away from work for more than three days. It is, besides, an unhealthy industry responsible for cutting short the lives of thousands of workers whose eyes and lungs are affected by the dust and disease of their trade.

That hundreds of thousands of men should be cut off from the light of day for the major part of their lives; that every working day should carry the risks of violent death or crippling injury; that with every life-giving breath a miner should in fact be also hastening his premature end; and last, but not least, that in the name of civilisation and progress men should be required to crawl on their bellies three miles below the earth's surface . . . all this is only possible in a world in which values have become distorted beyond human recognition. After all it is not only the public which shows a lack of imagination (when it attacks the miners for "slacking" and "absenteeism" or complains of having to subsidise the miners' "riotous living" and holidays in the South of France), but the miners themselves, who generation after generation go on providing the human sacrifice to

the god of Industry without so much as a spark of revolt.

It may be true that we who write about the mines and the miners have no experience and too much imagination; that miners enjoy their jobs and if given the choice would infinitely prefer to hew coal in stifling heat, on their bellies at 13,000 feet below ground, than dig a ditch *above* ground. All we can say is, that if they do, then as we see it, something is wrong, either with them as a community, or with the society in which they live!

★
EVEN in an age on the brink of providing mechanical hearts and artificial kidneys, Life is still a risk, and not even the most perfect Utopia could guarantee immunity from death, nor would most mentally healthy people require it as an incentive to living a full life. But the extraordinary phenomenon of our age is that people are, as it were, penny wise pound foolish in matters of life and death: they are unwilling to take risks which may prejudice their status or lower their material standards of life but seem unaware of the fact that in not taking the plunge they are acquiescing to something much worse, which is their

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FREEDOM needs many more New Readers

Brutality Knows no Frontiers

JERUSALEM, OCTOBER 12.

Eight officers and men of the Israeli frontier force were to-day convicted of first-degree murder for their part in the massacre of 43 Arab villagers, including seven children, on October 29, 1956, the day of the Israeli invasion of Egypt. Three other accused were acquitted.

A handful of men belonging to the frontier force was sent to enforce a curfew on the Arabs in the village of Kfar Kasim, near the Jordan border. They shot dead the 43 men, women and children who were returning to their homes unaware of the curfew.

Major Schmueel Malinki (38), a veteran of the British Army and father of four children, was not present at the massacre, but was accused of issuing an illegal order to carry out the murders. The others were accused of executing the murders.

Witnesses said Major Malinki had been asked beforehand what should be done with those returning to the village without knowing a curfew had been imposed. He replied: "They should be regarded as curfew-breakers. May Allah have mercy on their souls."

The major testified that this order had been given to him by his own superior officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Issahar Shadmi. Colonel Shadmi denied having discussed the position of curfew-breakers ignorant of their offence.

The other accused pleaded that they had merely carried out orders received

from their superiors. Lieutenant Gavriel Dehan (28), a regular soldier who led the patrol, said he believed the order he received from his superior was dictated by the military situation.

The man said to have actually fired most of the fatal shots, Corporal Shalom Ofer (26), told the court: "In my view, I carried out as I understood it the order I received from Lieutenant Dehan." Corporal Ofer twice attempted to commit suicide while in custody awaiting trial.

The Court President, Dr. Benjamin Halevy, said in his judgment that Lieutenant Dehan and Corporal Ofer had been guilty of "cold-blooded and premeditated murder."—*Reuter*.

MODERN TIMES

SYDNEY, OCTOBER 21.

At a new restaurant opened to-day in Sydney the diner orders a meal by pressing buttons on a panel corresponding with the dishes on the menu. This registers the order and the table number in the kitchen and notifies the cashier of the amount of the bill. Then the food is brought from the kitchen on a conveyor belt.

The designer of the system says it will deliver food in from three to five minutes during a busy period, instead of the present average of ten to fifteen minutes.

—*British United Press*.

PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT! WEEK 43

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The Claims of the Anarchist Movement

THE most important function of the recent international gathering of anarchists was not the series of resolutions it carried, but the fact that through it, the participants, and those who were or will come in contact with it through its written communications, were made conscious of the fact that anarchism exists as an international movement, with conscious, active groups in every country in Western Europe, most countries in the American continent, and in isolated other parts of the world.

