

Freedom

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Threepence

FOOD SHORTAGES IN EUROPE

THE world shortage of food is not something which afflicts only the world's main population centres such as India and China. It is also very much a reality in Europe. FREEDOM has already drawn attention to the fact that whereas industrial output has increased very markedly during the past 15 years, agricultural output has remained virtually stationary. Indeed, taking into account the increases in population agricultural output per head has almost certainly fallen.

Just as the increase in industrial output is due to social and economic causes connected with the last war, so the failure to deal with the need for increased food production also stems from the same causes. The food shortages of to-day are man-made. A scientist, Mr. A. E. Bender, said recently at a meeting of the food group of the Society of Chemical Industry, on Dec. 10th, that "scientists could no longer sit down and say they had done all they could, and that now it was up to the politicians; for chemists were also citizens. Technically, the problem had been solved; but success could not be achieved by scientists acting as scientists, but only by scientists acting as politicians".

The Case of Yugoslavia

Food production in Yugoslavia has become so critical that the Tito Government in October last invited a mission from the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations to study the problem. Their report, now published, finds that famine will ensue unless \$65 million dollars' worth of foreign help is forthcoming.

The mission foresees three choices for Yugoslavia:

(1) No outside aid. Suspension of defence equipment and spending of existing \$65 million aid (from the United States, Britain, and France) on imported food and feeding stuffs.

(2) The Government to divert grain and maize to human nutrition. A rapid slaughter programme to reduce the present number of pigs and poultry by 55 per cent. (The report says that this would require compulsory measures and rationing and would meet with heavy resistance.)

(3) Imports of 280,000 tons of wheat, 330,000 tons of maize, 20,000 tons of

THEY DIE MORE EASILY IN THE NORTH

THE recently-published Registrar-General's Statistical Review for 1950 illustrates the wide disparity in mortality rates in different parts of England and Wales. Mortality on Tyneside was 22 per cent. greater than for England and Wales as a whole, in urban south-east Lancashire 17 per cent. more, and on Merseyside 13 per cent. more. In the urban West Midlands the excess was only 5 per cent., while Greater London had 8 per cent. less mortality than the country as a whole—the same as for the aggregate of rural areas.

Commenting on the review, the *Manchester Guardian* says: "Vital statistics are notoriously full of pitfalls, but it would seem that there is room for more study by public health authorities of the reasons for these disparities. They cannot be all due to climate, or the presence of manufacturing industry. It is highly probable, for instance, that we are losing many lives in Lancashire because of the scandalous pollution of the atmosphere which our local authorities tolerate so complacently. And why is infantile mortality so high in many Northern towns? One would like to see health committees setting their medical officers to work explaining and analysing their local figures. To take Lancashire only, why, in 1950, had Salford 27 per cent. more mortality than the national average, Burnley 25 per cent., Oldham 24 per cent., Manchester, Rochdale and Wigan 22 per cent., Warrington 20 per cent., Bolton and Liverpool 19 per cent.? The answers might be disturbing to local pride."

barley, beans, sugar, 30,000 tons of oats and fats, at a cost of \$65,000,000 dollars. The mission also recommends that 10,000 tons of dried skim milk should be imported immediately and, if possible, another extra 10,000 tons of beans, both of which would cost \$6,000,000. This would save the situation.

"Without such help the country would be thrown back on the choice of (1) and (2), both of which may create a dangerous situation. Number 2 would reduce human food available in various parts of the country to a level which would result in heavy loss in morale and health, while the Yugoslav Government is probably not in a position to accept choice Number 1 for general security, political and economic reasons."

This is as far as any F.A.O. report has ever gone, for F.A.O. is non-political. Clearly the mission found the whole situation inside Yugoslavia a bit shaky. It also found that "rents have increased by 100 per cent., the allocation of cheap heating fuel has been abolished, and the purchasing power of the people is already very low".

It found that 70 per cent. of total agricultural production came from individual farmers, 5 per cent. from State farms, and 20 per cent. from Co-operative farms. It found "many children suffering from malnutrition, child mortality extremely high, and rickets common among children. In the South, from lack of milk, children are often breast-fed until the third year."

The mission has recommended an end to all food exports except meat. At

F.A.O. the people concerned state that the situation in Yugoslavia might easily turn to famine unless measures are taken.

Czechoslovakia and East Germany

Similar problems face Czechoslovakia and East Germany. In the latter the food crisis is acute, with Communist brigades patrolling the countryside and seizing and killing livestock on the farms in order to fill the shops in the towns before Christmas, while hoarding and concealment are the natural reply of the peasants.

In Czechoslovakia it has proved impossible to pretend that all the country's economic ills are due to the executed "Slansky-Clementis group". The Prime Minister, Zapotocky, declared in a speech:

"People complain that they cannot buy coal for the winter and that their food rations are insufficient. We cannot provide the people with coal because it is required for our industrial plan, and the plants lack hundreds of thousands of tons of coal. Among the people there is discontent and rebellion, but against this rebellion there is no help. It can only be eliminated by fulfilment of the plan."

President Gottwald, addressing the Communist Party conference recently, said that there was a lack of discipline in both State and labour from top to bottom. Food production was inadequate. He declared that it was "counter-revolutionary drive" to say that the party intended to reduce the supply of consumer goods. But though the industrial equipment existed for producing these goods, the country could not import enough raw materials.

Once again it is plain that the industrial economic programme takes precedence over food production.

Road Transport

A Strike Against De-Nationalisation?

A MOVE which backs up what is said elsewhere in this issue about decentralisation, is under foot in the Road Transport industry.

For some time now an unofficial, or at least very semi-official, organisation has been growing among Road Transport workers. It is an organisation of shop stewards called the Nationalised Road Transport Shop Stewards' Association, and has been created as an expression of the workers' frustration with the official union—for, of course, most Road Transport workers are members of the Transport & General Workers' Union. (Need one say more about frustration?)

This association has, as was to be expected, been able to express any grievances of the rank-and-file, and get them dealt with, better and quicker than the established officials of the T. & G.W.U. Drivers, mates, loaders and maintenance men have all found it easier and far more effective to get their shop stewards to take up their queries than to embark upon the tortuous procedure—usually with a blank wall at the end—entailed in trying to get the paid officials of their union to earn their keep.

In other words, the Road Transport workers, having created their vast, centralised union, are now proceeding themselves to decentralise its effective operation as far as they are concerned.

And the Shop Stewards' Association, having spread all over the country, now feels that it is in a position to take on the bigger job of organising a nationwide strike in protest against the Tories' denationalisation Bill. For, clearly, neither the T.U.C. nor the Labour Party are really prepared to do anything but talk about opposing it.

At this, of course, all those who are opposed to nationalisation will ask themselves why on earth are the transport workers prepared to strike to defend that?

"The State is a condition, a certain relationship between human beings, a mode of human behaviour; we destroy it by contracting other relationships, by behaving differently."

