

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

The mass strike cannot be conjured out of nothing even by the leaders of the strongest Socialist Party . . . in one way or another mass strikes are the product of the workers who take part in them.

ROSA LUXEMBURG

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Threepence

MALENKOV'S BOMB

THE announcement by Malenkov that Russia, too, has the hydrogen bomb seems to have come as no great surprise to the leaders of the West. Although a certain scepticism has been expressed as to whether or not Malenkov's announcement was a piece of bluff, supposedly knowledgeable people this side of the iron curtain have hastened to add that nobody believed that Russia was incapable of producing the particular weapon.

Now this leads to some interesting trains of thought. If it is recognized that it has always been merely a matter of time before Russia had the H-Bomb, then some of the arguments used against the Rosenbergs in the past are obviously meaningless.

We remember that President Truman maintained that the disclosure of the Rosenbergs in helping the Russians with atomic secrets to Russia would have brought death and suffering to untold thousands of people. However, by the mental shrugs which have greeted Malenkov's glad tidings, we see that atomic experts in America have all along been reminded of the fact that sooner or later the Russians would develop the hydrogen bomb anyway—presumably with or without the help of any of their various spies.

It also throws into sharper relief the futility of the notions about "outgassing from strength" at the conference tables of the world. It makes obviously suicidal the rearmament programmes of the "great" nations of the world, which can only lead to a lunatic competition on both sides to get ahead of the other, and conjures up a vision of practical and possible destruction on a scale so vast that it transcends the imagination of normal human beings.

The hydrogen bomb as already claimed by America has a destructive radius of one hundred miles. In Britain that would mean that such a bomb dropped on London would destroy not only the biggest city in the world but the whole of South-East England as well, reaching as far as Birmingham in the Midlands.

Some years back Sir Frank Whittle, inventor of the jet-engine, told us that six atom bombs strategically dropped on Britain would be enough, in view of our concentrated

industrial centres, to knock us out of any future war. He was referring to the "ordinary" uranium bomb, which was just a toy compared with the improved versions now available.

Six hydrogen bombs would be sufficient not merely to destroy this country's industrial potential but to blanket out life on these islands completely.

Now it may be said that the prospect of atomic warfare is so ghastly that no nation would dare to begin a conflict that could develop on those lines. We are reminded of the poison gas that was not used in the last war. But we see that the immediate reaction of at least some sections of American opinion has been to call for still further development by the U.S. of its atomic weapons to keep it ahead. And we see too that the possibility of Britain having, outstripped America with atomic war potential (the new super weapons that Sir William Penny is going to test next October in Australia) has made the U.S. Government begin to change its policy towards the secrecy existing between the scientists of the two countries.

But we do not see much sign of a realisation that what must be done is not—most definitely not—further development of these weapons, but a reversal of the whole crazy business, aiming at the complete destruction of armaments before they destroy the entire human race.

But can we expect the leaders of the powerful nations to act in this direction? It seems hardly likely. Malenkov, leader of the world-wide political organisation which claims to stand for peace, boasts of his country's possession of a horror weapon—and is cheered by the assembled Supreme Soviet—no less than Churchill boasts of British bombs and Eisenhower of American.

These men—if they are still men—are committed to the path of State power and would regard as weakness the pleas of ordinary men and women to stop before it is too late.

So it is on the ordinary men and women that the responsibility finally lies. And that ordinary people may not be so blind as the leaders of States is hinted at by a columnist in the *London News Chronicle* for August 10. He writes:

"To the man in the street the case for a preventive war loses any little attraction it may have had and the case for keeping out of war at all costs enhances its appeal."

To keep out of wars, however, entails keeping out of the way of the State, and while the State retains the initiative and the power it continually attempts to bend us to its will and "war is the health of the State".

If the man in the street wants to keep out of war he'll have to do more than wish for peace. He will have to consciously work towards the abolition of the social systems and institutions which will destroy him if he doesn't destroy them first.

WILL THE ELECTRICIANS STRIKE?

EMPLOYERS of electrical workers on contract work have turned down an Electrical Trades Union demand for a "substantial" wage increase.

The union is now pressing for a re-consideration of their demand and is threatening strike action unless negotiations are re-opened.

45,000 workers who do the interior wiring on building sites will be involved, and the dead-line has been set for August 24.

Knowing the employers, we guess that they will agree to re-open negotiations, waiting until just before the E.T.U. time-limit expires, and will then drag out discussions as long as they can, when they will offer an increase of about one quarter of the union's claim. Knowing the unions we guess that this will be accepted with relief, since direct action (and having to pay out strike pay) will have been avoided.

Whatever the union leadership may think about it, however, it is plain that the rank and file are taking the business seriously. Following a meeting at Hyde Park last Monday, 2,000 E.T.U. members marched through the West End of London to the headquarters of the employers' federation.

Six of their number had been chosen to form a delegation to go into the building and present to the bosses' representative the men's demand for a "substantial" increase.

But the employers would not see the delegation, which naturally incensed the assembled workers, who took the snub as a declaration of war. The general feeling seemed to be that if the employers want trouble—they'll get it!

And it seems that the employers are preparing for a showdown, for no attempt has so far been made by them to renew the contracts and agreements that are shortly due to run out. It may be that instead of simply striking, the electricians will be faced by a lock-out.

If they try this, the employers may be in for a surprise, for last Monday, 17 Ministry of Works depots were brought to a standstill when none were expected to be affected at all. If battle is joined, we may find the electricians putting up one of the biggest and most militant fights that we have seen since the war.

Police Brutality in America

The Erie County (N.Y.) Civil Liberties Committee is investigating claims of police brutality against Buffalo policemen in the arrest of 24-year old James P. Madden, charged with creating a disturbance, resisting arrest, and use of profanity. According to eye-witness stories, reported in the *Buffalo Courier-Express*, Madden was beaten with nightsticks while handcuffed and unable to defend himself. Physicians at Emergency Hospital, according to the newspapers, used 13 sutures to sew up his face and head wounds. —(Industrial Worker).

FOREIGN COMMENTARY

General Strike in France

THE general strike last week in France which for more than two days paralysed the nation's transport and communications is noteworthy for its completeness and for the fact that it appears, as in the case of the E. Berlin strike, to have been a spontaneous manifestation.

