

'Nationalism is an infantile disease.  
It is the measles of mankind.'  
ALBERT EINSTEIN

SOCIALISM BY PRESSURE GROUP  
THE PREJUDICES LIVE ON  
CONVERSATION WITH  
A CONSPIRATOR  
L.A.G. SUMMER SCHOOL  
NO LOVE FOR SIR

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If there were any grounds for believing that the European Economic Community (EEC or Common Market) or some such organisation as this, contained the seeds from which a united, a socialist Europe could grow; a Europe which by its example and its economic structure could succeed in eliminating the armaments industry and the causes of war, then we think there would be grounds for professed socialists the authoritarian wing giving their support to and working for, an EEC which would embrace all the nations of Europe. In fact it could not stop there; such a movement would need to establish itself on a world basis, and the strength of its unity would be such that no group of nations could easily remain outside—or if they did they would, nevertheless, in no way constitute a threat to the security and the prosperity of this vast Common Market joining the overwhelming majority of mankind.

It would all take time, a long time, but it would be argued that even a step in the right direction is positive and worth a hundred along the well worn paths that always turn out to be dead ends pitted with economic and political "crises". And we should be the first to agree! How important it is, therefore, to expose as time-wasting and dangerous illusions, economic and political alignments which are dressed up as progressive steps to "unity", "equality" and for the elimination of frontiers, but which are in reality just the old firm trying out different ways of retaining its privilege in society. The

## EEC: Key to a Capitalist Utopia?

Common Market, with its Treaty of Rome (now being bandied about like some blueprint to Utopia—a capitalist utopia?) is the brain child of a shrewd bunch of financial experts, industrialists and politicians who saw the need for an overhaul of the mechanism of capitalist production and distribution in this post-war era of an industrial expansion which threatens to completely outstrip effective consumption; that is consumption which can be paid for. The aim of the EEC\* is "to eliminate the traditional system of economic frontiers between national States in Europe". This simply means that nation members will aim at removing tariffs and restrictions on the free movement of labour within their "Community" and will protect their internal markets by raising a wall of tariffs so far as those nations outside the Community are concerned. In this way the EEC countries will virtually enjoy a monopoly in a market of some 200 million people (at present). But within that market the member nations will compete for business in the best capitalist tradition. It is true that there will be certain "Rules of Competition", involving anti-cartel legislation, anti-dumping regulations as well as rules governing State Sub-

sidies and Tax allowances which might result in one member state having an unfair advantage in the marketing of a particular commodity, over the others. Coupled with this capitalist free-for-all (within the rules of the game!) the EEC aims at having so-called "free movement" of workers by 1970-73. According to the *Observer* summary this must include the right of workers to "accept offers of employment actually made" by an employer in another country. Professional men and business men will be free to work in any country in the Community.

It needs only a moment's thought to realise that this is a two-edged weapon so far as workers are concerned. For, if, on the one hand it can be said that the greater the choice of jobs available to a worker, not only is he a freer man but may well also command a higher wage, on the other, the fact, as the *Observer* summary put it, that, for instance "a German worker will be free to displace a Frenchman in a French factory if he is better qualified for the job" and *vice versa*, will

not only accentuate the existing lack of internationalism among workers, but will, by making workers dispensable, result in increasing the power of the employers. In his contribution to the debate, Lord Chandos (formerly Mr. Oliver Lyttleton, a Tory Colonial Secretary) pointed out that if Britain joined the EEC "the wildcat strike, the demarcation dispute, the shorter hours for less work at lower productivity would become an impossible luxury". And the President of the Board of Trade thought that "the great effect of going in will be that the efficient firms will prosper and the inefficient ones will go down". Thus management, if only for the sake of its own survival, must get tough with the workers it employs, even assuming that it now treats them with kid gloves! †

†Mr. Harold Wilson in the Commons debate also pointed out that there were a number of employers who favour entry who were anxious to get in for one reason only—"to have a wages showdown, which they have not been able to have for the last five years."

But no danger of 'Federalism'!

WE do not propose to repeat the arguments we used recently in these columns trying to assess motives behind Britain's decision to apply for membership of the Common Market. We refused to accept the view that in taking so much time to make up their mind the government, in general, and Mr. Macmillan in particular were dithering or incapable of doing their job, which is what the Labour Party spokesmen and the *New Statesman* were maintaining last week. ‡ Not because we admire the determination of the government but because unlike these "socialists" who believe in strong men—and who, therefore, think of themselves as the right kind of strong men to take office, or to

‡She [Britain] is also doing it [seeking entry to the Common Market] under the personal leadership of a man whose powers are manifestly in decline. Mr. Macmillan may screw up his remaining energies for his television appeal; but it is obvious from his recent parliamentary performances that his grip on events is weakening. . . . (N.S. editorial "Third Class to Europe").

Continued on page 3

\*See the useful *Guide to the Common Market* in "The Observer" (July 16th).

## Sentimental Call

THERE is usually nothing quite so successful as a sentimental call to patriotism for rallying "the nation" behind a political party regardless of its previous blunders or corrupt dealings.

In spite of the many criticisms levelled at Kennedy since his election, both by his own supporters and the political opposition, Alistair Cooke, writing in the *Guardian* (1/9/61) states:

... that the American people, the American Congress and the American business world stand behind President Kennedy on Berlin with a unanimity no President has enjoyed since Roosevelt proclaimed his National Recovery Administration as a cure for the great depression.