—GUSTAV LANDAUER

Perhaps the answer really is that the workers are not so much interested in defending nationalisation as in preventing the return of private enterprise, for the return of cut-throat competition among the haulage firms will have immediate worsening effects upon the workers concerned.

Anyway, they think it is worth striking to prevent denationalisation if they can, and at a meeting in London just before Christmas an overwhelming majority voted for strike action to take place throughout the country on January 19th.

THE END OF UTILITY FURNITURE

FURNITURE has now been accorded the same treatment as clothing and textiles, in the abolition of the Utility scheme, which came into operation during the war, and the substitution of a "D" scheme.

Unlike clothing, however, furniture will probably make immediate jumps in price. In all textile articles, the carrying of tax on lower priced goods has been largely offset by the drop in prices of the textiles themselves. But there has been no comparable drop in timber prices, so that there will be nothing to balance the tax, which is assessed on a sliding scale on that part of an article's price which is above what is called the "D" line.

Previously all "Utility" furniture was tax-free, and at various price levels and quality standards, by keeping within Board of Trade specifications for those standards, many manufacturers, assisted by first class designers, were able to produce furniture of good quality, well made and well designed.

Now only the cheapest furniture will be tax free, and no quality standards have been set, so that an incentive is given for the production of shoddy goods. The dearest furniture, previously non-utility and bearing heavy purchase-tax, will be cheaper—but not cheap enough to bring it within the limits of workers' pockets.

The Government's arguments in favour of their scheme is that it gives "greater freedom of choice" to the consumer, although it is obvious that choice for the poorer buyer will be restricted, while for the rich it never has been.

One other factor, however, may indicate the real reason for the Government's scheme: it stands to make an extra £3,000,000 per year from Purchase Tax, this way.

AFTER STALIN'S CONGRESS

(By an East European correspondent)

THE recent congress of the Soviet C.P. provided some new information on the ruling class of the U.S.S.R. It is however necessarily incomplete in view of the nature and the methods used by the existing régime to hide those aspects which show the wide gap between Communist practice and theory. Yet even with the existing data certain tendencies can be gauged.

The Soviet C.P. has often been designed as a model to its less successful sections abroad which all glory in the title of "the advance guard of the working class". How unimportant the rôle of Communist workers is in the Soviet Fatherland can be seen from the fact that out of the 1,192 delegates at the congress 709 were university graduates. For 448 among the latter further information was provided at the beginning of the Congress. There were 282 engineers, 98 teachers, 68 agronomists, 7 lawyers, 11 doctors, and 18 economists. About the remaining 225 a discreet silence was maintained because they were either army or secret police officers. (N.B.—In the U.S.S.R., officer schools have the rank of universities).

IMPORTANCE OF OFFICERS

Nor is the military element strong solely among the delegates, for 86.4% of the officers are members of the C.P. or of the Young Communist League. No other occupation in the U.S.S.R. can boast of such a high percentage.

While in Britain army officers have to wait till they retire before they can busy themselves in the constituent Conservative Parties, Stalin's

marshals and generals on active service supply more than a tenth of the total membership of the governing body of the C.P.

CONCENTRATION OF POWER

The concentration of power on the top is reflected too by the increase of Communists who combine high posts in the State administration with membership of the Central Committee of the C.P. This is the case of all the important ministers and ambassadors. Further, the Central Committee in reinforced by leading party bureaucrats whose jobs keep them outside Moscow.

THE NATIONAL PROBLEM

One of the chief planks of Communist propaganda is the so-called progressive solution of the problem of nationalities in the U.S.S.R. in contrast to multinational capitalist States. The figures provided at the congress and quoted in the well-informed Paris review B.E.I.P.I. show that just as before the October Revolution the Russians as opposed to the other nationalities, play a far greater rôle in the running of the Soviet State than their sheer number would warrant. For example the Ukraine contributes 20% of the total population of the U.S.S.R. but its C.P. only 12% of the total membership of the Soviet C.P. The gap is even wider in the case of the other non-Russian republics. The only exception to the above rule is Georgia, Stalin's native land, where the percentage of Communists is higher than elsewhere in the U.S.S.R. It seems that even the chief exponent of "scientific social-

ism" and of "proletarian internationalism" prefers and feels safer with those of the same racial stock as himself. Like his precursors, Marx and Engels, who, being Germans, had a weak spot for the German Social Democratic movement.

Exploitation of the Colonies

PEOPLE often assume that nowadays the direct exploitation of the colonial empire has ceased and that in financial terms, colonial territories have become more of a liability than an asset. But Sir Richard Acland in a recent article in *Tribune* shows that in fact this is not so. "The colonies," he says, "by the total of their trading transactions, are financing us."

"In 1950 they did it to the tune of £180 million; in 1951 £235 million; in 1952 it looks as if it may be £150 million."

"What happens is that the colonies earn more dollars than they are allowed to spend. In addition, taking their trade as a whole, and particularly their trade with this country, they send out goods to a far greater value than the goods and services which we send in return."

A table in the October issue of *The Banker* showed that from 1948 to 1951 the sterling balances had increased from £655 million to £1,095 million: Malaya by £135 million, West Africa by £150 million, East Africa by £60 million.

Another table published in the *Observer*, on November 23, shows that in 1949-51 other members of the sterling area contributed surpluses or drew out deficits as follows:

Burma: surplus £32m, New Zealand: £32m, Ceylon: £19m, Pakistan: £9m, S. Rhodesia: £89m, Ireland: deficit £122m, India: £167m, S. Africa: £223m, Australia: £239m.

Our own deficit in the same years was £201 million.

Sir Richard Acland quotes a remark made by Mr. Oliver Lyttelton, Secretary of State for the Colonies, when he took office. "A system of colonial development," Mr. Lyttelton said, "which leaves the colonies to finance the mother country to the extent of £1,000 million, cannot continue unchecked." But it does continue and is a deliberate policy.

The report on "The Colonial Territories, 1951-52" says at paragraph 392: "After the meeting of Commonwealth Finance Ministers in January, 1952 . . . Colonial Governments were asked to take measures which would restrict imports during 1952 from the non-sterling area to below the 1951 level."

The *Observer* says: "This rather shocking state of affairs ought not to be allowed to continue: it amounts to the richer members of the Sterling Club . . . living off the earnings of the poorer members."

MARX, MARXISTS & THE STATE

It cannot possibly be here a question of beginning a complete critique of Marxism. What we propose is only to examine the Marxist conception of the State.

From *Hegel to Marx*: We cannot understand the development of the thought of Marx if we neglect to start from the Hegelian conception of the State.

Hegel considered that the "Ideal Moral Goal" is realised in the State, identified with Society. Hegel justified Statism and conceived of liberty as affirming itself in the State. The highest duty of the individual is to be a member of the State. Marx, on the contrary, saw in the State, not an actualisation of "the Idea", but something which is a product of society at a certain stage of its development. The individual, far from actualising himself completely, loses a part of himself at the hands of the State: the State represents the alienation of man. It is necessary to establish a society where the State disappears.