The decision to call a general strike of postal workers came after the "unexpected success of a local postal workers' strike in Bordeaux", which in its turn led to the calling of a general State employees strike. Reports disclose that that movement had evidently been borne on a much stronger current of discontent than was expected, and had been exacerbated by the government's known intention to raise the retirement age for officials and State employees. "This proposal—writes the *Manchester Guardian's* Paris correspondent—which the Government was hoping to get through in decree form during the holiday with the support of those Frenchmen who do not work for the State, has evidently provided the main driving force behind the strike movement. Defenders of the officials and railwaymen

argue that the early retiring age is a compensation for modest salaries and by nature of a contract which the State has not the right to break."

The strike was of interest too in that it was not possible to charge the Communists with having organised it, for in fact the Communist led C.G.T. has had to play a very secondary rôle of following the lead given by the Socialist Union *Force Ouvriere* and the Catholic Unions who between them control the majority of the membership among the postal workers and State employees. It is also significant of the improvised nature of the strike that the Socialist Party which might have

given considerable support to such a movement was unable to do very much since its impoverished daily organ *Le Populaire* had found it materially impossible to appear during the summer holidays and had closed down for the whole of August.

As we go to press 2,000,000 strikers are returning to work. Only the postal, telephone and telegraph workers are continuing their strike. But one main concession has been won: namely that the retiring age will not be raised, but those employees who wish may continue to work after the retiring age.

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SHOULD THE WORKERS PAY?

SHIPYARD workers on Wearside have been shaken by a recent decision at Sunderland County Court on a claim for damages by a shipyard workers against his employers.

The worker's finger was injured by a crane operated by Frederick Greenhow, and when the employers—Pickersgill's—were sued for negligence they denied responsibility and brought in Greenhow as a third party.

Judgment was given against the firm for £110 damages, but an order was made that they should recover the money from Greenhow at the rate of £1 a month. This will take nearly 10 years to pay off.

"I shall be retired before I have paid the lot off," Greenhow said.

"If I had the option I would rather go to prison than pay."

This, however should not be the alternative, for the 10,000 shipyard workers on Wearside are now realising that what happened to Greenhow can happen to any one of them.

Mr. F. Savage, secretary of the Wear Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering unions, said: "A most disturbing precedent has been established."

Another member of the Wear Confederation said: "Men in the shipyards have every reason to be worried, because accidents happen so easily in their industry."

What, then are they going to do about it? They can of course look to the law to reverse the decision on Appeal, or they can look to their own strength.

First action they should take is to begin to work with extreme care—to make sure nobody gets hurt. This will undoubtedly slow down production considerably, but since the employers have established the principle of workers' responsibility for accidents, they will have to put up with that.

Secondly, they should make sure that every safety regulation is rigidly adhered to and should refuse to begin any job until that has been checked and put right.

Thirdly, on any job where accidents are even possible, they should demand danger money—and back up their demand by direct action.

This should make the employers begin to think differently. After all, they don't ask the workers to share the profits—why should they share the losses? No worker wants to get injured, and no worker wants to injure his fellow-worker, but if in the course of using the boss's machine, making goods for the boss to sell to make profits for the boss, somebody gets hurt—let the boss regard it as an overhead and pay up with a good grace.

It only costs the bosses money—workers lose their fingers, their limbs, their health and sometimes their lives.

Bertrand Russell Supports Einstein's Resistance Plea

Bertrand Russell, in a letter to the *New York Times*, has supported the position taken by scientist Albert Einstein that those being questioned by "Senator McCarthy's emissaries" should refuse to testify. Russell, answering a *Times* editorial, stated, "You seem to maintain that one should always obey the law, however bad. I cannot think you have realized the implications of this position."

SITUATION VACANT

Grimmest job is vacant: Joseph Franckell has retired after 14 years and 230 executions as executioner at Sing Sing jail.

Reasons: Too many threats to kill him; pay, 150 dollars (54) per execution, too low.

—Daily Express, 5/8/53.

ONCE again London Transport has decided to increase fares. All the usual protests have been made by local borough councils, trade unions and passenger organisations—and the usual result has been the usual increase just the same.

We think the time has come for a little unusual protest. It's about time

Londoners tried the methods the Barcelona workers operated two years ago when they boycotted the trams and forced the fares down.

A handbill has been prepared suggesting this. Supplies are available from Freedom Bookshop.

This is the leaflet that is being circulated:—

BOYCOTT* LONDON TRANSPORT on August 17

Londoners are fed up with being held to ransom by London Transport. Normal channels of objection to the forthcoming fares increases have been used to no avail.

It is time the customers took action themselves.

- WALK OR HITCH-HIKE TO WORK
- FIND ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF TRANSPORT
- REFUSE TO PAY INCREASED FARES, or simply
- STAY AT HOME

Let London Transport economise by cutting down on their executive and other unproductive staff—e.g., the snoopers who spy on travellers and L.T. workers alike.

LET LONDON TRANSPORT KNOW WE'VE HAD ENOUGH!

* When Barcelona workers did this in 1951 they forced their tramway company to cancel a fares increase. We can do it too!

THE ANARCHIST CURÉ

THE name of Jean Meslier is little known in this country, and even in France he does not occupy his true position in the evolution of libertarian thought. His reputation is that of an early anticlerical, or freethinker. His views on the State, and his hatred for almost all forms of authority are not known. His "Testament" still finds readers, but it is a mutilated work only expressing a half of what was written in the original version.

Meslier was born in 1664 at Mazerny in the Duchy of Rethel. His parents were not poor, his father was a draper. The family had produced many ecclesiastics, some of whom had risen to high positions in the Church. But Meslier had no sense of vocation, and although not forced against his will, he had little enthusiasm for the priesthood. He allowed himself to be put into the Church to please his parents, as he tells us, and no doubt also because he shared with them the opinion that it was "a state of life softer, more peaceable, and more honoured, than that of most men".

He studied in the seminary of Rheims. He was ordained on the 18th December 1683, and after several other posts was given the parish of Etrépiigny in December 1688. He was then twenty-four. He remained there till his death in 1729. Had all gone well he should have enjoyed a pleasant comfortable and rather futile existence, and died and been forgotten like so many parish priests. He had a certain amount of money of his own, apart from his stipend, so he was far from his class almost rich. But trouble was waiting round the corner.

At first all went well. We have a certain number of reports about him made by his superiors. For twenty years nothing but good was said of him. He fulfilled his duties correctly, he was even praised for having some excellent books in his library. There was only one fly in the ointment, but it caused very little concern. He had as his housekeeper a

young cousin. She was twenty-three and he thirty-two. The housekeepers of priests should all be elderly women, but it was an easy-going age in some things, and nobody bothered Meslier about his little lapse.

