

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Where is there any book of the law so clear to each man as that written in his heart?"

—TOLSTOY

KOREA: PERMANENT WAR

Governmental Idealism Unconvincing

THE war in Korea has now lasted for almost two years, while the armistice talks are nearing their first anniversary. If they are dragged on much longer we shall see the curious spectacle of a war in which more than half its duration has been occupied with armistice negotiations. General Ridgway recently described the Communist negotiators as "lying men, of neither logic nor integrity," although Mr. Eden "assumed" in his speech on May 7th that they were honestly concerned to reach a settlement on the outstanding problem—the repatriation of prisoners-of-war.

There is something very unreal about these proceedings. They have come to resemble in miniature the conduct of the United Nations' sessions, where rational representatives talk and wrangle and abuse each other, while the day to day business of power policies is conducted outside almost as if they did not exist.

At Panmunjon, the United Nations are insisting that there shall be no forced repatriation of the 70,000 prisoners of war (out of a total of 132,000) who do not wish to return to North Korea or China. Mr. Eden described in Parliament the procedure in screening and declared that the United Nations were prepared to have this screening checked over again by a neutral commission with Communist observers present. His declaration that the idea of forced repatriation was unthinkable to the United Nations and to western opinion is very gratifying.

But it is also very mystifying. At the end of the war, the Allies thought nothing of permitting the Army to occupy large tracts of Europe, though they cannot have been ignorant of what this would mean to large numbers of political anti-communists in the areas involved. Governments are not usually so tender-hearted about these things.

In the case of Korea, the U.N. negotiators have been prepared to make concessions on the issue of the building and fitting of airfields in North Korea rather than concede the issue of the prisoners. Such behaviour is so unusual in governments that we do not feel it to be ungenerous or unduly suspicious to speculate on what is behind it all.

Maintaining the War

If the negotiations prove fruitless and are broken off, or, alternatively, are continued at their present unproductive level, it may be permissible to wonder if their function is not to

act as a cover for prolonging the war and stepping-down its intensity to a manageable level?

FREEDOM has often drawn attention to the rôle of war as an institution, a permanent activity having a definite function in our society. We drew attention to the revivifying effects on trade at the beginning of hostilities. Since then, Korea must have absorbed a considerable volume of production. The armies which now face each other are each 900,000 strong, and behind each is

the enormous organisation of supplies and communications.

In addition to its economic importance in a world forever on the edge of slump, Korea has proved an invaluable testing ground for military techniques for both the United Nations, the Russians and the Chinese Governments. The North and South Korean administrations have probably not learned anything valuable to them, but the great powers undoubtedly have.

It seems likely, therefore, that the Korean war is still too important to world economy and to military "science" to be brought to an end just yet. Such a speculation is unpalatable enough, no doubt, but some explanation of the interminable dragging out of this remote war must be made, and governments' idealism does not seem to us a sufficient explanation.

KOJE ISLAND P.O.W. CAMP

General Dodds' Kidnapping

ON May 10th, the prisoners-of-war at the vast Koje Island camp released the camp commandant, General Francis Dodd, whom they had kidnapped some days before and held pending negotiations on improved conditions. Complete secrecy has surrounded everything connected with this incident except the fact of the actual kidnapping itself. General Dodd was reported as sending messages that he was well and unharmed. His last messages before he was released were to request that a United Nations' plan to secure his release should not be used, and that he was nearing agreement with the prisoners "who showed honest interest".

At the time of going to press, General Dodd has refused to say anything of note until the publication of the findings of the enquiry into the incident. This almost certainly means that the question before the United States Government is what facts to admit and which to keep secret.

Conditions at Koje Island have been the subject of notes in FREEDOM several times in the last few months and there is doubtless much to hide.

It may be taken as certain, however, that the prisoners would not have released General Dodd without receiving at least a personal promise that there should be no reprisals. It is to be hoped that the veil of secrecy will not be used to cover a violation of any such promise, now that the General is free again.

THE IMPOSSIBLE PARTNERSHIP

EVERY politician and trade union leader will adjust his words to suit his audience. If the rank and file of the trade unions want to get an idea of what some of their leaders think, it is as well for them to read not only the *Daily Herald*—the official Labour paper—but, say, the *Sunday Times* as well. For it is surprising what can be put forward as "the workers' point of view" in such an organ of respectable conservatism.

A few months back, a series of articles in the *Sunday Times* on "Unity in Industry," featured among the contributors no less a red-hot militant than Arthur Horner, Stalinist Secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers. Little Arthur was all for unity between the employers and the employees, and we are inclined to wonder whether his recent omission from the national executive of the Communist Party has anything more behind it than the very reasonable reasons given at the time?

But Horner is by no means the only workers' representative to tell the readers of Lord Kemsley's best Sunday paper what the workers want. Last Sunday (May 11th) a Mr. J. Greening, (rather anonymously described simply as "a Trade Union official") pleaded the case for co-operation and participation. And how respectable it all sounded! As, of course, it is. There is nothing more respectable than "knowing your place" and Mr. J. Greening was very careful to show that the trade union official of to-day knows his rightful place in the modern economic life of this country and has none of those nasty bolshevik ideas of equality or workers' control or anything like that.

Mr. Greening began by gently ticking off one of the contributors to the unity series, Sir George Schuster, who maintained that "the workers . . . have no clear conception of the pattern for a new system in industry". But unfortunately, this is only too true—thanks to the reformist trade union officials who have managed to spread confusion and apathy among the workers so that they now don't know where they are, or where they are going.

Mr. Greening, however, knows where he wants to go (we could also tell him!) and says that "many trade unionists have a clear picture of what is desirable, but the problem facing them is not only to convince those members of their unions as yet unconvinced, but also to convert their employers to the necessity and desirability of joint consultation as a first step to co-partnership in industry."

We are quite pleased to see that trade unionists are still unconvinced about the necessity for co-partnership. We fancy, however, that from the bosses' point of view, at the moment, there is even less cause for worrying about it. With the workers as confused and apathetic as they are, why bother about offering them anything beyond the wages with which they seem satisfied? The employers can feel no necessity to come to terms with underlings—as long as they are content to remain underlings.

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THE NEWS CHRONICLE

ANNOYS THE DOCKERS

LONDON dockers were very cross with the *News Chronicle* one day last week, when it printed the docker's basic pay as £6 3s. 6d.

This is not the case. £6 3s. 6d. is the weekly wage for permanent staff. The pool workers are paid a guaranteed basic sum—providing they report for work properly—of £4 8s. 0d. a week.

Dockers were agitated about this, because they immediately imagined that when they got home they would be greeted by irate wives demanding to know what the game was, and what happened to the difference between £4 8s. and £6 3s. 6d.

When we phoned up the *News Chronicle* to put them right, we were told that 200 other irate dockers had phoned already! The next day the paper printed a correction.

But dockers are still getting suspicious looks when they lay down £4 8s. after a week's "bumping".

FOREIGN COMMENTARY

RUBBER AND POLITICS

JUST as the American Government was announcing that the restrictions placed on the importing of natural rubber had been removed, on the grounds that synthetic rubber production was now so well established in America that it could hold its own against competition from natural rubber (FREEDOM, 10/5/52), West Germany's biggest synthetic rubber producers were announcing that they were giving up for the time being plans to expand production because of the recent slump in world market prices of natural rubber! Indeed, the Chemische Werke at Huelo decided to reduce monthly output from 500 to 300 tons, though the 20 million marks expansion plans called for a monthly capacity of 2,000 tons.