There is no central organisation to which these anarchists give their adherence, just as there is no authoritative body of doctrine to which they subscribe. It is consequently impossible to ask anyone to join the anarchist movement in the way in which one can join the world Communist movement, the Social Democratic movement, or any internationally organised church. There is no universally accepted declaration of principles by means of which an interested sympathiser can test his attitude to see whether or not he is an anarchist. If some groups and federations do have membership files and even statements of principle, they are merely conveniences, and hardly any would claim that the person without a membership card was less of an anarchist than the proud holder, and adherence to a statement of principles generally means that the person wants to take part in a specific type of anarchist activity, and is joining a group devoted to it, and is not a means of separating anarchist sheep from non-anarchist goats.

This deplorable untidiness in the anarchist movement may frighten away many left-thinking people who are broad-minded enough to consider anarchism as a possible claimant to their social and political endeavour. Despite this, the anarchist movement can present claims to being the most effective and purposeful movement acting within society today, and it is perhaps because of this, that we do not need to waste so much time on internal organisation.

During the recent de Gaulle plebiscite in France, when 85% of the population were apparently falling head over heels to put a one-man figurehead to the despotic government which rules over them, in place of the former pluralistic figurehead, the anarchists denounced the plebiscite itself. The leaders of the

socialist party brought their followers in behind de Gaulle, and only the Communists and supporters of Mendès-France could suggest the alternative, of carrying on with a Fourth Republic which had already collapsed. The anarchists, in a declaration made by three anarchist groups and the anarcho-syndicalist union in Paris, and in a poster published by *Le Monde Libertaire* pointed out that the problems weighing so heavily on the French people would never be solved by putting one constitution in place of another, or one set of politicians in place of a previous set. They showed the responsibility of the socialists and communists, the so-called parties of the working class, in leading the French to the brink of fascism, and *did not promise to lead them to freedom*. The declaration referred to ends with the claim: The anarchists have never betrayed you. We have always urged you to put trust in no-one but yourselves.

IN Italy the anarchist movement is suffering an intense attack by the government, in the form of numerous prosecutions of speakers, editors, writers, and comrades responsible for posters. These result variously in acquittals or prison sentences of up to a year. Yet the movement in Italy, just as in all countries, is hampered in its work by numerical smallness, lack of funds, difficulties in producing its propaganda due to these, and so on. The Italian state is worried nevertheless. The Communist and Socialist parties are prepared to indulge in fisticuffs in the Chamber, but on political questions they support the union of church and state, offer the workers nothing more than the emulation of the Soviet Union, and it was reported in the English press that *L'Unità* even brought out special editions dealing with the Pope's dying. No wonder then, that the workers can vote in their millions for their own workers' parties, without a hand lifted to stop them, but when the anarchists urge them to stay away from the polls and take their defence into their

own hands, every trick of legal procedure is used to make their propaganda appear illegal and to suppress them.

In Spain, the government claims that all strikes are inspired by the Communists. At the same time Franco admits his partial admiration of the Russian régime, as opposed to 'democracy'. Birds of a feather. But the Spanish press in exile claims that the strikes were inspired in Barcelona by members of the illegal anarcho-syndicalist union C.N.T. and at a recent mass trial there no fewer than forty-nine members of the C.N.T. were condemned, two to death. After twenty years of fascist dictatorship, anarcho-syndicalism is so much alive, that Franco needs to deny it in words and repress it by brutality.

In Northern Europe and in Great Britain, there are neither the conditions nor historical basis for the type of politics which involves a large Communist party, and the formal opposition lies in the hands of the social democrats. These cabbage-headed parties can hardly be said to have 'betrayed' the workers, or anyone else, as they have long since given up even promising more than the tiniest morsels of reform. On the economic level, the extreme poverty which gave rise to their existence has disappeared, and having collapsed when faced with a first world war, they have no idea of what to do when faced with the threat

of a third. The social reforms that have been accomplished have all been under the wing of the state, from the Health Service in Britain to the schools of Holland and the family welfare of Scandinavia. In all these countries it is gradually dawning on people that when the state generously subsidises a forward-looking school, it takes away its freedom to introduce the experiments to which its ideas might lead it in the future; that where the state subsidises Universities, it controls by direct or indirect means, what is to be taught in them. Above all this, it is widely felt that the promises in terms of human happiness have not been realised by the Welfare State solution. Within the recent past several social scientists have expressed a leaning towards some aspect or other of the anarchist philosophy. Without committing oneself to more than that, the names of Malcolm Muggeridge, G. D. H. Cole, and J. Hampden Jackson spring to mind.