Suddenly everything changed. Our hero is presented to us as "ignorant, presumptuous, very stubborn and opinionated, a wealthy man who neglects the Church because he has too much money. He interferes in things he does not understand and will not budge from his opinion once formed. He is very much concerned with his own private affairs and is infinitely negligent, but has a very devout exterior tending to jansenism." His church is in a pitiable condition.

This was in 1716. In 1710 Archbishop Le Tellier had died and his successor was not so friendly or indulgent to Meslier. But this would hardly be sufficient to explain such a change. There are several stories, a bitter quarrel with the lord of the manor, who seems to have been a spiteful and unpleasant person,

*A fashionable heresy of the day.

though we only have the curé's version.

Voltaire says that the affair started with the maltreatment of some peasants by the seigneur de Touly, the local squire. Meslier took the side of the peasants and refused to recommend de Touly to the prayers of his parishioners, as was the custom then.

Another version describes the feud as having originated over a question of seating accommodation in the church. Whatever the cause the matter became a miniature war, carried on, on de Touly's side at least, with all the bitterness of men who live in isolated communities. have too little to do, and in consequence see everything out of proportion. It was the kind of thing portrayed for us in the well-known novel "Clochemerle". A mixture of meanness and childishness which is almost too painful to be funny.

When the curé entered the pulpit one Sunday his voice was suddenly drowned by the raucous notes of hunting horns. De Touly had stationed his huntsmen just outside the church, with orders to keep on blowing till Meslier gave up trying to preach.

However the huntsmen did not come the following Sunday and he took the opportunity of attacking the seigneur by name and then passing on to include the entire nobility in a splendid jeremiad. He declared moreover that he did not care what his superiors thought about his opinions.

De Touly took the affair to the bishop, but Meslier would not withdraw from his position. However the nobleman knew his enemy was vulnerable. The cousin had departed, and the priest, now in his early fifties had for a servant a young girl of eighteen. There was no doubt at all that she was his companion, and de Touly took great care to remind the bishop that Meslier was "living in sin". This cost the unfortunate man a month's "retreat" in the seminary, and eventually he had to send his little friend away.

His fury, as we can tell from his writings, was terrible, but he had no means of venting it publicly. He was not the kind of man who takes a fancy to martyrdom. He enjoyed his comforts, and in any case a man of fifty used to soft living and the pleasures of the flesh cannot suddenly uproot himself. Being a priest he was in that helpless condition described by McCabe in "Twelve Years

in a Monastery".

"The decree of the Church goes forth against the 'apostate'. He is excommunicated—cursed in this life and the next—and socially ostracised, if not slandered . . . He is cast out to recommence life, socially and financially, in middle age; perhaps he is homeless, friendless, and resourceless . . ." He does not know how to earn his living in any way except as a priest. Meslier therefore had only one outlet open to him. He could write.

When he died his colleagues found among his possessions an enormous manuscript, with, on the paper in which it was wrapped this uncompromising if somewhat long-winded title.

"Memories thoughts and sentiments of Jean Meslier on a part of the errors and abuses of the conduct of the government of men, wherein one may see clear and evident demonstrations of the vanity and falseness of all the gods and of all the religions of the world, addressed to his parishioners after his death, and to serve as a witness to the truth to them and to all like them. *In testimonium illis gentibus.* Math. X, 18."

There were three, perhaps four, copies of this manuscript. In 1735 Voltaire obtained a copy and published a mutilated

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BOOK REVIEW

The Quest for Community

THE QUEST FOR COMMUNITY, by Robert A. Nisbet, (Oxford University Press, New York. No price stated).

ESTRANGEMENT, aloneness, frustration, anxiety, insecurity, deracination or detribalization; loss of status, belonging, membership, and a coherent moral perspective; values devalued, sterilization of social diversity, and functionless ritualization of the past; avocations of relief from nervous exhaustion, custodial and redemptive agencies; family, school and psychology reduced to the manufacture of adjustment . . . This, in some of its most general aspects is the depress-

ing picture of an age which Robert A. Nisbet, professor of Sociology at the University of California, Riverside Campus, has chosen to analyze, finding in it, however, a positive and hopeful, all-underlying trait which gives the title to his book *The Quest for Community*.

"It is in Renaissance thought," he writes, "it was the myth of reasonable man which predominated; if in the eighteenth century it was natural man; and, in the nineteenth century, economic or political man, it is by no means unlikely that for our own age it is alienated or mal-adjusted man who will appear to later historians as the key figure of twentieth-century thought. Inadequate man, insufficient man, disenchanted man, as terms, reflect a multitude of themes in contemporary writing". And he quotes Berdyaev, Toynbee, Ortega y Gasset, catholic and protestant theologians, sociologists, anthropologists and psychiatrists, all stressing the same central fact of loss of community.

The fact is fully exploited by totalitarian parties and states. They need the unattached; atomized, amorphous, helpless individual of the great urban centres, the mass-man disciplined by the factory and at the mercy of the first stimulus when unemployed, the man with no purpose or will of his own, the manipulatable man. Where he does not exist they ruthlessly create him. That is the real, sinister aim behind the bid for industrialization in so-called backward countries where Communism has triumphed, Russia, China and Yugoslavia. To man they have often themselves thus alienated, frustrated or excluded from what was his right place in a community, they promise unity and belonging, and bring hope and fulfilment. It is not so much economic and political realities that

"It is of no importance in this connection whether the absolute power of the State is exercised by a king, a landed aristocracy, bankers and manufacturers, professional politicians, soldiers, or a random majority of voters. It does not matter whether the right to govern is hereditary or obtained with the consent of the governed. A sense is absolute in the sense which I have in mind when it claims a right to a monopoly of all the force within the community, to make war, to make peace, to conscript life, to tax, to establish and dis-establish property, to define crime, to punish disobedience, to control education, to supervise the family, to regulate personal habits, and to censor opinions. The modern State claims all of these powers, and, in the matter of theory, there is no real difference in the size of the claim between communists, fascists, and democrats. There are lingering traces in the American constitutional system that there are inalienable rights which government may not absorb. But these rights are really not inalienable for they can be taken away by constitutional amendment. There is no theoretical limit upon the power of ultimate majorities which create civil government. There are only practical limits. They are restrained by inertia, and by prudence and even by good will. But ultimately and theoretically they claim absolute authority as against all churches, associations, and persons within their jurisdiction."

Walter Lippmann.

"A Preface to Morals." (New York, 1929), page 80.

account for the present widespread feeling and belief that history moves inevitably towards the hegemony of a totalitarian creed and social structure as this sense of moral coherence and communal membership which totalitarian party or state can give to those who have become victims of the sense of exclusion from the ordinary channels of belonging in society.