One cannot help speculating as to whether this decision was one entirely dictated by the lower price of rubber (3 marks per kilo) as compared with Buna, the synthetic product (4.60 marks per kilo) or whether pressure has been brought to bear by British interests concerned with the slump in rubber prices, now at their lowest level in two years.* An A.P. report from Singapore (7/5/52) states that the 20% drop in prices has "evoked words of warning and apprehension from worried businessmen and other observers who sense a possible general depression. Few undertakings in this troubled peninsula are free from the influence of rubber trends. Pointing out the truism 'as rubber goes, so goes Malaya', Singapore papers expressed hope but little confidence that the price would recover".

One might add that those who really suffer are not so much the shareholders and the large planters, but the unfortunate plantation workers, as is always the case in those colonies which have been exploited as vast sources for one commodity and are therefore at the mercy of world prices, slumps, crop failures, which a balanced economy, of producing firstly the requirements of the inhabitants of the country, would avoid. But such considerations are alien to colonisers in general. Who are the real bandits in Malaya, if not those who have imposed this precarious economy on the country instead of developing it for the benefit of its inhabitants?

*An A.P. report from Singapore (10/15/52) states that the fall during the past eight days represented a drop of about £35 million a year in Federation Government revenue.

PROTECTING ANIMALS FROM MAN'S CRUELTY

WE have not often found ourselves supporting those organisations which exist for "protecting" animals in one way or another. We have on other occasions pointed to the fact that there exist such organisations to ensure, for instance, that horses and donkeys over a certain age shall not be required to do heavy work, and there always appear to be funds available to buy up large numbers of these animals, and unlimited offers from animal-lovers to give them "a home for their remaining years". But no such organisations exist to protect old people from having to work, nor are "good homes" offered to them for their old age. And one's hostility to these animal organisations springs from this lack of a sense of proportion: the attributing of human feelings to certain animals and an almost complete unawareness of the human feelings of old folk (how else can one explain the "workhouse" and institutions for old people?)

On the other hand, there would seem to be a justification for some organisation to draw attention to the cruel treatment of animals, judging by the kind of work to which animals are subjected by their human(?) masters. The most glaring example we have yet come across has been revealed at a meeting in the Hague of the World Federation for the Protection of Animals. How many visitors to that tourist paradise, Nice, in the South of France, are aware that dogs are used for cleaning the sewers? They are made to wriggle through the pipes, brushing the sides clean with their coats. When they emerge they are cleaned with hoses. After going through a few times it appears that the dogs usually die. Following the exposure of this barbarous practice, the Nice Director of Public Works has told the World Federation that he would approach the mayor to authorise mechanical cleaning of the sewers.

This is not a case of individual cruelty to animals. It has, for years, been the recognised practice of a Municipal Council and, therefore, known to a large number of employees in all its details—including how the dogs are forced to wriggle through the pipes as well as how the dogs are obtained—and obviously a large number must be required if their expectation of life is so short. That a

large number of people should condone such methods—and even at this stage all that the Director of Public Works has promised is that he would "approach" the mayor "to authorise" mechanical cleaning—is disquieting and the cynic might be justified in suggesting that what is required is a World Federation for Humanising human beings. We could then dispense with Societies for the prevention of cruelty to children . . . and to animals.

GUNS AND/OR BUTTER

PROGRESS report from Italy: "Italy's growing Army staged the country's biggest military parade since the war as a farewell salute to General Eisenhower. Over ten thousand men from the five and a half divisions assigned by Italy to the Atlantic forces in Europe marched past the retiring Supreme Commander on the outskirts of this north-eastern fortress town."

Meanwhile, unemployment shows no signs of decreasing, and the poor peasants of the South still live in their hovels.

On the other hand it appears, according to Alistair Cook in the *Manchester Guardian*, that the United States is the country where they have succeeded in having guns and butter "without inviting retribution". We think that that remains to be seen. It would certainly seem that at present some Americans are having too much butter, for according to Dr. G. M. Wheatley, a New York insurance company executive, one American in every five is eating himself to death. At least twenty million Americans are over-weight and five million are "grossly over-weight" (Cartoonists, please note). This is a very serious matter for the cause of democracy, and we suggest that Senator McCarthy be appealed to immediately by patriotic Americans to investigate these allegations. The Russians are so cunning that one cannot exclude the possibility that whilst the American Generals are telling the world of their latest diabolical weapon, the 75 ton atom gun—Russian agents in America are infiltrating the food and drink industry and tempting the Americans with every trick they know (even that of national pride by telling them that only they can have guns and butter) to make them eat more and more and so within about five years kill off half the population through over-eating!

LIBERTARIAN.

DOCKERS WIN MINOR BATTLE

(From our Docks Correspondent)

A MINOR battle—but with big implications—has just been won by the dockers of Free Trade Wharf, Wapping. Readers will remember the ban on overtime in the Port of London just before last Christmas. It followed the suspension of some workers for refusing to work overtime, and dockers, stevedores and lightermen joined in a protest ban in what had become an issue of principle—was overtime compulsory? The ban then lasted until Christmas goods were piling up, and then the union officials persuaded the men to go back to "normal" working—i.e., a 60-hour week—and that the issue would be cleared up by arbitration later.

We said at the time that there seemed something fishy about the way in which the stevedores' and lightermen's leaders—Barrett and Lindley—had supported the ban, so strongly at first and then turned round and sent their men back to work, with nothing settled.

Anyway, the issue of overtime (the Docks Agreements say "reasonable" overtime must be worked when necessary) has never been cleared up, and last week in London a small spark nearly started a flare-up again.

A docker at Free Trade Wharf was given 7 days' suspension for refusing to work overtime one evening. Immediately his mates declared a ban on all overtime, and began to put pressure on their

branch official to take the issue to Court and get it cleared up once and for all.

The Company were scared at this, for obviously that would be the beginning of a full-scale struggle with the whole Port involved, with the most likely result being that refusal to work overtime except under exceptional circumstances, would not be grounds for punishment.

Realising this, the Company cancelled the suspension order and recompensed the worker in full for his lost time by paying him what he would have earned—the same as the rest of his gang were paid.

The Company asked in return that the ban on overtime be lifted right away. This the men agreed to do.

Two points emerge from this issue. One is that, in view of the increasing unemployment in the docks, the employers are beginning to feel stronger. The London Portworkers' Committee, through Stalinist infiltration, is weaker than it was two years ago, and the authorities are obviously beginning to feel that the time is ripe for a tightening up of discipline throughout the Port.

The second point is that the workers' answer—as shown in this incident at Free Trade Wharf—is still: prompt direct action. However much the bosses may want to put the screw on the workers, it is the workers who have the answer—if they want to use it.

America, Russia & Totalitarianism—2 Individual Responsibility and War

It is a commonplace that the rulers of Soviet Russia regard the people as being almost indefinitely gullible and forgetful, and it is interesting to know that the Yugoslav Communists similarly regard the people as *siva massa* (grey masses), a dull, uniform medium in or on which the elite can operate as they please. It will be noted that this assumption of superiority is by no means unconscious or taken for granted. The Russian rulers employ considerable numbers of men and women whose task is in effect to ensure that everyone in the country knows the official version of current events and the party line with regard to these. Their efforts seem to be largely exhortatory and didactic. Contrasting with this are the efforts of the spokesmen of the American "ruling-class", the advertising men. They have the advantage of not having to instil an attitude towards life into their hearers while dealing with more ephemeral issues: they know that most of their audience will share the "mass-production mentality" which they assume as their target. Under the whip and spur of "free competition" their methods, developed pragmatically and judged in hard cash, have grown refined and subtle to a startling degree. For example, we might imagine that the irritation produced by "commercials", particularly singing commercials, perhaps interrupting an interesting news bulletin, or delaying the action of a favourite "soap-opera" would prevent any favourable reaction to the product extolled: so it does, but it has been found that a certain degree of irritation is sufficient to put the name into the hearer's mind, so that on the next day at the shops, when asked to choose a brand, that name will come to the lips of the "sheep" without a second thought! (It is, after all, in America that we find those famous stock-yards in which only the pig's squeal is unused.) The recent war saw a considerable increase in the employment of commercial advertising methods by the Federal authorities.

