

# Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"More and more people are coming to suspect that the citizen's real enemy nowadays is the man he sets in power over him."

—EDWARD HYAMS

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Threepence

## A Boom Month for the POLITICAL INDUSTRY

Big four already possess (and which probably Eisenhower told de Gaulle during his present American visit that he could have if he accepted to respect an official ban on testing).

THE ten-nation disarmament conference which has been taking place for the past seven weeks in Geneva announced last week that it was suspending its meetings for a period of six weeks. Needless to say no progress was made during these seven weeks of wrangling: in fact the delegates could not even agree on the text of their adjournment communiqué! Now the Western delegations are reporting to the Ministerial Council which commenced its discussions in Istanbul last Monday. From these discussions will emerge the Western disarmament (assuming that the conflicting "interests" of the powers can, in fact, be reconciled into a "line"), which in turn will form the basis for the Summit meeting starting next week.

We are confident that the Top will be affability personified, will utter the usual platitudes of peace and prosperity, but at the same time nothing will be changed. Perhaps they may decide that the political industry must present the world with at least one concrete achievement to its credit. After all, the most heavily subsidised industry in all countries of the world, produces nothing but strife and war though its alleged purpose is to give us milk and honey, peace and prosperity! So one may expect the Summit to at least achieve a measure of agreement on the ban on the testing of nuclear weapons. (apart from France, whose Sahara tests are in terms of fall-out still in the nursery stage) the Big Four have in effect suspended tests these past two years, the powers can be magnanimous and officially agree to ban further tests for, say, a period of five years (with an option to renew the agreement). From the point of view of practical politics they can afford to make these concessions, to offer these sops to "public opinion" and the vocal biologists and geneticists, for, if war is the ultimate instrument in power politics, then today the problem which is taxing the technicians is not how to destroy their country's potential enemies (the H-bomb is the last word in destruction) but which is the most effective method of delivering that concentrate of death and annihilation which three of the

### THE ADVANTAGES OF THE V-BOMBERS

In the Debate on Blue Streak the Minister of Defence, Mr. Watkinson, explained the advantages of the airborne missile in these terms: "The flexibility of the V-bombers which will be still further improved by measures now in hand to permit a higher state of readiness and better dispersal, clearly gives them a great advantage over fixed missile sites which are tied to particular areas in this country. "The V-bombers also have the advantages that they can be launched without necessarily committing us to a nuclear war and, though primarily designed to carry nuclear weapons, they are also available for use in a conventional role if needed—which fits well with our world responsibilities. It would be madness not to exploit this great British asset to the full."

We specially draw readers' attention to the paragraph we have italicised.

Today the "deterrent" is not the H-bomb but the transport system for delivering it to the enemy's doorstep, and if what we have been told about the destructive power of the H-bomb is true, then it is reasonable to assume that future research and development in the war industry will concentrate on new, more accurate and swift ways of delivering H-bombs, and, since the "enemy" will be doing likewise, of evolving mobile delivery bases. Hence the development of atomic-powered submarines, and of missiles launched from submarines (the American Polaris) which in turn calls for the development of the anti-submarine submarine. The following B.U.P. report from New York (April 27) does not come as a surprise:

The atom-powered submarine *Tullibee*, designed to hunt enemy submarines, was launched at Groton, Connecticut, today. A large part of the United States submarine force is now dedicated to anti-submarine work.

The *Tullibee*, 260ft. long with a displacement of 2,600 tons, has been called the Navy's "big ears" because of its record number of sonar tracking devices.

(It is clear that in the wars of the future, if they occur, the Mata Hari will be replaced by much less romantic figures in the form of elec-

tronic devices; Big Ears and not sexy silhouettes will be used to ferret out the enemy's plans, or rather, his location).

★

THE navy and the shipbuilding yards which only a year or two ago seemed doomed, have a future after all. The Stock Exchange will undoubtedly reflect the trend for the benefit of shareholders and those workers in the industry, who cannot think of themselves other than as wage-slaves, will sigh with relief at the thought of a steady job for at least the next ten years—building submarines. Only last week the Scottish Trades Union Congress in conference at Perth

called on the Government to negotiate with other nations supporting the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade for a "scrap and build" policy under which ships over twenty years old would be scrapped and replaced.

The resolution was passed as an attempt to avert a possible slump in the shipbuilding industry. The Congress also called for an ending of trade barriers to facilitate the securing of fresh orders, the strengthening of the country's economy, and the raising of the standard of living.

Mr. Ted Hill, general secretary of the Boilermakers' Society, welcoming the "scrap and build" idea, said that in 1954 the Russian Government had asked the shipbuilders of this country to build 95

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### The Disarmament Fiasco

WE have often stated in this paper that the disarmament talks at Geneva seemed to be getting nowhere, although political speeches might persuade unthinking or trusting people to the contrary.

We have been criticised by angry people, who want to believe in the good intentions of their political leaders, for our pessimistic and negative approach to the Geneva circus.

We can only say in our own defence that we do not criticise lightly but base our views on what is actually happening.

Discussions between East and West on which should come first, disarmament or control have been in 'progress' since 1945 (FREEDOM, April 23rd). If after fifteen years no agreement can be reached on this one issue we think it is reasonable to doubt the good intentions of the contenders.

Latest reports from Geneva tend to confirm our 'pessimistic' views, and we quote from a *Guardian* editorial to avoid repeating the similar points we made ourselves several weeks ago in FREEDOM.

"The disarmament conference at Geneva adjourns to-day, with few achievements to its credit. The Russians no longer insist on an inflexible time limit of four years; apart from that, the conference's main contribution towards bridging the gulf between East and West has been to show how wide the gulf really is. For this, both sides are to blame. At the beginning of the conference, each put forward grandiose plans which the other was almost bound to reject. Mr. Zorn must have known that the West would never accept the Soviet plan for total disarmament without in-

sisting on measures of control too sweeping for the Soviet Union to accept. The West must have known equally well that the Soviet block would reject the Western plan for an international police force, for in a disarmed world the international police force would amount to a world government. East and West disagree as bitterly over the preliminary stages of disarmament as they do over the final stages, and for the same basic reason."

### A SEXUAL 'CRIME' IN SOUTH AFRICA

JAMES SHOLTO DOUGLAS (a relation of Lord Douglass of Kirtleside) was jailed for four months in the Transvaal because an African woman bore his child.

This is only one of the many cases we do not hear about because the people involved have generally no news value.

The woman, Lydia Ndu, was tried separately a month ago and sentenced to four months imprisonment, two of which are suspended.

