

Freedom

AN ANARCHIST FORTNIGHTLY

"Downing Street: happy spot, where they draw up constitutions for Syria and treaties for China with the same self-complacency and the same success!"

BENJAMIN DISRAELI

On the 11th Anniversary of World War II we ask: Do you accept

PERMANENT WAR?

THIS issue of Freedom will be in the hands of its readers in time for an anniversary—the eleventh since the outbreak of the Second World War on September 3rd, 1939. For many, these ten years represent a substantial fraction of their lives; for younger people, almost the whole of their adult lives. The conditions of war have been the main external factors pressing on the existence of our generation; the events of recent months make it nearly certain that war conditions, if not war itself, are likely to remain the dominant social factor.

For English people, war has not only been acceptable as a temporary expedient to meet apparently pressing political situations. That it was losing its temporary, improvised character began to suggest itself after "the ending of hostilities", permanent conscription was retained instead of being repealed with relief, as the politicians promised. Now it is "peace" which has a partial, temporary character. The permanent war preparedness of the anti-Stalinist Russia, of Fascist and Nazi Germany is the lot of the Western democracies also. Just as they are ahead of us in the trend towards permanent war, so they are slightly ahead of us. Eleven years ago, we were many in this country who concluded themselves that the so-called "anti-Fascist" war was necessary for the safeguarding of peace; but there are few so naive as to find acceptable the American wishful illusion of "Let's get World War III over and done with."

This is the world we live in. Those who find it an acceptable world may also be able to accept its permanent war. But for those who find the social structure of our society so faulty that they wish to alter it, the growing dominance of war appears as a ghastly symptom requiring analysis and explanation.

THE "ANNIVERSARY"

First of all, it is apparent that to consider September 3rd as a starting point, "eleven years from then . . .", is illogical and absurd. A better, though still by no means an initial date is 1931, the outbreak of the war of China and Japan. Besides making clearer that war has long roots in our lives than our "anniversaries" suggests, consideration of some aspects of the 1931 war helps to clarify the general problems of war for us.

In those days there were many statesmen and captains of industry who supported or apologised for Japan, whose colonial war seemed to them to be no different from the ventures of the British for two hundred years before. With Sir John Simon and Mr. L. S. Amery as their spokesmen they formed a tactless group of the Right. The Left had for many years denounced imperialism and colonial methods of rule. That the British had got away with it in less enlightened times seemed to them no reason at all for letting Japan get away with it in the mid-twentieth century. The Left therefore supported China ("Arms for China, etc.")—and also Chiang Kai-Shek. They laid the foundation for that wartime build-up of the Chinese leader as a champion of the "free" nations. This is a significant point because it illustrates the necessity which war lays upon its supporters of "adjusting" the truth to suit political requirements—as much or more for the Left as for the Right. To support Chiang Kai-Shek the Left had to forget that only a few years before he had been the "Butcher of the Chinese Revolution" who had fought his way to power through an appalling political slaughter of Chinese workers.

As War Commentary pointed out during the time of the Churchill-Roosevelt-Chiang conversations at Cairo, he has more blood on his hands than any other successful politician with the exception of Stalin. Political fashions have now stripped the veneer from this particular leader. The truth, however, has always been there, however much the Left sought to gloss or conceal it. It is perhaps unnecessary to do more than point to the glorification of Churchill by the pro-war-Left.

The important matter here is that the claims of truth are largely incompatible with the waging of war or with acceptance of the war-pressed social structure. The more one adheres to the truth—both for moral reasons and in order to understand the modern dilemma—the less can one put up with the half-truths and downright lies of war propaganda.

WHY IS IT ACCEPTABLE?

To turn from those who manipulate the facts of history for the purposes of propaganda to those at the receiving end is equally disillusioning, perhaps more so. For it soon becomes apparent that however flimsy the propaganda pretexts, and however much "we all hate war", there is something about war which is highly acceptable to modern men and women. Even before 1939 there were those who were prepared to admit that the only time they had ever been really happy was in 1914

to 1918, and who were frank enough to say that they would welcome the outbreak of hostilities.

Psychologists have somewhat differently explained satisfaction in war by reference to "release of aggressive drives in a socially acceptable form." The layman is often aware that the pulse beats quicker in wartime, that the sense (one should say, the illusion) of purpose lends point to life. Many are able to recognise that Army life with all its squalor has something to offer

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RESISTANCE TO MILITARY CONSCRIPTION

THE Los Angeles Daily News is quoted by the Paris weekly *Libertaire* as stating that in Germany, in spite of Adenauer's new position, the German people in general are resolutely hostile to any plans for rearmament; that in France it is estimated that in the event of war half the conscripts will ignore the call-up. In America the position is stated to be that in New York of 1,402 men called up 329 failed to respond; in Portland (Oregon) the comparative figures were 191 and 82, Washington 100 and 22, Cleveland (Ohio) 100 and 38, Boston 154 and 10, Kansas City 200 and 25, Miami (Florida) 103 and 27, and in Chicago only a third of those called up presented themselves.