Mind you the self-interest behind the patriotism is not always hidden, especially in the business world, but the readiness which the ordinary American shows to don a uniform cannot entirely be accounted for in terms of recognisable self-interest.

Unlike the inhabitants of Europe and Asia the average American concept of modern war is less realistic, and perhaps for that reason the romantic notion of the strong man "resisting aggression" (as the American undoubtedly believes) still has an appeal untouched by the realities of brutal warfare.

Whatever reason the ordinary American may have for flying to the colours, the world of finance (or

that part of it which benefits from war), has a simple enough reason.

But it seems that while many American companies connected in some way with the war industry are enjoying a financial boom since the Berlin crisis started which suggests that they will have a basic interest in keeping it going, many are disappointed with their share of the spoils as the following quote suggests:

... The business man's mood seems to be summed up by a Cleveland manufacturer who remarked that since the Government itself gave no sign of increasing its defence orders from him, he "assumes that Berlin is just one of those things that have blown up and will blow over".

It seems that after a week of "community patriotism, some parts of the community are beginning to wonder how the economy will look when the bills come in."

Wall Street is worried about "the balance of payment problem", which will result if the United States is to establish large armed forces abroad, and the threat of competition from the European Common Market.

The Republicans, deeply opposed to the idea of the welfare state, are snapping at the heels of the President, not for spending too much on defence but for not cutting down on education, medical and housing aid.

It look as if what was in the beginning a useful crisis diversion for the Democrats is now turning into a political liability.



## The Business Approach to Public Service

### AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

THE Postmaster General announced in the House recently the surcharges to be made for telephone connections which are more than three miles from the exchange—that is mainly in rural districts. For some would-be subscribers these connection charges will amount to £40 a mile. The *Guardian's* political correspondent comments that

In fact the main purpose of the changes is to deter anyone who would make only small use of a telephone from applying for one. Capital investment in the telephone service is regarded by the Post Office as yielding at best only a small return, and since the Post Office has wage increases to pay and is unwilling to ask the Chancellor in his present mood for much capital, it is officially discouraging the development of the telephone service by small users.

If this approach to services is accepted unchallenged there is no reason why at some later stage surcharges will be made on letters which have to be delivered

more than a certain distance from the sorting office. After all, it is quite clear that delivering letters in remote parts of the country costs in wages much more than the value of the stamp.

The cutting down of services, and the attempt to implement the view that not only must nationalised or other services pay their way, but that they must be paid for by those who use them, is meeting with so scant resistance because the vocal section of the community, beginning with the popular press is, successfully putting over the view that the hard-working people of this country are having to "carry" and subsidise the "shirkers" and the "slackers", and that the fault is with a system that gives them something for nothing. To our minds it is a reflection on the malaise of the affluent society that in the midst of

plenty people should feel so strongly and bitterly towards the misfits. The healthy resent the "excessive" use made by the sick of the Health Services (and the government encourages this attitude by making the sick contribute to the cost of prescriptions); the middle classes resent subsidised housing for the poor; car owners resent contributing to railway deficits (but not to train users contributing to the building of motor-ways and so on!) The capitalist approach of the affluent society is killing all feeling of mutual aid, and this deterioration in human feelings is best illustrated perhaps by the ungenerous treatment of old people. That the government should be indifferent to their plight is not surprising, but that the people as a community have not devised a way for dealing with the problem of loneliness and poverty among old people is inexcusable in a society which lays claim to being civilised.

THERE are two main types of pressure group. One is the group organised to represent and further the interests, usually 'material', of a relatively stable section of a community. Employers' and employees' associations, such as the F.B.I. and the T.U.C., are the most obvious examples of this type. The other is the group organised to represent and further the interests, usually 'ideal', of a set of like-minded individuals. The essential basis of this second or 'promotional' type is the common acceptance by the group's members of a proposal or set of proposals which they wish to see implemented by the authoritative decision-makers of the society in which they operate. The Anti-Corn Law League, the Anti-Vivisection Society and the C.N.D. are all examples of this type. From their very nature, groups of this kind tend to be less stable, more ephemeral than sectional interest groups. The Fabian Society, however, appears to be an exception to this rule. Founded in 1884, it rapidly became, and remains today, the most influential pressure group in the British socialist movement. Its impact on the wider society, if unmeasurable, has been great. Recently, it has been paid the sincerest compliment of all by its Conservative political

# Socialism by Pressure Group

opponents; imitation. The successful and much-publicised Bow Group of Tories was deliberately modelled on the Fabian Society and designed to combat its influence.

In her latest book\*, Margaret Cole gives us what amounts to an official history of this socialist pressure group. Soberer, more informative and a good deal more accurate than the journalistic effort of Miss Fremantle which appeared last year,† it supplements, if it does not replace, the previous 'official' account by Edward Pease written in 1916.

