

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"No simplicity of mind, no obscurity of station, can escape the universal duty of questioning all that we believe."

—W. K. CLIFFORD

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Threepence

After the Monckton Report

WHITE. RHODESIA PREPARES

FOLLOWING the report of the Advisory Commission, headed by Lord Monckton, on the Review of the Constitution of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, the white population in Southern Rhodesia have reacted violently against what they term unwarranted interference in their affairs by the British Government.

To cover up their fears that Africans will be granted even a few human rights, they have singled out one clause in the report for attack: the recommendations that each territory should be given the right to secede from the Federation within a specified period: But there seems to be a great deal of confusion as to who wants what except in respect to privilege and white domination.

The findings of the Commission on secession are, that in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, Africans are mainly opposed to federation and Europeans in favour; in Southern Rhodesia African evidence was mainly in favour and a large "volume of European opinion hostile to federation", the latter believing that it will bring about too rapid an increase in the political power of Africans.

On the other hand, Sir Roy Welensky, the Federal Prime Minister, and his United Federal Party who were voted into power by a majority, have "rejected out of hand" that the three constituent members of the Federation should be given the right to secede.

Sir Edgar Whitehead, the South-

ern Rhodesian Premier, hitherto a federation supporter is now expected to lead the white secessionists.

Among the Africans themselves there are divisions of opinion on Federation, and criticism of the "moderate" leaders. The personal rivalries too within the National Democratic Party will not help the African cause already weakened by the imprisonment and exile of articulate Africans.

It is obvious that European objection to the Monckton report limited as it is in its recommendations to widen the franchise by changing the composition of the Assembly and to draw up a bill of rights in "accordance with the traditions of the English-speaking world", is that here is a conservative body issuing an indictment against methods of discrimination and exploitation.

The commission found discrimination in all parts of the Federation, but most strongly in Southern Rhodesia where there are no non-Europeans in the civil service.

Few people can believe now that the white population in Rhodesia consists only of decent people faced with an ungrateful African majority who have benefited from white civilization; and when Roy Welensky says that if merit was the yardstick for election to government there would not be any Africans in the Federal Legislature (there are now 12 Africans out of 59 representatives), he is in effect indicting his own system which limits Africans to certain jobs and degrees of education calculated to keep them servile and powerless.

More important than all the discussion on secession and Federation which are political and not human issues, is the attitude of the white minority whose claim that they have raised the standards of Africans is not backed by the facts.

Poverty and lack of constitutional rights are now acknowledged by a respectable body to be the lot of the

African. The minimum wage in the prosperous textile industry is £8 10s. a month, only recently established since the workers staged a strike—not all Africans are so well off.

Following the recent riots in Gwelo, Southern Rhodesia, it was reported (*Guardian*, Clyde Sanger) that in the town there are:

8,000 unemployed whose hunger tempts them to loot the nearest shop as soon as any chance disturbance rouses their spirits. There are scores of Africans who have been dismissed by employers for being active members of the National Democratic Party. There are 2,000 empty houses and flats in the European areas of Salisbury, and appalling overcrowding in the African townships.

However much sympathy the present Government may have for the white minority in Rhodesia, it can no longer afford to support the privileged position of the colonial and risk the censure of African states, now an important factor on the international political scene.

It is, therefore, faced with having to keep the Europeans in check now organising themselves into an "Active Citizens Force" one leader of which told an audience of 1,500 Europeans in Gwelo that "he who throws a stone will receive a bullet in return. They have learned a lot from their counterparts in South Africa.

Two European battalions and African troops have moved into the townships in Salisbury, Gwelo and Bulawayo, and the Government is pushing through legislation empowering the police to "clean out hooligans, spivs and loafers", a description which can be attached to any African suspected of holding the wrong political ideas or who refuses to be cowed by the police.

The British Government has created a monster which now chooses to go hunting on its own; we cannot feel sorry that it bites the hand of the mother who weaned it. What is certain, it cannot live for ever.



THE APPRENTICES

APPRENTICESHIP is a very ancient institution in this country which has always been sluggish to change in the wake of changes in methods of production and in the structure of industry and education. At no time was the state of the institution more in question than today: among apprentices, concerned with the disparity between their wage rates and the general level of wages among young earners, and with the quality of the training they receive; among would-be apprentices and their parents and teachers concerned with the pressure of the "bulge" in the birthrate, which is already reaching school-leaving age, upon the available number of places; among economists and educators concerned with the relative efficiency of part-time and full-time technical education and with the changing needs of a highly developed technology; and among those sections of the trade union movement which are concerned with preserving differential earnings and restricting entry into occupations in order to maintain the premium upon craft skill.

Strike The Clydeside Apprentices'

The discontent amongst engineering and shipbuilding apprentices

which came to a head in the 1960 strike had been brewing for a long time. Their scale of wages ranged from 22½% of the craftsman's rate at 15 to 62½% at 20, with a supplement, won in 1952 of 5s. 6d. to 11s. In the lower-paid districts this worked out as a weekly wage ranging from £2 7s. 3d. to £3 7s. 6d. The long-standing claim by the apprentices was for a scale ranging from 52½% to 90%. There were several token strikes at the beginning of the year, and at the youth conference of the Amalgamated Engineering Union on March 17 there were strong protests at the complacency of the union, and "utter disgust" was expressed at the employers' attitude. A meeting on the claim was held in Glasgow on April 20 and 500 apprentices demonstrated. A number of employers suspended the demonstrators, at which 4,400 journeymen on Clydeside struck in sympathy, while the boys came out again.