Not only the totalitarian state and party, however, can give a sense of moral meaning to the existence of millions, otherwise onerous and empty. War also shows to possess a community-making property. Judging particularly from experiences of the last war, "society attains its maximum sense of organization and community and its most exalted sense of moral purpose during the period of war" (p.40). Thus the two phenomena of totalitarianism and war work hand in glove, and one leads to the other. But if anyone should think that the spiritual cravings they both satisfy are so great a boon that all their horrors may therefore be forgotten or accepted as an unavoidable price to be paid for a future of lasting and universal happiness, let him reflect that with the unification of the world in one single totalitarian state all wars will come to an end, and with the end of wars all spiritually binding and happiness-giving qualities now inherent in the totalitarian state and party will also come to an end.

The expression 'totalitarian state' is historically correct, but conceptually redundant. Historically a state is totalitarian when it has practically succeeded in abolishing or controlling all other forms of social relationship, but conceptually a state that is not totalitarian in its premised and intended area of authority is not a state. To those who say to the anarchist that society is impossible without the state, we may point out, first that societies have existed for centuries and millennia without state, in the family, tribe, local community, and other forms of association; second, that the kinship origin of the state is incorrect, and has therefore no biological sanction; and, thirdly, that activities such as the maintenance of hygienic conditions or the prevention of crime could be carried out by bodies which, socially but not politically dependent, would have none of that statal support without which they are now thought to be impossible.

"If there is any single origin of the institutional state, it is in the circumstances and relationships of war", writes Robert A. Nisbet (p.110), and after giving a few significant illustrations, he reiterates (p.119): "in historical terms the State is the outgrowth of war". It is the great merit of his book to stress that the single most decisive influence responsible for the evils of our age is not science, nor technology, nor the city, nor protestantism, rationalism or even capitalism, but the rise and development of the centralized territorial state. To express it emotionally: the State is the enemy.

Whose enemy? Not of the individual as such, for "the State grows on what it gives to the individual as it does on what it takes from competing social relationships—family, labour union, profession, local community and church" (p.256). "The real conflict in modern political history has not been, as is so often stated, between State and individual, but between State and social group" (p.109).

"By almost all of the English liberals of the nineteenth century freedom was conceived not merely in terms of immunity from the powers of political government, but, more significantly, in terms of the necessity of man's release from custom, tradition, and local groups of every kind. Freedom was held to lie in emancipation from association, not within association" (p.228). Thus individualist theories, rebellion against society, and starting from Rousseau, led more than anything else to invest the State with mystical absolute power. Now "all freedom", in the words of Lord Acton, "consists in radice" in the preservation of an inner sphere exempt from State power"; and our author aptly comments: "To recognize the rôle of privacy and the importance of autonomies of choice is to be forced to recognize also the crucial problem of the contexts of privacy and personal choice. For man does not, cannot, live alone. His freedom is a social, not biologically derived process" (p.246). The anarchist who has too abstract a notion of freedom may be reminded of Montesquieu's warning: "The only safeguard against power is rival power", or of Lamennais' words: "Who says liberty, says association". "As a philosophy of means, individualism is now not merely theoretically inadequate; it has become tragically irrelevant, even intolerable" (p.245). The practical answer to the problem is given by Proudhon: "Multiply your associations and be free".

Two other assumptions that not infrequently recur in anarchist thought and which the author proves to be misconceptions are the insistence upon making the irrational and the evil interpenetrating essences of one another (p.195-6), and the "perspective of moral philosophy that makes all evil a mere reversion to the past, as though there were some inevitable link between time and moral states" (p.197).

Professor Robert A. Nisbet is not an anarchist. Beside the labour union and the co-operative, he relies on the enlightened industrial community "as real defences against political invasions of economic freedom" (p.240). The remedy he suggests is a new *laissez-faire* whose prime objective would be to create conditions within which autonomous groups may prosper (p.278). I gather he relies on enlightened statesmen for the carrying out of the policy of his new *laissez-faire*. He does not want to do away with the State, but the State he has in mind is one "that seeks to maintain a pluralism of functions and loyalties in the lives of its people . . . that seeks to diversify and decentralize its own administrative operations and to relate these as closely as possible to the forms of spontaneous association . . . that seeks cultural diversity, not uniformity . . . and that recognizes that the claims of freedom and cultural autonomy will never have recognition until the great majority of individuals in society have a sense of cultural membership in the significant and meaningful relationships of kinship, religion, occupation, profession, and locality" (p.283). How any existence state will endeavour to answer this description the author does not tell, but maybe this description is not as utopian as it seems. Without a miracle, and in particular without the miracle of a revolution, anarchists may well auspiciously if not positively work for a state of this description as the first historically possible large-scale step in the direction of a fully anarchist society.

GIOVANNI BALDELLI

FILMS

ANARCHS OF THE GLEN

"AN outbreak of anarchy in the Highlands" provides a promising start to a film version of Eric Linklater's novel *Laxdale Hall* that has recently been showing unobtrusively as a second feature in London. For that is how, in the film, a rather worried-looking Prime Minister describes the refusal of Laxdale's five motorists to renew their Road-Fund licences until the authorities mend the road that is their only link by land with the outside world. Laxdale being a small village at the tip of a peninsula in the Highlands of Scotland. There is a sea connexion as well, but the village pier is too dilapidated to use, and in rough weather the tender cannot get alongside the steamer.

The Prime Minister is disturbed enough by this direct action to send a parliamentary delegation to investigate. Its leader, Samuel Pettigrew (Raymond Huntley), is a millionaire furniture manufacturer who has worked his way up from the bottom, and his solution to the problem is to write off the whole village as a hopelessly uneconomic proposition. He offers to transfer all the inhabitants to the suburbs of a new

industrial town where they can work in a factory and live in rows of little houses. But the prospect of giving up their free-and-easy village life to become industrial helots in a drab manufacturing town is not one that appeals to the villagers, who are a proud and independent lot. As an old fisherman puts it: "Thirty miles from the sea! No river! No hills! I would as soon go to live in Hell!"

While the visitors are being honoured with an *al fresco* performance of *Macbeth*, given by the local Thespians in the torrential rain that seems to be as much the normal climate of the Highlands as it is of the rest of Great Britain, a gang of poachers from Glasgow are discovered to be emptying the river of its salmon. The theatricals are abandoned in haste, and the villagers go after the poachers. In the battle that follows the politicians, anxious to miss no part of the Laxdale way of life, find themselves embroiled not only with the rival contenders for fishing rights but also with the police, who have chosen this time to make another ineffectual attempt to serve summonses on the defaulting motorists. One incident provides an opportunity for another member of the delegation, whose Highland sojourn has made him pro-Laxdale, to bring a little pressure to bear on his leader, who duly announces that he has reconsidered the matter.