The general character of Fabianism is too well known to need depicting here. 'Fabian' has long been a term of abuse in the vocabulary of radical socialists and libertarians, ever since its original anarchist members, headed by Kropotkin's collaborator, Charlotte Wilson, were manoeuvred out of the Society in 1887. Mrs. Cole, in an epilogue, attempts some assessment of the Society's record but fails to meet, let alone to answer, the most serious charges levelled against it. Committed to being 'practical' and to the pursuit of the municipal and Parliamentary road to socialism, the early Fabians distinguished themselves from their socialist contemporaries by their resolute opposition to 'political luddism'—State-busting—in all its forms. Their successors, despite their avowed *penchant* for political *free-thinking*, have never questioned this commitment. Confronted as we now are by a State in which even the Tories 'plan' the economy—in a manner deliberately designed to win elections—and further away than every, apparently, from the realisation of a society which anyone with the instincts of a William Morris would recognise as socialist, the Fabians still urge us along the same path. More facts, more tracts, and, so we are assured, all will be well. Frank Horrabin's Fabian tortoise with its uplifted paw—looking like

an outraged old-age pensioner begging for a shilling rise to meet the latest increase in the tobacco tax—moves slowly, but move it does. Where it has come from, the historically minded Fabians are quite clear: where it is going to, the unphilosophically minded Fabians have never bothered to enquire.

Seventy-seven years further on from its starting point, perhaps the most interesting question to ask about this organisation is: How has it managed to survive and still be kicking? Part of the answer undoubtedly lies in its relative lack of dogma. The early Fabians saw themselves as the latter-day Benthamites of British socialism. Beyond a few basic principles enshrined in the Society's original Basis, which even some Liberals and Tories found themselves capable of accepting, they had no set programme to foster. Proposals for reform they produced in plenty, many of which have found their way on to the statute books of the State and of local and other authorities. But the Society *as such* promoted none of them. Almost from the start, each proposal was presented with the disclaimer that it represented the views, not of the Society but only of the individual who prepared it. As a consequence, divisions within the membership over specific policy matters, although not avoided altogether, have been kept to a minimum. This organisationally sensible procedure was taken a step further in 1939 when—a new and even broader 'basis' having been adopted—the Society accepted as a fundamental rule the self-denying ordinance which forbade it to put forward any resolution of a political character, expressing an opinion or calling for action, in the name of the Society. This rule immediately placed the Society out of the reach of interested minorities chasing paper majorities which has been the bane of most socialist and labour

organisations. No Fabian delegate to any other organisation has a mandate from the Society and his vote commits no one but himself. Freedom from internal political manoeuvring and policy rivalries has left the Fabians with the energy to pursue their major task—research and education. At the same time, it has enabled their Society to attract financial support from a wide variety of sources.

As an organisation, the Fabian Society has also shown a remarkable ability to hive off those groups and individuals within the membership who looked like making trouble. The hiving off of the anarchists in 1887 by the passing of a resolution committing the Society to participate directly in political action—a resolution which the majority had no intention at that time of implementing—was only the first of a series of such events. Before the first world war, the old guard Fabians met a number of challenges to their authority by giving the rebels their head and an organisation of their own. Some of these organisations quickly perished; others, like the Fabian Research Department, subsequently captured by the C.P. and renamed the Labour Research Department, survived. The peak of the Society's influence was undoubtedly reached before 1914. After 1918 the Fabian's monopoly of socialist cerebration was broken by the establishment of other bodies, including the Labour Party's own research department. In the '20s and '30s, under the bumbling secretaryship of F. W. Galton, the Society went into a decline. By 1939 it was on the point of expiry. But it survived because a few years earlier G. D. H. Cole and his friends had formed the New Fabian Research Bureau. An amalgamation of the Bureau and the Society, under Cole's leadership, gave it a new lease of life. Membership figures, if not influence, reached a peak in the post-war years. The years of apathy and the lost sense of socialist direction have since eaten into the membership. One no longer looks to the Society in the expectation of finding 'new' socialist thinking, but the volume of work produced remains high and the odd tract here and there warrants a *Times* or a *Guardian* leader.

Part of the success of the Society must also be attributed to the quality of its leadership. The verbal brilliance of Shaw which attracted hundreds and thousands needs only to be mentioned. More important in the long run were the prodigious efforts of that bureaucrat par excel-

lence, Sidney Webb, and, more recently, of G. D. H. Cole. That Cole, the guild socialist rebel who plagued the life out of the Webbs in the period 1914-24, should have succeeded to Sidney Webb's mantle seems a bit ironic.

'Mr. G. D. H. Cole is a bit of a puzzle. With a Bolshevik soul in a Fabian muzzle'.

So sang Maurice Reckitt in 1920. Margaret Cole comments that the epigram would have been more correct if 'anarchist' were substituted for 'Bolshevik'. The anarchist element in Cole's thinking was very real and remained with him to the last. So much is evident from the final paragraph in the last volume of his *History of Socialist Thought* where he repudiated both Social Democracy and Communism. The puzzle about Cole remains but there is no doubt that he shared with the Webbs a selfless devotion to the cause of socialism. Neither the Webbs nor Cole, nor many other Fabian stalwarts, were 'on the make'. We may violently disagree with many Fabian policies and principles but it is difficult to point finger at the men. If only the energies and capacities had been wholeheartedly devoted to the libertarian cause, we might not now have to make such a qualified approval of this most famous of all socialist pressure groups.

GEOFFREY OSTERGAARD.

\**The Story of Fabian Socialism* by Margaret Cole, Heinemann.  
†*This Little Band of Prophets* by Ann Fremantle; reviewed in *FREEDOM*.

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## The Prejudices Live on

'THE ORIGINS OF TOTALITARIANISM' by Hannah Arendt, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 30s.