We can only hope that these figures are accurate.

KOREA—A Phoney Crusade

Taegu is accepting tragedy and disaster with the expressionless calm of a people well-adjusted to despair. One gets the impression, irresistibly, that for total victory, whichever way it went, Taegu would put out no flags and shed no tears.

War report in "The Observer", 27/8/50.



IF you went to the cinema the week before last, you probably saw the news-reel of war-planes and ships being taken out of storage and refitted "after the long years of peace" as the commentator put it without a trace of irony in his plummy voice. You saw, too, the bombing of Korean villages and towns in the name of "freedom and democracy". The news-reels, the radio, the press and the politicians are all preparing us for the idea that the Korean war is the first stage of the Third World War.

While a rational and calm approach will show that neither the Russian nor the American government is prepared technologically for a full-scale war, and that Russia will not be for a long time, it is obvious that they may well have created a situation from which they cannot withdraw. The American government in particular is so deeply committed, that, no matter what the cost in soldiers' lives, it must continue to defend what its own advisers considered last year to be strategically undefendable. Defeat in Korea would be so disastrous to American prestige that, however great the losses, the government whose prestige is at stake dare not end the war. Men may die, the country (which was once called *Chao Hsien*—Land of the Morning Calm) may be utterly ruined, but prestige must not be lost.

The manner in which the "values of the free world" are being defended should be enlightening to those who imagine that the Korean war is being fought "for civilisation".

The war correspondent of the American paper *Time* (21/8/50) writes that the war in Korea is forcing upon the American troops "acts and attitudes of the utmost savagery, not the usual inevitable savagery of combat in the field, but savagery in detail—the blotting out of villages where the enemy may be hiding, the shooting and shelling of refugees who may include North Koreans . . . And there is savagery by proxy . . . The South Korean police and the South Korean marines who I observed in front line areas are brutal. They murder to save themselves the trouble of escorting prisoners to the rear; they murder civilians simply to get them out of the way, or to avoid the trouble of searching and cross-examining them. And they extort information—information our forces need and require of the South Korean interrogators—by means so brutal that they cannot be described."

We may be sure that whether the victory in Korea should go to America and its puppets or to the Soviet Union and its, the people of the country will be the losers. C. P. Fitzgerald, an anthropologist of the Australian National University, writing in *The Listener*, (24/8/50) says, "The Korean people wanted independence and unity—liberty from the Japanese yoke. Instead they

Foreign Commentary

Crab Politics

Plays into the hands of Stalinist Propagandists

THE embargo by New York stevedores on all goods of Russian origin must not be mistaken as a sign of working-class militancy against authoritarianism. Indeed, the political manoeuvre which resulted in their action is much less savoury than the Russian crab meat which they refused to unload.

Three million dollars' worth of this commodity had already been imported and sold in the United States without any objection from the dockers. The first ideological protest came from a group of senators who, to quote the well-known American commentator, Alistair Cooke, "by a coincidence happened to be the representatives in the United States Senate of the crab-infested shores of such States as Maine, California, Oregon, Louisiana and Maryland." These senators eventually found a longshoreman, Patrick Brown by name, and who is also a commander of a local post of the American Legion, to champion their cause. It is reported that it took him only forty-five minutes to win over one of the branches of the A.F. of L.'s International Longshoremen's Association, not on the

grounds that American crab interests were suffering by this invasion of Russian crab naturally, but to the patriotic slogan of "we are at war with Russia." The conversion to the Senators' cause seems too sudden for one to suspect that we have not been told the whole story; one day we presume the whole dirty story will come out.

Helping Communist Propaganda

Meanwhile such action helps Communist propaganda. For the Communists will be pointing to the fact that while longshoremen were boycotting Russia, the House of Representatives was agreeing to the granting to Franco, Europe's arch-Fascist, a £22,000,000 loan. On this action, it will be pointed out, the dockers are silent though they will be called upon to load ships with goods which will be used by Franco to consolidate his totalitarian regime, and to strengthen his own prestige among the Spanish people.

If dockers—and other workers, were to boycott all totalitarian countries then one might even applaud their militancy, but they don't; and Capitalism knows no frontiers—not even iron curtains or rivalisms. We pointed out in *Freedom's* wartime predecessor, *War Commentary*, how Germany was receiving scrap metal, rubber and meals from this country right up to a week before the outbreak of war, and the same occurred in the case of Japan and America. Why should it be different now?

In fact, the same situation exists to-day. In Germany for instance the embargo on steel exports from Western Germany to the Eastern zone has been lifted. It should be noted that the embargo was imposed in the first place, not in order to prevent Russia using the steel for war preparations but simply because the East zone failed to meet its promises of payment in kind and also ran out of Deutschmarks! Besides lifting the ban, it was learned in Bonn, last month, that a big West German iron and steel company was negotiating for a direct deal with the Russians amounting to more than £2,000,000.