Mr. Douglas gave notice of appeal and was released on a £100 bail.

The fact that they both say they love each other, and are the parents of a child, does not interest the South African Government which makes it a criminal offence for a white man to love a black woman or a white woman to love a black man.

In spite of this some courageous people from both races continue to mix, socially and sexually, even although it may mean jail.

### CARYL CHESSMAN

IT is of course the mouse's fault if the cat plays with it. In the first place he shouldn't get caught; but if he does, then he should lie perfectly still and allow himself to be eaten without a struggle. Sensitive humans would then be spared the revulsion they feel at seeing the cat-and-mouse game in action.

We could not help feeling, when we heard of Lord Birkett's admission of revulsion at the final execution of Caryl Chessman, how he must have felt proud of British superiority in this, as in so many other things. The British way is so much more considerate of all our sensibilities; our condemned prisoners either get prompt remission to life imprisonment or they are equally promptly polished off after the prescribed three Sundays and their file quietly closed. The English hate a fuss.

And miscarriages of justice never take place. If doubts arise among any members of the public, a judicial enquiry can sometimes be arranged to confirm that no miscarriage of justice has happened.

In America, things work differently. The mouse is allowed to wriggle; he can try to get away. But the cat gets him in the end just the same.

#### Sacco and Vanzetti

For seven years, between 1920 when they were arrested on trumped-up charges of robbery and murder, until 1927 when they were finally electrocuted by the State of Massachusetts, Sacco and Vanzetti fought to prove their innocence. It was proved to the satisfaction of millions of people, powerful and humble, throughout the world. But they were anarchists and had to die, in spite of petitions, pleas, stay after stay of execution, strikes and demonstrations.

The same monstrous pattern has been repeated in the Chessman case—except that it has dragged on for nearly twice as long as the Sacco and Vanzetti torment. For 12 years Caryl Chessman has fought for his life. In that time, in the words of Alistair Cooke in the *Guardian*:

"he has developed his impressive mental gifts beyond the usual persuasive force of educational systems. He has become, in the judgment even of an eminent justice of the United States Supreme Court, a distinguished lawyer. He has applied his misguided childhood talent for brooding to a career in the history of philosophy that would ensure him a "chair" in a reputable university. "To newspaper interviewers, of whom

there has been a morbid flock in the last week or two, he has analysed the pathology of his childhood with frightening insight and a Faulknerian lack of self-pity. He has become proficient in four languages. He is, by any healthy standard, a greatly gifted man."

But Alistair Cooke, usually one of the most perceptive of professional journalists, also wrote:

"He is also, by any measure known to civilised countries, a perverse and chronic criminal. . . . In any Western country that inherited Roman law, the just penalty for his frightful crimes is death. The evidence of rape and kidnapping in the substantive episode, quite apart from a criminal record that reaches back to childhood, is overwhelming."

Apart from being factually untrue (in 52 countries which 'inherited Roman law' death is not the penalty for any crime and in many others is not the penalty for kidnapping or rape) this report overlooks completely the differences that have taken place in Chessman himself over the last twelve years.

#### Not the Same Man

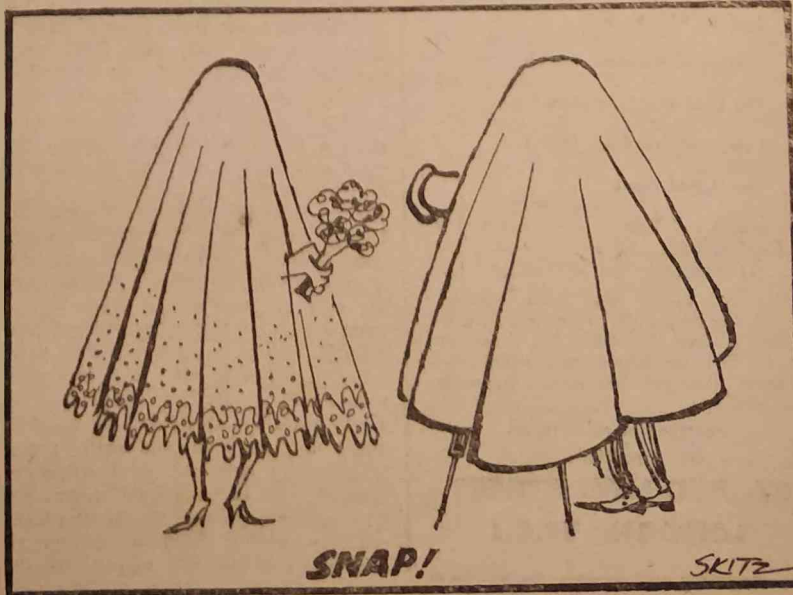
How could Alistair Cooke write that Chessman 'is a perverse and chronic criminal'? For 12 years the condemned man had hardly any opportunity for criminal activity, but instead had written books and developed latent talents in a way which presumably had been denied him previously.

The Chessman that was killed by the State of California was not the same man as he who had been condemned by it. In a highly intelligent editorial comment the day after Cooke's superficial cable, the *Guardian* wrote:

"Any argument for the death penalty must assume that the condemned man is unworthy to live—and is bound to remain unworthy. The uses to which Chessman put his years in the condemned cell have refuted that assumption."

But the law takes no account of this, when its answer to the transgressor is to eliminate him. Capital punishment, in its brutal and ignorant suppression, for ever, of the offender, also snuffs out, for ever, any chance of rehabilitation.

We can only conjecture, now, on what society has lost in losing Caryl Chessman—twice, for it lost him before when he turned criminal—and what we might have gained had the people of California been as intelligent as he obviously was. But they matched him only in his perverse criminality.



# A Pacifist Viewpoint on Assassination

THREE weeks ago, FREEDOM published an Editorial article entitled "Too Bad He Missed", commenting on the attempted assassination of Verwoerd by David Pratt. This has been the subject of a letter of protest by one reader, and I gather that others have been shocked by it. This is an issue which is extremely critical, involving as it does so much personal emotional feeling on the part of many people, and I therefore think that it is one on which individuals' personal viewpoints are very much in order.

In publishing the article with its provocative, uncompromising title "Too Bad He Missed" the Editors of FREEDOM have faced an issue highly dangerous for an intelligent anarchist paper, honestly and courageously. I honour them for it. Along among the intelligent papers FREEDOM and *The Observer* published honest comment.

