

Freedom

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Threepence

OUR DEMOCRATIC UNIONS

In referring to the Margate T.U.C. last week, we mentioned the more than 6,000,000 majority the General Council had won for its resolution on wage restraint. And we added in brackets, "how misleading as to the real feelings of trades unionists these card-vote figures are!"

Just how misleading they are we are probably going to be shown over the next few weeks, and a start has been made by the miners of West Wales who have protested against their union leaders' support for the wage restraint resolution.

Representatives from 59 lodges of the National Union of Mineworkers, on behalf of 18,000 West Wales miners decided last Saturday to protest that the action of the national executive did not represent their points of view.

The chairman of the meeting, which was held in Swansea, Mr. E. W. Evans, said that the union's executive had voted

Engineering: The Union's Last Hope

It seems fairly clear that the Engineering unions will be able to avoid the terrifying threat of having to take direct action.

Since they announced, on the eve of the Margate T.U.C., that they had decided on a ban on overtime and piece-work, the union leaders themselves have been working overtime. Not preparing for battle, but pleading for arbitration.

For this is the remaining card up their sleeves. By threatening action, they were able to go before Sir Walter Monckton and ask for a sitting of the Government's arbitration board. It has not been put to their members quite like that; it was merely reported that Sir Robert Gould, chief Ministry of Labour conciliator had invited the unions to meet him in London for discussion and to allow him to arrange a joint meeting with the employers.

The Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions was meeting at York, ostensibly to decide on the date to commence their ban, when Sir Robert's "invitation" arrived. With what a sigh of relief the union leaders must have gladly grabbed at the chance to postpone the ban!

Now, once again, increases of 10s. or 15s. a week are being suggested instead of the "unreasonable" £2. And knowing the lack of support the union leaders have for the larger figure (Jack Tanner, A.E.U. president and Robert Openshaw opposed it when the rank and file first demanded it), it is plain that the employers will be able to force them down to the very lowest figure that will avoid an open dispute.

At the time of writing, Sir Robert Gould has met the union leaders and they apparently "went away satisfied". Now he has to meet the employers and try and get them together.

There is one interested party in all this who are very obviously going to be dissatisfied with the result: the rank and file. They are going to be asked to be satisfied with an increase about a quarter of what they asked for, while the well-paid executive will consider they have done very well.

But whatever they get, it will not be because of the ability of the executive, but because of the threat of direct action.

FOR THE DEFENCE OF FRANCO

A diplomatic official said [in Washington] that the State Department has offered the Spanish Government a firm guarantee to defend the proposed air and naval bases in Spain in the event of war.

He said such a guarantee would amount to a U.S. promise to defend Spanish territory if an enemy approached the Pyrenees.—*News Chronicle*, 13/9/52.

in favour of wage restraint without any prior consultation with the rank and file.

Sir William Lawther, president of the union, said afterwards that the N.U.M.'s delegates supported the General Council at the conference "because they thought it was the right thing to do, and they were all rank and file delegates."

The N.U.M. delegation held a conference and decided upon its policy after consultation with the executive council of the union.

Now this is a fine example of the way in which democracy operates in one of the most powerful unions in the country. The N.U.M. delegation to Margate was very clearly not a delegation at all in the real sense. They had not been delegated by the rank and file to put forward the point of view of the rank and file—they had been given the right to take decisions themselves without prior consultation with the rank and file.

In this way, control of the union's policy had passed from the membership into the hands of a minority. And, of course, in the relaxed atmosphere of Margate, with drinks and smokes being handed around, it is simply a matter of skilful use of the gift of the gab for the national executive to put its point of view across the delegation—probably not a very hard thing to do anyway.

As President, Sir William Lawther would naturally think it is the right thing to do, for the delegation to support the executive, but those funny old miners back in West Wales, who only pay the salaries and expenses for their various officers, seem to have the strange notion that their interests should be considered. Sir Will is very definite about that. "We

do not allow," he said, "any outside bodies, even if they are affiliated, to dictate policy to us."

In other words, this amusing statement means that the national executive is the inside body, dictating policy, and the rank and file miners are outside, simply doing as they are told.

Perhaps Lawther thinks he is in a strong position because of the structure of the N.U.M., which is not an industrial union so much as an umbrella for the various federations—South Wales Miners' Federation, Scottish Miners, Yorkshire Miners, and so on—and it may be possible for a clever politician to play off one section against another—or to ignore the wishes of one while looking after another—but if he isn't a bit more careful, Sir William may find his affiliated federations becoming dis-affiliated.

Then, we suppose, we shall hear all the squeals about "break-away" unions, splinter groups and all the rest, if not the dread word "anarchy" itself, invoked to shame the miners who no longer see the point in paying affiliation fees to something which operates against them.

The character of democracy in our unions is being shown to be just as shabby as it is in politics and in national life. Let us hope that the miners will not be content to sit down under Lawther's dictatorship and the N.C.B.'s contemptuous dismissal of their 30/- wage claim, but will rediscover the independence and militancy which have served them so well in the past, as well as recreating the desire for workers' control which remains the only solution to the shortcomings of leadership. P.S.

MALAN BANS PAMPHLETS AGAINST RACE PREJUDICE

DR. Malan has banned the Unesco pamphlet "The Roots of Prejudice" by Dr. Arnold Rose of the University of Minnesota, and another published by the British Bureau of Current Affairs.

Both of these (the first was reviewed in FREEDOM, 13/10/51) pamphlets are moderate in tone and set out to expose the ignorance and misinformation that underlie racial prejudice. The *Observer's* Cape Town correspondent, Hugh Latimer, describes them as follows:

"The Unesco pamphlet outlines the causes of race prejudice in general and contains only one passing reference to South Africa. Other sections of the pamphlet describe without passion the social and economic costs of racial prejudice, its transmission to children and its effect on personality.

"The second pamphlet 'Behind the Colour Bar,' is by Dr. Kenneth Little, head of the Department of Social Anthropology at Edinburgh University. Its subject matter is not confined to South Africa, and its summary of the policy of *Apartheid* is carefully fair."