The State, Product of the Division of Labour and Expression of the Alienation of Man

In *The German Ideology*, Marx sets forth his theory on the origin of the State:

The division of labour and of exchange gave man the feeling of being outside the productive forces: "the social power, that is to say the multiplied productive force . . . appeared to these individuals . . . not as their own combined power, but as a foreign force."

The alienation of the individual is therefore a product of the division of labour. But the division of labour in producing classes, made the state appear.

Recently, A. Cornu, in the article,

"Marxisme et Ideologie", in the review *La Pensée* (No. 3, 1945), basing himself on the analyses of Feuerbach on religion and of Marx on the State, writes:

"In his creation of God, man made the most essential of his own qualities alien to himself from that time on. He transferred them to an imaginary being who deprived him of his own substance . . .

. . . It is by an analogous process that morals and law establish their fundamental concepts. In the moral order, in effect, good is nothing but the transposition (according to the rational plan of the conception of God) deprived of its concrete elements and reduced to an abstraction, to an ideal in which is summed up all of that which was human greatness.

"This conception of good finds, in the plan of legality, its expression in the concept of the State which plays in the realm of law, the same rôle as Odin in the realm of religion.

"In every society divided in antagonistic social classes, the idea of the State clothes itself in the same metaphysical character as the conception of God and is formed in an analogous manner, through the alienation of that which constitutes the essence of man considered as a social being.

"In place of conceiving of the State as the product of society, just as God is the product of man, the law, in its rôle of defender of the interests of the ruling class separates the State from society and opposes it to society in order to attribute to it an absolute value; a reality in itself; a reality whose concrete content is represented in fact by that

which constitutes the essence of social organisation."

Thus there is among the Marxists this persistent idea that the State is the point of the division of labour and of classes and takes on a religious character because man is alienated in it and confers upon it the qualities of social man.

The State: Organism at the Service of the Bourgeoisie

Another conception common among Marxists is that the State is the political expression of the ruling class.

Marx writes (again in *The German Ideology*): "From the moment that private property is emancipated from the community, the State becomes independent, both at the side of, and outside of bourgeois society; but it is nothing more than the form of organisation which the bourgeoisie gives itself, externally and internally for the reciprocal guarantee of their property and their interests."

This allows us to suppose that the State is not the State at the service of the bourgeoisie except at a certain stage in its evolution, when it is the liberal State of the type of Louis-Philippe. In effect, Marx admits that it is possible for the State not to always be the expression of the antagonism of classes, and he writes: "the independence of the State is no longer present to-day except in the countries where the estates are not yet completely transformed into classes."

There are, therefore, epochs where the social differentiations (the estates) are not yet classes and therefore the State presents a certain independence; it is the arbitrator State, the State of the

absolute monarchy for example. Marx admits that the State is not necessarily tied to the existence of classes, that social structures, "estates" and castes are able to exist before class societies.

But that which interests Marx is the State of the capitalist era, the liberal State at the service of the bourgeois class, the State reduced to the rôle of harmoniser (according to the liberals), of gendarme (according to Marxist thought).

In the Communist Manifesto, the formulation employed is categorical: "Modern government is nothing but the executive committee of the entire bourgeois class."

But the *coup d'état* of 1851 obliged Marx to alter his analysis, to admit that the political domination is not the direct expression of the economic domination. The French bourgeoisie, in fact, seized by fear, proceeded to resign its political domination to the advantage of Napoleon III. Marx in *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, then made an attempt to explain that in voluntarily abdicating its power, the bourgeoisie still ruled.

As Michel Collinet has pointed out in *La Tragedie du Marxisme*, Marx had reached the point in *Eighteenth Brumaire* of citing as factors determining history: "the intrigues of the heart", "the astute imbecility of a single individual".

Marx, moreover, in his *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of the State*, had already pointed out the rôle of military and bureaucratic castes and had written that in Prussia, the bureaucracy "has in its possession the existence of the State, the spiritual existence of society that is its private property."

Marx, in *The Civil War in France*, says again that the organs of power of the State "find themselves at the head of society, place the public power little by little at the service of their own interests and from servants of society develop into its masters."

The State is therefore able to be the State of the bureaucracy just as well as the State of the bourgeois capitalist. Note also that the bureaucratic caste is also able to develop into a true economically dominant class as the State comes to control more and more of the economy.

Engels in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, says there quite cautiously that the State is not the State of the ruling class, but only as a general rule.

"The State is as a general rule the State of the most powerful class, of that class which has economic domination, which by this means becomes also the politically dominant class."

Engels even writes that the State is a power issuing out of society, but which wishes to place itself at the head of it and to disengage itself more and more. Notice the surprising use of the term "wishes", permitting us to allow a totally autonomous will to the State.

Engels succeeded no more than Marx in reconciling the theories of the State of the Manifesto and of *The 18th Brumaire*. And yet their embarrassment came from nothing more than the existence of an Empire in the capitalist period.

But if Marx and Engels had wanted to consider the Pharaonic State, the early Chinese State, or the Inca State?

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WHAT I BELIEVE by William Morris

WE reproduce below, one of four letters which William Morris wrote in the spring of 1888 to the Rev. George Bainton in order to explain his point of view. They were privately printed in 1894 as *Four Letters on Socialism* and are reprinted in *The Letters of William Morris*

I THINK that what lies at the root of the due answer to your objections is that our present representative system is the reflection of our class society. The fact of the antagonism of classes underlies all our government and causes political parties, who are continually making exhibitions of themselves to the disgust of all sensible men, making party questions out of matters of universal public convenience, and delaying reforms of the most obvious nature long after the whole country has cried out for them. This is I think a necessary result of government—or, if you please, of political government; and what causes that government is, as I have said, the contest of classes which our competitive system forces on us.

Under these conditions the business of a statesman is to balance the greed and fears of the proprietary classes against the necessities and demands of the working-class. This is a sorry business, and leads to all kinds of trickery and evasion; so that it is more than doubtful whether a statesman can

be a moderately honest man.

Now, the contest of classes being abolished, all this would fall to the ground. The relations of men to each other would become personal; wealth would be looked upon as an instrument of life, and not as a reason for living, and therefore dominant over men's lives. Whatever laws existed would be much fewer, very simple, and easily understood by all; they would mostly concern the protection of the person. In dealing with property, its fetish quality having disappeared, its use only would have to be considered, e.g., shall we (the public) work this coal mine or shut it up? Is it necessary for us to lay down this park in wheat, or can we afford to keep it as a place of recreation? Will it be desirable to improve this shoemaking machine, or can we go on with it as it is? Will it be necessary to call for special volunteers to cultivate yonder fen, or will the action of the law of compensation be inducement enough for its cultivation? And so forth.

Of course it is clear that such considerations can only be held when all such things as this are public property.

The instances you give of public management (you might have added the Poor Laws in spite of the cruelty and stupidity of their administration forced on them by our economical position) show this at least, that whatever theories of individualistic property holding there may be, they cannot be thoroughly carried out in practice.