IT would indeed be interesting if any of these people should show themselves willing to go beyond the expression of intellectual and emotional interest, and to actively work against the extension of State power, and to urge people in general to do the same, and to work towards the establishment of social relations based on free co-opera-

tion. The anarchist movement has been doing this for the last seventy-five years and has not been slow to re-examine and apply anarchist ideas to the issues, as capitalist society has developed into the Welfare State. In the Nordic countries too, the movement suffers from the usual disadvantages consequent on numerical smallness. Nevertheless, the disillusioned socialists are trying to find what has gone wrong, anarchists presenting the alternative approach to social problems which could bring satisfactory solutions. They do usually cry scorn on the ideas of ameliorations introduced by the state, but have always made it clear that advantages are always bound to be this "easy way out". Just when more people are realising these disadvantages it is all the more important that anarchist ideas are continually put before them.

The strength of anarchism in all situations then, can be traced to common roots. They do not recommend people to trust any authority, or to trust anarchists—in power. The emphasis approaches to all problems has been the need for direct action, for people to develop their latent strength for life to use it for themselves. There are situations in which this philosophy is inferior to the authoritarian one, the weakness of the movement is because it demands active work from those who would support it, and asks the person to begin with himself, it does not have many adherents. On that basis, appeal for the active support of anyone who feels inspired to it.

CINEMA

The Man Upstairs

EVERY now and again a film is loosed upon the circuits without benefit of a West-End showing. These films are quite often "B" films, too bad even for the West-End, which one would not believe possible; but sometimes the "off-beat" film gets through, the maverick which no manager in the West-End would book. *The Man Upstairs* now on release is one of these, it is an excellent

film which may have scared the managements into thinking that the audiences wouldn't like it.

But the cinema trade is trying to learn how to beat television. The days of the mass audiences have gone. Vainly one section of the industry tries to drag people into the cinema with horror piled upon horror, or smellorama piled upon cinerama. The other section realizes its only chance is in a minority audience, and films of integrity, sensibility and intelligence will draw the minority in—who probably never have TV anyhow.

It may be that the ideas of libertarianism, humanitarianism or even sheer downright pacifism are, like sheer downright horror something that television being a family entertainment does not and dare not show. If a radical idea showed its head on the television screen too often and too unmistakably it would be slapped down by the lowest common denominator with the mental age of 9 which is the Great British Viewing Public.

It is rumoured that Rank is to make a film on the Notting Hill race riots. I do not think that this will contribute much more to the idea of human responsibility than this film does. Strangely enough it is based upon a real-life incident that happened at Notting Hill which I had forgotten till I saw this film.

A Nigerian went berserk and barricaded himself in his room, the police failed to get him out, a police dog was stabbed but finally a Mental Welfare Officer talked him out of it.

This is the basic situation upon which the director has worked. Richard Attenborough takes the rôle of the man upstairs, a scientist on the verge of a severe mental breakdown, isolated in a top-floor bed-sitter with a stopped clock and a jammed gasmeter. The oppressive claustrophobia is conveyed as brilliantly as in *Le Jour se Lève* to which it bears a slight resemblance.

The strength of the film lies in its refusal to explore the reasons why the man was upstairs under an assumed name. The main action is upon two planes, that of the boarding house dwellers discussing their human responsibility in the matter and the police intent on the technical problem of capturing a law-breaker. Between them is the Mental Welfare Officer (played by Donald Houston) who knows that the bumbling efforts of the police will lead to disaster.

The police have an interview with the man upstairs which truthfully conveys the utter snottiness of the police force. (The abomination of the police is not in the beatings-up and briberies, which, after all, are human on some level but in the machine-like functioning which is their norm).