"Dr. Little says, 'Apartheid does not signify any radical change in the South African approach to the colour problem. It is merely a more logical and more specific application of the principles which have also guided General Smuts's party.'"

By banning these publications, Malan shows how weak are his arguments. Despite the general colour prejudice throughout white S. Africa, it is to be hoped that his caution indicates widespread readiness to accept the rational ideas put forward against such prejudice.

NORMAN HAIRE: A Contradictory Figure

DR. Norman Haire, who died on September 11th, was one of the most paradoxical figures in the progressive movement. Since the end of the First World War, he worked single-mindedly on sexual education and the practical problem of birth control. In the early days, especially in England, such work cut right across established conventions of secrecy in matters of sex. It is an indication of the achievement of workers like Haire that the *Times*, a newspaper which refused to mention birth control right up till the second war, could write in its obituary notice:

"From the date of his establishment in England, Haire threw himself vigorously into the movement for sex education and rational birth control. He was forced by the facts that came to his notice in the course of his practice to the conclusion that the happiness of thousands of homes was destroyed by sexual maladjustment and over-large families, badly spaced and

owing their size to ignorance rather than to philoprogenitive tendencies. He therefore began to study, teach, and write about sexual hygiene and contraception, basing his teaching on what seemed to him sound medical principles. In 1921 he was one of the founders of the Walworth Welfare Centre—the first British welfare centre to give advice on contraception . . ."

During the 1920's, Haire attended almost every year Birth Control and Sex Reform Congresses all over the world, and was one of those responsible for the building up of the World League for Sexual Reform under the presidency of Magnus Hirschfeld. The subsequent history of this body illustrates one of the contradictions in Haire's nature.

When Hirschfeld died, Norman Haire and the Scandinavian sexologist, Leunbach, became joint presidents. Leunbach believed that the chief obstacle in the path of rational sexual reform was bourgeois morality and that this was directly linked with and sustained by the social and economic forms of capital. He therefore urged that the movement for sexual reform should link itself up with the revolutionary socialist movement.

Inside Tito's Party

(by a Balkan correspondent)

ALL serious students of public affairs, whether anarchists or not, have drawn repeated attention to the inevitable degeneration of revolutionary parties once they capture power. Tito's Communist Party proved no exception and provides yet another classic example in support of the above thesis.

Tito's Yugoslavia is visited every year by thousands of foreigners and many later describe their impressions in the Western press. Some praise the régime; if they had been to see Tito, they tell us that he is "charming"; if they speak about the failure of "socialist planning" in Yugoslavia they blame the Soviet economic blockade for it; if on the First of May parade they watch the march past of some military units they try to convince the public in Western Europe that Tito's thirty-two divisions will fight to the last against any Soviet invasion, and similar nonsense.

Yet there is one very important aspect of Yugoslav life which is almost never discussed in the press: the state of affairs in Tito's C.P. For everything that exists in Yugoslavia, the so-called federation, the new constitution, "workers' control", Tito's army are but a façade based on the C.P. which has to-day 779,000 members.

Its secretary-general, Tito, appointed to this post fifteen years ago on orders from Moscow, is best suited to provide the first answer to any queries about the C.P. Speaking recently to a delegation of Communist students, Tito declared: "I am sorry that the type of Communist we have to-day is not the same as before the war. . . . To-day a Communist is no longer a militant who has to carry a heavier burden and be an example to others. . . ."

Looking at these new "student leaders", Tito must have thought in sorrow about the pre-war members of the then illegal Yugoslav C.P. and had he continued his speech with the same candour would have added: "To-day a Communist is one who is a profiteer or an opportunist—a profiteer because he uses his membership card as a spring-board for a career and an opportunist because though claiming loyalty to Tito, he does not exclude the possibility of a change of régime and of the need to make personal arrangements with either anti-Communists or the Cominform to keep his job."

The Yugoslav C.P. lacks not only a revolutionary élan but also its monolithic unity. Its upper ranks are systematically infiltrated by Stalinist agents while the rank and file show an increasing aversion to the party organisation and its teaching.

When in 1948-49 Yugoslav Communists declared their allegiance to Stalin, the work of Tito's secret police was relatively easy: arrests (as well as some assassinations), forced labour and

"True order, let me tell you, has never existed and will never exist so long as you make such efforts to obtain it, because true order supposes cohesion, yet not a cohesion obtained by the presence of exterior causes, but an intimate and spontaneous cohesion which you with all your restrictions inevitably inhibit." (1854)

—FRANCESCO PI Y MARGALL

then, more than once, a public confession of the arrested Cominformist. But now the directives of the Cominform order its followers to disguise their views, keep their jobs in the State apparatus and work from the inside. Thus it is almost impossible to discover who is really a Cominformist. On whom can Tito rely and how to be sure? It is only rare that hidden supporters of Stalin can be spotted as happened with some journalists in the party organ *Borba* who wrote articles against the U.S.S.R. but in reality worked for the Cominform. Similar cases occurred in the army and even among several of Tito's ministers.

While the party leaders are inclined to change masters, the rank and file are thoroughly tired of the Communist ideology. The members of the Yugoslav C.P. have long abandoned the pretence of being militants, fighters for some lofty ideals. They belong to the party not to struggle for marxism, but to get an extra room, more firewood and similar privileges. Before the war, party members risked arrest to read and spread the Communist press. To-day, they receive it by post and do not even bother to look at it. In the very organ of the C.P. one can read that in several districts in Serbia, parcels of *Borba* are left unopened, that in the Vojvodina even members of party committees read only the sports news, that in the industrial centres in Bosnia the percentage of workers in the party is negligible or that participation at party meetings is low.

The influence of the church presents another problem for Tito. Instead of the C.P. members preaching atheism, *Borba* is full of news of Communists going to mass, of some party members becoming bell-ringers and of Communist officials baptising their children in church!

The decomposition of the Yugoslav C.P. cannot fail to have repercussions on the régime and the people itself. On the régime because it is based on the party and any weaknesses in the party inevitably affect the régime. On the people which lives under this dictatorship and sees in everyday life that the ruling party is not the same as it was in the past, not because Tito's Yugoslavia is becoming more liberal (as Tito's friends in the West pretend) but because the régime, already unpopular, is getting weaker year after year. B.L.