By April 29, 35,930 apprentices were on strike in Scotland, and the strike had spread to Sheffield, Tyneside and Manchester. On May 2, the shipbuilding employers said that they would not discuss the claim on the 6th, as previously arranged, unless the boys returned to work. The AEU leaders urged the apprentices to go back and at the Union's Blackpool Conference, the president, W. J. Carron, refused to accept a motion urging support for the strike. By this time there were 13,000 out in England, and more followed in Coventry, Bury, Hanley, Merseyside, and Rochdale. When a deputation from Scotland and the North of England went on May 9 to the headquarters of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions in London, officials told them to address their appeal to the 40 separate unions in the confederation. On May 12, when the strike had spread to Belfast and the West Riding, the employers agreed to discuss the claim on the 20th, and guaranteed no victimisation of strikers.

There were now over 60,000 apprentices out, and a delegate conference in Liverpool decided to recommend a return to work on May 17. The increases eventually awarded ranged from 4s. at 15 years to 16s. at 20. "Certainly," argues Donald McLaren, secretary of the Clydeside Apprentices Committee, "this falls a long way short of what we were fighting for, but of one thing we are all convinced, and that is that had it not been for our determined strike action, we would not have received a penny, far less 16s."

FULHAM HOUSEHOLDERS WITHHOLD RATES AS CD PROTEST

Three Fulham people withheld part of their rate this week as a protest against expenditure on Civil Defence. They refused to pay sums from 1s. 8d. to 2s, which, they said, represented their portion of the Borough's contribution to CD.

The three are Mr. J. Bowles, of Colehill lane, Mrs. B. Bradford of Broomhouse Road, and Mr. S. W. Wilcox of Fulham Road.

Fulham's borough treasurer has written to them: "No doubt on re-consideration and in view of the recent decision in the courts you will let me have the balance of the rates as soon as possible to avoid incurring extra recovery costs." *The Star*, 13/6/60

Refusal of Overtime Grounds for Dismissal?

IN the dispute between workers in the Malta dockyard and their employers Bailey (Malta) Ltd. over pay increases, the union at one stage announced that it was banning overtime and night work until its claim was met. The company then issued a warning that if men did not report for overtime or night work they would be dismissed. After consultations with the Governor and with the Director of Labour, Mr. Rossignaud, the company agreed not to dismiss the workers involved, but to suspend them for 48 hours. It also offered to withdraw the suspension notices if the union would withdraw its ban on overtime while negotiations on the claim proceeded. The union refused to agree.

Since when has the refusal to work overtime become the grounds for dismissing a worker? What is the point of fighting for a 40-hour week if the boss has a right to insist on a worker doing an extra 20 hours overtime?

A Chance in a Lifetime

Local Radio for the People

FOR years we heard the moan that the B.B.C. was a monopoly, what is more, a stooge of the government. All of which is quite true. We call it a moan, simply because it was not a protest backed by a bit of militancy. The development of the TV. industry (and the HP. industry) brought in its wake the financial pressure groups who in the name of the freedom of the screen "persuaded" the government to permit an alternative programme to be run by private enterprise and financed by advertising revenue. We understand that the result is punk of the first order for most of the time with a few first-class programmes (which appear first-class because the standard of what smotherers them is so bad). But free-enterprise, freedom of the air, has been vindicated by the operating companies making annual profits far surpassing their creators' wildest dreams.

cannot absorb all the potential advertising revenue on TV.) with the aid of a pamphlet issued by Pye Ltd., the Cambridge radio and television manufacturers, which draws our attention to the fact that no important obstacle now stands in the way of establishing in this country 100 or more local sound radio stations, serving towns of 50,000 people or more, and operating over a radius of about ten miles.

We have not seen the pamphlet, but according to a *Sunday Times* summary the team responsible for it, led by the managing director of Pye Telecommunications is confident that

the plan is bound to have considerable impact on future planning in the industry, both for its ideas and its timing: the Pilkington Committee is at work, examining the future of broadcasting, and the radio industry feels sorely in need of a release from the effects of credit restrictions.

We could not expect Messrs. Pye to be interested in our entertainment or enlightenment, for our sakes, any more than we are interested in

the exciting possibilities offered by a decentralisation of sound radio in terms of how it will affect Messrs. Pye's business interests!

What we are obliged to the Cambridge firm for is the information they supply which makes clear that not only is such a project feasible, but that economically it is not one of those pye-in-the-sky projects which only millionaires or cartels can afford. For £15,000-£20,000 a station can be set up (indeed the *Guardian* report states that a medium wave transmitter can be bought for £1,000 and a V.H.F. one for about twice the amount). The average number of staff would be "between 6 and 15", and so far as running costs are concerned "a small town might be served for between £20,000 and £30,000 annually—worked out as a penny per day per family.

According to the Pye report "The idea that each sizeable town in Britain should have its own radio station catering for its own needs... is gathering momentum". They

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THE APPRENTICES

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He puts the blame for the stoppage squarely on the employers:

"by their consistent refusal to negotiate over the past six years, by their vicious victimisation of boys who had demonstrated to bring attention to their wage claim, and—most disgusting of all—by sending threatening letters to the boys' parents, trying to enlist parents' help in their low attempts at intimidation. They must accept full responsibility for what has happened and what can happen in the future."

The apprentices learned a lot from the strike. Apart from their own development, ("Boys who had never uttered more than three or four consecutive sentences, became public speakers holding forth to thousands of apprentices, arguing a direct, forceful and sincere case"), they developed a hostility towards the rigid sectionalism and demarcation between unions, and strikers belonging to all unions, and some to none. They also developed a contempt for the union leadership, and *The Times*, reporting the Manchester demonstration, noted that "many of the boys seemed to be almost as critical of trade unions as they were of employers."

Progress in Rochdale

One outcome of the apprentices' strike, in Rochdale (where 300 boys came out), was the publication in August by a group of apprentices,

of the first number of a monthly journal *Progress*, which by its third issue reached a circulation of 500. Its editors urge "that Rochdale apprentices should form a Pioneer committee which will be an example to the rest of the country". A shop steward, welcoming the suggestion, writes in the second issue:

"This is a matter which has been delayed too long as none or very little interest has in the past been shown to the apprentices both in their internal troubles in these works, or in their external troubles with the National Executives of our national unions, least of all the AEU. Take for example the muddle and delay over the vicious and wicked attack of the firm against the apprentices. The much vaunted question of indentures is a matter which is still not settled although we have got some measure of satisfaction by getting these indentures withdrawn, but an active and virile apprentice committee could, and probably would, have obtained some measure of satisfaction long before relations at home for some apprentices became very strained . . ."