These two constables are so unutterably true to type that no sympathy is aroused in the audience when one of them is knocked down the stairs and injured. This precipitates a siege upon

a Sidney Street level with a wounded soldier called in from an ordnance depot to supply tear-gas bombs.

The police, as the film progresses, less and less humanitarian, even the brigade gets involved in red-tape.

On the other hand the boarding-house dwellers get more and more aware of their responsibility. The harassed housewife (Patricia Jessel) phones the scientist's fiancée, the fusspot (Kenneth Griffith) who has phoned the police in the first place eventually joins a deputation to ask the police to call off their vicious approach. During the discussion one of the characters says, "They say our society has to be protected from individuals like him but what I want to know is, who's going to protect us from society?"

In the end humanity triumphs and the man upstairs is led away peacefully to a mental hospital. There one might deal with Peter Whitehead and the revelation of hospital attendants in mind, start another struggle for humanity's responsibility and dignity but that is another film which I hope the same excellent company will make. J.R.

Theatre

Brendan Behan

THE HOSTAGE by Brendan Behan. Presented by Theatre Workshop at the Theatre Royal, Stratford, London, E.15.

BRENDAN BEHAN'S new play is exhilarating and exciting. It tends to fall into two parts, a serious play and a revue. The story centres round the I.R.A., with a young cockney soldier held as hostage for an I.R.A. man who is to be hanged. The hostage is held prisoner in a bawdy rooming house in Dublin, and is accidentally shot during a police raid.

The moral appears to be the utter futility and ridiculousness of Irish Nationalism in general and the I.R.A. in particular. This is encouraging coming from Brendan Behan who was in jail for I.R.A. activities. It's a very funny play and in parts extremely moving, perhaps trying to shock just a trifle too hard. The chief character, Pat the caretaker (Howard Goorney) is very well played, Meg his mistress (Avis Bunnage) is too noisy for my liking, the cockney (Murray Melvin) personifies the soldier who is in the Army not to fight and be killed, but just to do his National Service.

Joan Littlewood's production goes at a terrific pace. There is a very fine decor by Sean Kenny. The whole evening, of course, is dominated by the personality of Brendan Behan, who seeks to be there in the considerable flesh at every performance, and rounds off the evening by dancing a jig on the stage. This adds to the feeling of oneness between the actors, the audience and the writer. The atmosphere is something quite different from anything one finds in the West End production, which is somehow remote and out of contact with the audience. I.M.B.

MEETING

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

AN historic account of Birmingham after the Revolution of 1688 describes how this city became a great home of dissent; "Quakers, Unitarians and Jews and the persecuted of every sect found in it a sanctuary" concluded this warming account.

Last week in search of dissenters I ventured into the University of Birmingham only to find the fragments of non-conformism. Invited by the *New Thinkers*, a tiny group of students looking for new ideas, I went there to suggest an alternative to politics which, as one might expect, was too strong for the tender stomachs of some of our University youth.

Allowing for lack of clarity on my part which could have led to misunderstanding I had the impression that the majority of students who attended this meeting had little interest in ideas but what intellectual energy they could muster individually would be used to bolster the "establishment". There was no real sense of enquiry behind the stock questions, but it is not the kind of question which is so depressing—these have to be answered—but the realisation that one is not communicating. Simone Weil wrote somewhere that communication can be induced and truth transmitted by establishing mutual respect and sympathy. For anarchists this is the only desirable way, but I have no faith in my ability to induce sympathy for a philosophy like anarchism from prejudiced people who are convinced that their interests are best served by supporting the existing order. My only hope is that time and their own experience might succeed where anarchists have failed.

A student writing from Birmingham expresses to me his amazement that—"university students are so prejudiced—especially in a 'scientific' University like Birmingham". But it is so amazing that young men and women enjoying the benefits of a University education not available to everyone are so prejudiced? Generally they all come from middle- or working-class homes where the only real difference is in income but not necessarily in social attitude. Working-class parents who have made sacrifices to keep their sons and daughters at universities feel just as strongly, often more so, as middle-class parents about their children "getting on".