Obviously the politic thing for FREEDOM to have done was to evade the issue. Those who see the awful implications of an anarchist paper condoning assassination may well consider that an awful, tremendous blunder has been committed. "And what a time to drop such a brick!" they may say; for the article was published in the double-issue selling an extra 1,500 (?) to the Liberals, Pacifists, etc. on the Aldermaston March. And on the front page too!

If the uninformed know nothing else about anarchists it is that they are reputed to throw bombs and assassinate people. Against this stigma the anarchist movement has long had to wage a patient campaign of education to show people what anarchism really stands for. There is an age-old cry that we should change the name "anarchism" to something more "respectable" in order to sell our goods. Viewing such of the history of the movement in this country as is known to me, I am sure sticking to the traditional name of our movement has not been a mistake. Those who have

retired from the movement because it was not sufficiently "respectable" have been no loss, and indeed the uncompromising title protects the movement to some extent from too close an identification with that genre of anarchist fellow travellers who have one hopeful foot on the Establishment ladder.

By not evading the issue of Pratt's attempted assassination of Verwoerd, by not taking refuge in a diplomatic tut-tutting over the incident, FREEDOM can retain the respect of its readers, and furthermore, it shows that it does not attempt to sell itself to new readers under false colours.

When the news of the attempted assassination was in the Sunday papers, I was at a respectable gathering of professional people. As they sat around after breakfast reading the *Sunday Times*, *The Sunday Express* and *The Observer*, I heard their comments. "Too bad he missed," is a fair statement of the verbally expressed opinions. One venerable professor reading the *Sunday Times* merely remarked that it was a pity the man didn't use a larger calibre revolver. All this was spoken comment at the not-too-public gathering, yet I venture to think that if the newspapers had printed the sentiments these gentlemen were freely expressing, they would have protested at such honest human sentiment appearing in print.

Why is it accepted that a certain humbug is proper in print?

I have titled this "A Pacifist Viewpoint" because I think I should describe my general viewpoint as pacifist. Pacifism involves both emotional and intellectual factors. Emotionally I have such a strong objection to killing off the poor mutts who are regularly rounded up and equipped to slaughter one another for this cause or that, that I shall always take good care to evade the role of killer. Repugnance and cussedness are so combined in me that one day I might even foolishly lose my own dear life in obstinately evading the killer's role; but that would be an unhappy accident and not a matter of principle. Intellectually I know all the arguments for participation in an emancipatory armed struggle like the Spanish revolution. But I am unconvinced. I do not see how the Spanish tragedy could have been avoided, the participants feeling as they did. But those who pinned their faith to the armed struggle, even had they met with military success, were in my opinion, making a fundamental mistake.

However, this is not the point I wish to make. Having roughly indicated my pacifism in these matters, I can go on to say that of all forms of killing, assassination seems to me most justifi-

able. The soldiers who kill one another act completely irresponsibly; by delegating their own personal responsibility to their commanders they shelve their humanity. If they killed out of some honest personal hatred or vindictiveness they would have some shred of human justification. In times of war governments try to work up psychopathic hatred of 'the enemy' but it is pretty phoney and the troops know they are faced by poor mutts like themselves. Whether they kill the people of Eastasia today to support Westasia, and Westasia tomorrow to support Eastasia, it is all one. Here many comrades may remind me that revolutionary fighters know what they are fighting for, whom they are fighting and why. They have my greater sympathy but I fear that even the foregoing is not quite true, and part of the Spanish tragedy was that idealism was made to serve some pretty stinking ends.

The assassin at least acts on his own responsibility. However wrongheaded he may be he is in a different category to the soldier, and his act does not merit the contempt that the soldier's act of duty merits. The assassin must bear the consequences of his act both physically and morally; he cannot hide behind the skirts of any military command and claim to be personally blameless for his act.

Here I must sacrifice all title to be considered a pacifist, in the eyes of some. For I will not condemn each and every act of assassination. Indeed, I believe that every person of integrity and cour-

age might have the potentiality of being an assassin if he found himself in very special circumstances. This is no mere romanticism on my part; I think it is echoed by every person who felt "Too bad he missed", when he read how Pratt failed to kill Verwoerd.

I think it is foolish for the writer to FREEDOM (T.S.) to say "Perhaps the author would like to carry his ideas to their logical conclusion by assassinating Macmillan?" To do such a thing would be as crazy as it was for poor Czolgosz to kill President McKinley. Crazy, because one would have to live in a very unreal private world ever to pick on Macmillan. But the world of South Africa is very different from ours; I know next to nothing about David Pratt, and it may be that he is as mad as a hatter—but that does not follow from his act. For a Marxist, the motivation which led Pratt, a rich and economically secure white man to kill the politician who was defending his class interests against the black proletariat, is quite meaningless. But there are forces beyond those which are covered by a Marxist interpretation of society. That a privileged class can exist in a condition of such un-freedom in spite of its material luxury is a fact that has produced many revolutionaries of note, and can drive men like Pratt to acts of desperation.

In refusing to condemn every act of assassination with horror, I think it fair to add that I and all responsible anarchists that I have known, have been entirely satisfied that the development of

anarchism in this century has been from acts of sporadic violence to individual despots. In actual fact part that anarchists have played in the history of assassinations has been small. But it is one thing to assassinate as a feasible or permissible policy, and another to hold up hands in horror when a monster like Verwoerd becomes one of the many casualties in the policy of violence or terror he is pursuing. When the name Verwoerd I just cannot find myself to spare pity for a man with blood streaming down his face, his wife his side": to that extent my heart has been hardened. It may have been utterly impolitic to shoot at Verwoerd just now, for reasons T.S. and others have mentioned—I do not know. Surely this is a most improper argument to advance if we are concerned with ethical considerations of the act itself. I do not think that T.S. would approve of the act if it were to have taken place at a time nicely calculated to win a path for the coloured people's cause. To kill a man because it is a cute propaganda dodge is to me an abominable thing to do, but I do not think Pratt's ineffective attempt can be considered in this category.

Again, it may have been utterly impolitic for the Editors of FREEDOM to have published the article they did at the time they did, for reasons T.S. and others have mentioned—I do not know. But the fact that they did reflect credit to their credit, and I think it more important that this paper should retain a record of honesty than that it should seek to capture more readers on a short-term basis.

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## AROUND THE GALLERIES

THIS is on the whole a pretty dismal week for those who drit around the London galleries. The Redfern of 20 Cork Street, W.1. seem to have almost touched rock bottom in the last few months, for the work that they have been displaying is unworthy of that gallery. The current exhibition has little to commend it.