But to return to our "government" of the future, which would be rather an administration of things than a government of persons. Without dogmatising on the matter I will venture to give you my own views on the subject, as I know that they are those held by many Socialists. Nations, as political entities, would cease to exist; civilisation would mean the federalisation of a variety of communities great and small, at one end of which would be the township and the local guild, in which administration would be carried on perhaps in direct assemblies "in more majorum", and at the other some central body whose function would

(Longmans, 1950, 25/-). It will be seen that Morris's position is not the same as that of his anarchist contemporaries, nor is it that of the Labour Party or the Communists, who both claim him as being "on their side."

be almost entirely the guardianship of the principles of society, and would when necessary enforce their practice; e.g., it would not allow slavery in any form to be practised in any community. But even this shadow of centralisation would disappear at last when men gained the habit of looking reasonably at these matters. It would in fact be chiefly needed as a safeguard against the heredity of bad habits, and the atavism which would give us bad specimens now and again. Between these two poles there would be various federations which would grow together or dissolve as convenience of place, climate, language, etc., dictated, and would dissolve peaceably when occasion prompted. Of course public intercourse between the members of the federation would have to be carried on by means of delegation, but the delegates would not pretend to represent any one or anything but the business with which they are delegated, e.g., we are a shoemaking community chiefly, you cotton spinners, are we making too many shoes? Shall we turn some of us to gardening for a month or two, or shall we go on?—and so forth.

Absolute facts and information would be the main business of public assemblies.

Of course every competent citizen would have to take part in public business; and also no one would receive any special dignity, still less any domination for filling any post; he would do his work there because he could do it best, i.e., easiest. To my mind the essential thing to this view (which can be filled in detail as much as you please, but always with a tolerable certainty that the actual details won't be like the imagined ones) is the township, or parish, or ward, or local guild, small enough to manage its own affairs directly. And I don't doubt that gradually all public business would be so much simplified that it would come to little more than a correspondence. Such are the facts with us; compare them with the facts with you. You know how to act, so that we should tend to the abolition of all government, and even of all regulations that were not merely habitual; a voluntary

association would become a necessary habit, and the only bond of society.

I admit that this is a long way ahead; the contest of classes is still going on, and we cannot help taking part in it.

State Socialism will have to intervene between our present breakdown and communism; but I do not think it will last long when it is fully developed, especially as I think there are signs that it will come in the municipal rather than the imperial form; which I think a very good thing.

To conclude, I must remind you that however gradually the change comes from monopoly to freedom, it will only be when the first stage which recognises the principle at least is complete that our present inequalities can be, I won't say abolished, but even much palliated. The present system is based on the assumed necessity of a proprietary class and a proletariat. As long as this lasts whatever advantages you give to the latter must result in the aggrandizement of the former,

At the Cinema

MAGI OR MAGOO?

EVERY now and again a small miracle happens, not enough to make us clap our hands and make an affirmation like Tinker-Bell, but a pocket-sized one, just enough to make us believe in the decency, good taste and humanity of man. Sometimes it is an unemployed family in Lancashire giving away food to those worse off than itself, or, in a different world, the B.B.C. gives us *The Troubled Air* and *The Face of Violence*, or it may happen in Milan (the Italian film-makers are a miracle in themselves).

Into the arid technicolor desert of sadism and Disney-wisney-whimsey, a little seed drifted and grew. The cartoon film started off as the Cinderella to the Ugly Sister of the big picture. Nothing fails like success, and Cinderella grew old and became an ugly sister herself, full of violence and crudity. Then out of the waste land sprouted the small shoots and a new rebirth of the cartoon was at hand.

It had a mixed ancestry, this new cartoon—Freud, Dali, Ronald Searle, Emmett and Chaplin all seem to have been in at the birth. The main crop was a small short-sighted bachelor of about fifty, Mr. Magoo.

Magoo is unaware of the evil and

except so far as the proletariat are struggling towards revolution by rebellion of various kinds: the lowest form of which is the ordinary stealing, lying, and cheating of the criminal class, and the highest, conscious political action directed against the dominant class; workmen's combinations for strikes and suchlike lying between two extremes, and being like the others a necessary form of the class struggle, but a temporary one; the link between the pure hopelessness of the slave, and the self-sacrificing, dignified hope of the rebel who feels his rights of citizenship, and is determined to claim them for his class, whatever may happen to himself personally.

As to when the change will come about, that is not our business. It is clearly the hope of its advent that forces us into agitation. For my part, I think that though it may be long before the revolution will be complete, it is already amongst us; and that a very few years will see a great change in the attitude of the political parties towards Socialism. I am certain that they will be forced into socialistic experiments, which may be partial failures, but which will always leave their mark; and that this will go on till it will be only one conscious step over the border, and monopoly will be no more.

dangerous forces in the world, and hence to him they do not exist. The 'wise' man is consumed with care, the 'fool' Schweiks his way through life pleasantly saying good morning to everyone, playing tennis with walrus, golf with a bear, and like Toto, to the dwarf, he is small, to the cripple he is pain-wracked, to the wry-faced he is twisted. The Magoos have a better gift in this life than the Magis, the gift of not seeing evil in things and people, and therefore no evils happen to him.

But Magoo was not alone when we saw him. We saw "Rooty-Toot-Toot", another version of "Frankie and Johnnie", "Madeleine", (which recaptures the innocence of the earlier Disney, as opposed to the later Plutonic, moronic ignorance); "Georgie and the Dragon", and "Family Circus" (both U.P.A. cartoons which hint at causes of juvenile delinquency).

If your "local" is not a tied house, cinematically speaking, and is not under the bargaining arrangement of block booking, you might get Mr. Magoo or U.P.A. cartoons if you ask for them. Anyhow, there's no harm in trying. J.R.

FREEDOM BOOKSHOP
OPEN DAILY

New Books . . .

ANDRE GIDE: *Et Nunc Manet in Te* (an intimate journal) 10/6

Everyman Reprints . . .

TURGENEV: *Fathers & Sons*; *Smoke*.
BLAKE: *Poems & Prophecies*.
ZOLA: *Germinal*.
ROUSSEAU: *Social Contract*; *Emile*.
IBSEN: *Ghosts, &c.*
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last published number 2/6

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REFLECTIONS ON THE NEW YEAR

UNLIKE others journals which—however free from popular superstition—are naturally soaked in local atmosphere, FREEDOM will not in this issue be wishing its readers a *Happy New Year*. It is a salutary reminder that the New Year is as much a superstition as Christmas (whatever popular jollification surrounds it) when one finds that journals in some countries find themselves constrained to wish "A Happy New Year to all our Christian readers"—for it is the New Year by the Christian calendar only, and other religions had their New Year a few months before or stand to have it a few months later.