The principal actors include Ronald Squires as the Laird, Kathleen Ryan as his wife, and Kynaston Reeves as the village clergyman, and these are well enough known to most moviegoers. Less well known, perhaps, but players of sterling worth nevertheless, are the group of Scotch actors, most of whom were recruited from the Glasgow Citizens' Theatre, who make up the supporting cast.

The film was made by Group 3, which is sponsored by the National Film Finance Corporation, an organization set up to finance the production of films out of funds provided by the Exchequer from the tax on box-office receipts. This means, of course, that its films have to be made on a very modest budget. One of Group 3's aims is to give an opportunity to young directors and others concerned in film-making. In the case of *Laxdale Hall* the producer, Alfred Shangnessy, and the director, John Eldridge, have shown how a film made with limited means can be in every way superior to some of the million-dollar and million-pound epics that not even a stretching on the Grand Panopticon Screen can rescue from insignificance.

EDWIN MACPECKE.

FREEDOM BOOKSHOP

OPEN DAILY

OPEN 10 am to 6 pm, 30 SATURDAYS

New Books . . .

The War on World Poverty

Harold Wilson 14/-

Reprints . . .

Reflections on Violence

George Sorel 25/-

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John Burt Foster 2/-

The Time Machine

H. G. Wells (Paper Books) 2/-

There Must Have a Stop

Alfred Huxley (Language Books) 3/6

Second-Hand . . .

Memories of My Childhood

Julius Lippmann 5/6

Professor Sinner alias

Montague Norman 5/-

Unknown Diplomat—

Britain in Spain 3/6

Spain in Revolt 1814-1931

James McCabe 5/-

New Deal for Coal (1945)

Harold Wilson 2/-

Journals . . .

Pythagoras No. 2

6d.

This was found in a book that was a second-hand copy. It is of some value to those who are interested in the history of the anarchist movement.

Obtainable from

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

ON MUSICAL EDUCATION

AN agency report from Vienna states that:

"The City of Vienna has made it obligatory for students to visit concerts and operas in the future. In an apparent effort to stir up a greater interest in music among the students, the city fathers have allotted a considerable amount of money for special opera performances and concerts which the students are to attend as part of their general education. Besides these free-of-charge performances, tickets at sharply reduced prices will be available for students, thus to widen their musical knowledge, with the city government making the difference."

It is difficult for the writer of this column to be completely objective in an appraisal of the experiment. I can imagine that the progressive educationists among our readers will hold their hands in horror at this example of compulsion; we can imagine that others will recall their own childhood when they were required to practise every day some tune as the "Bluebells of Holland" on the upright piano, the cornet or the cornet, while their parents were set on playing hopscotch or marbles with the kids from the corner. And yet there are also those among our readers whose parents could not stand the nervous strain of listening to the initial birth pangs of their future nephew or Solomon and who soon resorted to the youthful entreaties that they were more suited to ball games than to Bach. And the piano became part of the furniture, a kind of mantelpiece adorned by photos of relatives, and souvenirs from Brighton and Boulogne-sur-Mer. How many of those readers, in adulthood, have not had pangs of regret in retrospect, who have not thought it might have been a good thing if their parents had insisted a little more in the initial stages of their musical education?

The educationists who hold the view that the child must be entirely free to do as he wishes at school, including the choice of the classes he will attend and those he will "cut", seem to us to place a too great responsibility on the understanding and foresight of an immature human being. It seems to us that such an attitude does not take into account the growing difficulties in later life for acquiring new skills and absorbing basic knowledge. (One has only to compare the difficulties an adult experiences in learning languages with the facility with which a young child will acquire a working vocabulary in whatever surroundings he finds himself).

Many adults also perpetuate the idea that we are not all born with a "musical ear". We have no scientific proof at hand to contradict this view, but we suspect that it is one of those old-wives' tales that die hard, and an adult creation, to justify their own shortcomings; an easy way out of the problem of what to do about the musical education of their own children.

The problem as we see it is not that some children are born with an "ear for music"—or for languages. The delight of very young children in musical nursery rhymes, and their overwhelming desire to acquire the ability to express themselves, clearly indicate their receptiveness. What has been lacking in the past has been the ability—or perhaps the understanding—of parents and teachers to teach subjects in a way that would interest the child. To make a child practise scales for months on end without giving it an idea where this scale-playing will eventually lead, is expecting too much in concentration and patience

Spanish Frontier Shooting Incident

"Gunmen were members of a Uniformed Force"

DR. PECK issued a statement last week about the shooting incident on the Spanish frontier in which his wife was killed and he was seriously injured (FREEDOM 8/8/53). He made the point that the men were identically dressed and were carrying sub-machine guns. "It struck me—he stated—that they were not so much bandits as members of a uniformed force" (our italics). One of the men put his head through the passenger window and lifted out the doctor's camera. (It should be noted that no property was stolen from the car). The man who took the camera then "stepped back and gave a signal which I took to indicate that I was to drive on. When he gave this signal I feel convinced I made no mistake because the last words of my wife were, 'They want us to go on. Hurry.' I had not stopped the engine, so engaged gear and drove on. We had not gone far when I heard the splutter of machine-gun bullets. My wife toppled over in her seat and a bullet went through my left hand as I changed gear. The windscreen was shattered by bullets and I held my head out of the window because I could not see through the screen. I suppose this saved my life because I had not only the other side of the car between me and the bullets, but also the back and side pillar.

"The firing continued and I received two bullets in the left arm, one in the jaw as I turned to see what had happened to my wife, one in the back, and one which took a neat circle out of the lobe of my left ear. I managed to get the car

around the next corner and the bullets stopped."

Elsewhere we have read that military manoeuvres had been held in the area. Might the shooting not have been in fact the work of some zealous soldiers and that the Spanish government has found it much more convenient to put the blame on "anarchist bandits"?

Explosion in Barcelona

BARCELONA, Aug. 5 (A.P.)—Four workers were killed and two others are believed to have died in an explosion at the printing plant of a local morning paper, *La Vanguardia*. The cause of the explosion was not immediately known. The damage is believed to be heavy.

Chinese Revolt against Land Reform

A DIRECTIVE recently sent out by the Central-South China Communist Bureau to the thousands of rural cadres scattered all over China's richest grain-growing provinces, ordering them "humbly to learn from the peasants and exert more effort in working with them" marks a complete change in the Communists' land reform policy.