BIRTH CONTROL IN CATHOLIC ITALY

THE Italian Penal Code, Section 553, a former Fascist statute enacted by Mussolini, forbids both public discussion of birth control and books on the subject. So far no one has come forward to amend the code. To our knowledge three cases of violation have come before the courts in recent years. Two resulted in acquittal: Cesare Zaccaria and Giovanna Berneri [editors of the Anarchist monthly *Volontà* from Naples—ED.] were accused in 1949 of issuing a booklet, *Controllo delle Nascite*; a more recent and more widely publicised case was that of the Hungarian, Dr. Lenard and his publishers, tried for a book entitled *Birth Control: an Historical Survey*. After the latter case had been postponed twelve times, the Roman Court ruled that "the action did not constitute a punishable offence". An appeal against this decision has since been dismissed.

The current case is that of Dr. Dino Origlia, founder of marriage guidance clinics in Milan and Turin, because of his book on voluntary parenthood, *Procreazione Volontaria*. On May 31st, 1952, he was acquitted but the verdict is being appealed by the Public Prosecutor (who had asked for an eleven months' sentence).

Claude Enfield suggests in *The Doncaster Free Press* (England) that "every-one interested in the problems of war and peace should follow closely Dr. Origlia's fight. . . . It is abundantly clear that unless the birth rate is reduced. . . Italy is heading for disaster. Dr. Origlia appears to be the brave pioneer who is risking persecution in order to rouse his countrymen to a sense of their danger. . . . This is not purely an Italian question. Dr. Origlia is entitled, surely, to the support of the United Nations; for planned parenthood in the overpopulated countries. . . would solve many of the problems with which that organisation has for years been grappling in vain."

—(The above account is taken from the *Bulletin of the Planned Parenthood Committee*, published in New York.)

THE HEART OF THE CITY

A CONFERENCE was held last year to discuss this neglected "centre without which a community becomes a crowd." It was convened by the C.I.A.M. or International Congress of Modern Architecture.

Before turning to the speeches made at this congress, it is instructive to note how the C.I.A.M. closely resembles the type of functional organisation which, as anarchists, we advocate.

"There is one element which makes the community a community and not merely an aggregate of individuals. An essential feature of any true organism is the physical heart or nucleus, what we have here called the core."

"For a community of people is an organism, and a self-conscious organism. Not only are the members dependent on one another but each of them knows he is so dependent."

"That a special study on these lines is called for at the present time can hardly be doubted. Everywhere new communities are being built up and old communities reconstructed."

Background of the Core" in the light of his experience of the decay and rebirth of urban social life.

Jose Luis Sert:

The city has become a terribly over-extended monstrosity. The means of communication and contact and connection, are so difficult that the people because of the physical difficulties, get less together.

Le Corbusier:

Le monde s'ennui, les hommes s'ennuient... in our contemporary mechanised society, most men and women play a passive part. We have got to restore to our society the conditions in which spontaneity is again possible.

putting themselves in a condition of beatitude. This Parisian fourteenth of July locates quite clearly the different hearts of Paris. People gather spontaneously at certain places rather than others, without any advice from councillors or architects.

Our task as architectural planners is to create a tolerable background. That may sound quite obvious and quite easy. Actually, to take one example, the necessity to assert the predominance of the pedestrian has for us enormous consequences.

P. Honnegger:

Some houses were built in North Africa, with running water, but people left because the women no longer had a

pretext for going to the well. . . . Jacqueline Tyrwhitt:

There is one very hopeful sign to-day. That is the immediate use made by people of any opportunity to take part in the anonymous social life of the core of the city.

There must be no distinct zones of separation between the different facets of city life at the heart: no clearly separated commercial centres.

Siegfried Gideon:

One need only provide the opportunity and we—the public . . . will know what to do with it.

Like plants, human settlements require certain conditions for growth. Only human community life depends upon far more intricate conditions than the plant.

In cities that have been developed by the unified efforts of their citizens, everything—even to the last detail—is permeated with a wonderful strength . . . The despot has the advantage of his capacity for rapid and ruthless action:

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Community Farm?

COMMUNITY FARM, by John Middleton Murry. (Peter Nevill Ltd., 16s.)

THERE are gentlemen farmers who I can scarcely distinguish a barrowful of muck from a pailful of milk. John Middleton Murry is not one of these gentry. This classical scholar and eminent critic weighs up the pig as knowledgeably as he appraises the poet—and far less long-windedly.

In 1942, he scraped together £3,325 to buy the 183 acres and dilapidated buildings of a run-down Sussex farm, with the two-fold object of reclaiming it and setting a pattern of reformed society.

Patience enduring the oddest individuals, but retaining only the cranks (Mr. Murry's definition), he could turn to account; budgeting with the austerity of his close personal friend, the late Sir Stafford Cripps; pouring exhortation into the ears of the community as fast as he poured cash into its coffers;

But what of the concomitant community ideal? When I first visited Lodge Farm, five years ago, the whole community no longer lived under the one roof of the farmhouse, and had become departmentalised.

Coincidental with the community's renouncing the pacifism which inspired this sociological experiment, there was a shifting of emphasis. That coercion and true community are incompatible is the inescapable conclusion this autobiographical record unwittingly arrives at.

To-day, the farm is graded up from C to A and is worth every penny of the £14,302 which is its book value.

Mr. Murry is something of a mystery—perplexed and perplexing personality. For one who is sustained by a mystic

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BOOK REVIEW

THE CONDUCT OF LIFE

THE CONDUCT OF LIFE, by Lewis Mumford. (Secker & Warburg, 21/-).

LEWIS MUMFORD has certainly shown himself, during the past quarter of a century, one of our sanest and most constructive sociologists. He has detected the fallacies which underlie modern machine-based and centralised civilisations, and has put forward much cogent argument for turning towards a form of society which will be more closely related to man's organic nature, less centralised, less mechanised, simpler and more libertarian.