An editorial discusses the organisational bases for such a committee and for a national committee of apprentices. It must cut across union demarcation lines, its delegates must be subject to recall from their respective shop committees in order to prevent "the form of bureaucratic dictatorship which is common in our national unions. The control of such committees must come from below and not from above as is the case in state-socialism and capitalist societies." Finally, *Progress* sets out three points, the achievement of which it sees as the aims of such a committee:

- (a) Day school for all apprentices.
- (b) A £3 10s. minimum wage for a 15-year-old apprentice.
- (c) The abolition of cheap labour.

These three points: education, remuneration and exploitation have always been the sensitive spots of the apprenticeship system. Is he being adequately taught, and at the same time adequately paid for his services? Is his status of pupilage being abused?

Cheap Labour?

It is alleged in *Progress* that some local firms are using their apprentices as "apprentice labourers"—pushing a truck around the works or packing boxes with odds and ends.

"The apprentices who are subjected to cheap labour are quite aware of their position, but do not seem unduly worried: in fact most do not complain because they accept it as a matter of course, due to the fact that they have no one to turn to but the whip-crackers themselves, who appear to have no interest whatsoever in the apprentices except as a form of cheap labour."

Do these firms do this because they cannot afford to pay a labourer's wage, "or is it a case of being unable to find sufficient work for the apprentices? If this be the case why not inform the apprentices of their fate, rather than let them continue in this so-called trade?" A later issue of *Progress* reports that since this attack was launched a number of apprentices previously involved in the cheap labour racket "are now receiving a training which will be of more benefit to them than their former scandalous occupation."

A thoughtful article in the same issue discusses the opposition of interests between employer and apprentice, and the way in which the coercive relationship can be altered to one of co-operation on a voluntary basis:

"The idea is that the employers forfeit the right to direct control over the apprentice, but in return is supplied with a better trained and more versatile finished product. In the firm we know the apprentices are moved around the firm according to instructions from the apprentice supervisor. A more happy state of affairs for everyone would be for the supervisor to inform the apprentice committee of a need for an appren-

tice in a certain department, the committee would then find someone willing to work in that department. If, however, an apprentice is spending too long in a particular department, the committee can then demand that he is given a choice of an alternative department."

(People interested in distributing *Progress* should write to Brian Bamford of 39 Alder Road, Rochdale, Lancs.)

Glorious (and Murky) History

The system of apprenticeship is very much older than capitalism. The master-craftsman of the Middle Ages had little capital beyond his tools and materials, and the three grades of artisan in the guild system, masters, journeymen and apprentices, did not indicate different ranks in the social hierarchy, they were simply different stages in the same man's working life. For this reason wages were seldom a source of conflict. In the heyday of the guild system there was no suggestion that the number of apprentices should be restricted, but by the close of the Middle Ages there was a growing restriction to the sons of guildsmen or burgesses, and the practise of requiring a premium arose. That some of the same tensions arose as are found today is suggested by the provisions that the guild might change an apprentice's master if he failed to fulfil his part of the contract by properly training his apprentice.

Guild apprenticeship was followed by statutory apprenticeship under the Elizabethan Statute of Artificers which made apprenticeship compulsory, fixed a period of seven years, assessed wage rates and fixed a ration of apprentices to journeymen. The statute fell into disuse and, with the rise of the factory system at the end of the 18th century, the factory visited the workhouses to collect batches of pauper children as "apprentices" under the terms of the Poor Law. The unfortunate chil-

dren, because they cost no more than their keep, displaced the craftsmen who continually petitioned against the way in which the law controlling the ration of apprentices to journeymen was ignored.

The modern system of voluntary apprenticeship began with the repeal of the Statute of Artificers in 1814, but during the last century there was a continuous decline in indentured apprenticeship because of the change conditions of industry. As John Hilton put it:

"The increasing subdivision and specialisation of processes and the greater use of machinery rendered it unnecessary for many workmen to become acquainted with a complete trade or even a complete branch of trade; with the increase in the size of industrial establishments the obligation on the employer to teach the boy became more remote . . . the speeding up of the processes and the increasing use of payment by results made it difficult and even unprofitable for the journeyman to give the time and care necessary for the proper instruction of the apprentice; the competition of boy labour, which under the new conditions had become a source of profit, with that of the journeymen led in some trades to the imposition of restrictions by trade unions on the number and conditions of employment of apprentices."

There are many people in industry with bitter memories of the pre-war days when in many trades, the ending of apprenticeship was celebrated with dismissal, the employers not wishing to pay a man's wage when they could get plenty of boys.

Why Does It Survive?

Over sixty years ago, Sidney and Beatrice Webb declared that "Undemocratic in its scope, unscientific in its educational methods, and fundamentally unsound in its financial aspects, the apprenticeship system, in spite of all the practical arguments in its favour, is not likely to be deliberately revived by a modern democracy." But it *does* survive, and in West Bromwich, where you

can get about £10 a week on a mill round at 15, forty per cent. of boys leaving secondary modern schools are applying for apprenticeships at £3 a week. More than half will be disappointed. It survives because there is something in it for everybody. For the boy and his parents it represents an avenue to security and craftsman's status, for the authorities concerned with the provision of technical education, it provides practical training without dipping into the taxpayer's pocket; except for one-day-a-week release, where this is operated, while for the employers and the unions,

"apprenticeship is not just a form of training but is also used by both sides of industry in order to further their respective sectional interests. All the modifications made in adjustment to technical and other developments have been made in such a manner as to preserve the power of employers and trade unions to bend apprenticeship to their own ends." (Kate Liepmann: *Apprenticeship: an enquiry into its adequacy under modern conditions*. Routledge 1960.)