Even this Christian calendar is far from being constant. The Georgian Calendar has been adopted by this country only 200 years, and was objected to vigorously by many Protestants, since it had been in force only by Catholic countries following a decree of the Pope. In Russia, up to the downfall of the Tsars, the Old Style was still used to reckon time. It can instantly be seen, therefore, how absurd even by Christian standards the Christian festivals are, and the celebration of the birth of Christ (which was reckoned by casting back some hundred years after the alleged event) obviously does not, as is pretended at Christmas-time, come on the same date. The old country superstition about hawthorns that bloomed on Christmas Day could not survive the change of date to December 25th!

The choice of January 1st as New Year's Day still leaves a lot of tidying-up to be done, and the World Calendar Association contend that the calendar is due for another reform, which would give an equal number of weeks to the solar year (365 is not divisible by seven). In a recent address, Lord Merthyr, chairman of the British Committee, contended that such a reformed calendar would bring great benefits to business, but dealt with religious objections. These primarily come from Jews who object to the extra "world's day" necessary to bring into the plan, to even it up, thus making more than six days between one particular Sabbath and another. This objection (sustained by Seventh Day Adventists, who have adopted the Jewish Sabbath on Saturday, and the Lord's Day Observance Society, who uphold the Scotch Presbyterian idea of a Jewish Sabbath on Sunday) is based on the case that from the beginning of eternity the Sabbath has occurred after an interval of six days work. Lord Merthyr countered this with a "devastating reply". What about when they cross the international date line and lose a day? There are many other such objections an agnostic can make, and it is clear that the claim is based on sheer superstition in the belief that despite all the calendar changes, this six days on and one off has been going on eternally.

One does not feel very enthusiastic about Lord Merthyr's proposals. After all, equally good cases were made out against the Roman Catholic saints' days. These superstitious relics of the past were abolished in Protestant countries—worked so well for business that Catholic countries followed suit. We have never since got anything granted out of reason, and having lost the Catholic saints' days one hesitates to lose the Jewish Sabbath too! It is undoubtedly good for business to abolish all excuses for stopping work, but it is time that we started thinking of a few more

The Presidential Election and the Militaristic Crisis

1. The Militaristic Crisis

America is now engaged in a series of wars to which we can see no end. In a previous article ("The Military Subordination," *Resistance*, July 1952), we have tried to describe as exactly as possible how the American system is now working, in order to find out what effects the state of war is likely to have on the "home front". In the present article, we shall try to use this analysis to discover the meaning of the November election.

Economics, we said, no longer is the key to understanding the deep currents flowing in America. We still have a capitalist system; the stock-holders, bankers, etc., still hold the lion's share of wealth, they still exploit the workers, farmers and middle classes in a thousand different ways. But we no longer have a real ruling class. Each economic class or interest-group has a definite status, it has certain privileges and rights that the other classes accept. In return, none of the economic groups—unions, bankers, farmers, industrialists—tries seriously to expand its power at the expense of the others. They talk as if they would like to, but the industrialists do not dare to try to break the unions, and the unions do not try to dispossess the capitalists. In each group, leadership has been taken over by bureaucratic minded careerists—in the corporations as well as in the unions—and these men, who vaguely understand the fact that the day of real conflict and struggle has passed—settle their disputes in amicable conferences. When one group becomes too stubborn and insistent, the bureaucrats of government come in to smooth matters out.

In all this, there is probably nothing unusual—probably every system of ex-

ploitation falls into such a pattern sooner or later. Sooner or later all ruling classes become leisure classes, and everyone knows and accepts his station in society. But if we do not understand that these changes have now taken place, we will be unable to understand the results that a state of permanent war will have.

First of all, it has been the capitalist class that has been most effective in opposing the political pretensions of the military. Now, at a time when the military institutions have expanded vastly, the capitalist class may no longer have the vitality, the will, to put up serious resistance in case of a crisis.

Second, belief in the "bourgeois values" has been shaken greatly. People no longer believe in the rightness of rugged individualism, in free capitalist competition and... free exploitation. But, unfortunately, what is taking the place of this philosophy is not, say, a bold humanism and libertarianism. What replaces it is a vague philosophy of Welfare and Security—an uninspiring philosophy that fits the new social structure very well. In contrast to the new ideology, the "military virtues"—heroism, patriotism, savage destruction, discipline—are undoubtedly much more "exciting". Although they are far from dominant, they may already have taken a strong hold on the younger generations. And as the "military virtues" become more popular, the threat of militarism must increase.

Now, side by side, with the physical growth of the military institutions, and the weakening of the capitalist way of life, a third and very important element arises—from the nature of the war itself. This is, that the war, as it is being

fought, is not acceptable to the American people. With every additional month of war, their anger increases. How much of a political force this anger can become, is hinted by the election; on our future history, it may have very deep effects.

Such are, as we will try to show later, the elements of a "militaristic crisis" of a very serious character.

2. The Anti-War Sentiments

The November election confirms the anger of Americans over the Korean war. Obviously, many other factors came together to cause the Republican victory: "It's time for a change"; Eisenhower's reputation; proofs of corruption, and charges of "Red infiltration"; the Southern betrayal of the Democratic Party; the lavish Republican spending. But there is evidence that the war played a very important rôle. The nation is waiting intently to see what Eisenhower will do about it. And even certain of the other issues of the election are closely associated with the war. "It's time for a change" referred, above all, as people understood it, to the war-policy. The "Red infiltration", the slogan of McCarthyism, was believed in just because people felt that something treasonable was going on down in Washington—not because they were given any proof of serious "Red infiltration".

The most direct evidence of the importance of the war issue was the strategy of the Republican campaign. In the beginning, the Republicans wanted to talk about anything but the war, for the very good reason that the Korean war, and the rest of foreign policy, had been truly "bi-partisan", and the Republicans had no intention of changing this policy. They talked about Socialism, about the Reds, about corruption, about Ike—anything but the war. The public was bored. The pro-Eisenhower New York *World-Telegram* complained, in that period, that "Ike is running like a dry creek."

Then, in the last weeks of the campaign, the war became *the* issue—Eisenhower talked of leaving Korea to the orientals—he implied he could end the war—he blamed the war on the Democrats—he promised to go to Korea—and people took this to mean, not that he would go to inspect the troops, but that he would go to settle the war. And from then on the campaign caught fire.

When a political party stirs up an issue it knows will be embarrassing after the election, we must conclude that its leaders believe the election is in doubt, that there is a big bloc of voters waiting to hear what they have to say on this issue—voters who will stay home, or vote the other way, if not satisfied on this issue.

That popular sentiment shifted greatly

to Eisenhower at the last minute is confirmed by the public opinion polls. Their error was in being unable to take into account the decision of the undecided and the hesitant to vote for Eisenhower, and thereby change a close election, leaning toward Eisenhower, into a landslide. The tidal wave of Republican radio-television propaganda would account for only a part of this shift.

In addition, we have numerous reports of resentment over conscription as a strong influence among rural voters in the mid-west; the complaints of labour men and the wives of union members, swayed by the Korean issue, voted for Eisenhower; and the overwhelming victory of McCarthy in Wisconsin, despite the opposition of liberals of both parties.