The Conduct of Life is the last volume of the series which Mumford regards as his most important life work. After the volumes of examination and analysis, the books in which our civilisation is traced to its roots and its faults are laid bare, The Conduct of Life is the attempt to apply constructively the conclusions which Mumford has reached, to sketch out what he calls "the final problems of man's nature, destiny, and purpose", and to present his own view of the way in which the social and individual life of man can be re-integrated and disaster averted.

In general, it is rather a disappointing book, but I should hasten to say that it is so very largely because the excellence of Mumford's earlier books has led one to expect so much. The nature of the present enquiry has inevitably led Mumford very largely into the field of abstraction, and here, after the mastery and accurate way in which he handled concrete matters in the past, one becomes aware of a vagueness and a naivety which are perhaps inseparable from the speculative nature of much that he is saying, but which nevertheless seem to detract from its urgency.

In addition, there are certain specific points on which the liber-

arian reader will inevitably be critical. It is disconcerting, for instance, to find this long-time antagonist of centralisation advocating that super-centralist conception, that ancient liberal mirage, "a world government, with a world capital in every continent, transmuting national struggles and conflicts, which will continue in some form to exist, into habits of law and order, of restraint and positive co-operation".

Other authoritarian ideas also emerge as we look through The Conduct of Life: Mumford tells us that "once war armies are disbanded, peace armies, on a far larger scale, must be formed," and he goes on to suggest that all young men and women, at the age of eighteen, should be incorporated into public works corps. These will be compulsory: "No citizen should be exempt." What Mumford does not seem to realise is that the very element of compulsion will negate the socially positive results which he expects to emerge from these "common work experiences and services."

Last in these points of criticism, I should mention a certain puritanism which crops up in occasional

The Syndicalist

THE September issue of The Syndicalist begins with the question "Do We Need Leaders?" and it includes an article on postal services with the title "The Postmen Could Do It," a study of Syndicalism in Spain, the fifth of the series on anarcho-syndicalism, which discusses "Workers' Control and the Wage System." There is an eulogy of Direct Action with the title "Hit Them Where It Hurts," notes on the sell-out of the miners, on "hidden unemployment", and correspondence on the topic "Why Reject the Unions?"

minor tirades (against the use of tobacco, for instance), that at times seem completely out of proportion to the relevance of the subject. Puritanism, however, has a long and largely unstudied connection with libertarian thinkers—Proudhon, Godwin and Kropotkin all display, either in their writing or their lives, similar blind spots of intolerance—and I think that this tendency in Mumford should be observed less in condemnation of him than as a warning of the tendency to lapse into "moralism" as soon as one embarks on the creation of moral systems.

But, despite what seem to me these faults in The Conduct of Life, it is nevertheless a book which contains enough excellent material to be well worth reading. There is a provocative discussion on the place of purpose in human life, there is an excellent chapter on the need for a return to balance rather than specialisation in work and in social relationships, and a sound criticism—after Proudhon's own heart—of the fallacy of set systems and "either-or" philosophies.

Mumford, like Orwell, has also a vigilant concern for that corruption of language and idea which is perhaps the most deadly weapon of totalitarianism: "the first step towards freedom," he says, "will be a new respect for the symbol, a purification and clarification of language itself, an abstention from unclean slogans and conditioned verbal reflexes. The death of the advertising slogan and the propaganda bureau will be one of the surest signs of the birth of a new society."

Again, it is admirable in Mumford that, unlike so many of his fellow liberals in the United States, he has not fallen into an apathetic acceptance of present world conflicts and of war fatalism. Instead, he criticises forthrightly the moral ineptitude of present-day policies and trends. And, finally, he displays that confidence in the resurgent quality of the human individual which prevents him from taking for granted the proximate decline of humanity into unrestricted tyranny or barbaric chaos.

GEORGE WOODCOCK.

FREEDOM BOOKSHOP

- Strait is the Gate André Gide 2/-
Men and Gods Rex Warner 2/-
Who Lie in Gaol Joan Henry 12/6
Strikes: A Study in Industrial Conflict K. G. J. C. Knowles 42/-
Free Expression in Industry J. J. Gillespie 3/-
The Conduct of Life Lewis Mumford 21/-

Obtainable from 27, RED LION STREET, LONDON, W.C.1

TOUCHING PITCH

AN account on another page of Dr. Norman Haire's work mentions the influence of the Communists on breaking up what might have been a very influential body, the World League for Sexual Reform. Acting through men of great social courage and revolutionary views, as well as of unimpeachable integrity, the Communists sought to gain the exclusive support of progressive men and women in the sexual reform movement for their own party—and hence for Russian nationalism.

How sincere the Communists were is shown by the sequel. After 1929 the Russian Government began systematically to destroy the progressive institutions in education, child care, legalised abortion, birth control, divorce and the social attitude towards sexual anomalies which had been built up in the first years of the revolution before Bolshevik power had embraced every aspect of Soviet life.

Russian sexual morals are now described by bourgeois ambassadors as "Victorian" and an official delegate has described the movement for extending birth control as "out of date". Legislation in sexual affairs is now extremely rigid in Russia, and the new laws against homosexuals, for example, are much harsher than was the Tsarist code. Meanwhile, the men who fought for sexual reform within the Left socialist ranks have been subjected to every kind of execration and even threats by the Communists.

Had they succeeded in "capturing" the World League for Sexual Reform, its eclipse would have been even more total than was its demise through the split in which they played an instrumental part. The whole episode is typical of Lenin's "tactic of the united front" whereby the Communists deliberately set out to capture an organisation and turn it to their use, or, if they fail, to destroy it.

The same destructive tendency is now to be seen at work in the movement of opposition towards war. To an informed mind the aims of Communism in this respect are no different from those of the U.S.A. They seek to strengthen the hand of the U.S.S.R. in the international struggle for power. Their history during 1939-45 shows just how consistent their "anti-militarism" was. From being anti-war to the point of Fifth Column work during the years when Stalin and Hitler were in alliance, they became almost hysterical recruiting sergeants after Hitler's invasion of Russia. Now they are once more partisans of peace.