The aim of the average student there-

fore, is to receive the kind of training which will prepare him to take his "proper" place in our society. Nurtured in the principles of leadership and competition he sees himself as a privileged individual who will either become a leader of men, unfit (as he sees it) to lead themselves, or pursuing an exclusive economic career either in business or in a well paid job. He rarely questions the unjust basis of our society and assumes that some have innate abilities which "in the nature of things" must always lead to an economic and social division between men. His parents and educators have always said so. When, as sometimes happens, our average student comes into contact with people who have curious ideas about justice and equality, he resolutely surrounds himself with a mental barrier in order to protect his comfortable theories. He then accuses us of trying to establish a society of people who all think alike! He may say that he believes in "freedom"; freedom to vote for one government or another; freedom to compete for a job; freedom to buy good food and pleasant homes if you can earn enough to pay for them; freedom to choose between the armed forces or prison.

His concept of freedom is limited because he believes that people are incapable of ever living together harmoniously without some form of government, law and the necessary machinery with which to enforce that law. He is in fact, not very surprisingly, expressing the views of the majority of people.

Many anarchists to-day consider that it is in the field of education that our ideas will spread and bear fruit. Certainly students have access to knowledge covering a wide variety of subjects which if coupled with humanistic or anarchistic convictions could produce an articulate group of people capable of encouraging individual responsibility in schools, universities or wherever they have chosen to work. But there is no evidence that libertarian ideas are more widespread in universities than at the factory bench. Obviously there are individuals from both these sections of the community who are deeply disturbed about the authoritarian nature of society and the apparent apathy displayed by so many people. It is only from this tiny minority that anarchists can hope for any form of activity. R.M.

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VISIT TO CYPRUS

I could offer no observation regarding Cyprus which did not relate directly to the people most concerned. By that I do not mean the civil or military leaders, native or foreign, whose names make the headlines. I mean the great majority of those simple, ordinary people whose happiness and welfare is so extraordinarily at the mercy of influential and often unscrupulous minorities.

Although I was in Cyprus for little more than five weeks, and it would be absurd for me to pretend to know all about the people and the present turbulence, I discovered with certainty what no newspaper had told me, that the Cypriots generally are kindly and hospitable and would prefer to be left alone by both priest and politician (who are usually one and the same) not to mention the military.

DURING its history, Assyrians, Byzantines, Egyptians, Franks, Greeks, Hittites, Lusignans, Macedonians, Persians, Phoenicians, Romans, Turks, Venetians and British have conquered or colonised Cyprus for strategic or commercial reasons. Throughout the centuries of these conquests the Cypriots have shown no spirit of political independence whatever. Even the minority who have become traders, doctors, lawyers and the like are of peasant stock recognising no class distinctions and without political ambition.

I believe it is true to say that it is purely through religious influence and under politically-inspired duress that the present outward show of rebellion is maintained. Even the protesting mayors of towns are mainly mouthpieces of Makarios. Dr. Dervis, Mayor of Nicosia,

There is a crisis in the coal industry. In the past fortnight another million tons of coal for which there is no market has been added to the 17 million already dumped into quarries. The *Manchester Guardian* can be excused for seeing this disaster in terms of pounds, shillings and pence:

"Every ton represents about £4 6s. 0d. of locked-up money and, on top of this, every ton costs the Coal Board about 13s. in handling charges and rent for storage sites. The accumulated liability this year cannot be far short of £75 millions."

"At this rate"—declares the voice of (capitalist) Liberalism—"nearly one-eighth of all the men drawing wages from the coal-fields—say about eighty thousand—are being paid to get coal which is being put back in the ground."

For us, however, it means that eighty thousand men are risking their lives each day under conditions from which most people would shrink in horror and fear, for no reason at all. Why not pay them and let them stay at home? From a financial point of view it would cost 13/- multiplied by a million less each fortnight if they did, since it would not be necessary to dump the unsaleable coal into quarries.

For political reasons the Government obviously does not wish to send 80,000 to the Labour Exchanges just now, nor does it, however, want to undermine a principle that workers must work for their money so they go on risking their lives producing coal which is made into a surface mine, which one day may be dug by other miners! What would the Labour Party do, we repeat, if they were in Macmillan's shoes?