HANNAH ARENDT'S book is densely written. A great deal of study has gone into its closely reasoned pages. Yet at the end I am left wondering. Reich, Fromm and a host of others have each had a shot at analysing totalitarianism. It is a complex phenomenon, and there is a lot to be said about it from every point of view. But when all has been said the fact remains that totalitarianism is a recurring form of human society. It is not new, the only distinction between its ancient and modern forms being that modern totalitarianisms possess machines that were not available for their predecessors. In the old days tyranny and mass murder were handicrafts. This is the age of mass production. It is much easier when you have poison gas, railway trains and machine guns to exterminate large numbers of people. Also there are more people.

What is happening today of course always seems more magnificent, or more horrible, than anything that has happened before, simply because it is happening now, before our very eyes as it were.

I should like to know why men feel the urge to tyrannise over each other and exterminate each other, and I don't feel that this book, in spite of its immense detail, gets us much nearer to a solution to this question. What emerges is that "rootless" masses and cynical or disillusioned intellectuals form a breeding ground for totalitarianism. I am sure that since men began to wage wars on each other there have always been uprooted and disillusioned people, though not as many as today, since the population was smaller in any case, and there was more room for a displaced population to move and settle elsewhere.

Hannah Arendt comes to the rather pessimistic conclusion that the totalitarian form of state will be with us for a long time yet, and we had better learn to live with it. In an epilogue on this new edition (the book was first published in 1951), she allows herself a little more hope. She describes the Hungarian Revolution, and the Workers' Councils which made their appearance during the course of it, with approval. It certainly showed that even the modern totalitarian state is not irresistible completely.

I find it a most interesting book, but irritating in parts. On occasion there

creeps in a note of that guilt-and-angst anti-liberalism that was the fashionable attitude a decade ago, but now, thank goodness, seems to be on its way out. The nineteenth century liberal thinkers were not the naive fellows that some modern people seem to think, even if they did believe in the perfectibility of man. And nothing that has happened since has disproved any of their basic contentions, such as that power corrupts, for example. Also she underrates the civilisations of Negro Africa.

Racialism is something very old. The anti-semitism of Hitler had its roots in the anti-semitism of the Middle Ages, and this in turn could be traced back into the remotest antiquity. The antagonism between human groups is another of these perennial problems. It is strange, but to the Northern European the Southerner is always slightly sinister. Perhaps this dates back to the Indo-European invasions, beginning round about 1900 B.C., when the dark Mediterranean occupants of Europe were subdued by a fairer folk. The invasion of India by another branch of the same group of peoples, Hitler's admired "Aryans", led to the development of the caste system, which was originally a form of colour-bar. The human mind is intensely con-

One of the illustrations (by Rufus Segar) from THE ANARCHISM OF JEAN VIGO IN ANARCHY 6



servative, and prejudices live on long after their origin has been forgotten. The conquered always appear as diabolical to their conquerors, possibly on account of the curious quirk of human psychology that we can forgive those who have injured us much more quickly than those whom we have injured.\*

The Southerner is considered to be promiscuous and possessed of a fatal charm for good Nordic women. He is excitable, treacherous, unreliable, cunning, dirty and without dignity. He dresses flashily, laughs readily and gesticulates. He has a peculiarly "animal" quality. This flexible stereotype, with additions for particular races, is applied to Latin peoples in general, to Negroes and to Jews. (And also I have heard it applied to Welshmen and to Gypsies).

To beat totalitarianism it will be necessary to liberate people sexually, to give them a satisfying creative life, to build up real communities where the individual can feel that he really belongs, and change the economic system to one based on human needs. That is all. It should keep us busy for another five milleniums.

ARTHUR W. ULOTH.

\*This is perhaps a roundabout proof of the fundamental goodness of human nature. If it were natural for human beings to conquer and enslave their fellows, they would have no sense of guilt about it, and the conquered race would not be represented in a particularly bad light.

## SAVING THE SYSTEM

Continued from page 1

advise those in office—we maintain that the real rulers of this country and the nations of the Common Market are the industrialists, the financiers, the large landowners (and, in some, nations, the generals and the colonels!). And Mr. Macmillan kindly confirmed this view in his much praised, "refreshingly warmer in tone" (*Guardian*) speech last Wednesday week, when he declared:

It was impossible to tell, by the precise balance sheet, the prospects of our industries in the Common Market. But the weight of opinion of British industrialists was that, from every point of view, the balance of advantage lay in joining a unit which would be of comparable size to the United States or Soviet Russia.

Mr. Macmillan who told the House, much to the discomfort of the *Guardian's* editor, that

The Treaty of Rome did not deal with defence or foreign policy. It dealt with trade and some of the social aspects of human life most connected with trade and production.

Later, in the same speech he underlined the economic (we would say "financial") nature of the Common Market with "a reminder to the House" that

the EEC is an economic community, not a defence alliance or a foreign policy community or a cultural community. It is an economic community and the region where collective decisions are taken is related to the sphere covered by the treaty—economics, tariffs, and markets."

★

THE position taken up by the Parliamentary Labour Party is worth noting, the more so if one depends on Mr. Freeman and the *New Statesman* for one's information on the state of the Party. According to the *N.S.* the eclipse of poor old Macmillan has been accompanied "happily" by "one gleam of light": "the resurrection of the Labour Party".

In recent weeks, for the first time, its front bench has spoken and acted like an alternative government, and there is a growing mood of confidence and unity behind it. . . . It [the Labour Party] is clear and united on the way to approach the Common market problem. Now is the time to demand from the country a mandate to pursue it.