But to return to the children: in American schools perhaps half-an-hour each morning is spent in civics; lessons in the glory of America, the privileges (and duties) of an American, and hymns and prayers conducted in front of Old Glory. The Americans treat their flag much more seriously than we do ours, attaching to it some of the affection and respect felt for the Royal Family. And the Americans themselves recognise that some such symbol is necessary to assist in the creation of a national consciousness amongst the mélange of nationalities which constitutes the population of the U.S.A. In Russia the party has a complete and explicit control over every aspect of schooling. The symbol upon which the masses can discharge their emotion, the lightning-rod of the social system, is the Little Father himself. It appears that it was deliberately decided as part of Russia's war preparations to create an image of Stalin as the *paterfamilias* of the Russian people and so to unite the many different cultures comprised in the U.S.S.R. in a common emotional bond. The current ascription of supernatural powers to Stalin by the Russian press is an interesting example of the "father-into-god" explanation of the religious instinct (on a different level of consciousness). When the Russian leaves school he is at the mercy of the State; that is to say, of the party, which has control of the state machinery: the party alone determine what may be published, either in books and periodicals or in the daily press; their control over printed matter from abroad is far more rigorous than the Catholic's Index, which is merely a list of books the faithful are recommended not to read, at least, not without consulting their priest. But the Muscovites have been known to remark of their two big dailies *Pravda* ("Truth") and *Izvestia* ("News") that there's no news in *Pravda* and no truth in *Izvestia*. Unorthodox ideas (heresies) occur frequently, and in fields from agriculture to philology, resulting in the purges of which we hear so frequently; with permanently unfortunate results for the "wrong-thinker". It is even found

necessary to re-indoctrinate those soldiers who have been exposed to the corrupting bourgeois decadent luxury of the West.

The Thought-Control Business

In America there is no such centralised control over the printed word. Publishers in the U.S. will produce anything the public wants enough to pay for, and there is no obstacle to its distribution, except that the mails will not accept matter described as obscene or seditious. Except for a recent act said to be aimed at the Communists (which as the President said, "puts the U.S. Government in the thought-control business," the Federal authorities have little power over the daily, periodical or book publishers. Indeed, the power of the Press is such that any influence in this sphere would seem to be exercised in rather than by Washington. This freedom from governmental control can produce interesting results. A Congressional committee under the influence of the opposition has been investigating the connection between local crime and local politics: the majority of local administrations are in the government party's hands. The public interest has been aroused not so much by the chaos and general link between local crime and local politics which is rather taken for granted, as by the news that crime had nation-wide organisations on a scale equal to that of legitimate big-business; a scale which Americans would regard as a dictatorial threat to their civil liberties in the explicitly "political" field. The probable result will be changes of administration and increased powers for the authorities, that is, for the police forces who are generally under the control of the local authorities. Part of the impact which this news might have had has been lost by reason of the fact that the American public is so accustomed to dramatised stories of crime that this seemed like a "romance in true life" which had passed from fiction to non-fiction. The equivocal attitude of good American citizens to crime and criminals was clearly shown during the years of Prohibition (1920-1933) when a central

government ostensibly representing the wishes of the people tried to deny them an article of diet which has been present in almost every known society: in accordance with the well-known law of supply and demand, private enterprise came to the rescue, illegally. But Americans did not feel the suppliers were doing wrong, and they were supported in this view by the "orthodox" creed aforementioned, which said that this is a democratic country, that what the people want is right and that it is a socially acceptable career to supply their wants efficiently—and when this attitude is challenged by the government it is the government which is defeated. The true allegiance of the American is not so much to Jeffersonian democracy as to the economic machinery of the country. America is a business civilisation: those cases in which the government has successfully attacked the economic rulers are those in which the attack could be supported on grounds of overall economic efficiency, even though humanitarian or political matters may be the ostensible ground of dispute. But America cannot be dismissed as a nation of dollar-worshippers, of money-minded "go-getters". The dollar is only the outward and visible sign of a righteous life, a life, that is, spent in service of the ideal set before young men by the society into which they are born.

In Russia the position is more obscure; the Russians have had more than a generation under the same régime but this has not meant consistency for the people. In one part only of the field of foreign relations, for example, Germany, the legacy of pre-Revolutionary Slavism had to compete with the Marxian expectation that Germany, traditional enemy of the smaller Slav nations but the most "advanced" capitalist country on the continent, would be the scene of the next workers' revolution. The idealistic emphasis on world-wide Socialism had to succumb to the realist's decision (in 1924) to concentrate on achieving Socialism in one country. The military links with Germany, strengthened

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It is usual to measure the justice or injustice of a particular war, or of war in general, by reference to some absolute determining factor. Pacifists and non-pacifists alike are inclined to judge war in relationship to their concept of a God, their political beliefs, or some other tyrannical abstraction such as justice, society or the liberation of the oppressed. When regarded from aspects such as these, war becomes a phenomenon which it is possible to intellectually accept or reject without consideration of its meaning in human suffering or its effect on the individual. It is therefore from such abstractions that politicians seek their justification when about to embark on an orgy of international violence. If we are prepared to accept wars as a defence against aggression, of Christianity, democracy and a particular way of life we may consider them to be justified. But, should we ask, "Is war just?" and take into account its inevitable human misery, and the negation of the liberty and responsibility of the individual that militarism involves, then the answer must be an unqualified "No."

The only sufferer in war is the human individual. States and communities, which do not exist as entities and are only animated by the individuals in a certain geographical region, cannot suffer. Nations are not murdered; only the living components of the community can die.

This does not mean, of course, that the individual is able to discard all ideas of social responsibility and regard the question of war as a personal affair removed from allegiance to the social grouping of which he forms a part. It is not sufficient to disassociate oneself from the conflict and remain passively aloof whilst atrocities are committed and one's fellows killed and maimed. If the human being is a gregarious animal the objection of the individual must extend itself to the social plane. It is impossible to completely divorce oneself from the degradation of one's associates.

The alternatives involved are either the rejection of violence in all forms which implies the resistance to the prime movers of that violence, or its rejection

on an individual basis whilst tolerating or even condoning it as a social pattern.

The latter is the ideology of that type of pacifist who, whilst disassociating himself from international violence, is prepared to accept the protection of the policeman, and aims politically at the establishment of a "pacifist" government. He chooses to ignore that violence is the life-blood of any government and without the use of violence against dissenting elements in a society, a government would no longer exist. These people who so hypocritically claim to abhor all violence are quite prepared to condone the violence of the State against its rebellious "subjects". Theirs is not an intrinsic objection to the application of violence but in the use of force in a limited number of circumstances.

But the former alternative embodies a positive individual choice which is the basis of positive action. In such circumstances civil disobedience becomes morally necessary. The only pro-social actions in a society directed towards destruction are those directed against the structure of that society. It is essentially a revolutionary philosophy.

COLIN QUAYLE.

CRUELTY TO CHILDREN

IN those nations which we consider backward, cruelty to children as we know it is comparatively rare," writes Dr. Eustace Chesser in his new book, *Cruelty to Children* (Gollancz, 1946).