Coupled with other events in the past eight months, it means that peasant resistance has compelled the Communists, if not to discard, at least to suspend important features of their agrarian policy.

During 1952 great publicity was given to the formation by the cadres of mutual aid teams and co-operative groups—in which the peasants would pool their

TWO interesting points were made by the Commander-in-Chief East Africa, General Erskine at a press conference in Nairobi last week.

The first was: "I am not sure the world realises that one of the most important things we are dealing with is a Kikuyu civil war, in which Mau Mau are fighting loyalists. It was the duty of the security forces to give the loyalists all possible help and support, moral as well as material."

The second was a warning to Kikuyu: "I must warn waverers both in the reserves and in settled areas who sit on the fence and go down as it suits them on one side or the other that the time has come when it is not good enough to do nothing. There are too many playing a double game and a waiting game. I've no doubt some support both sides." It might take a considerable time to settle this matter and "get the Kikuyu tribe under loyal leadership."

The first statement shows that it has not taken long for the British to use the "divide and rule" tactic to further their own ends. And they now stand before world opinion, innocence personified, as the defenders of moderate Africans against the excesses of African terrorists. They tried to put over that line in India and Palestine, though it was they who created the internal strife in those countries.

And in his warning to the Kikuyus General Erskine lets the cat out of the bag. Africans in Kenya must not be neutral: they must either be *with us* or *against us*. It is a Hobson's choice, because in fact only Africans who play Britain's game and fight those Africans who are not playing that game can hope to escape the concentration camp, two minute justice (FREEDOM, 1/8/53) or a stray bullet.

In Nairobi alone 309 African "suspects" were arrested in the past month and between July 16 and 21, 7,255 Africans had been arrested by troops and police.

"Altogether good progress has been made in the right direction—declared the General—but there is plenty of work still to be done", and some idea of the task facing these disinterested liberators is given by the admission that the General had advised the Government to draw up plans for a larger police force to deal with emergency tasks on a *three year basis*, though he hastened to add that it did not signify he believed that the emergency would necessarily continue that long.

Perhaps we shall soon hear of reinforcements being sent from Korea to liberate the Africans of Kenya. After all killing off the opposition is one way of achieving unity is it not?

THE ANARCHIST CURÉ Continued from p. 2

version in 1762. He cut out all the libertarian and revolutionary sentiments, being himself a bourgeois and a statist, and restricted the edition to the free-thought and anticlerical sections. The complete text has only once been published, in 1864 at Amsterdam in three volumes.

It horrified those who discovered it, and it is amazing that the manuscript was not destroyed on the spot. Meslier's colleagues were so upset that they did not even allow his death to appear in the parish register. He was thus banished after a fashion from the Christian community.

The book is not the product of a calm and peaceable mind seeking to reveal the truth. There is evidence that Meslier had always been an unbeliever, even an atheist, but he had restricted his atheism to occasional witty sallies when in the society of educated men. He had always performed his priest's duties faithfully, without too much ritual or ceremony. But the situation was different now. The book is a cry of revolt, a furious onslaught on all established authority.

What is the theme of the work? It is that religion is the support of tyranny. Religion is not only a lie. It also stands for oppression. "Religion and politics . . . understand each other like two cut-purses. Political government upholds religion, however silly and useless it may be." Such is "the source of all the ills that overwhelm mankind, and of all the impostures which hold them unhappy prisoners of error, and of the falseness

from restless youth! But even so, in the acquisition of skills of all kinds there is always in the early stages a period of—let us call it—boredom. It is in fact the critical period for, once overcome, real progress and mastery can be achieved. The question then is: should the child be left to its own devices at this critical period, and those who succeed will go on, the others condemned because they have "no ear" or "no ability"; or should they be wisely—yes, and perhaps firmly!—guided through the critical period?

Whether this (personal rather than editorial) viewpoint is right or wrong, we think the fact remains that a problem does exist which needs a solution.

Without such a solution that wise French saying: "*Si jeunesse savait, si vieillesse pouvait*" originally expressed, we believe, in a much more intimate context, could equally be applied to our musical and linguistic problems!

"If youth knew how, and age were able."

of superstition as well as of the tyrannical laws of the great ones of the earth." That is why Meslier made his own the wish that he had heard from "a man who, without education nevertheless had much sense: 'I wish,' said he 'that all tyrants could be hanged with the bowels of the priests!'"

No other writer of the eighteenth century wrote with such violence against royalty. No king pleased Meslier, not even Henry IV, whose praises Voltaire was to sing later on. "Where," he demands, "are those generous murderers of tyrants that existed in past centuries? Where are the Brutuses and the Cassiuses? Where are the noble murderers of Caligula and so many others? . . . Where are the Jacques Clements and the Ravaillacs of France? Why don't they come in our day to butcher or stab all these detestable monsters and enemies of the human race, and to deliver by this means the peoples from their tyranny? But no, they no longer live, these great men! . . ."

"The first monarchies," he wrote elsewhere, "were gatherings of bandits, pirates, and thieves." The same with the nobles. "The first were bloodthirsty folk, cruel oppressors, and parricides." Without justification to start with their reign has shown no justification since. They are parasites, as are their servants the bureaucracy, "all these officers of princes and kings, all these haughty intendants and governors of towns or provinces, all these proud tax- and tithes-collectors, office clerks and bureaucrats, and finally all these conceited prelates and ecclesiastics, as well as all these gentlemen, ladies, and misses, who do nothing but enjoy themselves and have a good time, while you other poor folk have to work day and night, and carry all the weight of the yoke, and are loaded with all the burden of the State."

It is not only against the ruling class that Meslier launches his attack, and against whom he calls upon the peoples of Europe to unite in revolt, but it is also against even the petty functionaries of the State. Not only the lawyers and judges, the men of justice, of "injustice" as he always put it, but also "the clerks, the controllers, the gendarmes, the guards, the sergeants, the ushers, the bailiff's men", and other "canaille". It is the bitterness of the poor that speaks through the pen of the anarchist curé.

He knew their misery. "All that," he says, referring to religious ceremonies, "will not produce a single grain of wheat all that is not worth while one single stroke of the hoe that a manual worker gives to the soil to cultivate it." But he was also aware that this misery was the product of the institution of private property. "Men appropriate each one their particular share of the goods of the earth, instead of enjoying them in common." "All men are equal by nature". From what follows it seems

that he means socially not biologically. "They all have equally the right to live and walk on the earth, equally the right to enjoy there their natural liberty, and to have their equal part of the goods of the earth, in working usefully everyone will have the things that are necessary to life."