Michael Wishart is showing some highly coloured bullfights and landscapes that possess more power than poetry and whose only claim to hold the eye is his slap-happy use of egg yolk yellow.

Theyre Lee-Elliott, using the single theme of the hanging Christ, has turned out some slick wall paintings that would make nice presents, while Louis James offers some spotty abstracts that could best be described as pretty. Gimpel Fils of 50 South Molton Street, W.1. are showing the latest abstractions of Sandra Blow and one feels that these were knocked off more to fill an obligation than to communicate a vision for they are those casual abstractions that comprise a few brush strokes wherein the artist relies on the width of the brush to fill the canvas.

The Hanover Gallery of 32a St. George Street, W.1. are displaying the latest labours of Alberto Burri, and here is truly rubbish enshrined for there upon the wall of the deserted gallery hangs thirty-six square feet of warped and torn sacking. No paint mars it and no wind ruffles it for it is what it is, thirty-six square feet of framed potato sacking. Thirty years ago this stuff was worth a giggle and the men who used "found rubbish" as a new medium of expression were truly to be congratulated, but not all the doughy prose of Sir Herbert Read can convince that Burri has anything to offer and one can only suggest that the

only choice offered by Gimpel or the Hanover gallery is whether you like your rubbish plain or coloured, yet year after year these sterile acres of brush wipings and dripping paint are offered for our applause and their only value would appear to be that they offer a vehicle for the shallow profundities of back-scratching critics. A break in the general monotony is offered by the New Art Centre at 41 Sloane Street, S.W.1. for the work of two extremely good minor artists are on display.

Terry Lee unfortunately echoes too much of Bratby's work and this is indeed unfortunate because he is a finer artist than Bratby with a greater sense of depth, and added to that he is a more sensitive draftsman. In "Rosemary and Daniel" the woman's body sags beneath the clothes she wears and one feels that there are bones beneath the flesh but you cannot hawk around another man's vision, and Leo must soon decide whether he is being influenced or whether he is imitating the Beaux Arts troop of muscle painters. John Eyles is a painter worth watching, for while there is an inevitable Parisian slickness in much of his work they do possess that extremely rare virtue, an English interpretation of the current scene. His elongated women are housed in rooms that suggest space and he succeeds in evocating the pathetic feeling of the second-rater sheltering in the decaying grandeur of an S.W.5 or W.10 address. Eyles paints his wife and his friends and for what it is worth we can view Colin Wilson peering myopically into the past or Michael Hastings shrinking into the coloured background for if Eyles fulfils the promise of these paintings this may guarantee them a minor immortality.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

## BOOK REVIEW

### Whose Trial?

Zhdanov's doctrine of Socialist Realism.

It is interesting that another anonymous document, containing a brilliant attack on this doctrine, has also come from Russia recently (published in *Soviet Survey* and *Universities and Left Review* here; in *L'Esprit* in France; and together with *The Trial Begins* in *Kultura* and *Tempo Presente*). The author of this attack puts his hope in "a phantasmogoric art", and it seems to me that Tertz's story is just that.

Its Russian title—*Sud Idyot*—has more the meaning of "The Court is in Session", and this is also closer to the superficial events of the narrative. The satirical tale is about a late-Stalinist prosecutor whose schoolboy son is sent to a labour camp for being too orthodox a Communist and whose narcissist wife is seduced by a cynical intellectual so wet that he can't make it when he gets there. It stands in the Russian tradition of Gogol's *The Overcoat*, Zamyatin's *We*, Ehrenburg's *Julio Jurenito*—analogous to our own tradition from Swift to Orwell—combining fantasy, fable and farce, with a bitter irony that is sardonic rather than sarcastic. I don't think it is far-fetched to see in it also the influence of Yiddish writers like Rosenfeld, Nadir, Kulbak and the younger Singer—even perhaps of Mendele Moicher Sforim and Sholem Aleichem.

Tertz's technique might well be called Socialist Surrealism. He uses tricks oddly like those so dear to Nabokov—the brilliant Prologue and Epilogue that bring the author into his own story and poke fun at Stalin and the labour camps, the convoluted style, the loaded dreams, the absurdity of the two secret police (strikingly similar to Disraeli's Taper and Tadpole) and of their method of detection (sieves in the sewers), the vicarious cruelty with which the protagonists are brought to grief, and the dispassionate remoteness of the atmosphere. All this has nothing to do with the more familiar ways of writing in or against a totalitarian society—Dudintsev's documentary indictment or Pasternak's personal epic—and is closer in spirit to Marek Hlasko.

## ANTI-APARTHEID CONCERT

A CHARITY CONCERT is being held at St. PANCRAS TOWN HALL in Tuesday, 10th May, at 7.45 p.m. in aid of Anti-Apartheid Fund.

Appearing are: Chris Barber, Steve Benbow, Bruce Turner, etc. Tickets from 4/- to 10/- available from Freedom Bookshop.

Edward Crankshaw was very keen about *The Trial Begins* (preferring poems of Yevtushenko), and though reviewers have disagreed with him, it is possible that we cannot help overestimating anything out of the ordinary comes from Russia. In fact I do not think Tertz is a brilliant writer; but any time it is exciting to read his story, just as it is to read Hlasko or Déry, because it is always exciting when a writer emerges from a cultural and social morass and proves once again that nothing can do can quench the fire of human

After all, let us make no mistake about Tertz's intellectual and emotional achievement. To think the way he did after half a century of Bolshevism is the sort of thing it takes a Pasternak to do—Voltaire would have given in or cleared out years ago. It is true that there has been considerable relaxation from above and resistance from below in the last five years or so. But Tertz's story and the critical article that is so like it are not examples of *resistance* (as the works of Dudintsev are, for example) but of complete *independence*. Their attitude to the Soviet régime is not to fight it, but to treat it as a macabre joke: they are infidels, not heretics. There is here a degree of alienation and a level of sophistication that remind us of the dissenting intellectuals in the West—that also remind us of the glorious part played for a century and a half by Russian writers in the great campaign for freedom and humanity.

What next? Who can tell? The Romans used to have a proverb that something new was always coming out of Africa, and the only generalisation we can make about Russian life and literature is that it is full of wonderful surprises. But I am sure that we will hear more from these two writers (or are they possibly the same one?). Let us remember that their protest is not just against the Stalinist tyranny; it is also against the whole ideology of conformism, bourgeois complacency—what one may now call *rhinocerosisation*. It is not only the Soviet rulers who are on trial, but all rulers and all who support rulers. We cannot interpret Tertz as an agent for the State Department; he is talking about us too.