The anti-war movement—and indeed every progressive cause—should learn well the lesson of the united front. It is to avoid the Communists at all points and spurn their advances. Unfortunately, so many progressives are not above playing at politics; they must think they can "use" the Communists. They neither realise the moral disintegration which playing politics brings about, nor do they see that the Communists are ever so much more experienced at using others, and know well how to avoid being used themselves.

The history of the last 30 years is strewn with progressive causes—often very noble ones—wrecked by association with the Communists. It is time the partisans of good causes learnt the lesson themselves and do not receive it solely from the abuse of reactionary anti-Russians intent on exactly the same fundamental activity—that of power politics.

The C.N.T. and Political Action

(Continued)

IT is thought by some critics that anarchists exaggerate the corrupting effect that power has on individuals. And they also maintain that those anarchists who look upon all governments in the same light are unrealistic. The argument always advanced is that from the anarchist point of view, a government which permits freedom of speech and of the press is to be preferred and supported against one that crushes the elementary freedoms and demands that all should speak with a single voice. This may be true in a sense, but it is nevertheless a choice between evils, and ignores the fact that the government which can permit the people to criticise it and to attack it with words, is in reality a stronger and more secure government than one which denies all criticism of the social system and the men in power, and perhaps therefore, from a revolutionary point of view, a greater obstacle to overcome. Many anarchists have been influenced by these criticisms and by those people who, whilst sympathising with the anarchist philosophy, nevertheless, consider it utopian and beyond the realms of practical application. "Perhaps in a thousand years" they say as they return to the realities of the atom bomb and the problems of the hour. And these anarchists, stung by the accusation that they are "dreamers", seek to put forward "practical solutions" capable of realisation in the present. But for these solutions to be "practical" they must clearly operate through the existing governmental and statal institutions, and this can only mean one thing: a recognition that the problems of our time can be solved by governmental action. And to admit this is to destroy the whole anarchist criticism of government—a criticism not based on emotion or prejudice, but on the accumulated knowledge of the purpose and function of governments and the State.

The recognition that anarchists and revolutionary syndicalists cannot usefully advance their social ideas within the framework of State institutions does not, to our mind, imply that they must therefore be condemned to impotence and silence. What made of the C.N.T. in Spain such a vital force compared with the U.G.T.—

numerically its equal—was just the fact that it was from the outset in opposition to the State and all governments, and its form of organisation was the opposite to that of government, that is, control was exercised by the members of the organisation, and not by permanent officials with executive powers. The U.G.T. on the other hand was controlled by the Socialist Party leaders and therefore subject to all the political vicissitudes of that party, which used the numerical strength of the U.G.T. as a political weapon, with consequences similar to those with which we are only too familiar in the Trades Unions of France and Italy (where we see Catholic, Socialist and Communist dominated unions), Britain (where they are virtually part of the State machine) and Russia (where they now exist in name only).

The strength of the C.N.T. lay in its uncompromising opposition to the State and political intrigue; in its decentralised structure and in its opposition to the universal practice of paid, and permanent officials; in its deep interest in its objectives of workers' control of the means of production as the necessary step towards libertarian communism whilst at the same time courageously putting forward the demands of the toiling classes for better working conditions and a recognition of the elementary freedoms of the individual. Concessions torn from governments from strength as an opposition have the positive result, from the anarchist point of view, of weakening the authority of government, and cannot be confused with political reformism.

We believe the C.N.T.-F.A.I. would have made its maximum contribution to the defeat of Franco and to the success of the social revolution by remaining faithful to its principles. The readers who have followed us from the beginning of this study may share this view or have reached by now different conclusions from ours. We do not wish to join company with the amateur strategists for whom every problem is either black or white. As an anarchist we only know how, as an individual we should have behaved in the Spanish situation. And as a representative of the C.N.T. we could do no more than represent the wishes of that organisation, always, however, defending the right to express our views, and to

withdraw from representing the syndicate or organisation when, on fundamental questions, they were diametrically opposed. But never acting, or expressing views, in the name of the organisation without a mandate from the members to do so. We insist that for an anarchist there can be no *force majeure* to excuse any deviation from such an elementary code of behaviour. Our goal may be supreme, but equally important are the means for reaching it, and only too clearly does history teach us that the means always ultimately determine the ends.

To understand how it was possible for the Spanish anarchists to throw overboard all their principles, one has to understand the particular atmosphere in which Spanish anarchism flourished. It was a movement based on action. "Most Spanish militants live for the revolution and believe that it can be achieved, no matter when or how, by being engaged permanently and completely in 'action'. This influences their outlook to such an extent that purely ideological questions no longer interest them or, at the most, are believed to be matters for the future. Generally speaking this is the type of militant who chooses the F.A.I. because for him it is the only organisation for action, created exclusively by action and for revolutionary action. This type of militant eventually becomes in fact, and in spite of his good will and his disinterested willingness to make sacrifices, the dead weight of the F.A.I. since he deprives it of other higher activities and provokes most of the differences, which futile or otherwise, absorb precious time which could be used for better things."²² The writer adds that there is a tendency in the C.N.T. which accuses the F.A.I.

Continued on p. 4

22 A. Ildefonso in a series of articles on "Il Movimento Libertario Spagnuolo" (The Spanish Libertarian Movement), published in the anarchist monthly *Volontà* (Naples, June, July, August, 1952) and still to be completed in subsequent issues. The writer is a militant of the C.N.T. in exile. The articles so far published in *Volontà* are an important contribution to an understanding of the different sections of, and influences in, the Spanish libertarian movement. No attempt is made to gloss over the weaknesses of the movement, and the study includes a number of interesting documents, particularly on the F.A.I.

THE HEART OF THE CITY

Continued from p. 2

but as his sovereign will is bound to ignore the imponderable laws which stimulate human co-operation, a city built under a dictatorship can never acquire that essential quality of organic diversity.