He applied his communism to the relations of the sexes too. "If men did not render marriages indissoluble as they now do, and if on the contrary they left always both the liberty to join together, each partner following their own inclination, and the liberty to separate when they could not get on together, or when their feelings prompted them to form some new alliance, one certainly would not see so much disorder and discussion between the sexes. They would have their pleasures peacefully and contentedly, because it would always be good comradeship that would be the principle motive of their union, and it would be a great benefit for them as well as for the children, who would be provided for . . . from the public and communal goods . . ."

Meslier's ideal was a society built up of peasant communes, the land of each being held in common, linked by agreements for mutual benefit. He did not go to the books of the philosophers nor to the account of travels among savage peoples. He based his utopia on the peasant communities that he saw around him, the outlines of whose organisation were still visible, crushed out of all shape though they might be by the existing social system. His ideal society was the dream of the people among whom he lived. The problem of the towns he dealt with very cursorily. He did not speak of industry and the urban artisan class, and commerce of course had no place in his commonwealth, being reduced simply to one community helping another in case of need.

His neglect of industry is all the more remarkable since there was already, a short distance from Etrépigny, the important drapery works of Sedan. Strikes broke out among the cloth cutters, in 1712, 1713, and 1729, the year of the death of Meslier. They made considerable stir. The most important was that of 1712, 12,000 workers found themselves out of work because of 400 cutters who were on strike. It seems probable that he identified towns with centralisation and the State which he so detested.

Anyway there was no room for the State in the society he proposed. The only form of authority he would permit was the moral authority of older or more experienced people. That this authority could also be tyrannical he may have realised, but he thought it inevitable. Apart from this however his ideas would be considered too advanced even to-day by most people, except anarchists.

He was certainly too much for Voltaire who did humanity a great disservice by

bowdlerising Meslier's book and even altering the sense of the excerpts he made. For Voltaire, as for the other "philosophes" the State was accepted as a matter of course. Most of them did not go as far as atheism either, Voltaire himself being a deist.

But what distinguishes Meslier's "Testament" from so many other social writings of the eighteenth century is his call for action, and for revolution. His book is addressed to his parishioners, and it invites them to act at once, to start the building of a free society without waiting for others to do it for them.

"Your salvation is in your own hands. Your deliverance does not depend on anyone but yourselves . . . Unite then, peoples of the world, if you are wise; unite then, if you have any spirit, to deliver yourselves from your common miseries. Start first of all by communicating secretly your thoughts and desires. Spread everywhere and as cleverly as you can writings similar to this for example, which may let all the world know the falseness of the errors and superstitions of Religion which makes for the odious tyrannical government of the Princes and Kings of the earth. Take into your own hands all these riches and all these goods that you make so abundantly in the sweat of your bodies, keep them for yourselves and those like you. Don't give anything to those proud and useless people, weaklings who do nothing useful in the world . . ."

Here is no empty rhetorical outburst. Here is a plan for revolution. There is no question of taking over the State, but simply of pushing it on one side.

This anarchist message never got as far as the parishioners of Etrépigny, nor of anywhere else. The bourgeoisie who circulated the "Testament" took care to edit it to their taste. But Meslier was not deprived of his vengeance, and when the peasants, during the course of the Revolution, rose and destroyed for ever the power of the feudal lords, they obeyed without knowing it the call that he had wanted them to hear sixty years before.

What makes Meslier's "Testament" so attractive is that instead of starting off from philosophy, or from some idealised conception of man "in a state of nature", he based his theories on men as he knew them. He did not maintain that men were naturally possessed of a super-human goodness. He considered that certain men are by temperament inclined to "imperious and tyrannical domination", and that others are "wiser and better intentioned". But he also knew that the moral complexity of men need not prevent the life of the community from being on the whole a happy one. This realistic view makes his book more convincing than most of the authoritarian utopias of his day, in which everyone being but a cog in the machine could hardly fail to be virtuous.

ARTHUR W. ULOTH.

BARREL BARRICADES

Describing it as "one of the shortest and most effective strikes the country has seen in many years" the *New York Herald Tribune* (Paris edition 10/8/53) points out that the returned workers are nevertheless ready to resume the strike if the measures the government is proposing to take "in the national interest" are unacceptable. The communists have attempted to take control of the strike but their efforts to keep the workers out, for instance, have been disregarded. This is far from indicating that the strike has fizzled out. The impression one gets is that the workers are beginning to realise that they have been badly served by the politicians in past strikes and that now they have to do things for themselves. As one observer has put it:

"The whole strength of the strike lay in the fact that it was non-political and because it was non-political it was partly successful."

BARREL BARRICADES IN FRANCE AND SWITZERLAND

IT may be true that the barricades have been relegated to a distant romantic past in revolutionary history. Yet the wine growers in the Languedoc region in South West France and their counterparts in Saxon, Switzerland could think of no better way of drawing attention to their difficulties than by barricading the roads in the former case and the railway entrance to the Simplon Tunnel in the latter, with wine barrels! The Frenchmen have

prepared circulars which explain their grievances to the motorists held up by the barrel barricades, and with commendable *savoir faire* they have had the forethought of holding "open house" in the co-operative cellars of the town, where inconvenienced motorists will be invited to sample *les vins du pays* without charge. Thus the innocent victims of the barrel barricades will be more than compensated for the trouble to which they have been put; one can even imagine wine-starved English tourists encouraging the extension of such strikes to other wine growing regions as well!

The problem of the wine growers is obviously a serious one. In France more than one and a half million people are engaged in the wine industry, and the economy of whole regions is directly linked up with wine prices. The problem in this strike area between the Rhone and the Pyrenees is that it produces most of France's cheap wine, and that production exceeds consumption. The growers maintain that the government should buy up the surplus millions of gallons, and this the government refuses to do. As these cheap wines are probably unsuitable for export, and the French nation leads the world's statistics for alcoholism and Frenchmen should not be encouraged to drink more than they already do, the obvious solution would be to reduce the area under vine cultivation. But such an obvious solution would require a mental and economic revolution, and as Monsieur Laniel, the Prime Minister, had occasion to say earlier in the week, "France is not ripe for anarchy".

LIBERTARIAN.