In the city columns of the Press, one also reads that heavy buying of rubber in the East by Russia and some of her satellites has "added to the recent pressure on supplies."

Spain Exports to Russia

But the most perfect example of the Capitalist International is the report that huge quantities of mercury (used in explosives as well as in instruments) are being exported by Spain to Russia via Finland and are being transported in American ships. And to complete the picture one should add that it is more than likely that the exporting firms are largely financed by Wall Street and the City!

One thing about the Russian crab meat is that it is palatable; which is more than one can say about politics on both sides of the Curtain.

[More Foreign Commentary on p. 3.]

Autumn Reading

AMONG the books announced for publication this Autumn, are a number which will have a particular interest for readers of *Freedom*.

The *Anarchist Prince* by George Woodcock and Ivan Avacumovic (T. V. Boardman & Co.) will be the first full-length biography of Kropotkin.

Marie Louise Berneri's *Journey Through Utopia* is to be published by Routledge and Kegan Paul. Readers are reminded that the special edition published by the M. L. Berneri Memorial Committee will be available to them.

A new Freedom Press publication is Bakunin's *Marxism, Freedom and the State*, translated and edited with an introduction by K. J. Kenafick.

Those who heard Alex Comfort's talk at the recent Anarchist Summer School on Delinquency will be interested in his *Authority and Delinquency in the Modern State*, a criminological approach to the problem of power. The same author's fifth volume of poems, *And All But He Departed* is also to be published by Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Of Fear and Freedom (Cassell) is a philosophical work by Carlo Levi, the author of *Christ Stopped at Eboli*. Secker and Warburg will be publishing *Shooting an Elephant*, a collection of essays by George Orwell. This book will be in three sections, one of autobiographical articles, one of literary essays, and one from his contributions to *Tribune*.

One of the most important books on Spain published in this country was Gerald Brenan's *The Spanish Labyrinth*. The author has recently revisited the country, and *The Face of Spain* (Turnstile Press) is an account of what he saw.

Allen and Unwin announce a book by Prof. David Fleisher on *William Godwin*, described as "a study in liberalism."

Eugen Kogon's *The Theory and Practice of Hell* (Secker & Warburg) is a book on the Nazi concentration camp system, which has been very widely read in Germany. (Kogon's federalist ideas are discussed by Helmut Rudiger in the latest issue of *Estudios*.)

Another book which has been very widely discussed on the continent is a novel

Esperanto or Desperanto?

PARIS LETTER

AN Esperanto Congress with 700 delegates has been held here; and the Stalinist papers have at the same time published a sensational declaration by Stalin himself about the coming unification of all idioms into one single Marxist lingo; so linguistics are on the order of the day, and they must be the subject of my letter anyway.

I have no competence at all the matter, of course—being no Russian, no Com-

The Twenty-fifth Hour, by a Roumanian author, Constantine Virgil Gheorghiu (Heinemann). This is an appalling story of the fate of modern man epitomised in the history of two men from a tiny Balkan village. As *Manas* (U.S.A.) writes, "Intentionally, or not, the author has subsumed in there two figures the two divisions into which fall the men of any country in any age: the large body of human being who toil, suffer, and endure, credulous inarticulate, incomprehending; and the smaller number who toil, suffer, and endure, yet articulate, because they comprehend, the unfolding tragedy of their time and place."

PLEASE NOTE: None of these books is yet published. They will appear in the *Freedom Bookshop* announcement, when available.

A FIELD OF BROKEN STONES

THROUGH the kindness of the Libertarian Press, copies of Lowell Naeve's *A Field of Broken Stones* (reviewed in the article "The Spirit of Resistance" in *Freedom*, 27/5/50), are now available to readers in Britain from Freedom Bookshop, at 12/6d.

munist, and no General Statesman: just a proof-reader, and, occasionally, a translator of English, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, Hungarian into French. (By the way, I was told that Uncle Joe-Mustachio does not get a word of any foreign language. Is it so?)

I hear that the Esperantist char-a-bancs from Holland, Belgium, West Germany and Scandinavian countries had a daily meeting every night in the neighbourhood of the Folies Bergère. The Congress was not, however, celebrated there, as at first supposed, and the variety show "Feeries-Folies" does not as a matter of fact require great linguistic knowledge. It consists of the same mass production of Bare-Breast-and Bottoms as usual, plus a fluorescent-mystical impersonation of Our Lady by Josephine Baker (with Schubert's *Ave Maria* played on the wave organ). It is therefore, a manifestation of international artistic catholicity. A ticket for the Folies is, I presume, included in the cost of the Pilgrimage to Rome for the *Annus Sanctus* (is that good Latin?) as well as the Pope's blessings and the visit to the Old Roman Lupanar at Pompeii . . .