3. The Dilemma

With some exceptions, the anti-war sentiment of to-day is not pacifist. Nor, on the other hand, does it represent a clear desire to extend the war to Manchuria, China and Russia—even though such ideas are frequently heard in company with condemnation of the war. It is, simply, an opposition to a *particular kind* of war, to the Korean war and the similar wars which seem to lie ahead.

A "cold war", punctuated by local wars—the present American foreign policy—is not a novelty, and by its effects at other times we can predict its effects to-day. Every major war is preceded by a state of diplomatic-political-economic war, which the statesmen manoeuvre into existence for the usual reasons—not necessarily with the aim of

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Marx, Marxists & the State

Continued from p. 2

History, as a result of the Mussolini State, the Hitlerian State and the Stalinist State has made us realise that which the wanting analyses of Marxism on the State helped us neither to predict nor to understand.

It is interesting to compare with the analyses of Marx and Engels, the theses which the celebrated Stalinist economist, Varga, opposed to the official theses of the Kremlin from 1946 to 1949. Here are some extracts from his defence as reported by the *Revue Internationale*, No. 21. "There are some very general truths relative to the State which all Marxists know: that the State does not exist except in a class society; that the State is the instrument of domination of one class over another; that in the feudal State, in feudal society, the class of feudal landowners ruled, that in the bourgeois State, the bourgeoisie rules, that under monopoly capitalism, the financial oligarchy rules, etc."

excuses for dislocating business a little. A free society would see more holidays, based on the undoubtedly pagan conception that it is a good thing to have one once in a while.

But in spite of lack of enthusiasm for the proposed tidying-up of the calendar, it is interesting to see how when it suits particular purposes, the morality enjoined by archaic religious observance can soon be blown sky-high. Scientists in this century appear loth to do so, but they could—if they chose—deal as many blows to religion as did the last century. And this is not a matter of light concern of blowing away cobwebs in men's minds. The laws of this country, as of many others, are based upon Biblical conceptions long since disproved, or readily disprovable. Some of the Jewish traditions, which in many ways were valid for a desert tribe surrounded by enemies, have set a Judaic-Christian tradition in a rigid mould: this particularly applies to sexual laws, in which Christianity has blindly followed the "increase and multiply" laws regardless of circumstance, and which were in direct contrast with the way of life of the Greeks, for instance. Hence the various laws against sexuality which daily find more victims, and which are based on nothing much more substantial than is the eternity of the Sabbath, which scientists can soon debunk when they so wish.

A.M.

But all that is able to be pushed to absurdity if one simplifies it too much.

Thus comrade Schreyerson has literally said: "There is a ruling group—that is the group of the big bourgeoisie—that determines 'the whole politics of the State.'" Comrades, I am in disagreement with that. I do not believe that the financial oligarchy determines by itself in times of peace the *entire* politics of the bourgeoisie, of the State. In this regard I suggest to the comrades that they refer back to the polemic of Lenin against Kievsky on the question of "pure imperialism". The Marxist method demands that when we study any question such as the politics, the economy of a country, etc., we study its history and the class situation in that which we wish to study. And I affirm that while monopoly capitalism existed already in Germany before the First World War, nevertheless, it was not only the financial oligarchy that dominated all politics, but that the landowners there also exercised a great influence. I maintain the same about the Japanese military clique which has had such a great influence on Japan, which has sometimes even assassinated representatives of the financial oligarchy.

I assert, also that even in a country like America the farmers have a certain influence on politics. There is no doubt that they do! Take England, for example. England is evidently a country of monopoly capitalism. But are we able to say, to-day, in 1947, that the working-class and the Labour Party do not have any influence on British politics, that the financial oligarchy determines all politics? If one puts the question *only* fundamentally, it is true that the financial oligarchy rules; but if one simplifies it to the point of saying that it determines *all*, then why study the position and influence of different parties, elections, union activities, Communist parties, etc.?

The imprecision of the Marxist doctrine on the concepts of State and class, in spite of the allure of scientific analysis, explain in part these controversies as well as the enormous error of not seeing in Fascism anything more than the end of capitalism.

That which Varga, and even more his adversaries, say of the State and of classes permits us to believe that the word "State" does not apply to the real forces that exist but is linked to the idea of law, of power at the service of a class, guaranteeing property, so that for the feudal State for example, Varga says: "in the feudal State, the class of landed proprietors rules". But it is known that military power, force-organised feudal lords were landed proprietors. And we have seen above that Marx himself did not attach the idea of the State too strictly to that of class societies.

(To be continued)

A FURTHER NOTE ON INDIAN BIRTH CONTROL

Margaret Sanger and Dr. Abraham Stone, now in Bombay at the International Conference on Planned Parenthood, told me some years ago that experiences in India had exploded the myth that religion and tradition prevented the adoption of birth control. Margaret Sanger said that she was told that Indian women would be horrified at any such suggestion; in fact they crowded round her beseeching her to tell them how to limit their families. Now at last, after Pandit Nehru's achievement in securing the inclusion of Family Planning in the Five Year Plan, Dr. Stone is himself invited by the Indian Government to act as adviser. In Baroda, Dr. Chandrasekhar told the Conference, a sample survey had been made of the attitude of 500 mothers; of the Gujaratis 63 per cent. were in favour of birth control, of the Marathis 77 per cent., and of others 70 per cent.

—New Statesman, 20/12/52.

U.N. Condemn Flogging

THE United Nations conference on crime meeting in Geneva in December evinced considerable dismay over the outcry for the reintroduction of flogging in this country.

"The delegates now meeting constitute the European regional group; the American and Asian regional groups have sent observers. The recommendations of all three groups will eventually be submitted to the United Nations General Assembly.

"One of the questions discussed this week was the laying down of standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners. It is noteworthy that Rule 25, which prohibits the use of corporal punishment, was adopted unanimously, but with the proviso that in the United Kingdom it must at present be subject to the use of flogging as a punishment for grave offences against prison discipline.

"The flogging controversy now raging in Britain is privately regarded by European delegates with astonishment mingled with dismay, and the reintroduction of this punishment, for offences outside prisons, would be considered a highly retrogressive step."

(Manchester Guardian).

Delay in bringing prisoners to trial is another question with which the Conference is concerned. Regulations governing the treat-

ment of untried prisoners have also been adopted. They are of comparatively little interest to the United Kingdom, but they are important for other countries, where prisoners may await trial for a long time and where as much as half the total prison population may consist of such prisoners. The Italian delegate, for instance, explained that Italy's high total of over 50,000 prisoners was partly due to the fact that the system of remand on bail is not applied there.

(Ibid).

In Britain the processes of the law are not encumbered by much delay. In America, on the other hand, delay at later stages is often cruelly protracted. Sacco & Vanzetti's appeals were dragged out for seven years, and the present case of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg condemned to death for atomic espionage is now almost two years old.