G. Scott Williamson:

If we look at the evolutionary process from the point of view of the physicist and biologist, we get the development and evolution of what can be done; but if we turn now to the functional attitude, the biological attitude, we find that man's ultimate achievement from the point of view of biology—is his freedom. He is now no longer dominated by instinct. His instincts are at the behest of his will. He can choose how he will use any of these instincts. He is not like even his immediate ancestors, the monkeys who still hold to compulsive instincts which make them obey, and do what they are told to do, in a certain physiological situation. When it comes to man, however, we have been unable to find in our close studies, any instincts that are necessarily compulsory. But unfortunately, though they are not necessarily compulsory, they can become so. Pavlov, for instance, in his work has demonstrated that you can condition your reflexes, that is to say, you can reduce man again to an automatic instinctive acting individual. There is another way of looking at this. If you get your conditions right, your reflexes will be right. This is where it comes very much into your sphere. The power of the architect to fix the conditions in

which life and living has to take place, is tremendous, almost frightening. Are those conditions going to do away with human autonomy, and press him back into a purely instinctive individual?

When we opened the Peckham Health Centre, and watched these new families coming in, we discovered a new kind of man—not *homo sapiens*, but *homo sporogene*. He was like one of those bacteria which when it meets adverse circumstances, goes into a sporing stage and accumulates a crust which protects it from its adverse surroundings. In the families that came into the Centre, we saw this poor unfortunate *homo sapiens*, totally enclosed in a spore, a membrane of habit. It doesn't matter whether the habits were good or bad, he had become simply a creature of habit. He was quite able to respond to the surroundings in which we placed him. But, as we watched him during the course of some months, we saw him slowly shedding this membrane, and becoming a free, whole *homo sapiens*, once again.

It is really horrible to think that some 99 per cent. of our community are really *homo sporogenes* not *homo sapiens*. They've lost all their autonomy, and are incapable of exercising their will. It was one of the most disturbing things that we had to face; but with patience, we watched them shedding their skin, and ultimately participating in all sorts of things. For instance, one of the surveys that we did about the individual, was to estimate how many of their faculties they were using—if any—and we dis-

covered that only ten per cent. of the people could do anything, and only about eleven per cent. really wanted to do anything. Most people were perfectly content with their present situation. They rested behind this wall of the spore, perfectly content.

After we had been going for three years, however, the situation had completely changed. Instead of only 11 per cent. of them attempting to do anything, we now had 88 per cent. of them doing something; and doing it with great sense, and doing it under complete autonomy. Because one of the conditions of our experiment was, that within the confines of the building, everyone could do as he liked, when he liked, with what he liked, and now he liked. We had no policeman in the building, to tell people what they ought not to do, nor had any teachers to tell them what they ought to do. They were free to do as they liked; and they took full advantage of that. At first, for about eight months, we lived in a state of complete chaos. Everything that we gave them to use, was broken, nothing was respected, and the whole place was an absolute strain on everybody. So much so, that my staff came to me every day, and told me that we must do something about it, especially about the children. Not only that, but some of the parents came to me and told me, "You know, doctor, it's really serious, my three little boys were quite nice boys when they joined the Centre and now look at them." But we persevered through that, and at the end of 8 or 9 months, there emerged quite suddenly, perhaps not as suddenly as it seemed, but the change was so great that it did seem very sudden, and spontaneous, they changed over from complete disorder to order. This was summed-up at a Sunday meeting. A newly-joined man said, "I thought I could do as I liked," but another older member said, "You've got it wrong. The thing is everybody can do as they like—not anybody."

American Elections

On November 4th, New York State voters will go to the polls. The only thing certain about the election is that just about two out of every five adults in the state won't vote.

In the 1948 Presidential election, 39 out of every 100 of New York State's potential voters did not go to the polls.

—New York Journal—American.

"To return to a state of affairs where corn is grown, and manufactured goods are fabricated, for the use of those very people who grow and produce them—such will be, no doubt, the problem to be solved during the next coming years of European history."

—PETER KROPOTKIN

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Assassination and Coercion

IT is suggested by comrade S.W.T. that the essay on "Assassination and Coercion" translated from *Le Temps des Assassins*, should provide the basis for fruitful controversy among anarchists in this country. Controversy on the subject of violence is evergreen and often violent; its fruitful nature is open to doubt.

In justice to "Fontenis", the writer of the essay, one can only hope that his meaning has suffered in the translation. The sense of his use of the term "assassination" is not clear—could it be better rendered by the word "murder" which has horrid guilt-laden associations in English, whereas "assassination" has an old-world, romantic charm about it? Few anarchists of bomb-throwing proclivities in the English-speaking world would have objected to the title "assassin".

But no shades of meaning altered by the translation can excuse the sheer muddle-headedness of the essay. The writer gives a categorical declaration that—"We combat all coercion and refuse to countenance it even as a revolutionary weapon". Then he explains how necessity compels revolutionaries to use coercion as a revolutionary weapon both in the day-to-day struggle, the winning of the social revolution, and in the consolidation of its gains. The best he can do is to label the killings which the reactionaries perpetrate as "assassination", and the killings which the revolutionaries perpetrate as "elimination". Is it not time that anarchists grew out of this childish moralistic phrasemongering? Could we not simply admit that killing is—killing? Let us leave such sophistry and euphemisms to the political parties, each of which are at pains to explain that their lies are really aspects of the truth, that their coercion is merely a form of liberation, and that their killings are simply a regrettable elimination. Such mealy-mouthed speaking serves the useful purpose of kidding on the mugs who follow the party pro-

gramme that whatever filth they are required to do is really laudable and humane. But anarchism is not a movement of mugs whose left hands do not know what their right hands are doing. If in the stress of circumstances we find ourselves lying, coercing and killing, then the harm that we may thereby do to our revolutionary principles will be lessened if we frankly admit just what we are doing, and do not try to sanctify it by calling it fancy names.

I am no advocate of violence; I know only too well how a libertarian struggle may be perverted from within by those who plead "necessity" to set up a machinery of coercion in defence of the libertarian ideal. But this I know, too, that the violence of the past will lead to violence in the future, and that when we by our agitation further the rising of men to end their slavery, we must expect their actions to be coloured by some violence. As to this I say that the best that the anarchist minority can do, is not only to agitate, to give coherence to the aspirations of the masses, but to be ruthless in our exposition of reality—to point out unceasingly that killing is killing and coercion is coercion, whoever does it and with whatever purpose. If we can tear down the philosophical veils that the moralists would weave around such actions, we will enable people to see their deeds plainly, and accept responsibility for them.