As for Esperanto, I considered (until lately that it was a sort of Sanskrit (holy or hieratic language) like those that children invent for the sake of mystery. I thought that the pleasure of the *gesamdeanoj* ("comrades", in esperanto. Literally: people-of-both-sexes-who-partake-of-the-same-idea), found in its use was to be understood by nobody else, under the pretext of being understood by everybody. But I probably misunderstood myself . . . the *Spirit of the Time*.

A great number of the Congress members did not speak a word of Esperanto either, but were all the more emphatic supporters of its beauties and of the introduction of its obligatory use in all schools. Every Esperantist I met avowed that the case was hopeless if some kind of compulsory measure was not obtained from governments.

The difference between that naive staid-ideology of the followers of Dr. Zamenhof, and the hard-boiled state-ideology of Generalissimo Stalin is, of course, a question of their amount of power. As Marx would have styled it, a theory is just a theory so long as it does not have the means to take hold of the masses. If it does, it enters into the Kingdom of "Reality" and, therefore, of "Rationality"; it becomes "true". Garry Davis' World Government on the steps of the Palais de Chaillot, and the "true" world government of Washington or Moscow—Cable's socialism in his book *Journey to Icarus* and the "true" socialism of *Icaria* realised over one sixth of the earth—Lenin's bolshevism of the Kienthal valley and Lenin's "true" bolshevism of the Kremlin Tower, are not at one. Things of inter-individual scale are not the same when they are on a superhuman scale. The cat is nice, the tiger terrible. I prefer cat-dimensioned institutions. Marxists want tiger-institutions! A born tiger may be quite nice, but growing up that makes the tiger. The only difference between the lunatic and the palace of the Emperor is that the Emperor is obeyed by his attendants.

As you may see, I am terribly bored by the idea that all the dear old tongues of Europe are to disappear superseded by an international A sort of Basic Georgian, maybe. Stalin already mixing in his cauldron the water of the Indo-European with the oils of the Uralo-Altaic of the Semitic sands and perhaps a spoonful of Bantu, a spoonful of Caribbean salt on? Are our next masters Kalmucks of the Red Army, or instructed in the way to teach us of *Desperanto*?

Anyhow, my trade is in danger of appearing completely, together with the pre-Stalin idioms and values, to happen to my family? Will it happen to Europe? Who will be Shakespeare, Heine, Petrarca, Camoens, Dekker, Ady and Montaigne in the future? Were there not 3,276 national languages . . .

(continued in next issue)

From our stock . . .

<i>The House by the Medlar Tree</i>	Giovanni Verga	10/6
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DELINQUENCY By Alex Comfort

In this and the next issue of *Freedom* we are publishing the text of Alex Comfort's lecture at the Anarchist Summer School on August 6th last. Despite the expression of highly reactionary views in debates on penal reform in the Houses of Parliament, such views are clearly on the defensive at the present time, and psychiatrists and others connected with the penal system are developing an outlook which would have been unthinkable fifty years ago. Surveying the subject of "Delinquency" in an entirely masterly fashion, Alex Comfort distinguishes between "crime" on the one hand and "delinquency" on the other, showing the relevance of the latter activity to revolutionary thought.

THE Mikado, you may remember, prided himself on making the punishment fit the crime. If he had been one of the more progressively-minded English Home Secretaries, he would have talked about making it fit the delinquent. A great many people use the word as a rather genteel term for criminal. I want to begin by pointing out that this is technically incorrect. Crime is something which the law punishes, and that is all it is. You probably know that the leading maxim of criminal law is that nothing is punishable unless the law expressly forbids it: crimes are those actions which are prohibited and which are punishable, and the term is a legal one. Delinquency is a psychiatric term, and it usually means that kind of behaviour disorder which expresses itself in injury to other people, or general mischief to society.

Now it is delinquency, and not crime, which psychiatry studies. I think you will see that this must be so—statistical data on the prevalence of crime, for example, are almost meaningless, because any action can become a crime or cease to be a crime overnight. If Parliament passes a Bill, or the Minister issues an order, forbidding the sale of herrings less than four inches long, it is going to be reflected in the criminal statistics. I'm choosing an extreme instance to illustrate the distinction. In most societies, including our own, it is quite true that most crimes, at least the important ones, are acts of delinquency, but in the last hundred years this has become very much less true, owing to the growth of a very large body of administrative law. And the distinction becomes highly important as soon as one begins to try to use psychiatric methods in dealing with those whom the courts convict. It must be quite obvious, I think, when we hear people saying that all convicted criminals ought to receive psychiatric treatment, that psychiatry would have very little to say to Robin Hood convicted of shooting the King's deer, or to the man who steals when he is starving, or to the Tolpuddle martyrs, or to the individual who is convicted of street betting. Those are not extreme instances. In the last few years we have seen psychiatrists being asked to rehabilitate people and readjust them in society because they refused to drop bombs on civilians or to conform to the Nazi racial laws. I don't think I need say any more to stress the distinction between criminal and delinquent, except to point out something I am coming back to later, that while some delinquents commit crimes, those who do are quite arbitrarily selected by the form of the law at the time, and that others of identical makeup are either unpunishable or are essential members of our present type of society. They may even make the laws which determine the selection.