The Labour Party amendment to the government's motion noted the government's decision to make formal application for membership of EEC but "regretted that the negotiations would be conducted from a position of grave economic weakness"—a dig at the government, for party advantage, but what do they mean by "grave economic weakness"? Are they really suggesting that the standard of living of the workers in this country is lower than that of workers in the Common Market countries? If they are then they are talking through their hats!

However, let us follow the arguments of the Leader of the "Socialist" Opposition. He did not think that the Common Market would be the panacea for all our export problems. But neither did he think that the "political consequences" were as "dangerous or profound" as they were sometimes made out to be. Indeed he did not think we were "necessarily" bound for Federalism in Europe. Why did Mr. Gaitskell consider political consequences which involved a supra national authority as "dangerous". Aren't the LP in favour of a United States of Europe? Apparently no longer:

There is no question, as far as Britain is concerned, of entering into a Federal Europe now. British opinion simply is

not ripe for this. In any event, it is incompatible with all the pledges made about the Commonwealth"

They must be clear that there was no commitment at all, even to eventual federation He hoped this would be cleared up in the debate.

He then drew attention to a proposal carried in the EEC Assembly in May last year for establishing a directly elected Parliament "Where exactly do we stand on that? Is this something which is going to take place whatever happens? What is the attitude of the Ministerial Council towards it? If we have a directly elected Parliament, we have taken a very long step towards a Federal Europe. I do not believe, whatever the future may hold, that at present British opinion is in any way ripe for such a step."

He said it appeared from the allocation of votes, that France and Belgium, for instance, voting together, were in a position to veto any decision which might be made otherwise by the Council of Ministers but we and Denmark were not. That would be very unsatisfactory. On the other hand, if the right to veto remained with us—plus one other Scandinavian State, for instance—then certainly it removed some of the doubts which many people had.

Here we are, already talking about powers of veto! But equally interesting is the admission by the leader of the "socialists" that Britain is not "ripe" for entry to a federal Europe! Obviously the LP has no intention of doing anything in that direction. The Common Market debate brought out more chauvinist arguments from the so-called socialists than from the Tories. Attlee's short and otherwise quite pointed speech in the Lords, nevertheless contained this irrelevant piece of nationalistic claptrap

we were asked to go into an organisation consisting of two countries which we had defeated in the last war and of four countries who owed their survival to us. In 10 years we had been so reduced and they had done so much that we had to beg to join it.

Mr. Harold Wilson (Labour's shadow Chancellor) in his speech declared that

If there was to be a choice between Europe and the Commonwealth, we were not entitled to sell our friends and kinsmen down the river for some problematical advantage in selling washing machines in Düsseldorf.

Presumably if the advantage is not "marginal" we might have to reconsider our "friends and kinsmen". As a matter of fact Mr. Roy Jenkins, another Labour speaker made it quite clear that he didn't believe the Commonwealth countries' claim that they could offer "the same advantages as we could get from Europe". In the Commonwealth, Britain, he said, was losing ground steadily to other competitors. "The last thing the Commonwealth will do is to give UK manufacturers a free run in their markets".

Here speaks the voice of capitalist reality! But if the Commonwealth,

Mr. Gaitskell and the Prime Minister are on common ground here. Mr. Macmillan had this to say on the subject:

The US had been formed by peoples with little history. "Europe is too old, too diverse in tradition, in language, and in history to find its unity by such means. Although a federalist movement exists in Europe, it is not favoured by the leading figures and Governments of today."

"The only practicable concept would be confederation or a Commonwealth which would retain the great traditions and pride of individual nations while working together in clearly defined spheres for their common interests. This seemed a concept more in tune with the national tradition of European countries and, in particular, our own. It was one which Britain could be associated with willingly and wholeheartedly.

"THE emergency is here. After all these years the time has come for direct action. A few must be killed that many may be saved."

He was sitting on the terrace of my medieval penthouse looking across the sea to the meretricious pesthouse of Monaco, a little lean old man, clean-shaven, well-dressed, whom I had found at the door when my bell rang. He had given some name I didn't know, hardly heard, quickly adding as his smile faded, "But it is 54 years—it is not surprising if we do not recognise ourselves."

"Amsterdam?" The year gave it. "I'm sorry—I still don't—but come in, please."

"I was delegated to the Anti-Militarist Congress that was after your Anarchist Congress," he explained when we were seated. "I was one of those who privately visited with Malatesta because he had spoken of the necessity to develop a *technique militaire*. He was not encouraging. I think it was you who said that we must from the cold water he had sprinkled on our hot aspirations make steam."

I remembered that unrecorded discussion; I even recalled my heated imagery. And presently he was talking the Anti-

in spite of blood ties, and sharing a queen, a queen mother *et alia* (but not the cost and inconveniences) puts its business interests before its loyalties to the motherland, what justification is there for having illusions about "higher motives" and "equality of economic opportunity" among the members of the EEC, a mixed bag of former "enemies", or chicken-hearted allies?

Of course our illusions, if we had any, would not be based on these considerations. What concessions, we would ask, are the member nations prepared to make for the common good? It is clear that the answer is *none*; that is each nation joining EEC does so because on balance each considers the advantages will outweigh possible disadvantages. Some firms, some industries, will, to quote Mr. Maudlin, 'go down'. Similarly some workers will improve their situations others will find it more difficult to get a job. But what the brains behind the Common Market feel they have saved is the capitalist system, and this is a consideration which is as important to the Social Democrats of Western Europe as it is to the I.C.I. and to Krupps.