N.W.

\*THE TRIAL BEGINS by "Abram Tertz", translated (perfectly) by Max Hayward (Collins & Harvill 12s. 6d.).

## CAMBRIDGE READERS

—PLEASE NOTE A reader in Cambridge is seeking contacts. Answers, addressed Freedom Bookshop, will be appreciated.

## A Boom Month in the Political Industry

Continued from p. 1

ships, but because of the Battle Act they had decided that the ships could not be built here.

WE could be accused of being optimistic, so far as the interests of the shipbuilding workers are concerned, and premature, so far as the Government's "defence" plans are concerned, for the government is now at the "air-borne" stage of the missile "deterrent" programme. Blue Streak is out even before it has been produced (though even at this stage of its development it will have cost the taxpayer £100 millions) and Skybolt, the American missile is in. That is, it may be, since like Blue Streak it will be some years before it is actually available and who knows what changes in war tactics will take place meantime! Now, the development of Polaris on the other hand, is more advanced and the *Guardian* with its usual practical approach to matters where money is involved asks (30/4/60) why the British government does not bypass the air-borne missile, which requires aircraft "on unsafe bases in British airfields" and take up the Polaris which is based on ships or submarines.

[Polaris] is no more expensive than Skybolt, and if based at sea, it would remove our chief targets from the vicinity of crowded cities. Why, then, are its advantages discounted? If the submarines to carry it cannot be available soon, ships will do for a while. Mr. Watkinson, it is true, has not entirely ruled Polaris out. But he has given a low second place, behind Skybolt. That seems an error. We hope that time remains for second thoughts. (Incidentally the Direct Action Committee should also have second thoughts. More demonstrators have been sent to prison this week\* for obstructing the police at the missile base at Foulness which will in the event be no more than a damp squib. If the D.A.C. are forward-looking they must think in terms of sea-borne demonstrations. They must train Direct Action *Commandos* and we cannot be sure that by the time demonstrations are feasible the submarine will not be on the way out!)

FOR those who are outside the political ring it is difficult to decide whether the political leaders are deadly serious about the "defence" programme or whether the whole business is one big big-business racket in which they are involved. The debate last week in the Commons on the Blue Streak missile, even leads one to believe that some politicians live in a make-believe world. Mr. Anthony Head, a former Minister, for instance had this to say about the £100 millions that have gone down the drain:

If the loss on Blue Streak were analysed, it only averaged £20 millions a year for five years. He was informed that last year the United States spent on rocketry and so on £4,350 millions. "If you are in this field, you must have great good fortune if you back a winner every time. I consider the Government's decision was right and courageous."

\*And it is noteworthy that the prison alternatives to the fines have been changed from one week to one month. It is worthwhile, bearing in mind that the demonstrators are charged with obstructing the police and not war preparations? Would these well-meaning people not achieve more lasting results if they spent a month speaking to the people rather than kicking their heels in the solitude of their cells in return for a day's press publicity?

## READERSHIP SURVEY: Sixth Interim Report

THE total number of replies received by Sat. April 30th, was 467. In the five previous reports, in our issues for Jan. 16 and 30, Feb. 13 and 27, and March 26, the answers, as they came in, to all the questions except two were discussed. There remain No. 18 *What constructive criticisms have you?* and No. 25 *Any other comments.* A wide variety of topics were raised by readers under these headings, which we attempt to classify below.

### Comments on Price, Frequency and Format

No reader suggested that the price of the paper should be reduced: 18 said that it should be raised, of whom seven mentioned 6d. and two, 4d. One, to support his point of view quotes these words from Tom Paine: "What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly—and it would be strange if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated." Another says: "Raise the price, it's the only cheap thing about the paper. Put a Publishing Fund in place of the Deficit Fund (the only unpleasant thing in the paper) and then maybe we shall see a small but steady stream of anarchist books. They are just as important as the regularity of the weekly FREEDOM."

Others want an enlarged paper: "Too small," says one, and another adds "Make it larger for 6d. with smaller pages, like *Peace News*."

"Enlarge your paper so as to enable readers to think more clearly."

"Double the number of pages and halve their size."

"Price should be increased and paper enlarged to *Tribune* size with more pages."

"Would willingly pay a higher subscription for an enlarged paper and be rid of the heart-rending deficit feature."

"New format—more suited to a weekly magazine-type newspaper."

Several more suggest smaller pages and others ask for "less chaotic make-up", while six suggest an improved quality of paper, or a more durable paper, one of them specifying the grade: "a coated mechanical."

Others want FREEDOM published less frequently:

"Would prefer a fortnightly, better planned and more meaty and better written."

"I am wondering if maybe putting out a paper twice as thick, half as often might be better."

"Publish bi-weekly."

"FREEDOM should take adverts and appear fortnightly."

"As a review FREEDOM could get better results."

On the other hand another says, "I wish to see FREEDOM eventually become a daily paper, so important do I consider its function."

Another Conservative, Mr. Aubrey Jones (was he not a Minister once?) made this original contribution to the debate

Outside the defence programme, we were spending far more on agricultural subsidies than on the total military research and development programme.

(Fancy wasting money on subsidising food production when it could be so much more usefully spent on missile development which is so much more beneficial to the community as a whole!)

But equally can we believe Mr. Harold Wilson, one of the Labour Party's ghost Ministers when he declared

Quite frankly the reason for the refusal to write off Blue Streak was one thing only—to save the face of the then Minister, the present Minister of Aviation.

If what he says is true, then anything is possible. But even without this, is not the whole "defence" game in itself a sufficient insult to our intelligence not to demand some kind of reaction from us, the public? We work and pay to keep the political industry busy doing all the things which are contrary to our interests; we pay them to make us feel inferior and unable to run our own lives; we pay them to divide us and to create tensions where tensions did not exist.

When will we realise that it is high time we shook these political parasites from their comfortable, their privileged, seats on our backs?

One reader says, "Could you perhaps admit a few judiciously selected advertisements into the paper and make money that way?" One asks for book ads, and another for a column of personal announcements for subscribers only, but one reader warns that we should "Go on keeping out advertisements. Don't let this census fool you or go to your head. I detect a motive to become 'brighter'."

Three readers complain of bad proof-reading, and three dislike the title block on p. 1. One says it looks "threatening in such heavy black" and another would prefer the word "libertarian" to "anarchist" under it.

