

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Party was never meant for Democracy, will not work with Democracy, and all attempts to yoke the two together must end in disappointment and disaster."
 —T. E. KEBBEL

NATIONALISATION OF LEISURE

Labour and Tory Solutions to our 'Problem'

"LEISURE"—the Concise Oxford Dictionary informs us—is the "(Opportunity to do for, afforded by) free time, time at one's own disposal." Yet, needless to say, the Conservatives with their "Challenge of Leisure" and the Labourites with "Leisure for Living" feel it incumbent on them to take steps in good time to ensure that, if and when the powers-that-be decide that the nation can "afford" a shorter working week, none of us poor wage-slaves will be at a loss as to how we shall occupy our leisure hours.

With an eye on general elections just round the corner, but also reflecting the alarm felt in high places (judges, police, Churches and the experts) with the "problem" of leisure, the political parties are stepping on each other's toes in their anxiety to offer us full-employment of our leisure hours!

And to that end they dangle before our eyes a few million pounds of our money to subsidise the Arts, to clear a bit of the countryside of fences and KEEP OUT signs, and to encourage sport by providing facilities in the way of practise tracks and trainers.

Apart from the fact that a nation which is rapidly losing the use of its legs (when not glued to a typewriter or lathe is glued to the 'telly'; when not in bed is squeezed in a bus) should be encouraged to use them in its leisure hours or be overwhelmed by the upright nations, the Labour Party is sports-conscious because it has the nation's prestige at heart (the Russians would probably call it socialist emulation). In lamenting the fact that "public arrangements for sport are behind those of other countries and in some cases our international prestige is low", *Leisure for Living* proposes a "sports council" analogous to the Arts Council, appointed by the Minister of Education. Its task would be

"to co-operate with the national sporting organisations in the provision of all that is necessary for the fullest use of physical recreation, including coaching and specialist advice of various kinds, to ensure fuller British participation in international sporting events, and generally to take such action as will raise the

standard of games and athletics throughout the country."

We do not deny that some of our fellow-beings dream of the day when it will be announced that the working week has been reduced by two hours, so that they can use those two hours to induce their legs to employ a tenth of a second less to traverse a hundred yards over cinders in getting from nowhere to nowhere. As an Italian friend of ours would put it in the circumstances: "Viva la Liberta"! The fact that we are not interested in thus occupying our leisure time is beside the point. But we think we are justified in questioning, and being very suspicious of, the validity of such activities when a so-called Socialist party mixes the issue of Leisure with a concern for Britain's "international prestige" in sport and "participation in international sporting events"!

IN any case on this matter of Leisure the Parties have put the cart before the horse. They talk of organising Leisure which very few people at present possess. Recently, for seven weeks, more than 100,000 printers were on strike because their demands for a forty-hour week (and a 10% increase in pay) were considered extravagant and a strain on the economy of the industry. It was pointed out at the time that the demand for the 40-hour week was a test case; if the printers were successful, similar demands would be made by all the industrial unions. The printers failed, and last week by a three-to-one majority on a ballot of their members, nine of the ten unions involved accepted the terms of the settlement devised by their leaders and the employers under Lord Birkett's chairmanship, that is a 42-hour week. Mr. Eastwood, general secretary of the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation has since declared that his Federation was "still most anxious to achieve the 40-hour week" and that it would ask the employers "to introduce it in two years' time"! It is obvious that the "leisure society" needs to be

defined for it seems to us that if the workers are still hoping that in two years perhaps the employers may introduce a 40-hour week we and the politicians are talking of different kinds of leisure!

A forty-hour, five-day week means, for most workers in the large cities, leaving home at 8 a.m. and returning at 6 p.m. It means rising at 7 a.m. and, to satisfy the traditions of 8 hours rest, going to bed at 11 p.m. Thus the "leisure" hours are from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m., that is five hours during which they wash and change, greet their families and have the evening meal. What are they really expected to do with what is left of the five hours leisure? Yes, they have Saturday and Sunday, but how much of the week-end is spent in recovering from the boredom or the fatigue or the mental strain of those other five days and preparing oneself to face the next five, and the next five hundred until death, a pension (or a penny pool) liberates them.