He regards ill-treatment as a disease of city civilisation, and its frustrations and discontents, and concludes that:

"If a man has work which fulfils and satisfies him, a home in which his needs are met, and a certain amount of peril to face... he will have no need to vent his frustrations on those who should be nearest and dearest to him."

BOOK REVIEW

SOIL AND CIVILISATION by Edward Hyams (Thames & Hudson, 21/-)

DO the terms "urban" and "rural" signify anything beyond the general, but by no means absolute, difference between living and working in towns and factories as against villages and farms; is the experience of producing goods so different from that of cultivating the soil that different attitudes to life and different ways of living result? Some months ago, I took part in an argument on this question but we came to see the problem clearly only after we had understood Edward Hyams' definition of "soil community".

"Soil community" is the phrase Hyams uses to describe the organic whole of all life on the surface of the earth; of this whole, human society is only one member. Human society is a community within a community; one of the most obvious, yet most commonly overlooked, facts of life. We had overlooked it, so our argument was unresolved, until, on reading *Soil and Civilization*, we realised that the farmer is, above all, concerned with the "soil community", upon which his production wholly depends, while the industrialist's production depends far more on the human community, on his co-operation with other men.

MARIA MONTESSORI

DR. Maria Montessori, the pioneer of freedom in education, died last week at the age of 81. The *News Chronicle*, in a leading article says: "In her own lifetime, Montessori has seen hundreds of schools adopt her methods of education. But her triumph is greater than that. She has seen the principles behind her system permeate the whole climate of teaching."

This echoes the concluding sentence of Tom Earley's article on her in *FREEDOM* last year, where he wrote: "Her memorial will not be the pure Montessori schools which are now to be found in every part of the world, but the fact that her inspiration and influence have coloured every aspect of work among young children everywhere, bringing light and joy into the dark and desolate places."

Copies of *FREEDOM* for 28/4/51 (Vol. 12, No. 9) which contain this long article on Maria Montessori's ideas and methods can be obtained from Freedom Press at 4½d. (including postage).

MAN AND THE SOIL

As our lives depend on both the human and the soil communities it is reasonable to suppose that the experience and attitudes gained from both kinds of work are equally important for our survival, and that our own comparative ignorance of the problems of the soil community is extremely unhealthy and dangerous. Urban civilizations of the past—Babylon, Mohenjo-Daro, Athens, Carthage, Rome—by forgetting and abusing their own soils have helped to bring about their own downfall; Western civilization is in great danger of following suit.

Soil and Civilization is not a pamphlet; it is the same sort of history book as Lewis Mumford's *The Culture of Cities*, or Siegfried Giedion's *Mechanization Takes Command*. Like these other valuable books, it is encouraging; it gives a clear picture, so that instead of feeling bewildered, one feels prepared to act. Hyams starts off by defining history as "memory", and by saying that unless past experience is remembered, effective and responsible action is impossible; the first part of the book is a philosophical enquiry into modern man's "loss of memory", his disregard for tradition which has had such disastrous results, especially in agriculture.

Hyams restates a now familiar diagnosis of modern evils: the split between thought and feeling, or, as he puts it, between Scientific Fact and Poetic Truth which has led to dominance of the scientific view and the exclusion from society of the poetic image with the consequent loss of a coherent picture of "life-as-a-whole". Hyams' interpretation is refreshing, but I think it a pity that it is in terms of man's psychic activities alone, since social and economic orientations are not mentioned. I have the impression that they are expected to follow from a change of philosophy, a sort of reverse materialism which I am sure contradicts what he says, as the corollary of the "inner" and personal activity of living in mind and spirit is, surely, the "outer" social activity of living in community? However, Hyams is expressly concerned with the Man-Soil Community relationship which is, perhaps, more directly explained in philosophical than in sociological terms; the bias is appropriate even if unadmitted.

The history of man is not only the story of his own society, but also that of his relationship to the earth's living surface; the last four of the five parts of *Soil and Civilization* is given to a detailed account of this latter, and apparently overlooked, history. Hyams defines various kinds of relationship which man has, and has had, with the soil community, ranging from a primitive state of full soil "membership" like that of any other species of tribal hunters, through various forms of "parasitism" in which man lives upon the soil community without either contributing or substantially weakening it, to either a state whereby man becomes a "disease"

of the soil, exhausting and destroying it, or to that of a civilised "maker" of stable artificial soil communities like that of Atlantic Europe. It would be impossible in so short a space to describe all these terms and, by Hyams' account, the extraordinary part they have played in our history. There are, however, two particularly interesting aspects of the problem which arise, the social and the religious.

Soil and Civilization illuminates at least one function, though evidently a past one, of religious myth; in the past, ritual and myth have been essential links between the human and the soil communities; trees, for instance, when supposed to be the home of spirits or gods, were never cut down indiscriminately; the deforestation of the Roman hills, and the subsequent erosion of their soils, was only possible when financial and political forces had weakened their mythology. Whenever a culture possessed a strong traditional Myth it was protected from the worst abuses of its own technology. (An exception was the Puritan invasion of the West where the Non-conformist farmers applied techniques suitable to their own stable European soils but disastrous to the thin virgin soils of America.) If the contemporary "religions" are really vehicles of a true Myth no part of that Myth regulates agricultural affairs; can Science? Not if Hyams' premises are correct, for science cannot ensure the proper emotional relationship that the farmer must have with his soil if he is to keep it in "good heart"; science can tell him all the facts of history, but it cannot make it real to him, which obviously it must be if he is to take any notice of it. What, then, is the modern equivalent to ancient religious myth?

Certainly, Hyams has not been prevented from discussing the social aspect through lack of appreciation and study of the relation between social structures and the soil; he gives us a great deal of information, but we are left to formulate our own questions. But this is singularly difficult since the material well-being of the human community does not necessarily imply the well-being of the soil of community or vice versa: the bubonic plague in Europe rid the soil of a burden it could no longer bear, and the inclosures of the 17th century brought about an absolutely necessary agricultural revolution in spite of the bitter resistance of the dispossessed peasants. The inclosures seem to be a partial exception to an apparently general rule that private ownership, leading through advanced capitalism to enslavement by the governors, destroys the fertility of the soil as surely as it destroys the social life of the human community; for, as soon as the cultivator loses his responsibility for the soil and becomes an uninterested wage earner or slave; private or public, the one vital link between man and soil is broken and a financial economy is substituted for an economy of the soil's fertility as the more successful competi-

tive farmers become landowners or landlords. This is a tendency rather than an absolute rule and really accurate only in extreme cases such as the Roman slave operated farms and American extensive farms.

High farming, mixed farming as in England to-day, was introduced by the great experimentalist landowners of the 17th century and took root only as the earlier feudal common ownership, which was identified with the cruder, and by the 17th century uneconomic, "open field" farming, was replaced by privately owned enclosed farms. In that particular case, private ownership or capitalism, actually rescued the land from a moribund communism. In my own rather limited, but first hand, observation it seems that the impetus of the feudal tradition, which identifies the peasant with the soil, has only died out during the last two generations and that this conservatism has been strong enough to preserve real interest in the soil, whoever the owners, in the majority of peasants; there are very few peasants left in England to-day, for they have at last realised that the soil they work is no longer "theirs" nor is it, very often worked for anything but money. So, assuming that the time has come for a new man-soil communism my own question is: what is the modern form of agricultural collective?