I want to begin, however, by confining myself the delinquents who are criminals, in the sense that they persistently fall foul of society and of the people round them in ways which bring them into conflict with the law, because they present a definite challenge to the ideas of society which we, at this conference, have been discussing.

One of the standing arguments in favour of the coercive power wielded by the State is that delinquents of this type exist, and that we need to be protected against them. Now I know that most of us here don't accept that argument, any more than we accept punishment. What I want to do to-day is to give you a clearer idea of the evidence which, to my mind, justifies our rejection of it, but nevertheless I feel, from reading a good deal of our literature, that we are in danger of under-estimating the activity of these delinquents, and of assuming rather blithely that in a society of the kind we envisage they will disappear and give no more trouble. It is quite true, I believe, that we can eradicate this kind of delinquency almost entirely by altering the form of society, but only if we have a very clear idea of the exact causes which produce them. If we talk in general terms about getting rid of capitalism or of coercion, we are really being just as vague as the elderly magistrates who talk about improving the moral standards of the nation. The only hope of getting rid of delinquency, in an anarchist society or in any other, depends on our having as accurate a picture of its causes as we have of the causes of epidemic disease, and we can get that information by exactly the same methods. I want to look at some of the ideas of causation in delinquency which have been held in the past, then at more recent studies, and lastly at the implications of this work in any planning of new social patterns which we undertake.

During the period when our criminal law was formed, the normal explanation of delinquency was that it arose from spiritual wickedness. In other words, it had a supernatural cause. So long as that view persisted, attempts to analyse this construct any further were rather limited and scattered, though they were not by any means absent. With the growth of deism and rationalism, the idea of original sin and of the Devil did not decay at all rapidly—they became translated into the ideas of a basic human tendency to relapse into aggression against others, and in the idea of antisocial instinctual drives which had to be curbed. We no longer accept the "basic human tendency", or rather, we recognise that aggressive impulses are normally the obverse of social impulses, but we have to accept the idea that some people have strongly-developed antisocial impulses—the starting-point of rational criminology came when individual workers began to try to ascertain where these impulses originate, why some people show them more strongly than others, and how they can be remedied. The book which is usually regarded as the start of modern psychiatry of delinquents is Beccaria's *Dei Delitti e Delle Pene*, published in 1764, but that book is a plea for humane treatment rather than a study of causes. Perhaps the first serious study of causes, though it was rather a mistaken one, came from the physiognomist Lavater, who originated two of the longest-lived and most misleading ideas in psychology, that of the criminal type and that of the personality-trait, which he claimed to be able to recognise in the face.

His influence is very manifest in the work of Lombroso at the end of the century. The tendency of Lombroso's work, as you probably know, was to assume that crime was an innate predisposition, similar to artistic proficiency or high intelligence. Ideas of this kind do much to limit the attempt to treat delinquents with a view to cure, by assuming that the man who commits crimes is generically different from the man who does not, but it did rest on one very important observation, which still holds good, that those who commit crimes fall into two very sharp groups—those who commit one crime from a fairly obvious cause, who steal when they are hungry or murder someone under the influence of extreme provocation, and those who are recurring decimals and commit crime after crime, very often identical in detail.

I think it is important to recognise this fact, when we try to assess the claim of political theory that the law and the coercive forces of the State are our main protection against delinquents. Quite apart from any consideration of anarchism, the facts show that a relatively large proportion of the crimes which occur, and which are delinquent crimes, as opposed to administrative offences, are the work of a relatively small number of people. The evidence which we have to-day suggests that any of us here to-day are good for one criminal-delinquent act, given sufficient provocation—the fear of punishment may play some small part in keeping us in order, but if it were withdrawn, very few of us would rush out to steal something or kill the person we like least. Our internal standards of conduct would stop us from doing so. On the other hand, there is this very definite group of individuals who repeatedly do such things, and who do them in spite of the law, in spite of repeated punishment, and very often without any great personal advantage accruing to them. The problem of crime is not the problem of stray, innate, or natural antisocial impulses. Stable societies control these very effectively without coercion by the same kind of group-custom which would make any of us here very loth to walk down Oxford Street naked, even if we would not be arrested for doing so. The problem of crime as a serious menace to individual life and rights is the problem of the persistent offender, and the only protection the State gives us against him is that which we get from his absence in jail. I don't need in the present company to argue against mere incarceration for preventive purposes. If we can rehabilitate these people, we ought to—there is quite as good a case, on grounds of policy, for imprisoning those who have open tuberculosis, but we don't consider it just or equitable to do this. From our point of view, the important thing is that this threat to society, upon which the State bases so many of its claims, would disappear if we could ascertain why individuals become persistent offenders, remove the causes which make them so, spot and rehabilitate the early case, and thereby remove the supply, even if we did nothing to rehabilitate the hardened cases.