THE subsidising of the Arts, "opera, ballet and orchestral music" will do very little to induce people to attend performances who are not already interested, for it does not touch the problems created by leisure, assuming that the conditions

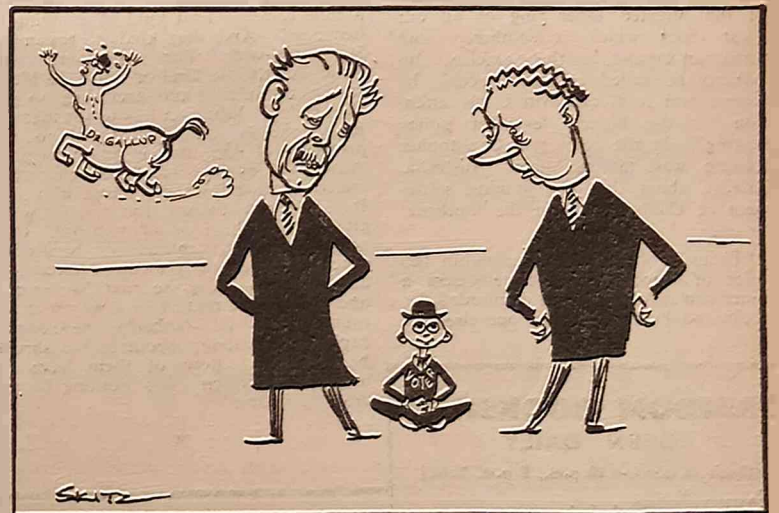
of a leisure society have been achieved: that is that as a result of production being geared to the basic needs of society no individual is required to work more than say three days in each week.

Leisure is only a problem in a society in which education is geared to adjusting the individual to society instead of bringing out and developing the potentialities in him irrespective of whether they can be translated into hard cash or wages. It is

ridiculous to provide children with the key to culture and then to throw them into the labour market, General Certificated or naked, just at the moment when they would be most receptive to guidance as to how to use the key.

If we are on the threshold of the leisure society, and if leisure is not to be viewed as a problem (juvenile delinquency we are told is the result of young people having too much money in their pockets and too much "time" on their hands), then it is our

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"Well, Look who's here!"

Hands off the Shop Stewards

AT the Trades Union Congress at Blackpool a resolution was put forward by Mr. A. Prestwich of the Engineer Surveyors' Association to get unions to 'define clearly the function of their officers and shop stewards'.

The innocent-sounding resolution is the first step in what is clearly going to be a sustained campaign against the shop stewards, organised from within the ranks of the trade union officials.

Nobody hates or fears the shop stewards more than the permanent T.U. officials. For the employers, the steward is a damn nuisance; he is the expression of the grievances of the men on the factory floor, he is often a 'stirrer' himself, he is the immediate, ever-present and vigilant representative of the men's wider organisation, he is the watch-dog over the conditions, welfare, regulations, and practises on the job.

More than this. Because he is not a permanent, paid union official, he has no stake in keeping his union job; he is not a professional negotiator. Similarly, he is concerned about the conditions in the factory, for they are his conditions, his living.

A Real Union Man

All these factors add up to make the shop steward an awkward cuss for the employer. But they equally add up to make him a headache for the union official, for the shop steward thus becomes a real union man as distinct from the remote dummy, the soft collaborator, the doubtful militant which is the full-time professional negotiator.

In practise, many of the agreements which the unions negotiate for their members are not acceptable to them. Most times the officials present their

rank and file with an agreement and issue the instruction that they must honour it—or else.

When the rank and file act against the employer they frequently find that they are in fact acting against an agreement accepted by their officers. In pushing forward their stewards as their spokesmen, they are increasing the hostility felt by the officials for those stewards. In acting in their own interests they have to act unofficially, therefore they force conflict between their true delegates—the men they choose and know and trust through working for their livings together—and their false representatives in the union hierarchy.

The Division Sharpens

As the trade unions become ever more official, more part of the establishment, the division between the top officers and the rank and file becomes ever sharper and thus the rôle of the shop steward more and more emerges as the expression of the rank and file and in conflict with the union bosses.

How much the rank and file as a whole understands this is debatable. There have been enough strikes in defence of stewards threatened or sacked by managements to indicate that workers understand the vital need to defend their stewards.

But what is becoming clear is that the union hierarchies most certainly understand the position. After all, the top union bosses have got where they are by understanding positions. They are fly boys who know the game. They are also people concerned with power, for nobody gets into positions like theirs who does not want power and nobody who

wants to get power wants to give it up.

The union mibosses are therefore very concerned with the influence of the shop stewards and will make moves to suppress it. But clearly they must move very carefully. They must pretend to be strengthening the union, to be acting in the interests of the rank and file, when in fact they will be strengthening their own power and reducing the ability of the rank and file to express itself.

Bring 'em Under Control!