And it retains its popularity with boys and their parents because it stands in the popular view for skill and security—a blend, as Dr. Liepmann notes—of the trade union purpose with that of the Ministry of Labour.

Apprenticeship fits into a long established tradition in this country of "learning while earning", a tradition which has many advantages—not the least of them being the degree of financial independence which it gives the earner, compared with the full-time student; and many disadvantages—the varying quality of instruction, the high failure rate associated with part-time education, and, for those who think in such terms, the waste of the nation's man-power resulting from the scarcity of apprenticeships by comparison with the number of would-be apprentices. C.W.

(To be concluded)

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THEATRE

Paradise Sought

THE performance of the Wesker Trilogy last summer was one of the chief theatrical events in London since the War, and its publication in book form is therefore a welcome event, though a small volume of 225 pages is hardly worth a guinea. Arnold Wesker is a Jewish Londoner who was born in 1932, left school at 16, and has written four plays during the last four years—*The Kitchen* and the three parts of this socialist trilogy. He deserves praise simply for the effort involved, and in the same way the Belgrade Theatre in Coventry—and to a lesser extent the Royal Court here in London—also deserves praise for making the effort possible.

But however much we may appreciate what Wesker and his helpers have done, we must be honest enough to admit that the first and last parts of the trilogy are pretty awful plays. *Chicken Soup with Barley* (1958) and *I'm Talking about Jerusalem* (1960) try to deal with the socialist ideas of Marx and Morris by showing the disintegration of a Communist family in the East End between 1936 and 1956, and the failure of a married couple to start a new life after the War in Norfolk (originally in the Cotswolds, and one discrepancy still appears in the text at the bottom of p. 72); the connection is that the same family is involved in both plays. In fact *Chicken Soup* is interesting and moving less because of its political arguments than because of its Jewish background and personal portraits—the disintegration of Harry Kahn and the obstinacy of Sarah Kahn are more important to the audience than those of the C.P.G.B. The moral of the play, moreover, is absurd—to remain a Communist in December 1956 because "if you don't care you'll die" and to drink Party doctrine as if it were the life-preserving soup of the title is really going too far. As for *Jerusalem*, it frankly isn't very interesting or moving at all; and its moral—"we must be bloody mad to cry"—is bloody mad itself.

The real trouble is that there is far too much talk and far too little action. It will be objected that these are plays,

not films or novels—but the subject would have been far better treated if they had been some other form of narrative and comment (a film of the Trilogy is in fact in the air, and it could be more interesting). You just can't deal with Marx or Morris in terms of stage dialogue, and cries of "They shall not pass!" or the contemplation of a single hand-made chair don't get us much further. There are some good lines—"Every defeat is victory and every victory is the beginning" (for the Party); "You can't alter people . . . you can only give them some love and hope they'll take it"; "You can understand the Labour Party losing the elections again, they change their politics like a suit of clothing or something"—but by far the best thing in the two plays is the character of Sarah Kahn (while Ronnie is the self-conscious worst). There are also some good minor characters—Aunt Esther and Libby Dobson (who has however performed the remarkable feat of marrying and separating twice between demob and July 1947)—and in the "Look-I'm-Alive" game an episode of the most embarrassing self-parody.

Nevertheless, the point is not that the plays are good or bad but that they are seriously concerned with serious problems that are hardly ever mentioned on the stage in such terms. In this field, the end almost justifies the means; *Chicken Soup* and *Jerusalem* are brave attempts, and at least they may start some people thinking.

To start people thinking is what the middle play is about. *Roots* (1959) doesn't really have anything to do with socialism as such, though its theme is very relevant to socialism (and anarchism). One assumes that Ronnie has taken his mother's passionate outburst at the end of the previous play to heart, since in *Roots* his girl-friend, convinced that he has started her thinking, spends most of the play trying to start her Norfolk family thinking too. (Incidentally, how can Beatrice have lived with Ronnie for three years in September 1958 when he only came back from Paris in December 1956?) Of course the whole point

of the play is that she hasn't really started thinking for herself at all, and it is the shock of being jilted that brings on her Pentecost and forces her to begin at last, on her "own two feet", in one of the most moving curtains I have seen. What has made the play outstanding is the performance of Joan Plowright.

Roots is also an excellent picture of working-class life in the English countryside, and here Wesker states the uncomfortable truth about "the people"—that they "want the third-rate", which is why they "got it". But another truth is revealed here, at least when the play is performed in a theatre. Both times I saw it the phrases that uncover the central tragedy of the English working-class were greeted with roars of comfortable laughter—"Don't you come pushin' ideas across at us, we're all right as we are"; "An English girl born and bred and I couldn't talk the language"; "Once we're married and I got babies I won't need to be interested in half the things I got to be interested in now"; "You spend your time among green fields, you grow flowers and you breathe fresh air, and you've got no majesty"—the answer is not *Boom*, apparently but *Ha ha!*

Oh yes, we have the lumpen-proletariat, all right, and we have the lumpen-bourgeoisie too (usually called the philistines); but how many people realise the existence of a lumpen-intelligentsia which is as bad as the others? E. M. Forster did when he described Rickie's father in *The Longest Journey*:

He passed for a cultured man because he knew how to select, and he passed for an unconventional man because he did not select quite like other people. In reality he never did or said or thought one single thing that had the slightest beauty or value.

Twice in the theatre I was far more depressed by the oafs in the audience than by those on the stage; and similarly Aunt Esther in *Jerusalem* was gulfawed at as if she were in a music-hall. I feel that it is to some extent the author's fault that this sort of response comes so easily; English culture-values are dangerously inclined to take refuge in laughter when things get too difficult for them.