This appalling dragging out of prisoners sentenced to death is very shocking to humane people. At the other end of the scale is the indecent and brutal haste with which Slansky, Clementis and the other Czech "traitors" were rushed to the gallows a few hours after sentence in Prague.

It is to be hoped that United Nations influence will be brought to bear on the side of those who would abolish the death penalty altogether.

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION AND THE MILITARISTIC CRISIS

Continued from p. 3

forcing a war. A "cold war", and the propaganda, the "preparedness", the mobilisation, the taxation that go with it, lights up the anger of the people. The inconveniences and hardships attending military preparations are one source of this anger; but it is also fed by the years of frustration in civilian life, the economic deprivations and failures, the dullness of the life of the "masses". It is often said that our way of life requires periodic wars, to release the tensions; this is not clearly so. But it is clear that a "cold war" sets off strong feelings, and that these feelings direct themselves toward the "enemy" nation, which everyone blames for the crisis. So, when actual war finally comes, people are almost eager for it; and the rising temper of the population is an incentive for the statesman to "solve" the crisis they have created and to initiate the "hot war".

But no, we are in a "cold war" from which the government cannot withdraw—but which it is, fortunately, still unwilling to "solve" by total war. To undo the dilemma in any other way would be inconsistent with the nature of governments—it could only come in a revolutionary way. So the Republicans inherit the fateful dilemma of the Democrats. They inherit a foreign policy that serves the interests of the government very well; it also serves the interests of Big Business, whom Eisenhower represents, for the corporations are making huge profits without the risks of total war. But this foreign policy allows no outlet for the anger of the people; inevitably that anger turns inward, against the government responsible for this policy.

Until now, the oppositionist rôle of the Republican Party has helped preserve an equilibrium. The Republicans pretended to shelter the anti-war sentiments, and gave them a channel of expression and a hope for satisfaction. But the Republican Party, as the party responsible for government, can no longer play fast and loose; while the Democratic Party is hardly in a position to pose as a Peace Party. So now the balance rests on the tenuous thread of Eisenhower's popularity. To exploit military heroes in order to hold a precarious status quo together, is an old, old device—and one of the less successful. Its use means that the party he represents could not, without his help, command the loyalty of the workers and farmers (in fact,

Eisenhower's vote far outstripped the general Republican vote). So, if Eisenhower should eventually feel compelled to abandon his Big Business backers, he could count on a very large following; but if he stands by them past the time when the war-policy becomes absolutely unendurable to the people, the latter are quite capable of rejecting his government, while continuing to worship him personally.

So the balance becomes more and more precarious—we approach the "militaristic crisis". Ultimately, several "solutions" are possible:

(1) To "save" the status quo by satisfying the wish of the people for any kind of alternative to the present policy. That is, by all-out war.

(2) Or the popular discontent may be exploited by a fascistic-militarist movement, outside the major parties. It would promise to punish the politicians responsible for the present policy, but it too would be forced either to all-out war or to the third alternative.

(3) The contradiction between the war-policy and popular sentiment may be solved by "abolishing" the latter. That is, the totalitarian countries have no such problem, because the people have no means of information, expression or action. If the government—under either civilian or military control—can establish such a condition here, it would have a free hand to pursue any policies it chose.

Now, these are "solutions". But it often happens that no solution is quite possible. If, for example, Big Business cannot bring itself to all-out war; if a fascistic-militarist movement is unable to muster a big enough following; if resistance to dictatorship is too great. Then, from the point of view of government, there would be chaos. In fact, such a chaos would be a positive possibility.

We may put it this way. The present anti-war feelings are formless—they are negative, prone to exploitation by dema-

gogues and politicians. But they might also become genuinely revolutionary. In view of the overwhelmingly conservative beliefs of the people, in view of the growing influence of the "military virtues", in view of the commitment of intellectuals and liberals to the war-policy, such a turn of events is not at hand. But, ultimately, it is a possibility.

What "genuinely revolutionary" means is this: consciousness that war is a madman's solution to the "cold war"; consciousness that none of the politicians, generals or demagogues have a solution; consciousness that America must give up the idea of maintaining its world position by war, or of maintaining "peace" by means of war; consciousness that there must be major changes in American society if the drive to war in this country is to be eliminated.

Such a popular consciousness would not, of course, be the solution by itself. If, by a combination of good fortune and effective education by those who desire peace and liberty, we advance that far, then we can hope for the growth of the kind of thinking that anarchists believe necessary to achieve a free society. Then, perhaps, we can show people how their aspirations can be realised only by the abolition of power and centralisation, the abolition of laws and armies, the replacement of private and public economic monopolies by voluntary organisations of workers and consumers; and so we should have taken

the first step toward the realisation of freedom.

The gap between the present thinking of the people, and the thinking we believe to be necessary, is obvious. There is no intent here to minimise it—to make the bridging of the gap seem easy. But if we want to know how to act now, we have to know what we want to do—and what needs to be done.

Above all, we must be clear, because there is a temptation to throw ourselves into trying to mobilise a mass anti-war movement. As things are now, such a movement could be formed only on a demagogic basis, because people have still learned nothing. We should only be stirring up sentiment that would be exploited by "practical" demagogues—Communists, fascists and the like—who want nothing more than to find a following to raise them to power. From the present, we must continually and clearly teach that there is no salvation except in the destruction of power; that freedom is possible only through the insistence of each individual on his own sovereignty over himself; that a libertarian revolution can be achieved only by people determined to be free, and that government and political leadership can lead only to the opposite of freedom.

4. The Failure of Liberalism

The threat of Total War and of Militarism drove many people of liberal faith, who regarded Eisenhower as a symbol of War and Militarism, to put their hope in Stevenson's election. Now that this hope has been shattered, they feel lost. If they have faced the facts at all, they have tried to devise ways to revive the "liberal" Democratic Party, and make it a national force again.

But the Democratic Party, although people thought it was campaigning as a liberal party, itself has responsibility for the very conditions that are creating the threat of war and militarism. To try to restore the status quo ante November, means merely, to put back in power

people who would follow the very same policies. It is not possible to carry on limited warfare, and to consistently undermine our liberty, without finally destroying the possibility of liberty and the possibility of peace. By now, a "liberal" administration cannot be considered even a "holding operation" against war and militarism; it would be an effort to restore a status quo that will no longer work, a status quo already destroyed by its own contradictions.

But the bankruptcy of Liberalism is even wider. By Liberalism we mean, the attempt to foster a more humanistic, libertarian way of life by using the government, and by attempting small reforms within the society. The Liberals complain that the "masses" did not vote for Stevenson. What reason did they have to vote for him? On the other hand, he stood for a policy of war—as the Democratic Party has sponsored it. On the other, he stood for welfare—for a more equal distribution of economic and social opportunity. True, he also stood for—a kind of liberalistic, humanistic aim. But people are right to be sceptical of a programme which speaks of lofty aims, but does not attempt to put them into practice. People are right to be suspicious of politicians whose highest practical conception of society is the equalisation of . . . exploitation, the maximisation of . . . bureaucracy, the pyramiding of the State.