The second thing which Lombroso recognised, and which led him to regard crime as congenital, was that the persistent offender almost invariably begins his antisocial activities at a very early age. And it is generally agreed that if we can focus our attention on the juvenile delinquent, pick out the group who are going to become persistent offenders, as opposed to the group of naughty boys, and arrest the process there, crime as an administrative problem will virtually disappear. That is why so much psychiatric attention is being focussed on juvenile delinquency to-day.

(To be continued)

Anarchist Activity—1

"Daily experience confirms the truth that the understanding may have reached a thing many years before the heart has ceased to beat for it."
—Max Stirner & Eddie Shaw.

At a private meeting held after the recent Anarchist Summer School in London, the question of anarchist groups was discussed. No conclusion was reached but the meeting was valuable in revealing the wide divergence of opinion which exists in our country we discuss two which in this country was yet another seldom, and because it was yet another illustration of the way in which political, illustration and authoritarian attitudes cling to us long after our "understanding has renounced them".

The "Union of Anarchist Groups" (I think that one can take the word union to mean a "coming together"; it does not necessarily imply a coming together of identical objects), was formed at a congress held in Glasgow on December 1st and 2nd, 1945, from groups which drew up and adopted a statement of aims and principles (*Aims and Principles of the Union of Anarchist Groups*, published by the L.A.G.; obtainable from Freedom Bookshop, 14.) and was "to consist of autonomous groups united in a federal manner".

It seems to me that any group which supports those aims and principles (and nobody suggests that they constitute a definition of anarchism, least of all an "official" one—they merely represent a basis of agreement reached at a certain congress), is quite right in describing itself as a member of the U.A.G. Thus I am not worried about the nebulous nature of the U.A.G.—if any group feels a need to keep in touch with any others and to co-ordinate their activities (and I think it is natural and desirable that they should) they will presumably set up the necessary functional machinery—perhaps a group might be formed purely for purposes of contacts and information.

It was pointed out at the meeting on August 6th, that the disagreement between organisers and non-organisers is as old as the anarchist movement itself and that it was discussed at length by some of the most able theoreticians of the movement at the Amsterdam Congress of 1907 without any conclusion being reached. There is only one solution and it should not be necessary to point out that it is the only, and the obvious, anarchist solution: Let the organisers organise and the non-organisers abstain from organising.

In any case, one organises the work, but not the workers. As Jimmy Raeside said, "I've no objection to organisation, but I've a hell of an objection to being organised." Such organisation as our work requires should be functional arising when the need for it is felt and disappearing when it is no longer useful. We know too much of that absurd hunger for authority, or for make-believe, which makes people start organisations and then look around for people to join them.

But while I believe that a union of groups can quite well be nebulous except when, for specific purposes or times, its adherent parts feel the need for it to be concrete, I think that a group is only a group when it sets itself some concrete and well-defined task. It seems to me that those anarchist groups which survive at all are those which consist of

people who have come together to do some particular thing; for example, the Freedom Press group which exists to publish an anarchist newspaper and books; or the Glasgow group which conducts street-corner meetings; or that street-chalking group that existed in Glasgow during the war, which when Frank Leech was on hunger-strike in Barlinnie, made it impossible for the city to be unaware of it; or the group in Italy which at the end of the war, instead of moaning like everyone else because no-one would rebuild the village bridge, rebuilt it themselves; or the group in Italy to-day which set itself the task of building a children's holiday home in memory of M. L. Berneri. These seem to me to be examples of groups which did not fail, because it's members were linked together, not necessarily by the same conception of anarchism, or the same eventual aims, but by the processes of doing a particular job which seemed worthwhile to them.

I don't think that the question of what are the qualifications for membership of an anarchist group arises at all. Somebody talked about intending members having two "sponsors", but this, while it may be appropriate for a cricket club, seems to me to be meaningless in this context. As I see it, people do not apply to join an anarchist group. If they are interested in the work of the group, they will, of their own volition assist it, and if the members of the group are unanimous in wanting the newcomers to join their group, they will be asked to. There is nothing more laughable than a multiplicity of nominal groups which have no purpose, but nothing more valuable for our purposes than a loose association of a multiplicity of small groups each with its own chosen function.

This conception of anarchist organisation is, perhaps, a reflection of the sort of social organisation that one envisages in an anarchist society and I think that the social groupings envisaged in anarchist theory, the commune as the territorial organisation and the syndicate as the industrial one, would in fact take this form.