Unfortunately, Edward Hyams does not attempt to answer, or to give his opinion on this question, he does not even mention the Kolkhoz, the Kibbutz, the Spanish Collectives, or any of the modern experiments which seem to imply a closer and healthier relationship with the soil. But this, I hope, will be the subject of a later book, and the fly-leaf claim that "Nobody interested in the survival of mankind can afford to ignore this important and fascinating book" is no exaggeration.

JOHN TURNER.

The Bolshevik Revolution

It is not generally understood that in the early days of the October Revolution the Russian Communists were engaged as much in a struggle against their Anarchist Extreme Left as they were against the counter-Revolution of the Right. It was the gradual concentration of authority centred in Moscow that secured ultimately the success of the Revolution in much the same way as in times past the Grand Duchy of Moscow had imposed its will upon the amorphous mass of the Eastern Slavs from the Ukraine to the Urals. The October Revolution in fact led to the establishment of a new Muscovite dynasty in twentieth-century surroundings. Lenin was the new Peter the Great, and after he died the oligarchy of the Politburo replaced the Romanoffs. —M. PHILIPS PRICE (reviewing the recently published second volume of E. H. Carr's *The Bolshevik Revolution* (Macmillan, 30/-).

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THE BATTLE AND THE TRUTH

THE defence of civil liberties has become one of the most important activities of socially conscious individuals, because recent history has shown that the legacy of nineteenth century liberalism is by no means a "natural right" which can be taken for granted. And also because the threat to civil liberties has been found to come not solely from the frankly totalitarian states but also from definite trends—official secrets, political loyalty tests, and so on—in western countries also.

But the "socially conscious individual" in this country has often found himself acting very much in isolation or with a very much smaller band of fellow-fighters than he might have thought. The defence of civil liberties is very much a defensive campaign. It is, therefore, welcome news to hear that an International Federation of Journalists has come into existence recently after an inaugural meeting in Brussels. The federation is not only concerned with professional association and employment conditions but also "to safeguard the freedom of the press" and to "take action against any threats to the rights and liberties of journalists and the press".

Such aims are entirely admirable. One is not surprised to learn that the federation is composed of newspaper men from non-Communist nations; but immediately the question arises as to how such an association will conduct itself.

The method of the Communists is to form all kinds of associations whose object is to promote the Communist policy of the day, to serve in fact the interests of the Soviet Government. They are not concerned with the truth or with abstract principles, but solely with the aim that the Soviet point of view—which they may well believe to be the right one—shall prevail.

To counteract this kind of association, there has been a tendency to form associations which while seemingly opposing the Communists, actually involve no more than a difference in loyalties. They are apt to hold that the American or western democratic point of view is right and must be made to prevail. It is true that the looser structure of western government reflects itself in these associations which are therefore far less authoritarian than their Communist counterparts. But the fact remains that the rival organisations both accept as a basis the conflict between East and West, and this has important effects upon their practice. Instead of taking their stand upon questions of truth and principles of freedom (vague terms not popular to-day) they regard themselves as instruments in the fight between East and West and only those issues favourable to their own side are seriously taken up.

Now the threats to civil liberties do not come from bad men on the other side of the political dividing lines; they come from governments which reflect certain economic and propaganda necessities. Do-good organisations rooted in a particular government immediately start at a disadvantage—a fact which is immediately obvious and recognised when it is the organisations of the other side which are examined. But it is true on the "home side" also, and in the not-so-very-long run negates all admirable endeavour.

The conclusion therefore is that in pursuit of such desirables as civil liberty one must refuse to become involved in the great political schism of our time, the cold war between East and West. Can this be done without sinking into an ideologically pure but wholly ineffectual isola-

tion? This question is a most practical issue and must be faced. In answering it, one has to set aside mere loyalty based upon patriotism or education or simple self-interest. There can be little doubt that the partisan approach has produced very little results for civil liberty in the past. And it has to be remembered that political line-ups change with the years, so that the "practical" approach can be invalidated overnight by a political change of front.

The conclusion must be that the most practical and valuable activity must be based on principles and regard for the truth. It must be, in fact, independent of government and above the prevailing battle of ideologies. In the world of to-day such a conception sounds forlorn enough. But however little the truth and freedom as a principle appeals to governments and business people and administratively-minded people generally, they are still concepts which stir simple people and the great mass of men and women the world over who have no great stake in the world of the ideologies.

A PLACE OF THEIR OWN

DOZENS of house-hungry families from industrial Tyneside, says *The Smallholder*, are hoping to find a parcel of land in south Northumberland, not too distant from their present overcrowded homes in Newcastle and Gateshead. There they hope to build their own homes in their spare time.

They plan to build an estate of small-holdings, each with cultivated land, and in due course its pigsties and outbuildings for stock. Some may have greenhouses besides.

The buildings they propose to erect by themselves, and they came together at a meeting in Newcastle recently at which they decided to form the Newcastle and Gateshead Self-build Housing Association.

This is the first association of its kind in the north-east and the first in the country to contemplate self-building of smallholdings.

INDUSTRIAL NOTE

Mr. Rufus Amiel, managing director of Chelsea Autos Ltd., said at Thames Court yesterday, he built Austin cars entirely from spare parts and was able to sell them at a fair profit, about £300 cheaper than similar cars sold on the open market.

But he and his firm were each fined £250 for failing to register for purchase-tax.

—*News Chronicle*, 23/4/52.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE "SELF-BUILT" MOVEMENT

WE have discussed several times in *FREEDOM* the growing movement for "self-building" houses.

In a broadcast talk on "Building One's Own House," last month, Mr. Fello Atkinson, the architect, said:

"It is a sign of the fearful complication of our times that building one's own house should seem a new idea. What else did our remote ancestors do? And, of course, all primitive and pioneer communities build this way. Grandma Moses, that astonishing ninety-four-year-old American lady who has achieved

AFRICAN AFFAIRS

THE London conference on Central African Federation has ended inconclusively, like its predecessors.

The background of the three territories—the self-governing colony of Southern Rhodesia, and the protectorates of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, was described in our article on the London conference of March 1951, "Rhodesia: Setting the Scene for Race War" (*FREEDOM*, 31/3/51). This conference's report recommending the federation of British Central Africa, was discussed in our article, "A Central African Dominion" (*FREEDOM*, 23/6/51). A further conference, at Victoria Falls, and the visits of the Labour Government's ministers to the territories, were described in the article, "A Sterile Conference" (*FREEDOM*, 22/9/51).

NO SAFEGUARD FOR AFRICANS

Last month's conference issued a "draft federal scheme" very similar to that of a year ago, but with some concessions to the White settlers and some assurances to the Africans. It was announced that nothing more will be done before the end of the year, which itself must be regarded as a concession to the opposition of the Africans. On the other hand the report, despite its proposed "African Affairs Board" gives no real safeguards to them for, as the *New Statesman* rightly comments, "It is useless to talk of constitutional safeguards, no matter how rigidly phrased, in the framework of White settler government. Lugard himself emphasised this when he discussed, in *The Dual Mandate*, the uselessness of the constitutional safeguards which had been applied to Southern Rhodesia. Once executive power had passed from Whitehall to Salisbury, the British Government possessed no means of making these safeguards work."

BOYCOTT

The official African delegations from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland held a press conference on April 23rd, the opening day of the conference at which they said that they came to London not as delegations to attend the conference on federation but as deputations sent by their people to reaffirm to the United Kingdom Government their unanimous opposition to federation. Both deputations, they said, were requested to attend the conference but they refused because, first, Africans in the Northern territories had rejected federation on principle and could not therefore participate in a conference which was discussing modifications, and, secondly, because, "Africans found it most embarrassing to attend the London conference, which was arranged in a private way between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Governors of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, as well as the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia."