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Local Radio for the People

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It is right though we agree with the *Guardian* that it is in fact not easy to find evidence of growing enthusiasm for the idea on the part of the listening public.

But there is no doubt of its appeal to business and financial investors. Already about 100 companies have been registered with the object of running such stations if and when it becomes possible and of them by the Rank organisation alone!

So it is already clear what the pattern of these "local" stations will be if they are run by the Big Boys in London, and they should be resisted by every means at the public's disposal.

The time to strike is now, assuming that it is not already too late. Every town of 50,000 inhabitants is most likely a Dramatic Society, Music Society, a Jazz Club, a Dealing Club and a number of political, cultural, scientific and social organisations which are more or less active, and it is from these voluntary bodies that the warning should come as well as the initiative to canvas everybody in the town to secure financial support for as well as interest in a truly local radio station.

What above all should be avoided are the big money boys and the idea that the station should be kept going on revenue from advertising. These are fatal mistakes, for whatever may be the initial intentions, eventually the monied interests and the advertisers will control the programmes and make or break the station as they please. Surely the lesson of the *News Chronicle* which this morning (Tuesday) appeared as a sub-title to the *Daily Mail* is that its more than a million readers just have no say in the fate of the paper, of which they may have been faithful readers for many years, simply because it is the National advertisers who determined whether the paper should continue by withholding or by increasing the space they bought in it each day. A local radio which is not concerned with advertisers does not need to compete for listeners, but can concentrate on the exciting task of using the medium not only to enlighten and to entertain but to stimulate local participation in all kinds of activities. And in so doing re-create that feeling of community which the growth of the huge urban centres, and the centralisation of the Press and the Arts in cities such as London, has all but succeeded in destroying.

Local radio is now an economic as well as a technical reality with huge possibilities for the good. Left to the financiers or the business men or to the local authorities it can only degenerate into a babble of vulgarity interspersed with the shrill voices of the detergent kings and the manufacturers of shoddy gadgets for jerry-built homes. It will be but a version in sound of the dreary, moribund local Press of today.

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Footnotes to an Editorial

'The Battle of St. Pancras'

IN our "Reflection on the Battle of St. Pancras" (FREEDOM October 1st), we drew special attention to the thoroughness with which the government went about its task of restoring "law and order", and commented:

Those people who imagine that the function or even the nature of the police in this country is any different from that of the police in all countries could do well to pause and reflect on the "battle of St. Pancras". Here was an incident which, on the surface at least, was far from shaking in any way either the authority of the law or the foundations of the State. But the guardians of law and order are trained to believe that even the smallest sign of unrest must not be allowed to go unchallenged. Weakness at the beginning will only lead to the lawlessness growing and perhaps assuming proportions which cannot be controlled. The traditional ruthlessness of continental police is a measure of the ever-present current of unrest among the people. The traditional mildness of the British police is but a measure of the conformism of the British people. For as we have seen in St. Pancras, when even a pocket of resistance emerges, the police will clamp down on it with a thoroughness and efficiency which leaves nothing to be desired! And within two days, the Home Secretary had agreed to the making of an Order by the Commissioner of Police prohibiting all processions (except those of a religious character) in the Borough for the next three months.

That we were neither exaggerating the "incident", nor misinterpreting the attitude of government to demonstrations which are something more than token, or symbolic protests, received confirmation from the Home Secretary himself when he addressed the Tory Conference at Scarborough last week. On the subject of "crime" Mr. Butler said:

"I want to make it perfectly clear that, as Home Secretary, it is my intention, with the crime wave at the present rate, to put the first emphasis on discipline and the prevention of crime."

He had done this, he said, during the recent disturbances in St. Pancras, "where, if the matter had not been firmly handled by the Commissioner of Police, backed by the Home Secretary, we might have had a very ugly situation indeed." . . . And he put first in the fight against crime a "stronger, better-paid, and better-respected police force throughout the country."

It is to our minds significant that Mr. Butler should have chosen the police action in St. Pancras to illustrate how the government is tackling the "crime wave". To many people it may come as a surprise that the rent siege in St. Pancras was either criminal or an aspect of the "crime wave" which particularly threatened anybody other than an impersonal landlord—the Council. But there it is in black and white, straight from the Home Secretary's mouth!

We would also suggest that a "stronger" and "better paid" police force will not necessarily be "better-respected"; it may well be "more feared" which is probably what the Home Secretary had at the back of his mind. But surely there is enough evidence in the world to show that neither the size of the forces of law and order nor their ruthlessness ever succeed in abolishing "crimes" (which are committed in the main against property) or in keeping the people down indefinitely. It is the social and economic injustices of society which are largely responsible for "crime". And the forces of "law and order", far from removing those injustices have the job of ensuring that they are maintained, with or without kid gloves!

IN our piece on St. Pancras, while welcoming the (all too rare) militancy of the tenants involved in the protest, we were unable to show the same enthusiasm for their cause. For they seemed to us to be attacking a "means test" which within the capitalist system, and in the parti-

cular context, aimed at subsidising the poorer tenant without obliging the better paid one to pay more than an "economic rent", and at no time directed their attacks to what is, surely, the real scandal, the exploitation of land and building by the property racketeers. Even discounting the anarchists' "extreme" demands for the abolition of money and private property as "unrealistic", in a Welfare State where it was being at last recognised that every individual who was born into this world was entitled to the necessities of life in the way of a minimum number of calories, as well as the mechanical means of seeing (spectacles) as well as chewing (dentures) them (in the event of the ravages of nature or urban civilisation depriving him of these natural faculties), one would have thought that it would also be taken for granted that this "body" was also entitled to shelter from the elements! Apparently not.

The Tory government has of course opened the flood gates to the property speculators. But the Labour Government during its period of office with an absolute majority, introduced no legislation to abolish landlordism or speculation in land (though we understand that socialism can be achieved by legislation "so long as we win a majority of seats in the House". Wasn't the 1945 Labour majority big enough?). And apart from the political parties, the working people of this country, in spite of the "silent revolution" of the war- and post-war years did nothing to ensure that with their dentures and their wigs they also got a box which they could call "home"!