★

IT is because we believe that the EEC is a scheme to consolidate the capitalist system that we advocate unconditional opposition to it by workers and their organisations. We anarchists have always stressed the need to break down the artificial barriers that divide workers, not only geographically but socially and economically. The Common Market proposes to remove all physical barriers to movement between these countries but not because they believe that national barriers are bad things but because they have now come round to the view that the free flow of labour as well as of capital and goods within the "Community" is a good thing for *Big Business*.

We anarchists are of the opinion that efficiency can only come about through co-operation; the Common market encourages competition at all levels; the elimination of the weak and "inefficient" business and industry, and for the workers affected it has an "European Social Fund" which "can make retraining and resettlement grants and temporary unemployment grants to workers discommunity they cannot begin to be placed by competition in the Common Market". More than ever will the worker be divorced from control over the work he does. Competition, profit motives, will determine not only what work he does but where he does it.

The EEC is a top-level financial and economic organisation. We anarchists believe that until the people have direct control of the means of production and the wealth of the free.

# Conversation WITH A Conspirator

Militarist language of those days, a tough language very different from that of today's pacifism or today's anarchism, being unclouded by social theory, more like the talk of Nihilists one used to meet at the Kropotkins'. It sounded old-fashioned then—Anarchists were more advanced, I thought; but today when he began to talk it, it sounded like something new—clean and strong and quite uniquely, narrowly, committed. His intonation was transatlantic.

"Your Anarchist steam did nothing for us in 1941," he continued. "You let us down, you and your syndicalists, as we expected you would. I do not include the Spanish Anarchists because they are different and even then they were not with you. You aim in all directions, you Anarchists, and you hit nothing."

"We make Anarchists—we are changing world opinion," I protested.

"While the enemy, he makes bombs! What will it matter if you are Anarchist or not in October?"

"You mean if there is war in October?"

"I ask what it will matter in October," he said sharply. "Is it your pleasure we talk politics? Will we discuss the Berlin situation? I did not come for that. You wrote in *FREEDOM* as if you were still thinking and I heard you were here. Do you remember that Malatesta said to cheer us who felt discouraged? You ought to do so because it was when you said that you came to Amsterdam prepared to undertake a dangerous task if it was allotted to you, that he turned on you and told you a little roughly not to despair, because an emergency will come some day when you can make all the sacrifice that you wish."

I said I remembered. He was poking about in corners of my social conscience which I had thought were empty. He looked at me gently, as if he knew what was going on inside there.

"You did not too well remember," he said. "But now you do. Well, my friend, the emergency is here. After all these years the time has come again for direct action. A few must be killed that many may be saved."

A different kind of discomfort stirred in me at these words, but I could not even in my own mind question his credentials—or only as an excuse to escape—to escape—from what? And truth would be a better way. I explained my change of opinion from those days, my present radical mistrust of violence.

"Even granted the emergency," I said, "which indeed I do not question, I would not thank anyone for shooting the Queen—or Macmillan—though some people would be stupid enough to be pleased—"

He had leaned forward and put a hand on my knee to stop me and when he spoke again it was in Italian, hurriedly saying that he did not want me to misunderstand his purpose in coming to see me, which was not to invite me or my friends to take any violent action.

"Then you had better tell me quite plainly what is your purpose," I said. "If it is not for collaboration you come. I am sure it is not for money." And I added flatly that I wanted no part in any kind of secret conspiracy.

"Benissimo," he said, smiling again. "Now we get down to cases. I will tell you the facts and you will then see the purpose of my visit. We are nothing but a few individuals who have been outside the Anti-Militarist organisations of several countries in preparation for an emergency. I have told you our opinion about it; I do not ask what is yours, about it, or about our programme. We have recently met—no matter where—and now shall not see one another again. We agreed on these few things: one, that the emergency is here; two, that preventive action must be timed for the eve of crisis; three, that preventive action should be taken only in the three decisive countries—the United States, Great Britain and Russia—against the high authorities in the politico-military chain of command; four, that we would not associate in any way with any persons associated with any group or society but only with lawless characters—outlaws from whom we could secure our

simple individual armament."

I thought I began to understand.

"You are telling me this," I ventured, "so that when these things happen—if they do—I can tell about your coming to see me—is that what you have come for?"

"You are half-way there," he said. "You realise that violence is a two-edged sword, that when we act we shall be called Communists in America, and Soviet agents in England, and agents of the British and American Intelligence in Russia, and that this would only make matters worse from our point of view."

"Exactly, you would defeat your own object," I said. "So you want to call it off. You want me to stop it by informing—"

"I want you to inform, certainly—but not stop it. I want you to inform the world that when we act we are not agents of any government but of an open conspiracy to defeat the governments in their evil designs against one another and against humanity; I want you to inform that we are what I tell you—Old Anti-Militarists acting in concert but not connected with any organisation or even in touch with one another or with any support except that of the poor stupid criminals who have so little to do with it that they do not know even for what purpose they sell their armament."

"But, my poor friend," I said, "do you imagine that anyone is going to pay any attention to me or to anyone else when such things happen?"