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THE DRAGON & THE UNICORN

A correspondent writes:

I read *The Dragon and the Unicorn* by Kenneth Rexroth over two years ago, and did not find it deserving all the unqualified praise George Woodcock bestows upon it. I certainly should not describe it as a poem for free men, except perhaps in the sense that Celine's "Voyage au bout de la nuit" or Miller's "Tropic of Capricorn" can be described as novels for free men. George Woodcock hopes "that some European anarchists at least will read and think over his (Rexroth's) comments on their lack of touch with reality". Here are the comments (a fair instance of the general poetical level of the book):

The London Anarchist Group
Like a debating club at an Exclusive Kansas private school.
Emma Goldman said, years ago,
"You're not British anarchists,
You're just British".

The whole is sandwiched between "The Chelsea set", and "A blonde barage balloon". Considering we heard Emma Goldman's quotation years ago, and that none of us has been privileged to see what a debating club at an exclusive Kansas private school looks like, I fail to see what an European anarchist has to think over Kenneth Rexroth's comments, even supposing that the London Anarchist Group may lack touch with reality.

UNPREDICTABLE MAN

Re. your notes on my article "Unpredictable Man" (FREEDOM, Aug. 1).

(1). Speaking of loss of faith on the part of the totalitarians I had in mind totalitarians both on this and the other side of the Iron Curtain. I

apologize for not having made it clear.

(11). Speaking of leaders in Russia and in the Soviet 'glacis' having developed a bad conscience I wanted to remind the readers that they also are human. They would be super-human if they could always govern their actions according to expediency, and give ground with the firm intention of retrieving it when it is the right moment. The time comes from them, too, when expediency is no longer expedient, and when, on giving more and more ground, the hope of a right moment in which to retrieve it becomes less and less. The government that preceded the French and the Bolshevik revolutions also started to give ground with the firm intention of retrieving it at the right moment, but the right moment never came. When things go wrong governments begin to doubt of their being in the right, of having history or the gods on their side, and that is what I meant by a bad conscience.

GIOVANNI BALDELLI,

Southampton, Aug. 2

Communist Pressure on Wives of Korean P.O.W.

Mrs. Elizabeth McKell, of Nitshill Road, Glasgow, whose husband is among the British prisoners released in Korea, said yesterday that during the two and a half years of her husband's captivity Communists pestered her to alter her political views. They made vague promises of "looking after" him, but she told them that she saw no reason for changing her political beliefs just

E. A. GUTKIND

The Expanding Environment

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—Ad. in *News Chronicle* 31/7/53.
Average wage for African worker in Kenya: 12s. a month.

Mutual Aid

NEW DELHI (W.P.)—Almost 25,000 people have offered to give voluntary, unpaid service in different fields to help build up India's economic strength, social health, education, relief, and community recreation. This service to the nation is performed without regard for caste, creed, or political affiliation.

"I think that the species of oppression by which democratic nations are menaced is unlike anything that ever before existed in the world; our contemporaries will find no prototype of it in their memories. I seek in vain for an expression that will accurately convey the whole of the idea I have formed of it; the old words 'despotism' and 'tyranny' are inappropriate; the thing itself is new, and, since I cannot name it, I must attempt to define it.

I seek to trace the novel features under which despotism may appear in the world. The first thing that strikes the observation is an innumerable multitude of men, all equal and alike, incessantly endeavouring to procure the petty and paltry pleasures with which they glut their lives. Each of them, living apart, is as a stranger to the fate of all the rest; his children and his private friends constitute to him the whole of mankind. As for the rest of his fellow citizens, he is close to them, but he does not see them; he touches them, but he does not feel them; he exists only in himself and for himself alone; and if his kindred still remain to him, he may be said at any

rate to have lost his country.

Above this race of men stands an immense and tutelary power, which takes upon itself alone to secure their gratifications and to watch over their fate. That power is absolute, minute, regular, provident and mild. It would be like the authority of a parent if, like that authority, its object was to prepare men for manhood; but it seeks, on the contrary, to keep them in a perpetual state of childhood: it is well content that people should rejoice, provided they think of nothing but rejoicing. For their happiness such a government willingly labours, but it chooses to be the sole agent and the only arbiter of that happiness; it provides for their security, foresees and supplies their necessities, facilitates their pleasures, manages their principal concerns, directs their industry, regulates the descent of property, and subdivides their inheritances: what remains but to spare them all the care of thinking and all the trouble of living?

Thus it every day renders the exercise of the free agency of man less useful and less frequent; it circumscribes the will within a narrower range and gradually robs a man of all the uses of him-

self. The principle of equality has prepared men for these things; it has predisposed men to endure them as benefits.

After having thus successfully taken each member of the community in its powerful grasp and fashioned him at will, the supreme power then extends its arm over the whole community. It covers the surface of society with a network of small, complicated rules, minute and uniform, through which the most original minds and the most energetic characters cannot penetrate, to rise above the crowd. The will of man is not shattered, but softened, bent, and guided; men are seldom forced by it to act, but they are constantly restrained from acting. Such a power does not destroy, but it prevents existence; it does not tyrannize, but it compresses, enervates, extinguishes, and stupefies a people, till each nation is reduced to nothing better than a flock of timid and industrious animals of which the government is the shepherd."

Written in 1840 by Tocqueville, "Democracy in America", Reeve translation edited by Phillips Bradley (New York, 1945), vol. 2, pp. 18-19.

because her husband had been taken prisoner.

Another wife of a freed prisoner, Mrs. Dorothy O'Hanlon, of Highfield Road, Newport, Isle of Wight, said that three weeks ago she received an illustrated book from a Russian source, purporting to be descriptive of life in a prison camp at Pyuktong. "I am keeping it to show my husband, as he will know whether it really is Pyuktong", she added.

Political Snooping in an English School

A letter from the correspondence columns of the *Manchester Guardian*: "Sir,—I am 17 and I am due to leave school for the university this year. One day my head teacher summoned me to her room and politely accused me of having Communist tendencies. I was greatly surprised.

I explained that I knew too little of any political belief to possess any strong convictions. I was told that I had been seen at a meeting of the local party committee and that I had shown a wing piece of propaganda to a school mate. Since that day I have hardly dared voice my opinions in discussion lest I be considered too revolutionary.

In view of the fact that I hope to a degree in political economy at university, I consider this attitude despotic, unreasonable, and dangerous.—Yours &c., M.

Special Appeal

July 21st—August 11th

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LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

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HYDE PARK
Sundays at 3.30 p.m.
TOWER HILL
Tuesdays at 12.30 p.m.

INDOOR MEETINGS *Watch this column for announcement of new meetings in September.*

NORTH-EAST LONDON

DISCUSSION MEETINGS IN EAST HAM

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GLASGOW

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