William Reich, who is regarded by some anarchists as a modern Moses, and by some as a lunatic, has, whatever you think of the theories which have made him famous, some very illuminating comments to make on the nature of work in functional groups, which he calls (rather misleadingly, I think) "work democracy". In an article, "Work Democracy in Action" (*Annals of the Orgone Institute*, No. 1, 1947):

"... On what principle, then, was our organisation based, if there were no votes, no directives and commands, no secretaries, presidents, vice-presidents, etc.?"

"What kept us together was our work, our mutual interdependencies in this work, our factual interest in one gigantic problem with its many specialist ramifications. I had not solicited co-workers. They had come of themselves. They remained, or they left when the work no longer held them. We had not formed a political group or worked out a program of action... Each one made his contribution according to his interest in the work... There are, then, objective biological work interests and work functions capable of regulating human co-operation. Exemplary work organises its forms of functioning organically and spontaneously, even though only gradually, gropingly and often making mistakes. In contrast to distinction, the political organisations, with their "campaigns" and "platforms", proceed without any connection with the tasks and problems of daily life."

Elsewhere in his article he says: "If personal enmities, intrigues and political manoeuvres make their appearance in an organisation, one can be sure that its members no longer have a factual meeting-ground in common, that they are no longer held together by a common work-interest... Just as organisational ties result from common work-interests, so they dissolve when the work-interests dissolve or begin to conflict with each other."

Do You Accept Permanent War?

FROM PAGE ONE
which wage labour on a clerk's stool cannot.

That this is so—and who can deny it?—is a formidable criticism of peacetime society. Students of militaristic totalitarianism know that the dictators make political use of this pseudo-corporate spirit, and can force that there is something severely wrong with a social structure that gives such psychological handles to reaction. Radical psychologists like Reich have been courageous enough to state outright that war provides sexual gratifications which peace denies, and that such a perversion of natural sexual desires itself stems from the sexual repression of our society. The "drift to war" is not a drift at all; it is a drive, it is a more uncontrolled because its motivating forces—the need for an outlet (a socially tolerated outlet) for repressed sexual urges—are unconscious. That they are unconscious is again due to the structure and mores of our society.

Sexual repression has an answer to all this—it is simply nonsense, say those whose training forces them to be blind to everything which an anti-sexual training has dubbed taboo. But the band of those who say this self-deception (that is, complete self-deception in this case) is a diminishing one. The army and the forces generally are careful not to diminish the appeal of their known opportunities for sexual licence, though they do not openly offer such.

An article in *Picture Post* (26/8/50) on why recruits volunteered for Korean service is remarkably frank within the repressive framework of our times. Almost all the men interviewed found civvy street unsatisfactory. One, aged 25, "went all over the Far East in the war, wants to go back. Says he's a free-lance, has no relations and... 'well it's not the Army actually I'm going in for...'" (our italics). Another, aged 27, "Admits there are also unspecified possibilities in the Far East. Like those he found in Hamburg. But if you press him too closely, again draw your attention to the news." That there are reasons which most are unwilling to put into words (still less into print) is clearly implied in this article, and *Picture Post* are to be congratulated on avoidance of the hypocrisy of stressing patriotic motives whose superficial character are only too apparent.

What is one to think of a society whose sexual mores are such that war is a necessity to provide an outlet for them? How trifling is the sexual "delinquency" of adolescents in the *News of the World* compared with this vast delinquency of the social structure?

THE ECONOMIC WAR

Who shall say what is the funda-

mental, the underlying factor which makes war inevitable in our society? Sexual repression is necessary to make war acceptable—in Army ideology licence goes hand in hand with chastity for "decent" women, and all that revolting farrago about "honour" in sexual affairs of an open character. But it seems unlikely that sexual repression, or any other psychological factor, is the cause of war; they only operate within the framework provided by war, and in its absence find other outlets. But they do not create the form of such outlets.

For this reason it seems to us that a more fundamental (though not necessarily more important) cause is the economic system of competition made necessary by the inherent expansionist demands of the capitalist mode of production, with its demand to "export or burst". Eight years ago, *War Commentary* published an article with the significant title, "War Without End". It pointed to the economic causes of war, and described how a war, far from relieving (still less removing) those causes, only exacerbated them. Hence the "end" of the war would see the foundations of a "new" conflict. And all this at the expense of the living standards of the workers of the world.

IN SUM

An analysis such as the above—and we believe it to be a truthful, and not a merely partisan account—shows that every aspect of war, if viewed without hypocrisy or idle gesturing, exhibits the social structure in a discreditable light. And our analysis has done this without actual horrors, miseries, bereavements, psychological deformities which individuals suffer in the course of war. Politicians are either cynical, like the imperialists Simon and Amery; or, like the Left, willing to travesty the truth for the sake of "progressive" propaganda. We could have added those pacifists who seek to whitewash the other side, or who delude themselves that "goodwill" on both sides "is all that's necessary". Briefly, they can be all described as either shameless or lying, cynical or wishful.