Eleven would prefer articles not to be carried over from one page to another, or would like them to be shorter or more ruthlessly edited. One suggests more sub-headings, one that the leading article should be on one column only, one that a whole page of one article looks formidable, while two others dislike (with exceptions) serialisation from one issue to another.

One reader however, suggests that "perhaps a whole issue could be devoted occasionally to a single topic", and another complains that "although comments are always topical and witty, the paper is generally too bitty." Several want more pictures, and some final comments under this heading are:

"I liked the half-tone photograph on the front page of the Jan. 9th issue and would like more such general atmosphere pictures, even if only one per issue."

"It might be visually more attractive, i.e. more illustrations and photographs."

"An extra cartoon or two."

"Size of the paper is right, the cartoon should stay and should be supplemented by another."

"I like your general layout and type policy and would not like to see it altered, any more than a drastic change in editorial policy."

"One of the most perfect small journals of its kind. You can't help the paper and print."

"Don't change a thing. The paper is fine just as it is."

*Improving or Declining?*

One reader asks for "A general 'back to 1949/50' which was the best period of FREEDOM and anarchist activity since World War I. All people with any sort of office believe they are indispensable, but all become tired and cynical. None admit to bureaucracy—None relish fundamental change. Why not a new Editorial Board and policy?" Another says:

"Time has overtaken much that FREEDOM belonged to, just as it has overtaken the working-class movement and revolutionary communism. FREEDOM is perhaps 50 years behind the times. If anarchism is to have any meaning, it should have moved into a 20th century anarchism. There are great names in the past; where are the equivalent creators of today? It is running now more as a nostalgia than as a weapon."

"I think FREEDOM as a paper has developed with the times and is now much wider in outlook."

"Please be broader and more scientific, also drop that halo of knowing positively everything, also less narrow cliquism amongst the so-called people who run the paper—drop the Fuhrer complex. Also be more humble in knowledge and show more tolerance of other movements who are trying to change the world."

"I think what I am looking for is already happening—less carping and more anarchist explanation in a readable manner so that people who are not too bright will begin to see what it's about."

"FREEDOM should really open its columns. It might allow a breath of fresh air to blow through its pages."

"Your paper is like a breath of fresh air every week."

"Revive the *Syndicalist* (it did not compete with FREEDOM, which is not designed for industrial activity. Two papers complimentary. Preferences:

writers like M. L. Berneri, Internationalist, George Woodcock, rather than some of present contributors."

"Encourage revisionism."  
"More revisionism."  
"Less revisionism."

"A more deliberate and outright attack on government is essential."

"FREEDOM is at its worst when taking up its pose that no government or state ever did any good. This makes it at times approve some very queer things."

### The Anarchist Movement

"One result of your survey will, I think be to show that apart from groups in large cities—anarchists are scattered and isolated. The movement might benefit if some of these individuals could have discussion and contact with each other. One possibility is that such individuals might be prepared to contribute to 'Circulators' a kind of magazine to which each member of a small group contributes before posting it on to the next member. Each group might consist of 6 or 8 members one of whom may act as co-ordinator for a few rounds to watch progress and to ensure smooth progress around the circuit."

"Tape recorders are becoming more common. They might serve as a valuable means of communication between small groups of anarchists separated by considerable distances. Speeches and discussions might be taped and sent

Continued on p. 4

## The R.C. Church and the Unions

A WAR between two unscrupulous organisations competing for control of the unions may well result from an appeal made by Dr. J. C. Heenan, the Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool.

The Catholic leaders seem to be so afraid of Communist influence in the unions that they have ordered Catholics who have a choice between attending a meeting of some Catholic society and a trade union meeting, not to hesitate to choose the union meeting.

Continuing the Moral Rearmament theme, the Archbishop carefully put the Church on the side of employers by stating that there was no longer any need for conflict be-

tween employer and employee.

But in true Catholic style he also managed to ally the Church with the workers when he said that *gradually* it would be recognised throughout industry that profit-sharing was better for efficiency and good relations.

It is true that most good Communist Party members are far more concerned with political control of the unions than in improving working conditions, but the aim of the Catholic Church—world domination—is no less insidious.

The Archbishop has chosen the language of the Communists to launch his religious war. Catholic workers, if determined, he said, can rid themselves of "these enemies of the people".

## Theatre

### THE OFFSHORE ISLAND

IT shows a nice sense of timing for Unity to stage "The Offshore Island" so soon after Aldermaston. The BBC was rebuked for televising the play a few months ago and the *Daily Worker* of April 25th is critical of the play. You can't please everybody all the time!

The play deals with life in a corner of England after an atomic war. A widow is living in a farm which has escaped contamination. She is occasionally visited by a fisherman who has survived—it develops that his visits are for the purpose of sexual intercourse and that they have to make plans for the survival of their little community in the atomic wasteland. The family are toasting the ingathering of their first substantial harvest when they are interrupted by the arrival of American airmen who are searching for what they call C.P.'s ("contaminated persons"). They settle in the farmhouse whilst they are waiting for the Russians to arrive. A truce has been arranged in the long war in order that the Russians and Americans may together attack the new enemy (unspecified, but presumably Chinese). In order to protect themselves, the Americans and Russians are removing all C.P.'s and wiping out with tactical bombs all pockets of uncontaminated territory.

The news is eventually broken to the mother with the blunt supplementary information that they are to be sterilized on arrival in the United States. At this she re-affirms her desire to be left alone at peace with her family. In her desire to protect the whereabouts of the fisherman friend, the son horrifies the American airman by a confession of incest, the airman is so enraged that he shoots the son. The mother decides to stay at the

farm until it is bombed (by the Russians) but she urges the daughter to escape to the fisherman.

The play closes with the mother on her knees by the side of her son as the plane is heard overhead. As the curtains close the explosion of the bomb is heard.

Marghanita Laski explains in the programme that the play was written in 1953. She says that it was not written to plead for or arraign any nation or group of nations. The plea of the American captain is the point of the play. What they did, any nation in their position would have done, that 'once this thing started' everything that followed was inescapable. She concludes 'that actions (of military necessity) like these are commonplace of war. In previous wars, from all these actions, recovery was possible. In nuclear war they will be finally and totally destructive'.

The *Daily Worker* criticises the play for being out-dated in its political judgments. It approves of the presentation of the aggressive designs of the Americans but concludes by saying:

"Nuclear disarmament cannot be fought for with any practical measure of success by calling 'a plague on both your houses' and turning a blind eye to the persistent and patient pressure for peace and disarmament from the Socialist countries. 'The Offshore Island' is a play conceived with power and passion on a vital and urgent theme. But its contribution to nuclear disarmament will be by provoking controversy, not clarifying it."