CURIOSLY enough, The Dolphin Square Tenants' Association, of all people, have sent the Minister of Housing and Local Government, a detailed memorandum on rents which strikes at the root of the present problem of high rents. A one-room flat (unfurnished) under the original controlled rent was let at £100 inclusive of rates. After the 1957 Act, three-year leases (which the landlords were obliged to offer) were granted at £165 exclusive of rates. Now, on expiry of lease, rents demanded are £350 exclusive. A two-room flat has risen

from £135 incl. to £430 excl., and a three-room flat from £165 incl. to £555 excl. In their memorandum the Tenants' Association were able to quote from inside information which came out at the recent criminal trial of the financiers Jasper-Grunwald-Murray, such as that between March and July, 1959, the directors of the company called Lintang, which had acquired Dolphin House, made a profit of "some £3 millions". Also it was pointed out at the trial that the property was worth £4.5 millions and that if sold at an average of £5,000 a flat, a sum of £6.25 millions would be realised. To which the Tenants' Association adds the comment:

"This would have represented an increase in the value of the property of 250 per cent. in little over a year. It is perfectly clear that the directors of Dolphin Square had made or intended to make fantastically high profits. At whose expense? Obviously the tenants' Only criminal proceedings on a matter not directly connected with the problems of Dolphin Square tenants brought these facts to light."

The memorandum then relates the problem of Dolphin Square to the general London problem.

"The 1957 Rent Act has led to the deliberate exploitation of rented accommodation and to the creation of an unprecedented speculative market in such properties. The homes of British families were surely never intended to become commodities from which speculators could make inordinate profits . . . the 1957 Rent Act was allegedly based on the idea that in a free market the supply of accommodation would prove equal to the demand. This has proved a complete fallacy so far as London and other big cities are concerned."

The problem is exacerbated in London by the growing number of businessmen whose rents are paid as part of their company's expense accounts, the increasing embassy and high commission staffs, and other temporary residents who have rent allowances, and by the "short-sighted policy of permitting colossal office blocks to be built in Central London."

The Dolphin Square Tenants place little hope in the powers given to local authorities to acquire properties by compulsory purchase order where rents asked are unreasonable, and as to the Minister's inferred advice that tenants who cannot afford the new rents should move out of London, they reply that "this is no remedy, for the inflation-

ary trend already operates many miles from the centre of London".

NOW though the Memorandum strikes at the roots of the problem, how many of the 3,000 tenants of Dolphin Square are opposed to capitalism, of which property speculation is only one of its manifestations. How many of them dabble or operate on the Stock Exchange? How many of them are executives in large companies, or are the direct employers of labour? How many are engaged in selling the product of other men's labour . . . at a profit? How many are professional people who enjoy large salaries out of all proportion to the wages paid to those who actually produce the basic necessities of life or services (The West Riding County Council last week awarded a salary increase of £10 a week to its chief officers—architect, treasurer, surveyor, education officer. Compare this increase with the £10 a week wages paid to a land worker or a railwayman)?

The Dolphin Square Tenants' Association memorandum will perhaps evoke a sigh from the Minister and a printed acknowledgement slip from his civil servants, but very little change. And if the Tenants vote Labour next time it will only show that apart from suffering from split personalities they are fools as well!

*According to a writer in the *Reynolds News* "In 1958 and 1959 together total Stock Exchange gains were about £10,000 million." He also gives a picture of the profit made by some companies which compares very favourably with the activities of the Lintang group! For instance:

Only last week Glaxo—now making antibiotics and drugs, not just food for bonny babies—gave a fine exhibition of the way capital gains come into shareholders' hands.

Glaxo have this year raised their profit before tax by 24 per cent, and their dividend from 14 per cent. to 18 per cent. They are also making a "one-for-four" bonus share issue.

Since 1950 trading profit and the amount earned for ordinary shares has doubled, and the amount paid in dividends has risen nearly tenfold. Bonus issues were also made in 1950, 1953, 1955, 1957, 1958 and 1959.

Even since last year Glaxo shares have risen from 35s. 3d. to 78s. If you had put £100 in these shares in 1950, it would be worth £1,000 now.

So you see how a "growth stock" grows. And nobody suggests that the directors of Glaxo should be put in the dock at the Old Bailey!

The Wages of War

THE time has come for the anti-war movement to set up some kind of co-ordinating agency to deal with the economic problems of potential war objectors, much as the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors and the National Service Board for Religious Objectors deal with the legal problems. The draft catches in its net a majority of the young men of the country between the ages of 18 and 26, but the growing militarization of the economy poses serious problems for a larger number of men and women of all ages who must reconcile their need to earn a living with the fact that, for most skills, the most easily available and highest paying work is war work.

What comes in the weekly envelope is only part of the pay a person receives for his work. Equally, if not more important, is the sense of creative accomplishment that should come from having given of one's mind and body to the production of something useful and beneficial. It is the general failure of the American economy to provide this latter reward that has long made a mockery of America's claim to have the highest standard of living ever known.

Today as the outdated myths of military defence gradually give way to the grim realities of nuclear fission (the right of little children to drink strontium 90 in their milk; the democratic right of everyone to be destroyed at the same time; the religious freedom to return to one's maker ahead of schedule), a grow-

ing number of persons is finding that to be a cog in the manufacture of missiles, bombers, genocidal germs, etc. is an unsatisfying and ignoble life work. But there has to be some sort of realistic answer to the question hurled regularly at those who have been demonstrating at the Polaris submarine base in New London, Connecticut: *Where else can I earn \$3 an hour?*

It is not the business of the peace movement to compete with the munitions manufacturers in slush funds and monetary inducements. Unfortunately many of those who see the futility and feel the frustration of making arms will have to pay a monetary price for their convictions, just as (unfortunately) many of those who refuse to bear arms lose jobs or go to prison. But we cannot be satisfied with a situation in which people want to devote their skill and intelligence to useful purposes and do not know where to turn in order to do so. We cannot speak self-righteously of "the benefits of sacrifice" to persons faced with a conflict between their need to provide for their families and their need for useful work.