INSTEAD of rejoicing that in this age of oil and atom-splitting, we can see on the horizon the day when no man will even be asked to volunteer to crawl into the bowels of the earth so that the wheels of industry may turn and our bodies spared the rigours of winter, the prospect of a coal-free future sends shudders down the spines of the National Coal Board and fills most of the miners and their families with apprehension and feelings of insecurity. Bankruptcy of an industry, and unemployment of a community—these are the current reactions. No feelings of liberation from darkness and dust, disease and death and a future in the open air!

Are we anarchists wrong, or is there something wrong with a society and a system which views with gloom Man's chances of freedom from inhuman toil?

said plainly last December: "The Greek Mayors as well as all the Greek Cypriots have not at all deviated from the well-defined and often declared policy of non-negotiation with the British Government, and they do not intend doing so. The only legitimate representative and negotiator on behalf of the Greek Cypriots is Ethnarch Makarios."

Certainly there is no comparison with the Irish situation in the 1920's, despite appearances. In Ireland there was one hundred per cent. hatred and detestation of the English Government and English people; but I am convinced the Cypriot majority would be content to follow their regular occupations in peace under the current or any other régime sufficiently enlightened to inspire trust in this mediocrally-minded peasant people.

In the Cypriot amalgam of successive civilisations and inherited maze of mythology the true symbol of the unspoiled Cypriot is neither the goddess Aphrodite nor the god Mars, but the solid square upright rush-bottomed kitchen chair!

The scene outside the cafés in every Cypriot village, Turkish or Greek, is dominated by short square people, mainly males, forever sitting on these simple chairs with solid legs and a couple of bars across the back. In banks, hotels, offices and shops it is a typical piece of furniture, smilingly offered. Before one can open one's mouth to talk business (however small) coffee or cocoa is offered and the sturdy chair brought forward. Nowhere have I found such a spontaneous friendliness to the complete stranger, even to the Englishman whose fellows are in military occupation of the island.

Cyprus is enchanting. There is, of course, the fierce undercurrent of dis-

turbed humanity. Only 48 hours before my wife and I landed at Nicosia Airport the truce EOKA had maintained for fourteen months ended. The wear and tear of nervous apprehension increased as the British came under a cross-fire of Turks and Greeks who in turn threatened each others. Yet even as one walked down a narrow Eastern street of single-story open-fronted shops, in which a fascinating variety of barbers, lace and dress makers, wood-carvers, copper-smiths, tailors, basket workers and furniture makers were busily employed, and one was startled when the street was suddenly closed while patrols "frisked" people for hidden weapons, one looked up to a sun higher and hotter than is ever seen in England, and the dark atmosphere was dispersed.

The light in Cyprus is remarkable. From very early in the day it heightens colour, sharpens shadow and illuminates a scene inherently peaceful. It is true that our R.A.F. son was under strict orders to carry a loaded revolver in his car as we drove through the suburbs which lie outside the Venetian walls of Nicosia; but young Greek Cypriot girls in conventional school uniforms cycled calmly past the orderly rows of these suburban dwellings of remarkable beauty of line and colour such as Europe cannot boast.

In no time one is in the land of the shepherd, in whose flock of long-tailed sheep there is always a sprinkling of black or brown goats. Over the great Mesaoria Plain spread between two mountain ranges whose barely-wooded peaks silhouette the clearest of skylines, this picturesque semi-nomadic herdsman (occasionally accompanied by his wife) walks slowly behind his feeding flock to halt at times and dip his slung bucket into a stone-topped well.

When one encounters a flock in the road, cut straight across the unfenced landscape, it is controlled with remarkable ease. Instead of the barking sheep-dog of England racing up and down, the Cypriot shepherd relies on flicking a pebble, with unerring aim, ahead of the leading sheep. The response is immediate. The road is cleared as if by magic.