The ESA's resolution was defeated at Blackpool—but the TUC General Council's spokesman in the debate, Sir Tom Williamson, made it clear that the General Council fully intended to examine the whole question of the shop stewards 'in due course'.

Mr. Prestwich of the ESA said that

"trade union activities made news and maintained that the newspapers could not be blamed for treating them as such. What the unions had to avoid was leaving themselves open to criticism which, Mr. Prestwich thought, in certain unofficial strikes, was often justified. He said he had no intention of discrediting the shop stewards as such (a claim that was met with a subdued jeer from the audience) but the motion was intended to bring under control those men who, with no authority, wanted to usurp the functions of their executives."

It will be noticed that two things pre-occupy this trade union official: to avoid laying themselves open to criticism and to bring under control those who 'wanted to usurp the functions of their executives.'

The shop stewards were defended by Bob Edwards of the Chemical Workers and E. Hughes, of the

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African Women Revolt

NEARLY 2,000 African women are now in jail as a result of the disturbances in Natal.

About 900 have been sentenced, usually to about three months imprisonment. Fines imposed amount to more than £10,000.

But the unrest continues. Almost daily African women clash with the authorities over a wide area of southern Natal.

One newspaper has described the disturbances as a people's revolt. The leader of the Opposition United Party in Natal, Mr. Douglas Mitchell, M.P., has warned the Prime Minister that open rebellion threatens.

Lives have been lost. Thousands of pounds worth of property—the symbol of White authority—has been destroyed.

Basically, the trouble is economic, and that is why it is the women who have come into the forefront of the struggle.

Most of the recent disturbances have taken place in rural areas where the women live in tribal communities, sharing the heightening poverty which is common to most tribal folk in South Africa today.

From all accounts they have had all they can take. Natal, particularly, is reputed to pay the worst wages in the Union.

While husbands, brothers and sons are often away from home, selling their labour to the White man where they can, the African wives have struggled at the kraals to feed and clothe their children and themselves.

Now the women are protesting against the high cost of living, the miserably low wages of their menfolk and the new increase in taxes.

There are direct political protests, too; for example, against the issue of the hated pass-books to African women.

In the cities, too, in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Durban, Port Elizabeth and Capetown, African women have staged mass demonstrations that have caused White (and non-White) South Africans to sit up and take notice.

Once roused, African women have shown themselves completely fearless.

They are a new and formidable factor in South African politics.

News Chronicle 2/9/59.

DURING the war when much was said and written about the virtues of planning in the post-war society there was a great deal of discussion about combining freedom with planning, and on the survival of freedom under planning. Now that the post-war world has been with us for a long time, when we look back on the planning legislation built up by the coalition and Labour governments, and largely dismantled in successive years, we do so without much enthusiasm. Town-planning means to the man in the street a local bureaucrat saying "No you can't", and in the tasks it set itself, it hasn't worked. The outward sprawl of the great cities has continued. In spite of the New Towns and the Development Areas, the conurbations grow. People's journeys to work get longer, and as Sir John Elliott the former chairman of London Transport reminded us last week, "London is slowly but surely throttling itself."

Faced with such a gloomy situation, the disappointed advocates of planning call for a new approach to put teeth into the plans: a more concerted use of existing powers, and new legislation (although "planners" has become so much of a dirty word with voters, that neither of the parties is likely to sponsor it). The texts of two broadcast talks, juxtaposed in a recent issue of *The Listener* illustrate the dilemma faced by people who want to combine the idea of a self-regulating society with effective solutions to our town-planning problems.

In one, Mr. Arthur Ling discussed decaying town centres, the phenomenon of the blighted inner ring of all our great cities, which is combined with Suburban sprawl on the outskirts. Inevitably he called for more action by central and local authorities, for attention "at the highest level of policy making". In the other talk Christopher Ralling was talking about Australia. Talking about the opal mining settlement of Coober Pedy in the 'outback' he said:

"There is not a policeman within 100 miles of Coober Pedy; nevertheless a miner can leave his claim unguarded for weeks and be sure that no one else will

'jump' it. Like the shearers, and the station hands, they have established something with stronger moral obligations than a policeman could enforce, which one of them described as 'a public opinion amongst themselves'." and extending his observations to the Australian city, Mr. Ralling observed:

"Political philosophers sometimes take traffic lights as symbol of what freedom means in an organised state. When the light is green you go; when the light is red you stop so that others may go. That much curtailment of pure freedom is accepted by most people. But in Australia, traffic lights, even in the great cities, are noticeably lacking. This is precisely the kind of regimentation, whether it is done by a robot or a policeman, that Australians dislike. Nor is it any accident that Sydney, hard by the first convict settlement of Botany Bay, has the fewest traffic lights of all, and the citizens have the heartiest dislike for their police. This is not meant to be an indictment of Australian driving habits (which seemed to me better than you find in many European countries). It is simply an illustration of an attitude held so strongly by many Australians that it has come to influence their way of life. They dislike a pattern imposed from above.