London, Sept. 7. TONY GIBSON.

I AM not a pacifist either by temperament or conviction, but am aware of certain weaknesses in the position of the non-pacifist anarchist who deprecates violence when used by the state but condones it when practised by revolutionaries. This weakness, in my opinion, was not dispelled by the article in *FREEDOM* by a member of the Anarchist Federation in France whose main argument seemed to be that legal violence is unjust while "elimination in the struggle, by necessity, of counter revolutionaries" is just. How many anti-Bolshevik revolutionaries fell in the face of this argument?

Right is always claimed to be on the side of violence. The State uses it as a justification for punishing those who break the laws and Governments use it as an excuse for launching large-scale wars. Do not allow ourselves to fall into the same error.

In fairness to the writer and although he is frankly contradictory, he says elsewhere in the article that he will combat the use of force even as a revolutionary weapon, and it is perhaps in the awareness of the dangers of coercion that "salvation" lies. That is if in a revolutionary situation, such as when workers are defending themselves and their factories against the use of force by the State, they are aware that violence is being used only for defence

the likelihood of it continuing for its own sake will be lessened.

But I think the real solution may lie in one of the clearer passages by the writer: "In the degree in which the revolution has an authentically libertarian character, it realises the aspirations and wishes of the masses. There can therefore be no question of imposing decisions on those very people who have taken them."

If we can first get enough anarchists, violence will be rendered obsolete.
London, Sept. 8. R.M.

RAILMEN THREATEN ACTION AGAINST MARKS

AT Broad Street, London, goods depot last week, 1,200 railmen threatened strike action against the employment of two informers, whose job was to assist the police in attempts to reduce pilfering.

It was said on behalf of the workers at the depot, that the police "appear to rely on stool-pigeons for information, rather than the active co-operation of the men."

They called off the strike, however, agreeing to accept arrangements negotiated by representatives of the National Union of Railwaymen with the Railway Executive.

Book Review: Community Farm?

Continued from p. 2
faith, he is extraordinarily sensitive to the impact of events. It would be untrue to suggest that he only cast his bread upon the waters when the tide was coming in. Envisaging difficulties clearly, his venture was an act of faith, mainly faith in himself: but this skipper watched the skies anxiously and trimmed his sails accordingly, maintaining a discipline of his nondescript crew with a delicate but firm hand, as he steered clear of certain shoals and altered course from one promised land to another.

In this interesting tale of the voyage of the good ship *Community*, which set out for Committee Bay but landed its chief officers, if not the entire crew (mutinous or otherwise), on Treasure Island instead, there is surprisingly no mention of the part religion played: for Mr. Murry, though no professing sky-pilot, conducted regular well-attended religious services. There is an amusing account of the truly rural parish council of which the director of Lodge Farm volunteered to be chairman. A model village is likely to result—a Murry model, we may trust.

Incidentally, Mr. Murry devotes a couple of pages to criticism of my anar-

NORMAN HAIRE: A Contradictory Figure

Continued from p. 1

But if Haire was right from a practical standpoint, it was only because the identification of the revolutionary movement with Communism had been a false one. Leunbach's social arguments were still unassailable. Yet, right up to the end of his life, Haire retained his political naivete, and insisted on keeping sex in one social compartment.

As a result, his work for sexual reform has succeeded in limiting its scope, and has held it back from exerting the social dynamite which is inherent in a radical conception of rational sexual behaviour.

No doubt, for the same reason, Haire's ideas never advanced beyond his original views of the early twenties, and he lived to see much of his wishes achieved. Had he been more receptive to social ideas, he might have continued to fight for further and further goals right down to the end of his life. Instead, his last years, when he was also burdened with ill-health, were spent in a certain isolation mostly in private practice and in a limited educational field.

No account of Haire's work would be complete that did not mention his adherence to rationalism. His moderation in social matters was certainly not due to a cautious nature. His frankness and outspokenness could be devastating—and sometimes uncomfortable to those who agreed with him. And it was the same with his attitude to religion. He never lost an opportunity of castigating

the churches. He knew well how destructive and life-denying was the influence of church teaching on the sexual life of to-day and he fought it with energy and bitterness—though always, again, in the field of ideas, never as a social influence.

Haire had friendly feelings towards the anarchist movement, though he dissociated himself from anarchism itself—"I don't understand politics," he would frequently remark. He was a remarkable figure in the inter-war generation, and his loss will be felt.

CANTEEN BOYCOTT

WORKERS at Woolwich Arsenal launched an unofficial boycott of their canteens because of increased charges. After a protest meeting of more than 3,000 skilled and semi-skilled workers, a resolution was forwarded to the Ministry of Supply Joint Industrial Council, calling for an immediate and thorough overhaul of the administration of all Royal Ordnance Factories canteens, and expressing dissatisfaction at the refusal of H.Q. to provide detailed balance sheets of canteen workings.

"Do not let us make the people believe that it would be possible to assure them work, well-being and liberty if the government passed from the hand of this party into the hand of that; if the right, after having oppressed the left, were in its turn oppressed by the latter. As power is the instrument and citadel of tyranny, the parties are its life and thought."

—P. J. PROUDHON

BUSMEN SUSPENDED-- REINSTATED

SIXTEEN officials and committeemen of the Dalston (London) Bus Garage branch of the Transport and General Workers Union were suspended by the union following an unofficial wage claim meeting at the Shoreditch Town Hall. Men of the branch defied a union order to cancel the meeting.

Following the publicity which the suspensions received, however—although the Area No. 1 secretary, Charles Brandon, who authorised the suspension felt it was "not a matter for the Press"—and the fact that the rank and file who attended the meeting would have more loyalty for their own branch officials than for the high-ups in the union, the suspensions were lifted.

Lessons of the Spanish Revolution-10

Continued from p. 2

of itself being responsible for provoking this "militant's mentality" in the members of the libertarian movement, and in support of this view, he refers to a number of men who for many years dedicated their lives to action, in which some even gave their lives. "Blinded by the 'practical' and temporary results of their activities, they practised a kind of doctrine of action". And the fact remains that many of these elements, carried away by the impetus of their actions, were imbued with a personal conception of the revolution, and even went so far as to put forward the idea of 'the conquest of power' in order to proclaim freedom from a position of command."