The analogous situation among human beings on this Mediterranean island is of rival herdsman with an equal facility flinging obedient flocks into obstinate

obstruction of the peaceful road. Literal obscuration is childishly attempted by the obliteration of signposts. Street signs and regulation notices are usually in English, Greek and Turkish. A sure indication of whether one is in the Turkish or Greek quarter of any town or if one is entering a Turkish or Greek village, is that the signpost exhibiting a direction in the rival language has been blacked out. Unanimity of purpose is temporarily achieved by a simultaneous blacking-out of signs in English.

The villages are a fascinating medley of Eastern peoples and drab dwellings of mud-covered brick. In the Turkish-Cypriot villages one may see the veiled grandmother and her modern-frocked grand-daughter side by side, and the male fez may be prominent. In the Greek villages the men sport baggy bloomer-like breeches fastened loosely at the knee, while their womenfolk dress in almost unrelieved black though the shade temperature be 100 degrees. The latter factor may explain why the curiously dome-shaped domestic oven is built right away from the house. Every bride's dowry includes a plank-shaped baking board, one end of which rests on the cavernous oven opening, the other on the inevitable square chair.

(To be continued)

SAM WALSH.

Socialist Contribution to Peace in Cyprus

Stand by Cyprus! The troops asked for it and the *Herald* is going to see that they get it.

They wanted to get in on the HOOP THE HULA craze that has got the folks at home wriggling round in circles.

One of the post-cards which arrived at the *Herald* yesterday morning said: "What's it all about? Send a few hoops out here."

The *Herald* is doing better than that. We're sending NINE HUNDRED hoops. But the biggest attraction will be an extra the boys in Cyprus didn't expect. The *Herald* is sending them a hoop-girl of their own—lovely Lisa Noble. . . .

And she can twirl SIX hoops at a time round her 34-24-36 figure.

When businessman Louis Marx heard about the troops' request he ordered 900 Hoop-zings to be put on the next plane to Cyprus—and other Middle East stations.

Daily Herald 18/10/58.

Nobel Literature Award Incites the Stalinists

Pasternak and the Politicians

OUR readers will have observed in the columns of the press a great many reports on the award to Boris Pasternak of the Nobel Prize for Literature, and the consequent uproar set up in the USSR, notably by an article in *Pravda* by David Zaslavsky which ferociously attacks Pasternak's novel "Dr. Zhivago", the motives behind the award and the author himself.

It will be recalled that "Dr. Zhivago" was reviewed in FREEDOM (September 20th) by our regular contributor C.W., who has since confirmed to us his very favourable impression of the book. He has made something of a study of the literature emanating from the USSR in translation, and considers the book to be vastly superior to two other recent novels which engendered a good deal of discussion in the West—"The Thaw" and "Not by Bread Alone", by Ehrenburg and Duddintsev respectively—there is in fact no comparison.

The book itself is concerned with the period in Russia, from 1903 to 1929 and an epilogue which takes the story beyond 1945; it describes the life and philosophy of a gentle, human man, caught up in the frantic events of the revolution, war and twentieth century communism. Since it has been denied publication in the USSR it can be understood that it does not conform to the requirements of present-day Soviet "Literature".

Pasternak has cabled Stockholm that he accepts the award, which has caused him to be "immensely grateful, touched, proud, astonished, abashed". *Pravda's* reaction is quite different; through the pen of Zaslav-

sky, a vicious old Party hack who was once a Menshevik, Pasternak is accused of being a "self-enamoured narcissist", an "extinct species of bourgeois individualist" and "superfluous" in the new Soviet society. "Dr. Zhivago", says *Pravda*, is a malicious lampoon on the Soviet Revolution, slurring everything new it had ushered in, extolling everything that was counter revolutionary; it is nothing but "low-grade reactionary hackwork". Furthermore says *Pravda*, if Pasternak had had a spark of "Soviet dignity" left to him, if he had had any writer's conscience and sense of duty to the people, he "would have rejected the award, so humiliating to him as a writer". His book had been taken up by the most inveterate enemies of the Soviet Union, and by the instigators of a new world war, "with the clear aim of aggravating international relations, pouring oil on the flames of the cold war, spreading hostility towards the Soviet Union, and blackening the Soviet public."