To my point of view, if not from the point of view from the young Squealers of the Y.C.L. at Aldermaston with their 'Five, six, seven, eight, negotiate!', the

play *does* clarify the need for nuclear disarmament, for opposition to war, for opposition to government, for joining the human race and being at peace in the family.

Marghanita Laski's play is full of good, adult issues, on incest, on farming, on tinned food. The bomb is too serious a business to be left to the politicians.

The pre-supposition of the *Daily Worker* that the Russians are the only nation who can be trusted is an evasion of the dilemma that the bomb presents to the orthodox left. As a weapon it is 'a change in quantity sufficient to be a change in quality'. Its genetic impact makes the horror not only that the bomb may be dropped on us but, what is more, under our control, that we may decide (for the best of reasons of course), to drop the bomb on others. As we did at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We desire 'neither to be victims nor executioners'. Marghanita Laski's play, though written in 1953, plants the problem squarely back into our laps.

It is to be hoped that the presentation of this play marks Unity's weaning away from the party line. In any case it is a great improvement on their standard of production. The production by Laurence Davies is excellent. The acting of Kathleen Wardman in the chief part of the mother is outstanding and Mick Kay as the son is very good. Mike Gambon as Captain Charles does his best with a part which he doesn't really understand and his opposite (or complementary) number, Tom Mercer as Captain Baltinsky puts in a performance which will do him no good with the Party.

Unity should be encouraged in this sort of play. J.R.

## 'Freedom' and the David Pratt Case

The Editors of FREEDOM,  
COMRADES,

You have justified David Pratt's action as a generous gesture.

In the absence of any definition of the word in your editorial of 30/4/60, I have taken you to mean that given in the

### Reich & Reichianism

The Editor, FREEDOM,  
DEAR SIR,

Reichianism may well be dead, as G. says in his letter, and he seems to know. It deserves to be a cult, a parasite on a science.

But the discoveries and findings of Reich are repeatable and have been repeated by myself and others working in close association. The incredible experiment XX, many experiments with the orgone accumulator and orgone pillows, subjective and objective experiments all these have been published and reported in England for G. to read. The work on a tenfold accumulator is going on, in my basement, at this very moment, while G. assumes that Orgone Boxes are collecting dust in attics! The joke seems to be on him.

He has never tried Reich's experiments. He obviously has not read Reich with any care. The whole hateful paragraph on Reich has an ulterior motive. It is irrelevant to the rest of the letter.

How shallow G.'s own writing is can be seen from the following sentence, equally futile whether in its context or out of it: "No ordinary, practical experience of children will lead parents to make unrealistic demands on them".

Can he not see that this is near a meaningless truism? If parents do make unrealistic demands he will assure us that their experience has not been "ORDINARY".

"Reichianism" may be dead, but I would be obliged if you could inform your readers that orgone research continues, and that the orgone accumulators of some continue to be used as they have been used for a dozen years.

Nottingham, April 29. PAUL RITTER.

Concise Oxford Dictionary, which gives 'gesture' as a 'step or move calculated to evoke response from another or to convey (especially friendly) intentions.'

We can dismiss the idea that David Pratt wished to convey friendly intentions, let us assume he wished to convey unfriendly ones. This could have significance only if he had other intentions than killing Verwoerd, and was shooting to miss, or at any rate not to kill. The fact that he shot for the head does not show that in fact he was doing this.

As for responses, there are a variety which David Pratt may have evoked. To show "that there are whites whose sense of justice transcends considerations of race or class" is indeed most important. There is at least one other aspect however, as FREEDOM puts it, "it has given the ruling clique in S. Africa a feeling of insecurity". True, but the usual response to fear in rulers of Verwoerd's ilk is an increase in their intransigence which "fosters a similar intransigence among black Africans", leading, of course to more fear among the Verwoerds, and re-doubled oppression. The result of this response so far as I can see is more inter-racial hatred, and thus the negation of David Pratt's good work in showing that some S. African whites are anti-racial.

In the absence of any evidence one way or the other about this however, and although emotionally I am all on David Pratt's side for his good intentions, I have my doubts as to the actual results of his actions.

There remains the time-honoured question for critics of particular actions: "What would you have done?" If I had David Pratt's opportunity I would have subjected Verwoerd to some kind of indignity, like slapping a jelly in his face, as happened to Mosley this week. If enough people did that kind of thing often enough, politicians would become the laughing stock they deserve to be. That may be a pious hope, but laughter can be a powerful weapon, as any demagogue can attest.

Yours fraternally,  
London, April 29. LOUIS BILLEREY.

DEAR FRIENDS,

Congratulations on the original "Too Bad He Missed" and "In Defence of David Pratt". The reaction of the left wingers and pacifists to David Pratt's courageous action is so typical that it

### 13 JAILED FOR SIX MONTHS AFTER SECOND DEMONSTRATION AT FOULNESS

FIFTEEN people were arrested on Monday after a second demonstration at the atomic weapons research establishment at Foulness Island, Essex.

Later in the day at a special sitting of Southend Magistrates' Court, the prosecutor said: "It is abundantly clear that the penalties for obstructing police are no deterrent to these people," and he continued, "It causes an enormous disruption to police services and is a waste of public money on what can only be described as a sporting event between police and demonstrators."

Three of the accused who had not previously appeared in court were fined £2 with three guineas costs. They refused to pay and were sent to prison for a month.

The remaining twelve, who had all taken part in last week's demonstration and had been sentenced to a week in prison, were fined £5 with three guineas costs. They also refused to pay and accepted the alternative of one month's imprisonment.

In addition all the defendants were required to give an undertaking to be of good behaviour for a year and not to repeat the demonstration for a year.

All but two refused, and were sentenced to six months' imprisonment in default. The two terms of imprisonment were order to run concurrently.

almost amounts to parody.

Your correspondent T.S., when he wonders how some anarchists "reconcile individual freedom with assassination", would appear to subscribe to the idea that one should not interfere with the "individual freedom" of a tyrant to oppress one. This is surely turning the concept of individual freedom on its head!

Pratt's action was certainly the result of desperation and one is not naive enough to believe that the exit of Verwoerd would mean the end of apartheid, but it at least might result in some of his followers hesitating before plunging any further into tyranny. T.S. claims that: "It is a mistake to assume that by eliminating individuals we can improve a situation . . ." As a generalisation this may be true but it is not applicable in every circumstance. As a concrete example, it would be rash to assume that the removal of Franco would make no difference at all. When a régime is as internally rotten as Franco's the exit of the figurehead might well result in the collapse of a whole structure.