Between war and welfare, the humanistic ideals of Liberalism perish. The "realism" of Liberalism carries its believers as inevitably along in the steam of war and Statism, as does the narrow self-interest of conservatives, the mad soldier-heroism of the militaristic.

And such must be the fate of any political philosophy that does not accept the need to abolish the system of exploitation and war, that does not teach the real, practical need of creating free social institutions. The belief of the Liberals that this is not "realistic", is one more obstacle in the way of making it a reality. DAVID WIECK.

POLITICAL AMNESIA

A YUGOSLAV engineer, Peter Ristic, shouted "Long Live King Tito" when he entered court here yesterday to face trial with six others on charges of hostile activities against the State. Asked by the presiding Judge what he meant, Ristic said that he had been in prison for so long that he had forgotten what the political set-up was. *Manchester Guardian*, 22/12/52.

SYNDICALISM & WORKING CLASS EXPERIENCE: DECENTRALISATION

WHEN the Conservatives support an idea or a policy, it is not at all surprising if the workers automatically oppose it. Experience of their class enemy has taught the working-class that no good can come out of anything which the Tories want to do. When the workers extend this distrust to all the political parties or economic groups that want to replace the Tories, they will have made a great step forward.

With this said, however, it remains a dangerous thing to do anything automatically. The Conservative policy towards the nationalised industries is one they describe as decentralisation, and we have heard opposition to their idea expressed in no uncertain terms by workers' organisations, with resultant confusion and yet another difficulty put in the way of the propagation of anarcho-syndicalist ideas.

For decentralisation has always been a main plank in the Anarchist case. Now we are used, when, say, attacking the Communist Party from our platforms, to be told (by Communists) "That's what the Tories say!" Shall we now have the same thing flung at us when we advocate decentralisation? And do we in fact support the Tory move in that direction?

Well, of course we do not, but whether we support it or not, we shall be accused of saying the same thing as the Tories, because they are now using the same word as we have always used. When we are making our propaganda, the Communists always say "That's what the Tories say," and the Tories say "That's what the Communists say," when in point of fact we are not saying the same as either.

Although the Tories are now picking up the idea of decentralisation, it does not mean that there is anything in common between their meaning of the word and ours. In their attitude towards transport, for example, all they really aiming at is the centralisation of control of the industry in different hands from those which control it at the moment, and the diversion of profit into private coffers in stead of State.

The Conservatives have always been for centralisation—the concentration of property and the control of it by the ruling class. Their only argument, fundamentally, with the Labour Party is—who shall be the ruling class. For the Labourites have only sought to shift the control from those who own to those who manage.

But just as when Anarchists say "Freedom", they mean it, so with decentralisation we mean the moving of control away from any centre at all—into the hands of the community as a whole and not just a small part of it.

Now I referred above to the fact that opposition to decentralisation (Tory version) had been expressed by workers' organisations, but this is really a misnomer. The organisations which attacked the idea, before the Conservative proposals were made known, were trade unions, and it is not really true to describe them as workers' organisations. It is, of course, not surprising that the unions should attack the very idea of decentralisation, for they are all centralised structures themselves.

In the modern union, control flows from the top down—from the centre outwards. They are all—the large ones, anyway—little states in embryo and they clearly want the workers to believe that centralisation in all things is the best way for human affairs to be conducted.

ISLANDS FOR SALE

MR. H. A. ANDREA, a London banker, may sell the islands of Benbecula, South Uist, and Eriskay. A member of his staff said to-day that his doctor had forbidden him to do any more fishing.

Mr. Andrea, he said, was quite likely to sell the islands, although with the very greatest regret, for he liked the islands and islanders. He had not yet made any move to dispose of them.

Mr. Andrea visited the islands regularly twice a year, spending six weeks there in the spring and six in the autumn. He bought them at the beginning of the war from the Cathcart Trustees.

—*Glasgow Herald*, 10/12/52.

CO-PARTNERS GET A PICTURE OF THE BOSS

ALL 10,500 members of the John Lewis Partnership to-day received a photograph of their chairman, Mr. J. Spedan Lewis.

It is not a new picture. The Partnership's Gazette, with which the picture is being distributed, says Mr. Lewis is "seldom photographed." The picture was taken within "a very few years" of 1928. —*Evening Standard*, 23/12/52.

But the unofficial workers movement, which we discussed last week is a move on the part of the workers themselves, towards decentralisation. They have found, in their own affairs, that the concentration of control at the centre does not work in the interests of the men and women at the bench, that it inevitably leads to the development of a cumbersome bureaucracy and a division of interests between the controllers and the rank-and-file.

Not only in their unions, are the workers discovering this. The reality of nationalisation, so long the goal of the union-led railwaymen, for example, has made them see the disadvantages of centralisation. And one result of this has been that, about a year ago, some 5,000 railmen in South Wales sent a petition to the headquarters of the Railway Executive in London demanding that control of the Western Region be placed back in the hands of the engineers and officials who had run it before nationalisation. The Welsh railwaymen said that they were appalled at the fantastic waste and inefficiency in the administration of their Region—and they wanted much more local control, under men who knew their job.

True, this could have been an expression of Welsh nationalism, but it is after all only one more example of the growing disillusionment with nationalisation which is spreading among those workers who have suffered it. The distrust and contempt which the miners feel for the hordes of officials which batten on their labours, is another aspect of the general dislike for those above them which is instinctive among workers.

The final decentralisation can only arrive with direct workers' control at the point of production. Any control above that level still means a degree of centralisation which is quite incompatible with workers' control. The Conservatives certainly have no interest in that end, and, as anarcho-syndicalists, we have no interests in the changes at the top represented by their policy of de-nationalisation.

The issues facing the workers to-day are not those which can be solved by choosing nationalisation or de-nationalisation under the Tories. When the workers should become interested in decentralisation is when they are prepared themselves to bring it about—the way they want it—and not to stop half-way by changing from State control back to boss control. Real decentralisation means workers' control. P.S.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

OPEN AIR MEETINGS
Weather Permitting
HYDE PARK
Every Sunday at 4.30 p.m.

INDOOR MEETINGS

The present series of indoor discussion-lectures will continue at the premises of the British Drama League, 9 Fitzroy Square, London, W.1 (off Warren Street, Tottenham Court Road).

The meetings will be held on TUESDAYS at 7.30 p.m.

JAN. 6—Tony Gibson on
ESKIMO CULTURE—A Study in Anarchy.

JAN. 13—Oswell Blakeston on
MODERN ART AND THE INDIVIDUAL

NORTH-EAST LONDON

DISCUSSION MEETINGS IN EAST HAM
Alternate Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL

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

GLASGOW

INDOOR MEETINGS at CENTRAL HALLS, 25 Bath Street
Every Sunday at 7 p.m.
With John Gaffney, Frank Leech, Jane Strachan, Eddie Shaw, Frank Carlin

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