The literature given to Polaris workers speaks of finding useful jobs for individual workers who withdraw from munitions manufacture. Peace-makers has offered to include them in its economic sharing plan ("so that there will at least be food on the table and a roof over your heads"). Polaris Action has also urged "collective action [including strikes

when necessary] to make the transition from war work to useful work."

But so far these are largely verbal beginnings. We propose an exploratory conference of those who could begin to translate them into effective action. The growing militancy of the anti-war movement is less significant to date than it should be because the increased activities still leave too many workers in the schizophrenic position of "agreeing" with our ideas but seeing no realistic alternative to their present jobs. Just as civilian populations are the chief victims of modern warfare, so are they, today, its chief perpetrators. The problems of economic conscription must be high on the agenda of those who are seriously interested in ending the arms race.

D.D.
(Liberation, Sept. 1960).

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Is Anarchism a Minority Sect or Social Force?

ANARCHISTS have their fingers in every pie. The distinguishing feature of anarchism is that it brings political, social and individual revolution together and asserts that each of them is dependent on the others.

One of the consequences of this, taken together with the nature of anarchist ideas, is that we are at a crossroads among minority groups. In one direction the I.L.P., S.P.G.B., the dissident Marxists and libertarian socialists all feel some kind of friendship towards anarchism, particularly aspects such as support for direct action, workers' control, and hopes for a free socialist society. Despite some assertions of purism this friendship is reciprocated. On the other hand groups which are chiefly interested in individual salvation, such as the pseudo-psychology cults also find it possible to exchange mutual sympathy with anarchists. In yet a third direction, every reformist organisation whose objects or methods can be stretched to include a leavening of libertarianism finds some support among anarchists who feel concerned in that particular direction. Hence anarchists are of were closely associated with the Aldermaston and Direct Action movements, the Boycott, and the anti Capital Punishment campaign. The list can be extended. Occasional voices assert that truth can only be found when the anarchists get together with the Flying Saucer people, and so on.

Anarchists therefore, tend to develop a kind of minority consciousness. That is, a feeling which is common to people who belong to minority groups of very varied kinds, and is independent of the particular features of their own minority.

This brings several problems in its train. One of them is the way in which peculiar individuals find a home on the fringe of the movement, and discourage casual inquirers. There are certain people who cause groans to go up by simply coming in to a meeting because whatever their hobby horse, they will get a chance to bring it up in discussion, divert the course of the meeting and considerably reduce its value in attracting non-anarchists. Whereas the authoritarian parties would expel or dissociate people who misrepresented their views to outsiders, the tolerant anarchists welcome them as just another group of valiant non-conformists.

On the group and movement level this spirit of generous acceptance also makes itself felt. As mentioned above, anarchism has a practical kinship with an extremely varied selection of movements. Simply form a group which is generally progressive, and a tiny minority, and you will find some anarchists supporting it, writing about it in our papers, writing about anarchism in its papers, and so on. As a result, anarchism is often treated, not on the merits of its case, but as one of an indistinguishable array of minority cults.

Another problem, which is more important, is the effect on anarchist ideas themselves of this minority position. In a recent issue of FREEDOM the leading article began:

Writers in this newspaper are not at all elated that our speculations on world politics are usually accurate.

It strikes us as a social tragedy that a handful of anarchists are alone able to grasp the significance of competitive political power when the facts are available to all.

Now if we are right, and our ideas are fairly simple to grasp, then the mass of people who have consistently ignored them for a century must be particularly foolish, neurotic or vicious. Unfortunately, it is these people to whom we have to get our ideas across if they are going to have very much effect.

It is suggested by more conformist people that rebels just enjoy opposing the majority attitude for the sake of being different. Whether this is ascribed to moral defects or complicated psychological drives depends on the sophistication of the attacker. However, this sort of feeling only becomes dangerous when it is inwardly accepted by the person to whom the criticism is directed. Once a group assents to the idea that it is doomed to be an ineffective and diminishing minority, that the big wide world is too cor-

rupt even to recognise the people who can put it right, and that rebellious attitudes often spring from psychological needs quite different from the ones to which they are ascribed, then it will indeed become ineffective and its activities sterile.

Objectivity demands that we concede some truth to the above criticisms, but what is really important is that it should be demonstrable that they are not true as a whole. That is, anarchists must find ways of expressing themselves which do not consist of crying in the wilderness, or playing ring-a-ring o'roses with all the other minority sects. It is no use making any propaganda at all unless we feel confidence that it will have a good effect.

To achieve this, anarchists should consistently try to find answers to the problems that ordinary people are facing. The outlook that leads to debates on "Which should the Working Class support: the Revolutionary Marxist Unity Party or the United Socialist Workers Front?" has nothing to do with reality. The ideas we put forward must however, be anarchist ones and not watered down versions for popular consumption. The false dichotomy between the conceptions of "escapist" revolutionaries and practical minded "revisionists" needs breaking down, and the best way is by showing in practice that anarchism can provide a realistic way of facing up to practical problems.

Finally, to what extent does anarchism still involve the idea that it can only be effective when everyone has accepted it? Are we looking for world-wide unanimity or are we content to make a contribution to finding a way through social problems, knowing that the solution reached will be either a synthetic one or a pure compromise, and hoping that the anarchist influence will be as big as possible?

P.H.