Sincerely,  
St. Ives, May 1. ALBERT J. MCCARTHY.

The Editor, FREEDOM,  
COMRADE,

I did not write before about the Verwoerd article because I spent most of last week in Great Wakering preparing for the first Foulness action and had not time; and when I returned hearing that T.S. had written I considered there was no need to write further knowing that most of your readers will agree with him. I was saved the embarrassment of having to defend FREEDOM by the fact that for most of the March I was carrying (or reviving after carrying) the PPU banner; and so such as I sold were in fact chiefly to friends of mine who know my views on the subject.

If as you admit in your first article that the assassination of Verwoerd will not remove the basic problems that divide the people of South Africa, it is plainly stupid to suppose that his re-

### Readership Survey Continued from p. 3

around between groups of this kind. Short 'sound' plays with anarchist themes might also be written and recorded by local groups with a view to transmission to other groups and possibly for the benefit of wider audiences."

"More activities of a similar nature to this questionnaire. More facilities for contact between groups."

"Is it possible to publish names and addresses of anarchist groups?"

"Although we don't believe in leaders there is no need to allow contact with fellow anarchists to fall to one night a week."

"I regret the lack of communal effort amongst anarchists."

"How about FREEDOM discussion groups, built up by putting your readers in touch with each other?"

"You have to try the creation of groups of 'Friends of Freedom' to solve the economic question."

"I would like to see much more news of the anarchist movement and happenings concerning anarchists throughout the world today. The reason being that any discussion on anarchism inevitably leads to such statements as 'But there aren't any anarchists beside you', or questions like 'Why don't anarchists do something about . . .?'"

"Not enough articles on foreign anarchists."

"Why don't we try to make an international anarchist attempt in getting the means for a radio station of our own" (writes a Spanish exile abroad).

"I should like to see a greater organisational responsibility undertaken by readers to get the paper read in the factories and support therefrom."

"Why is there no effort to get groups going in different towns? I realise the great difficulties."

"Should be closer work between FREEDOM and Peace News."

"Not enough about what anarchists have done or are doing."

"Would like more news of anarchists and allied activity throughout the world."

"More news of comrades in other parts of the world would be encouraging and might give us ideas. What are the anarchists in Japan, Holland or Mexico doing?"

"I would welcome more frequent articles on the positions and opinions of anarchists abroad."

"FREEDOM should try to make the

removal is going to produce a better in his place. You have only to look at the assassination of Bandaranaike to see this; there might well have been some case for your argument if Verwoerd, like some South American dictators had had no body of opinion or influential strata behind him; there might even have been an arguable case for the Nihilist tactic of sending him a warning before that unless he amended his rule he would be assassinated (this was a method that in its early days did achieve positive results, but the Nihilist groups became authoritarian cliques, and as Tolstoy shows they became interested only in Power themselves). You have argued too often that tyranny is the inevitable produce of Government and Privilege now to turn round and say that the removal of one tyrant can achieve anything; the short-term effects so far seen are that whereas a substantial body of the Nationalist Party was becoming "revisionist" and advocating the amelioration of Apartheid; it has now been routed by the extremists. The South African Government has been able to divert World interest from Sharpeville to the "attentat" and in so doing to pretend in some twisted way that Sharpeville was necessary, and that

FREEDOM

wonderful burst of world-wide protest that we saw last month has been killed. Unlike T.S. and others who may wish to you on this subject, my Pacifism is purely a question of expediency, I do not believe that a Free Society can be brought about by violence or even that any substantial amelioration can be brought about, and I believe that generally speaking violence gives tyrants the excuse they want; so I shall not attempt to answer your "reply" except to point out that there is record of some mental aberration in David Pratt, who two years ago was refused permission to land in Holland after he had announced that the purpose of his visit was to shoot his wife; while not asking all FREEDOM readers to agree that shooting wives is an act of insanity. I would suggest that announcing this to the Customs shows a certain lack of balance.

I can only conclude by saying that the lack of scientific analysis in your article was such that it might push people in reaction to the desperate step of joining the SPGB, not as Tony fears of having to go at Macmillan.

Yours fraternally,  
London. L. OTTER.

(See also page 2)

### The L.A.G. May Day Meetings

MAY DAY this year marked the opening of the L.A.G. outdoor meetings at Hyde Park and also served as an excuse for a public meeting at the Working Men's Institute in Clerkenwell Road.

In spite of the competition from the power seekers shouting their wares in the park through their power microphones the voice of the anarchists successfully made its effect, attracting quite a large crowd.

It was no doubt a result of selling FREEDOM and distributing leaflets both at the Park and also during the Aldermaston march and at Trafalgar Square that helped to fill the hall for our indoor meeting in the evening. Many of the faces in the audience were new to anarchist meetings and because of this one wonders what sort of impression these people took away with them. From the point of view of this seasoned

meeting-goer it was certainly a most interesting evening.

There were seven speakers—a large number for any meeting of this size—and each speaker spoke fairly briefly giving in each instance an extremely individual view of very different aspects of the causes of Tyranny and War.

Because of the varying interests of the speakers a wide range of ideas was presented. I felt, too, an unusual lack of barrier between the speakers and audience. In fact the audience itself was different from the usual attendance at such meetings. I had the impression not of either too facile support or of unthinking hostility but of an interested and thoughtful group of people with a healthy reserved scepticism that could hold much promise for anarchism.

F.S.

### MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP and MALATESTA DEBATING SOCIETY

IMPORTANT

MEETINGS are now held at CAMBRIDGE CIRCUS "The Marquis of Granby" Public House, London, W.C.2. (corner Charing Cross Road and Shaftesbury Avenue) at 7.30 p.m. ALL WELCOME

MAY 8.—Brains Trust

MAY 15—Philip Holgate on ANARCHISM AND DIRECT ACTION

MAY 23.—Frances Sokolyov on BREAD, ANARCHISM & PICCADILLY CIRCUS

MAY 29.—Jack Robinson on STRIKES, BOYCOTTS AND DIRECT ACTION

L.A.G. SUMMER SCHOOL REMINDER

Don't forget when arranging your holidays, that the Summer School will take place during August Bank Holiday weekend. It will be held at Alan Albon's Farm at Hailsham, Sussex (under canvas), and those who wish to will be able to stay for a week. Further details of cost, lectures, etc. will appear later.

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