The press reports of statements by these delegations and replies by the

*Reprinted in our volume of selections, *Mankind is One*, p. 87.

such fame as a folk painter in the last few years, records in her memoirs how, in her young days, the men of New England wanting to set up home were given land and an axe and set about making their own log cabins. I am certain there are many places where the same thing still happens. The idea is certainly not new but only unusual in modern, highly industrialised communities where each of us, except possibly farmers and sailors, tends to specialise in ever-narrowing fields to the exclusion and even ignorance of all others. The responsibility for housing has now largely passed to government,

Stalemate over Central Africa

Colonial Office, make it clear that when their unwillingness to participate was declared, they were treated in so off-hand a manner that, as Dr. D. L. Yamba said, "We think that the sooner we are out of this country the better will the government be pleased."

Consequently, the only Africans taking part in the conference were two delegates from Southern Rhodesia who were described, by Labour members in parliament (how fairly we do not know) as "stooges". Certainly they are the personal nominees of Sir Godfrey Huggins. Africans in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland subscribed a large sum of money to send further unofficial delegations of members of the African Congresses, tribal chiefs, and members of the African Miners' Union to express their vehement opposition to federation and to emphasise that the Protectorate Council of Nyasaland and the African Representative Council of Northern Rhodesia "have unanimously rejected federation in principle".

SETTLERS' MOTIVE

Dr. Hastings Banda at the press conference of the unofficial delegations, in which the official delegations participated, pointed out that their opposition was "because they know the real reasons why European settlers want federation". These reasons were not economic, strategic, or administrative nor concerned

with communications, but political. The settlers hoped by federation to prevent the Africans from achieving self-government and to extend to Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia the native policy of Southern Rhodesia. "The Africans," he said, "have heard a statement by the Secretary of State for the Colonies that he was going to persuade them to accept federation. But the Africans are not going to be persuaded."

After speaking about the colour bar, pass laws, curfew, segregation, and other restrictions placed on his people, Mr. Harry Nkumbula, president of the African Congress, said: "If these things take place now, how much more would they take place under the new scheme of federal Government." Recalling the promises made by Britain when Queen Victoria was first asked by the chiefs to take Northern Rhodesia under her protection—promises that the Africans would be taught to govern themselves, he concluded: "My people are now asking the British Government to honour its promises on self-government."

The underlying question behind the whole series of futile conferences which have been held on Central African Federation (will it be on the agenda for the next one?) is quite simple: "Are 167,000 European settlers to dominate 7,500,000 Africans? And how long do they think they can keep it up?"

THIS IS NOT MALAN'S LAND

IN Southern Rhodesia every urban African with a job has to carry three passes—a registration pass, a work card and a town pass. If he is unemployed, he has to leave the town and so loses his town pass, but he still has to carry a registration pass and a work card.

In Northern Rhodesia an African residing in or visiting districts where the European lives must carry a pass. He must have a pass in certain areas if he is outside his compound between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. In another area, he must carry a registration certificate and a resident's permit. It is true that exemption from these passes are given—1,675 in the past 20 years. That is an average of 80 a year, for nearly 3½ million people.

In Southern Rhodesia no legal provision exists for the recognition of African trade unions. Thus any agreement made with them by the employers cannot be enforced in a court of law. Southern Rhodesia argues that the African is not sufficiently advanced to be capable of organising and managing trade unions. And it denies him admission to the white trade unions.

In Southern Rhodesia, *Apartheid* is practised. The Land Apportionment Act of 1930, re-enacted in 1941, provides for a territorial or racial separation of Southern Rhodesia and is as near *Apartheid* as makes little difference.

To get on the Southern Rhodesia common electoral roll a few years ago, one needed property worth £150 or an income of £100 a year. These limits have been increased to £500 and £240. In addition, there is a language test. Subject to these qualifications, the electoral rolls are wide open to rich and poor, black and white—like the doors of the Ritz.

In Northern Rhodesia, the land is so divided that 35,000 Europeans and 3,200 Asiatics and coloureds own between them over 10 million acres, or an average of 283 acres each. And how much is owned by the 1,660,000 Africans? 39 acres each. Here economic discrimination strikes at the very root of the African's life, his tenure of the land.

—LESLIE PLUMMER, M.P.

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AMERICA, RUSSIA & TOTALITARIANISM--2

Continued from p. 2

at first by a common opposition to the Versailles powers, were broken by 1935 when it was clear that Germany was reviving the old Imperial "Drang nach Osten". This threw the Central European countries into Russia's arms: an important factor in the Russian's post-war penetration of Czechoslovakia was the recollection of their attitude at the time of Munich. In 1939, attempting to threaten the Entente with a second Munich with Poland as the victim, the Germans sought a rapprochement with Russia, which the Russians, following their traditional policy of selling space for time, accepted. This sketch of the conflicting trends in Russo-German relations between the wars may seem obvious enough, if incomplete; but consider the mind of the "typical" Russian, to whom literacy is a novelty and who is, in this primarily agricultural country accustomed to the dependable cycle of the land, and picture the idea of Germany which will have been presented to him, largely in the somewhat obvious cartoons of which some examples have been seen in the West. Faced in turn with the weak sister-nation, the toiling slave under the lash of foreign or domestic masters, the ogre threatening his peace and the strong brother helping to defend that same

peace, he might well become confused and abandon hope of comprehending his country's foreign policy; while accepting verbally the propaganda so liberally administered he would lose any feeling that he himself had an emotional stake in the matter; while returning the currently correct answers to questions about Germany's aggressive designs, or deep desire for lasting peace he would feel that this was not really important, that it was "their" concern, not his. A similar position would arise in more personal fields. The creation of an urban proletariat separated from elemental contact with the processes of nature, victim of the mental malaise which afflicts so many city-dwellers, and the reduction of the rural peasants to labour units on a collective farm in whose operation they have as much voice as a tractor, are both changes which produce people lacking in any feeling of responsibility for the activities which occupy most of their waking hours. This results in inefficiency, and the rulers of Russia realise the fact; they try to counter this lack of interest by appealing to the worker on four levels, body, mind, soul and heart. The straightforward incentive of higher pay for better work, labour camp for poorer work, is the major method.

(To be concluded) R.H.

and there exists a complicated and rigid pattern of planning and building permits, regulations and standards, financing and subsidies.

"But, in spite of this, groups of men are building their own houses in this country to-day; they have been doing so for some time, and they are building them successfully within this complex mechanism. And these 'self-build groups', as they are called, are growing in number."

He went on to describe the activities of groups affiliated to the National Federation of Housing Societies.

This called forth (and it is an indication of the spread of "self-building"), a letter in the *Listener* from the secretary of a group, who wanted to draw attention to the 194 "self-build" groups affiliated to the London and National Self-Build Housing Association, and the Central Association, Birmingham, and to "the difficulties and heartbreak of other groups, already fully trained, with considerable financial resources, who have been ready to build for eighteen months, and who lack one thing only—the co-operation of their local authorities to grant the necessary permission for them to go ahead and build."

The writer has also paid tribute to the founders of the associations, who "without and prompting, and for no personal gain, have come forward and shown us, for the first time in our lives, how to help ourselves."

For the first time in our lives, how to help ourselves. This is why we believe the "self-building" movement to be so valuable and important.

THE POPE AND FEARLESS WOMEN

THE rôle of women in society is not one which is generally singled out for special discussion by anarchists. Our appeal is to men and women unbound by the narrow limits of sectarianism, and we take it for granted that women have equal rights with men to express themselves in whatever they may choose.