Those Apolitical Beatniks

AMERICAN editor Irving Wechsler, taking a cool glance at the "beats" in "Reflections of an Angry Middle-Aged Editor" takes the line that, along with other "apolitical young people" of America who have contracted out, they ought to get busy like the organisation Americans for Democratic Action. Replying to him in the *New Leader*, Paul Goodman, writer and psychologist (and anarchist) declares that Wechsler's book "quite misses the point for by and

large the beatniks are not apolitical. They are programmatically defecting from the major state-structure of our times: the Organisation of semi-monopolies, the Pentagon, the FBI, Communications, Personnel, etc.; and they are using the most relevant means to combat such a structure, namely, non-violent direct action: 'I won't do that; I will do this.' We anarchists have always urged that the right method is to create little islands of freedom and nature, and some of these kids are trying to. The trouble with their anarchism is not that it is apolitical, but that they don't know anything, technologically or culturally. Therefore, they are unimaginative; therefore, some of them lapse into drink and drugs and trivial music and poetry...

"Wechsler points out that the draft law is a foolish and wicked thing. It ought to be abolished. But what happens when they come after the kid in his individual life, right now? He ought not to do what is foolish and wicked: Ought he then to dodge? to be a conscientious objector? to go to jail? to picket with his fellows in the same plight and be forced into every step under protest? These, it seems to me, are the interesting questions for a young fellow, and we find nothing of them in this book."

Paradise Sought

Continued from p. 2

And let us make no mistake—this Trilogy is very difficult. Wesker's theme is quite simply Jerusalem; he is in search of paradise, of the Kingdom of Heaven. In each of these plays there is an attempt to build Jerusalem, as the dictatorship of the proletariat, as awareness, as a miniature economic unit; and in each one the attempt fails; but out of each failure comes success—an oblique success, but success all the same. Ronnie learns that the important thing is not being a Communist but being someone who cares; Beatie learns that awareness must grow from within and cannot be imposed from above; Dave and Ada

NUCLEAR PROTESTS

ONE of the reasons why I supported the campaign against hanging was that its success would have reduced the power of the state. Capital punishment is an abomination in itself, as is all "organized vengeance called justice", but it is also a part of the coercive machinery of government and its abolition would have made this machinery that much weaker. At the same time, however, its abolition would not have affected in any fundamental way the punitive apparatus of law, and the police and prison systems would have continued to exist. From an anarchist point of view, therefore, the disappearance of the hangman would have had only a limited and relative value, but that did not stop many comrades from giving what help they could to make him unemployed.

Looked at in this manner, I would

Anarchism and Religion

DEAR COMRADES,

Whilst agreeing that both in the past and at present individual religionists have sometimes proved superior to their creed the religions of the world have been found out ever since there has developed a science dealing with religious growth, development and retention. It has been shown to be an earlier attempt to understand the world around and within us and to be found wanting by the scientific standards that operate in some quarters to-day. I state this in spite of some previous writers in FREEDOM attempting to "cock a snoot" at the scientific method which not only, it must always be remembered, deals with the realms of physics and chemistry but also with the social and mental departments of human existence. Note also that science is not to be confused with technology a favourite trick of many modern writers and speakers when attempting to rebuff the modern man who attempts to think scientifically. Science I take it is organised knowledge based upon experience and appealing to experiment for verification, not as is religion, an appeal just to believe amplified into what is usually called faith. Science develops from observation and experiment, religion believes first and appeals either to faith or to pseudo-experimentation afterwards.

Nowadays opposition to atheism is frequently coloured by referring to it as 19th century rationalism (a somewhat spineless term); but as I see it anarchism means social living without government and atheism consists of living without accepting the idea of supernatural beings, the two outlooks being two aspects of the same attitude. I therefore equate God with government and reject both.

Yours,

Guernsey, Oct. 16 BERT SMITH.

DEAR SIR,

The Catholic Anarchists must surely regard any sort of realised Anarchism as at best only a temporary condition. Whichever of the "eternal states" we are eventually transported to will, I suppose, be still organised on an authoritarian basis. Or do they plan to revolutionise even those classic monarchies?

Yours, etc.,

London, Oct. 16 JOHN ARCHER.

learn that they must cultivate their own garden. I think this message is in the Trilogy, but it is very much obscured by extraneous matter, and in particular by Ronnie's rantings; it is not accidental that *Roots* is by far the best of the three—and even then Ronnie's letter is a bad touch. But I hope that now Wesker has got his own past out of his system he will not forget Jerusalem. His work to bring the trade unions into British cultural life (together with Bill Holdsworth) suggests that he will not. It would be ironical if he should fail, but should himself discover in the failure that the search for paradise is paradise itself.

N.W.

The *Wesker Trilogy* is published by Jonathan Cape (21s.). *Chicken Soup with Barley* was included in *New English Dramatists* (3s. 6d.), published by Penguin Books in 1959, as was *Roots* (2s. 6d.).

like to suggest that the campaign against nuclear weapons, and particularly the radical wing as represented by the Direct Action Committee, has a similar value for us—as well as being directed against an abomination of far greater magnitude than the death penalty. It is quite possible that it may never succeed in achieving its object, but if it could be freed from its obsession with the legal and Gandhian niceties which at present hamper it, it could provide a decided check to the lunatic activities of those in power and to that extent constitute a potentially anti-state force. If it does not, then there is a distinct possibility that all of us, conservatives, reformists and revolutionaries alike, will be turned into radio-active dust because some form of militarism did not understand the rationale of modern tyranny as depicted in "1984".

While I agree, therefore, with the criticisms of the superficiality of most of those who protest against nuclear weapons, I consider that a case can be made for anarchists giving critical support to those who make their protest by means of non-co-operation and civil disobedience, while continuing to emphasise that only a grass-roots change in human attitudes and relationships can create permanent peace.

Bristol, Oct. 8.

S. E. PARKER

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NOV. 6.—A. Rajk on THE VOCABULARY OF POLITICS

NOV. 13.—Tony Gibson on Subject to be announced.

NOV. 20.—Ian Leslie on Subject to be announced.

NOV. 27.—Ian Celnick on THE KRONSTADT REVOLT.

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