"No, no, no!" he cried angrily; and then subsided and spoke calmly again, patiently. "It is not to wait until we act that I am asking you to inform, which would be useless, but now, at once, as widely as possible, so that there may be a body of opinion in the world that will understand."

"And your intended victims," I objected, "do you think they will do nothing about it if they are told this? But they will tighten all security measures to such a degree that you will never be able to get at them."

"Nonsense! No man is invulnerable. Also we have a wide choice in each country, and even if some fail, others will succeed. I shall not tell you how many we are—only that we are sufficient. And now that you, I think, understand—will you do what I ask? Just tell me before I go—because I must be going—I have a long journey."

I didn't know what to say. I didn't see myself going to the Foreign Office or Scotland Yard with such a story when I got back to London, where I was due in a few days, and said as much. They would just think I was a crank.

"Tell only a few who believe," he said as he rose to go. "It will get about."

"I might write an account of your visit for *FREEDOM*," I suggested. "I need not identify you."

"Could you identify me—except in the morgue?" he asked, smiling as we shook hands. "Yes, write it," he added.

I have done so.

KARL WALTER,  
Bordighera, July, 1961.

## ANARCHY 6

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# THE ANARCHIST SUMMER SCHOOL 1961

The Anarchist Summer School 1961 was a rather less formal occasion than earlier summer schools. Two of the three lectures were given in the evening, which meant that the serious discussions following them were able to merge imperceptibly into hilarious storytelling sessions round the campfire, and that a drizzly Saturday afternoon, a fine Sunday and a brilliant Monday morning could be devoted to informal activities. One of the objects of the Summer Schools, to help comrades to get acquainted, was better served this year, perhaps, than ever before. The theme of the lectures, somewhat inappropriate to the general atmosphere, was "Anarchism and Respectability".

Bob Green, speaking on Saturday evening, discussed Respectability as a phenomenon of social science, the desire to conform to a social norm, or in less technical terms concern for what the neighbours think. Respectable behaviour as distinct from the social custom which is necessary for any society, in that failure to conform produces a feeling of shock in the 'respectable' person. And it is also distinct from morality in that it is not internalised. The respectable man can steal library books, avoid paying bus fares and so on without feeling in the least unrespectable unless other people know about it. In this country one does not break wind noisily in public, but the most respectable and moral person can enjoy a loud fart in private without any sense of shame or guilt.

The social norm is, and must be, imposed on children from their earliest education. The child of a respectable family is taught quite clearly and distinctly what is done and what is not done. The child of a free family must learn a double standard, what is done and not done inside the family and what is done and not done in the larger group. The free child must learn for instance, that while sex is not dirty, "other people" think sex is dirty. This makes life at a certain period very difficult for the free child.

Social norms are not constant. In our society, for instance, the consumption of alcohol is quite acceptable, while the consumption of marijuana is frowned upon, even by many anarchists. In Arab countries, at least until they are westernised, the smoking of marijuana or *qif* is quite proper, but alcohol is considered dirty. Anarchists, Bob suggested, would like to be free of this kind of prejudice. They would like to approve or disapprove of alcohol or *qif* on grounds other than that it is customary to approve or disapprove; and to dis-

approve most strongly of the positively injurious, whether it is 'respectable' or not.

Rigid 'respectable' attitudes, however, often lead to faulty notions of what is injurious. In this country a child below a given age must be in bed before a certain time, and parents who allow their children to stay up later are accused of neglecting their children's health; but on the continent children stay up until the early hours of the morning without perceptible harm. Parents who leave children alone in the house asleep meet with shrieks of disapproval in view of the very remote possibility that the house might burn down; yet among those who shriek loudest will be parents who refuse to have their children inoculated against diseases which cannot be controlled by other means, thereby subjecting them to much more likely dangers than burning to death in the evenings.

There are, of course, "respectable" customs which are positively harmful to themselves, such as the teaching of nastiness about sex to children. These, Bob suggested, would be more suitable targets for anarchist disapproval than such harmless pageants as royalty. Anarchists wear ties and use table cutlery, just as they use conventional grammar and avoid licking their plates in swank restaurants, in order not to embarrass people. An English anarchist in Holland will have no compunction about eating a bread-roll with his fingers, if he is among Dutch comrades who understand that he is not trying to insult them or shock them; but among strangers in Holland he will eat his bread-roll, if he

knows respectable Dutch attitudes, with a knife and fork, like a respectable man.

The trouble is that respectable people get annoyed if one does not conform completely to their standards. To cut down one's weeds before they germinate, so that one's garden-proud neighbours can have natty gardens, is not enough for them; they expect one to cultivate a garden like them. But here the humanitarian may draw the line; he is not imposing his weeds on his neighbours and they should not impose their gardens on him.

The question is, are anarchists humanitarians?

Alan Albon, speaking on Sunday evening, discussed the question of whether anarchists were getting too respectable, too conformist, in their attitudes. The Oxford Dictionary, he said, connects respectability with fair social standing, conforming to the standards of the existing society and getting general approval for so doing.

To be a rebel for the sake of being a rebel is a sterile attitude. For the fairly balanced individual the pressure to conform is strong, and only a strong sense of the falseness of conformist values will bring him to the point of challenging society. Much misery is caused by arbitrary rules enforced in the name of human happiness, either here or hereafter. To live at odds with society is destructive; and while Alan felt society was being frogmarched in the wrong direction, he felt also that more and more people were getting the same uneasy feeling. Our advertising agents are demonstrating the puerility and futility

of our values, plainly enough to get them laughed out of existence.