In contrast with this malicious, guttersnipe attack, Mr. Mikhailov, the Soviet Minister of Culture, in an interview with a Danish Communist paper, said that nobody was surprised at the award, that Pasternak was a brilliant translator and a great poet, but that many Russian writers did not share the Swedish Academy's view of his work.

The differences of approach would seem to indicate a considerable divergence of opinion within Soviet circles, between those who long ago committed themselves to being the dishonest lackeys of Stalinist days and the men who greeted with enthusiasm the apparently changed

circumstances for writers in 1956, and at least tried to write again something of value and merit. Pasternak was and is a man of greater integrity than them all, and remains true to his beliefs to this day.

But what of the reactions from the West? Now that a Soviet writer is honoured with a Nobel Prize, the West sneers at the Soviet reaction, as if it was to be expected only from a country of the communist genre. Have the Americans forgotten their own precisely similar reaction when Paul Robeson was given a Stalin Peace Prize? In America this was regarded with the same horror, the same malice, as being a blatant piece of cold war hostility. As usual when nation speaks unto nation, it is with identical curses, the old familiar swearwords, the same pretence of injured virtue.

It seems unlikely that Pasternak will be permitted to go to Stockholm in December to receive his prize, but at least it would seem that he is not being persecuted as yet—except that his book is unlikely to be published in the Soviet Union. A few years ago he would have been "dealt with" quite differently, as were the other great Russian writers—Polovoy, Sholokhov, Feffer, Simonov, Bergelson—they are all dead.

Freedom of expression in the Soviet Union is not so great as in the West, but it has improved since Stalin's day. In the West whilst it largely remains, it can be said to be going the other way.

P.S.—Since this article was written, it was announced that Pasternak had been expelled from the Union of Soviet Writers.

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

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Coal and the Common Sense Society

Continued from p. 1

Physical annihilation. It is obvious, for instance, that a miner who during these post-war years could only have left the industry and found a job above ground, say as a labourer, would have been faced with the material problems of having to find accommodation near his new job, and of accepting less than half the money he was earning as a miner.

In the eyes of society he would be a failure, and, in addition he would have to establish new roots. By way of compensation he would have to find a better job and run less risks of being maimed for life or meet violent death by drowning, gassing or being killed in the course of carrying out his day's work. It appears that for the sake of £2 (or for a matter £20) a week the "risks" are more than compensated for by the advantages! Yet, on the contrary, though some miners did leave the industry, the majority have remained and many newcomers have been recruited in these post-war years of "full-employment" in industry as a whole and of relatively inflated wages and full employment in the mining industry in particular.

To our minds there is a vital connection between, what we would call, the "contempt for life" and the intellectual poverty, the lack of militancy, of the working people of the industrial nations of the world.

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THE trouble of course goes back to the birth of the reformist socialist movement which, in rejecting the "all or nothing" of the revolutionary socialists and anarchists, unfortunately accepted the "nothing"! The reformists philosophy of half a loaf being better than no bread was an illusion, partly because so long as a capitalist system prevails the economic yardstick is not bread but finance-cum-power, and partly because man cannot live by bread alone! The Labour Party is no more capable of bending the machinery of capitalism to favour the working class than the Conservative Party is of permitting what, in its booklet *Prospect for Capitalism*, it calls "the excesses of naked capitalism". To maintain the *status quo* both sides must play the game. But what is too easily forgotten by the anaemic Left is that both sides are playing the same game! Full-employment (minus 3% just to keep the workers on their toes and on tenterhooks) is not only the goal aimed at by the Labour Party but by the Tories as well, as Mr. Macmillan made quite clear at Blackpool recently! * Strengthening of the pound sterling was also a common ideal, while developing our foreign markets is for both parties the vital life-blood of the nation. . . . In other words, all good capitalists together! For all these goals have little to do with Socialism.

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LET us suppose for instance that the Labour Party came into power to-morrow. How would they deal with the present problems of the coal industry, which, incidentally, started us off on these "reflections"?

*Indeed he was quite emotional on the subject. Nothing could blot from his memory, he said, the terrible tragedy of mass unemployment which he had seen during his twenty years as candidate or member for a constituency on the North East Coast and he was determined, so long as he was responsible, that this would never happen again.