At the other extreme were those to whom we have already referred as the "politicians of the C.N.T." We used this word in its pure sense, in that these men sought, not only after July 1936 but during the years preceding, to orientate the C.N.T. away from the influence of the F.A.I. (they have frequently referred to the "dictatorship" of the F.A.I.) and into open political action, through political alliances, participation in general and municipal elections, and even participation in governments. How such activity is compatible with the federalist structure (with control from below) of the organisation is beyond our understanding.

It might seem, therefore, that of these two influences in the C.N.T. it was the reformist "leaders" who succeeded in making their point of view prevail in July 1936, thus determining the course to be followed by the Confederation during those eventful years. But this seems to us a too superficial and inexact summing up of the situation. We have already stated our opinion that it was an error on the part of the leaders of the C.N.T. to concentrate their written and spoken propaganda from the beginning on the menace of "fascism." But we have also come to the conclusion that the C.N.T.-F.A.I. leaders' concern over the "fascist menace" was a very genuine feeling which to a large extent paralysed objective thinking on their part, just as three years later many revolutionaries throughout the world were prepared, against their better judgment, to support the "war against Nazism", genuinely believing that it would solve the problem of totalitarianism and produce the social revolution.

Again and again in the writings of Spanish revolutionaries describing those early days of the struggle against

the Franco uprising, one reads of that spirit of comradeship which swept aside all party and class barriers among the men and women who had played their part in defeating the putsch. And this gave rise to the false hope, based on the idea that everyone hated the rebels as much as the workers of the C.N.T., that the people would remain united until Franco's forces were finally defeated. It does not require much imagination, even with the passage of time, to live those moments of exaltation, and to understand the over-optimistic political evaluation by the C.N.T. of their anti-Franco allies of July 1936. But, at the same time, for seasoned revolutionaries, it is inconceivable that such a state of excitement and optimism could last long, particularly when it was clear within a week of the uprising that the government had not joined the tide of revolutionary enthusiasm, nor shared the people's determination to carry the struggle against Franco and the old economic order to its limits. Nevertheless, we put forward these views as an explanation of the origin of the idea of collaboration in the leadership of the C.N.T., not only with the other workers' organisation—the U.G.T.—but also with the political parties. Once committed to the idea of "unity" and "collaboration" other factors came into play which rapidly undermined the independence of the C.N.T., creating amongst many militants a craving for power, both as individuals as well as for the organisation, and a legalistic attitude which came to believe that the workers' victories in the economic field could be made secure by governmental decrees. This growth of the bureaucratic, and legalistic mind was accompanied by a slackening of the organisational methods by which decisions were normally taken by the C.N.T. In other words, a leadership was created—not only by the politicians and influential members of the C.N.T., but also by the many members who held important administrative posts and military commands—which functioned through Committees and government departments, rarely consulting or giving an account of its actions to the rank and file of the organisation (i.e., the Syndicates).

It is true that the leaders could boast that the C.N.T.-F.A.I. alone among the organisations, held many Plenums were no more representative of the views of Confederation were discussed. But in reality these Plenums were no more representative of the views of the rank and file than a House of Commons debate

represents the considered views of the electorate. Time and again Plenums, with momentous agendas, were called at two or three days' notice, so that it was quite impossible, within the time allowed, for the local syndicates and federations to have an opportunity to discuss the questions on which their delegates were expected to speak on their behalf. More often than not, the statement issued after such Plenums would only consist of a few slogans and vague expressions of enthusiasm by the delegates, so that the rank and file's first knowledge of the decisions reached would be when they were faced with the *fait accompli*. Even to-day, for instance, the historiographer of the C.N.T. cannot establish whether the National Plenum of Regional Committees held in September 1936 ever discussed the question of the National Defence Council (which it may be recalled was the C.N.T.-F.A.I. "alternative" to the Caballero Government). "The suddenness of its [the Plenum] summoning and the guarded statement on the agreements reached do not permit one to know [whether the National Defence Council was discussed]."* In spite of the impossibility of referring to the internal documents of the C.N.T.-F.A.I. (which must seriously hamper any attempt at an objective study of the Revolution), there is sufficient evidence to show that the Plenums acted as the rubber stamp for the decisions taken by the leadership of the C.N.T.-F.A.I., not without certain misgivings as the Regional Plenum of Syndicates convoked on the 22nd October 1936 for the 26th shows. In those four days, the Syndicates had to examine the draft pact with the U.G.T., express their attitude to Municipal Councils and deal with the resignation of the Regional Secretary and the appointment of his successor.

At the Plenum, and following the Secretary's report, "discussion was prolonged and reasoned, many delegations taking part and expressing their various points of view, without any serious differences emerging, since all the organisation recognises that in present circumstances a strict conformity to the Confederal norms cannot be demanded. Nevertheless, the majority of the delegations expressed their logical desire that whenever possible the rank and file should be consulted, requesting the Committees not to exercise their prerogative save in exceptional circumstances. . . ."

(To be continued)

* J. Peirats, *La C.N.T. en la Revolución Española*, Vol. I (Toulouse, 1951).

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP
OPEN AIR MEETINGS
Weather Permitting
HYDE PARK
Every Sunday at 4.30 p.m.
MANBTTE STREET
(by Foyle's, Charing Cross Road)
Every Saturday at 6.0 p.m.
- NORTH-EAST LONDON
DISCUSSION MEETINGS
IN EAST HAM
Alternate Wednesdays
at 7.30
OCT. 1—SOCIAL EVENING
- LIVERPOOL
DISCUSSION MEETINGS at
101 Upper Parliament Street,
Liverpool, 8
Every Sunday at 8 p.m.

- GLASGOW
OUTDOOR MEETINGS
at
MAXWELL STREET
Every Sunday at 7 p.m.
With John Gaffney, Frank Leech,
Jane Strachan, Eddie Shaw,
Frank Carlin
- BRADFORD
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(weather permitting)
BROADWAY CAR PARK
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