The importance of women in society, however, has recently been given some prominence in certain unexpected quarters. Our experience has taught us to distrust most pronouncements which come from the Vatican, and it is perhaps understandable that we should regard the Pope's recent address to a delegation of Catholic women, with a certain amount of suspicion. He called upon Catholic women throughout the world to "impose their will for peace upon the rulers of peoples who maintain a state of things which give rise to war," and spoke of the necessity for removing the material causes of conflict, among them poverty and unemployment.

In view of the Church's opposition to birth control and the way in which, by implication, it encourages childbirth in the most appalling conditions of poverty, it is difficult to believe that the Pope is solely motivated by a desire to remove the conditions of want which give rise to war. His reference to the peace propaganda of the Communists, which he dismisses as useless on the grounds that a peace campaign is doomed to failure unless based on Christian concepts, may help us to understand why the Pope is now so concerned with uniting women for peace. Many women, among them Catholics, who are undoubtedly genuine in their desire to prevent war, in their ignorance of the real nature of the Communists, are nevertheless impressed by their peace slogans, and in many cases have offered them their support. The recent conference of the Communist-

dominated International Womens' Association is an example. Some of the delegates were Catholic, and some were from other religious groups. In face of our experience of the rôle of the Catholic Church in politics, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the Pope is concerned with a peace campaign of his own designed to keep these women within the Church.

Many Catholics, too, who are opposed to war have been looking to the Vatican for guidance on the matter. The address to these delegates seems to be the first definite statement which has come from Rome. It is, however, sufficiently vague not to warrant any concrete action, but will no doubt salve the consciences of Catholics who are opposed to war but whose first loyalties lie with the Church.

The Pope should move carefully, because if women once realised their collective strength, they might begin to doubt the wisdom of the Catholic Church which has always regarded them as merely a means for producing children.

A message to women to realise their potential strength has come from another

unexpected source in the form of the B.B.C., which has recently unwittingly given wider publicity to a statement by Bertrand Russell. The team in the Light Programme series "We Beg to Differ", were asked if they agreed with Russell's statement that "a generation of fearless women could transform the world". The comments from Gilbert Harding (one of the team) were definite: "One generation of fearless women who believed that they go through the pains of childbirth and the pleasure of motherhood not to have their sons popped into uniform to shoot other women's sons. One generation of women who said that they would not let their sons fight for anything or anybody—or in any circumstances, could stop this nonsense."

This is a fine sentiment expressed in forceful language by a public figure, but there is no guarantee that children will not fall under the influence of militarism however determined and enlightened their mothers may be, it is a risk that most women are prepared to take, but it would be more realistic if women united to abolish militarism.

R.M.

Townsmen's Food

THE argument is often advanced today, says *The Smallholder* discussing the new book *Townsmen's Food* by Magnus Pyke (Turnstile Press, 15/-), that the chemist plays too great a part in its preparation and preservation before ever it reaches our kitchens.

Dr. Pyke replies that this is a logical result of the way in which we live: if our form of civilisation obliges us to congregate millions together in cities, often far from where our food is grown, then we must accept the need for various forms of preservation.

Exactly what this "processing" of our food really consists is what most of this book is devoted to and it is a fascinating story.

Some of it is disturbing, too.

Humiliating, Dr. Pyke, who used to be Principal Scientific Officer (Nutrition) at the Ministry of Food, calls it, to remem-

ber that almost 1,000 outbreaks of food poisoning due to bacterial contamination were reported in England and Wales in 1948, compared with 500 in 1945, and a yearly average of 125 between 1935 and 1938.

It seems to be equally humiliating to learn that we have to import special flour to make biscuits for sale in the United States: no British-milled flour can be found to comply with American standards of purity, ours is all contaminated by the droppings of mice.

Processing of food to prevent contamination, to arrest decay, to avoid poisoning, that is one thing. But what about the use of so-called "improvers"? What about artificial colouring?

Is it right that a cured herring should be dyed to pass it off as a kipper darkened by wood smoke? Is it right that a "chocolate Swiss roll" should have no trace of chocolate in it?

MORE ATOMIC PROGRESS

THE announcement that the U.S. Army now has an atomic gun is a reminder of the continual refinement, improvement, and general increase in the ability to destroy. Fire power is the terse military expression for this branch of learning.

The 75-ton atom gun can be rattled along at 35 miles per hour and so is rapidly mobile. No announcement has been made to give a waiting world an idea of its capacity, but Mr. Frank Pace, the U.S. Army Secretary entered fields akin to astronomy when he came to compare atomic explosive force with "ordinary" weapons:

"As atomic weapons pass from blueprint to hardware," said Mr. Pace, "we are adding them to our arsenal."

"He said the early atom bomb dropped on Nagasaki had an explosive force about equal to the simultaneous fire of 1,300 battalions of medium field artillery or 50 to 200 strategic bombers dropping a full load of conventional bombs."

"Thirteen hundred American battalions would normally fire 23,400 guns of 155 millimetre. 82% carry 10 tons of bombs."

"BUT DON'T BELIEVE HER"

"You'll have a lot of fun in the Home Guard. She (your wife) may not find it so amusing to have you gallivanting about the country in uniform and being asked to brush the mud off your trousers when you come home."

"She may even say, 'You've got past that sort of thing. Your figure is no longer made for battledress, and won't you look silly marching about with a gun.'"

Field-Marshal Slim, of course, followed this with the usual recruiting speech. We will leave it at that.

German Rearmament and World Markets

IN case you missed it the other day the *Daily Herald* quoted Sir Vincent Twiss, addressing a T.U. Congress in New Zealand, unguardedly saying, "If Germany and Japan were not forced to re-arm to defend democracy, they would have an unfair advantage in the world's markets."

I.B.

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MANKIND IS ONE

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FREEDOM PRESS

YOUR article, "American Floods Again" (FREEDOM, 19th April, 1952) properly affixes blame to the system of parliamentary capitalism. I suggest, however, that the particular aspects of the system which you cite (the land exploitation - devegetation - erosion - flood cycle) are perhaps more in the nature of stereotypes than of a rational hypothesis in phase with reality. The present writer is no authority on the subject, but perhaps these notes—compounded of rather fragmentary reading and some personal observation of the situation—may point toward a more realistic explanation of the cyclical flood.

The first hypothesis to be considered is that your correspondent may have reversed cause and effect. The floods themselves (as "acts of God" rather than man-induced catastrophes) may have originally started the erosion cycle. This theory undoubtedly would partially explain the Mississippi-Missouri situation, and it is a nearly complete explanation of other recurrent flood areas, such as the Northern Idaho region.

A second hypothesis should be in the nature of an analysis of FREEDOM's analysis. Your correspondent shares a typical British-European view of the American West, namely, that there are unlimited frontiers. In point of simple fact, it is no longer possible to "move on and exploit new terrain rather than to conserve the old". The Mississippi Valley, particularly, is characterised by many of the large farms being in their third generation of operation by the same family. In addition to there being little or no new arable land, government regulations act as another deterrent to agricultural nomadism in the form of a stabilizing, inertial factor.

A third possible theory is one which may be directly attributed to government intervention and profit motive. Government support prices in recent years have encouraged one could also say "coerced" farmers into the cultivation of food crops—principally wheat—to the exclusion of the raising of livestock. The immediate results of this scheme are the astronomical cost of meat in the U.S. and the large-scale importation of beef from Canada and South America. A more subtle result is erosion. Wheat is so deterrent to erosion. Further, the cultivation of marginal land in the U.S.—again, principally in wheat—every year increases and every year sets a new record. And still the government continues to pay a bounty for the putting of new land into cultivation! The government encourages land-exploitative farming.