Yet there are many negative forces in society tending to make us accept affluence without question, which is a great danger. Alan thought the general vitality of individuals was declining, in spite of medical statistics showing the decline of this or that disease and the decline of infant mortality.

"I know that many anarchists feel that the Health Service is doing a valuable job, but it is a negative force in our society, and positive studies of health such as the Peckham Health Centre, are discouraged. Health is not the absence of disease, but a measure of the capacity to enjoy life and the ability to put effort into work, love, play and the search for knowledge."

Society is tending to develop into larger institutions, which tend to debase the physical and psychological basis of life. Food production is more and more on broiler lines, the emphasis on productivity rather than quality. Health in the physical sense can be created only by the application of labour to material, but our social set-up involves so much inconsequential labour that values important to health are blurred. The emphasis in work is placed on the money obtainable from a particular job, rather than on the benefit which the individual and society may derive from the job itself.

Anarchists tend to denounce non-conformists in their particular area of conformity of cranks, a term more accurately applied to those who pin their hope of salvation on one particular facet

of man's life. Bob Green, in taking a gentle backhander at those who distrust orthodox medicine, was merely supporting the orthodox cranks.

What are anarchist values, and can they be shown to be more attractive than the values of the affluent society?

More affluence cannot bring happiness. The very mechanics of accumulating wealth, unless as a by-product of purposeful, creative and enjoyable activity, may destroy the ability to enjoy what money can buy. Love, affection and the ability to enjoy life cannot be bought. Soon it will be impossible to buy good food with money, because good food will be unobtainable.

Machinery is not in itself harmful, but it should be controlled not only for productivity but also to make work creative and satisfying. It is good that machinery has done away with much drudgery, but physical and mental activity is necessary to whole organic beings and satisfied individuals.

The last lecture, given by Colin Ward on Monday afternoon spoke on the subject Are Anarchists Respectable Enough, discussing the intellectual respectability of various kinds of anarchist approach. The text of his lecture will be published separately and it would be redundant to summarise it here. Not surprisingly, it stimulated a most interesting and enjoyable discussion. D.R.

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L.A.G. Central London meetings are suspended for the time being pending the booking of a new meeting-place.

## Hyde Park Meetings

Every Sunday at 3.30 (if fine)

## OFF-CENTRE DISCUSSION MEETINGS

1st Thursday of each month at 8 p.m. at Jack and Mary Stevenson's, 6 Stainton Road, Enfield, Middx.

Last Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m. at Dorothy Barasi's, 45 Twyford Avenue, Fortis Green, N.2.

No August meeting at Fortis Green.

1st Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m. at Colin Ward's, 33 Ellerby Street, Fulham, S.W.6.

3rd Thursday of each month at 8 p.m. at Donald Room's, 148a Fellows Road, Swiss Cottage, N.W.3.

## NEW MEETING

Last Friday of each month at 8 p.m. at Laurens Otter's 57 Ladbroke Road, W.11.

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THE *New Statesman's* diarist "Charon" raises the interesting point, in connection with the teachers pay dispute, as to what effective steps they could take to press the authorities to give them the full amount recommended by the Burnham Committee. Apart from the fact that teachers have no experience of strikes—Charon recounts that one teacher who helped to run the first school strike recently told him that he had to go to the builders at work at his school to ask how to organise it! he adds that they have no strike funds and do not earn enough to have "saved individually". This is a sad commentary on the outlook of teachers, for even if one agreed that they are badly paid, there are millions of other workers who get even less than they do, and who have at various times engaged in long-drawn-out strikes. And it wasn't the strike fund which kept them going. As one has seen in the case of the big unions, strike funds are soon swallowed up, and other means have to be resorted to to keep going; where the strike will obviously be prolonged many workers get themselves odd jobs as well as visiting the pawn shops. Perhaps this would not be considered quite the right thing by teachers!

But to come back to the question of the effectiveness of strike action in the case of teachers. The result

## NO LOVE FOR SIR

would be that children would stay at home and local authorities would save money. Parents might protest, and some would be unable to go to work if they had their young children on their hands. The examination system might be put out of action temporarily but while one can visualise such action causing some inconvenience, it is an interesting reflection that a few thousand workers in the car industry, or at the docks who go on strike can do more to disrupt the life of the community than several hundred thousand teachers refusing to take their classes.

Individually there must be many teachers who are loved by the children and esteemed by parents. As a profession however, one suspects that there is little real human contact between teachers and the children and parents. The teacher represents all-powerful authority so far as children are concerned, and most parents must feel socially and economically in a position of inferiority. Most of us do not recall our school days with happiness; very few of us put a foot near the school once we have left it, and the teachers one remembers warmly are those who in fact established a relationship which transcended the learning of the three Rs!

The employment of teachers by the State, in fact the centralisation of education in the hands of the State (the fact that local authorities are financially responsible is much more a matter of bookkeeping than evidence of decentralisation) leads to this lack of any kind of human relationship between teacher, children and parents. Ideally schools should be an intimate part of a Community life. (This writer recollects that not only did at least half of the boys at his school in London, live more than five miles from the school, but that apart from the headmaster who had a house attached to the school, not one of the teachers lived locally).

Surely the problem is that education is one of the essential services of a civilised society which should

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