The individuals who accept war with open reluctance, but secret anticipation—and it is important not to shy away from this truth which is becoming more and more manifest—are also seen to be driven to the immorality of war by the frustration of natural and human urges. Finally, war is itself the product of an economic method which also provides misery and psychological defeat for millions of men and women the world over.

It does not require much logic to see that war and our society are intimately tied up with one another; that criticism of war leads to basic criticism of society. Nor is it a long step from war-reluctance or war-resistance to the

COMMENTARY

ABOLISH M.P.s? — QUEER VALUES — INHUMANITY OF THE LAW — DEMOCRATIC MARGARINE

● DO WITHOUT M.P.s?
A reader of the Sunday Pictorial talks sense when, in connection with Churchill's campaign for the early recall of the House of Commons, he says, "Let M.P.s have their holiday; I don't believe recalling 'em would make the least difference to the present trouble."

And we would add: And why not let them have a permanent holiday and then we can start learning how to run our own lives?

● SAD COMMENTARY ON VALUES
A man of 35, who said his wife had left him and he had no home since he left the Army, told Theftford magistrates that he has stolen a bicycle so that he could go to prison—"which as far as I'm concerned," he said, "will be my home now."

The magistrates apparently did not try to convince him of his wrong values nor did they attempt to understand the desperate plight which drives some people to such extremes, for they passed a sentence of three months' imprisonment.

● IS SHE A MURDERESS?
A mother, devoted to her child, which was going blind, decided to kill it and then commit suicide, the prosecution stated at Aberystwyth Magistrates' Court when a 20-year-old woman was committed for trial charged with the murder of her daughter, aged 15 months.

Reich specifically denies that his kind of organisation is "anarchistic", but I believe that his experience exactly mirrors that of, for instance, the Freedom Press Group and the Glasgow Anarchist Group, and probably many others.

I think we might well learn from these experiences and not attempt to apply to anarchist activities the methods of authoritarian organisation. C.W.

According to the prosecution, the child had a disease of the bone and was practically blind. Although devoted to the child, the young woman decided that the best thing was to kill it and then kill herself. She waited for 12 months to see if the child's health would improve. Since the woman has been committed for trial we cannot comment on this case. But is comment necessary?

● TWO BLACKS DON'T MAKE A WHITE

It is becoming increasingly rare these days for people to apply the same moral values to themselves as they use in attacking their enemies. The Stalinists are notorious in this respect, but only hysteria has so warped the minds of many so-called democrats that they little to distinguish them from the Stalinists so far as intellectual dishonesty is concerned.

When, therefore one reads letters in the Press from members of the Public who refuse to be panicked into blindly accepting that the "Democrats" are all moral and the Stalinists immoral (the reverse) one feels there is still hope.

The particular letter we had in mind was printed in the Manchester Guardian from a Hull reader, who writes: "I am a Vansittart hater, and I am a Communist supporter. I support a regime in Formosa which has been mitigated only by its inefficiency. He justifies this position on the argument that no concession was made in the struggle against the supreme evil of world Communism. The Stalinists denounce cruelty and oppression where the Russian Government and its allies are responsible. They justify their position with the argument that socialism must be maintained in the struggle against the supreme evil of capitalist imperialism. The similarity of the arguments is obvious. Both rest on the very same assumption that one form of cruelty and oppression can be effectively opposed by supporting another form of the same evils."

● DEMOCRATIC MARGARINE

A Press report stated that a Mrs. Norah Edwards (21), secretary of the Merseyside Peace Committee and a member of the Liverpool Unity Theatre Players, said to-day that she had had a job as a clerk in the personnel department at the Stork Margarine Works in Liverpool, because, according to the report, she had Communist sympathies.

Her crime was that for the past few months she had been collecting signatures for the Communist-inspired petition which she recently addressed a large audience of pacifists in London. The Liverpool office of the Clerical and Administrative Workers' Union said that the firm has been approached with a request for reinstatement.

We have had the experience of tasting Chutney which the manufacturers assure us, on the green label affixed to the jar, had been "untouched by native hands". That in 1950 we should also be able to have democratic margarine, untouched by Communist hands, is yet another example of the advantages of private enterprise. R.

The Future of South Africa

We very much regret that in the last issue of Freedom the name of the author of this article was inadvertently omitted. It was by Freda Troup and was circulated by Worldover Press.

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COLNE & NELSON DISTRICT
Discussion Group held fortnightly, Sept. 10th at 2.30 p.m. at Twisters and Drawers Club, Cambridge Street, Colne (Lancs.)

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SEPT 5th Peter Green
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SEPT 19th Round Table
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