A fourth hypothesis is one more immediately related to the problem of floods and as easily traceable to the government. This is the problem of effective flood prevention and control. There are two long-established truisms concerning this problem: (1) Flood pre-

vention and control facilities in the U.S. have no demonstrable relation to facilities for water power, irrigation, make-work, or what have you. In other words, if TVA builds a dam for water power, it will most probably have very little use as a flood preventive. The converse of this also holds. (2) There is an overlapping of function in the various tentacles of government (the most prominent of which are, in this respect, the Army Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Federal Power Commission, the Indian Claims Commission, state governments and regional bureaus, such as the TVA) which effectively and conclusively prevents anything but desultory make-shifts being accomplished to prevent floods. Needless to say, each tentacle is loathe to give up any of its functions. The rôle of these bureaus in the economy might be compared to that of the wolf-extermimating bureau in France; wolves still flourish in France and floods in the U.S. Whatever many anarchists may think of "human engineering", it is still necessary to indulge in long-range and co-ordinated planning if this tragic cycle is to be stopped. This observation

Continued from p. 1

When the workers begin to get militant again—then the bosses will hasten to offer co-partnership, joint consultation or any other form of class collaboration, in order to keep them quiet.

After all, the bosses will certainly lose nothing, but will in fact, gain. For, as Mr. Greening hastens to point out: "Consultation does not necessarily mean that a management gives up its authority . . . The orders of the management must be obeyed, and its responsibility for the result must be final."

What then, we may ask, is the point of consulting at all, if what the management says, goes, anyway? Mr. Greening tells us, "If we accept the idea that consultation is the sharing of knowledge, then the practical knowledge of the employee can be of great use when decisions are being made. Furthermore, his assistance can be more readily obtained in carrying out these decisions, because he knows the reasons underlying them."

Here, then, we are finding the whole basis for joint consultation: it will be useful for the boss. For there must be no replacing or removing of the boss. Mr. Greening tells the boss, straight out and boldly, that without the worker capital can do nothing, but, he adds, "likewise without capital the worker can achieve nothing".

The two must go together, hand in hand, for ever, in a happy partnership. For, "There need be no conflict between an employee's loyalty to his company and to his union. Indeed, if the management by using an intelligent approach can win the support and aid of the union, then the employees' loyalty can be of an even higher degree."

A neater exposition of the interests behind class-collaboration, could hardly be wished for. Here we see, in stark clarity, the identity of interest between the unions and the employers. And the task of those unionists who "have a clear picture of what is desirable" is to persuade the workers that their interests are identical with those of the other two sides. The exploited have interests in

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

American Floods Again

applies not only to this possible explanation, but to the other three as well. Whether under capitalism or communism, makeshifts have not and cannot do away with floods.

The true reasons for the flood cycle probably lie somewhere between, or even possibly outside, the ideas I have sketched. I do not think that floods can be dismissed simply as due to land exploitation under stimulus of profit motive. As anarchists, however, it should not be our rôle to join with the "liberals" in a clamour for more and better flood relief, or for the pacification of power-hungry bureaucrats. There is an explanation for the flood cycle and there is a way of ending it. If parliamentary capitalism were capable of finding the explanation and ending the cycle, it probably would have done so, for it would be to its interest. It has not and thereby has added another instance to the already intolerably long list of anti-social acts. Some day the flood-dispossessed along with the rest of the life-dispossessed will turn on the government instead of to it for aid in its misery.

RICHARD J. DEHAAN.
Chicago, May 7.

Youth for Freedom

I FEEL that the letter from H.R.L. on subject of my pamphlet, "Youth for Freedom", has raised one point which merits a reply, that is the question of the Peckham Health Centre and family units.

I am quite aware of the general theses of the Peckham biologists. I regard the published results of their work as extremely valuable, and that is why I referred to them in "Youth for Freedom". But I do not agree with the interpretation which is put on those results as far as the social and biological usefulness of the monogamous family unit. I think that it is significant that when searching for parallels to the human family unit among other forms of animal life, they refer persistently to the nesting habits of certain birds in which the father is an indispensable factor in the rearing of the young. Dr. Innes Pearce even talks of the "indiffusion" of human couples. Why when seeking biological parallels among the higher vertebrates, do they have to refer to the Bird Class, instead of to the Mammals, the Class to which our own species belongs? The answer seems to be that evidence gathered from the mammalian Class tends to disprove the hypothesis of the Peckham biologists regarding the reproductive rôle of the father.

I do not wish to denigrate the work of the Peckham biologists. I agree with the bulk of their findings to the extent that I need not hesitate to point out a particular in which I flatly disagree with them. I think that in following up

various hypotheses with a well-conducted experiment they succeeded in drastically disproving the validity of one of them—the supposed value of the conventional family unit in contemporary society.

That the Peckham Health Centre was designed to be built on family units, as your correspondent points out, is true; but in point of fact it was built on—people, people of all ages who took advantage of the grand facilities it offered to escape from the wretched pattern of the family unit. Once within the walls of the Centre, children could get away from their parents, wives from their husbands, and all could act as ordinary beings untrammelled by the conventional rôles of Son, Daughter, Mum and Dad. Leisure spent there was all the happier in the no-one need feel the social guilt of deserting the family, for it gave equal opportunities to people of all ages to foregather with those with whom their natural affinities lay. If it demonstrated anything about families, it demonstrated that they were happier when family life became supplanted by communal life.

The rest of H.R.L.'s letter hardly merits a reply. If he feels that there is some sort of undemonstrable bond between a man and the children he has begotten, which gives each child a biological need of his own father, I will not attempt to argue with his feelings. But because I do not share his feelings in this matter, and confine myself to a discussion of available evidence, I do not think that is a mark of prejudice in me.

London, May 2. TONY GIBSON.

The Impossible Partnership

common with the exploiters!

For the anarchists, all forms of class collaboration have clearly been seen as operating only in the interests of the dominant class. Joint consultation, and its minor variations such as the suggestion box, are simply ways for the management to pick the brains of the workers as well as their pockets. And the trade union officials approve of the idea because they accept capitalism, conceive of nothing better—and indeed want nothing better, for capitalism is the justification of their existence and their privileged positions. And if the workers are kept quiet by being "consulted" before being ordered about, then things are so much easier for the union officials.

But anarchists and syndicalists are not taken in, and will not be satisfied until the means of production are under the direct control of all the producers, not being consulted for the sake of the profits of the few, but maintaining a free economy for the benefit of all.

P.S.

Special Appeal

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Every Sunday at 3.30 p.m.

MANETTE STREET
(by Foyle's, Charing Cross Road)
Every Saturday at 6.0 p.m.

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at the
CLASSIC RESTAURANT,
Baker Street, W.1
(near Classic Cinema)
Every Sunday at 7.30 p.m.

MAY 18—Bert Willis on
CHARLIE CHAPLIN—ANARCHIST
MAY 25—J. H. Moorhouse on
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IN EAST HAM
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at 7.30

MAY 28—Rita Milton
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WEST LONDON

A Group has been formed in West London and any comrades interested in working with it are invited to contact—
C. Brasnett, 79 Warwick Ave., W.9

LIVERPOOL

DISCUSSION MEETINGS at
101 Upper Parliament Street,
Liverpool, 8
Every Sunday at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW

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at
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Every Sunday at 7 p.m.
With John Gaffney, Frank Leech,
Jane Strackan, Eddie Shaw,
Frank Carlin

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Anyone interested in forming a group in this area is asked to communicate with D. C. WILSON, 3 Norman Terrace, South Bank, Middlesbrough.

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