"A well-known Sydney painter said to me: 'The reason this is a dynamic city, the reason you feel alive here, is because no one has ever tried to plan a civic centre. That kind of planning is decadent'. And that kind of reasoning is nation-wide. The Australian will build exactly the kind of house he likes, facing north or south according to his own fancy. What matters is not that his house should appear beautiful to the professor of fine arts, or fit into a plan drawn up by the local council; what matters is that it should please him... It is difficult to say for certain what gives a city the look of maturity. One senses it when replacement begins to take the place of growth. Newcomers are quick to recognise that Melbourne and Sydney are mature in a way that inorganic, artificial Canberra, the Federal capital, meandering about in the shrubbery, is not. Both of them have an atmosphere which owes nothing to the drawing board."

★

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PEOPLE AND IDEAS:

IDEAL CITIES

LISTENING to the urgent warnings of Mr. Ling or Professor Holford we will certainly be persuaded that the fate of our towns cannot be left to the whims of motorists or the vagaries of speculative commercial enterprise. Listening to the Australian impressions of Mr. Ralling we may all the same feel contempt for the tidy ideals of planners and revel in the vigorous self-assertion which he presents, forgetting some other points he mentioned—the extraordinary fact that nearly four million out of Australia's ten million people live in Sydney and Melbourne, and that Sydney, in terms of its actual area stretches further than London, with mile upon mile of "an appalling red rash of suburbs."

Yet, no-one gets worked up about the delights of a planned city like Canberra, while

"It is easy to fall under the spell of Sydney. King's Cross, where the shops and restaurants stay open till midnight or later and people have the habit of boulevarding, much as they do in Montmartre, is within a stone's throw of Rushcutter's Bay, where dozens of yachts lie at anchor, gleaming on the dark water under the stars. It is hardly any wonder that many migrants get very little further. They are relieved to find an atmosphere of spaghetti and ancient trams. Life is sufficiently the same for them not to feel any pressing need to move on."

One of the reasons why planning is so unpopular is surely that we feel that we are being offered Canberra, while what we really like is Sydney. Or in terms of current sociology, we've all been moved out to Greenleigh, but we are happier at Bethna! Green. The current controversy in the *New Statesman* on 'The Planners of Aberdare' is an example of the same thing. "Surely any planner," writes Ralph Samuel "must start by considering the individual character of the town; it is not an 'efficient organism' but a place where people live, the home of their culture, their memories and their traditions," and he criticises the bland superiority with which the Glamorganshire planners wrote off Aberdare simply as "the context of a 19th-century industrial town" instead of looking at

the kind of place it was.

In a recent article on the New Town of Stevenage (*From Silkingrad to Missileville*, FREEDOM 11/7/59) we quoted Harold Orlans' study of the struggle for power between different groups of planners—the urban and rural groups, the house and flat addicts, the Development Corporation and the Stevenage Council, the Ministry and the Corporation, and so on.

"This predilection for power and the planning of other people's lives, implicit in utopian (as in ideological) thought and explicit in the political action to which it leads, gives an authoritarian colour to the most benign utopia."

This is certainly the impression one gets from a new study of the architectural forms given to utopia* As you glance through the plates in Dr. Rosenau's scholarly volume you sense a pervasive and depressing enshrinement of geometry and symmetry. All those circular, polygonal, hexagonal and square cities of the plain!

The Biblical descriptions of the Holy City dwell on its square form and Aristophanes in *The Birds* makes fun of the concept of circular geometric cities and of Plato, his disciples and the rigid planners. Of Plato's ideal city Dr. Rosenau writes:

"The admirers of the suggestive and unplanned effect of the Acropolis in Athens may well differ in their taste from the contemporaries of Plato, who . . . demanded a city as near as possible to the centre of the country, an acropolis circled by a ring wall, and divided his ideal town into twelve parts, planned for five thousand and forty plots, each of which was to be subdivided, in order to allow for the equalisation of the quality of land, the same citizen receiving a superior central portion and an inferior one at the periphery."

Similarly the Roman author Vitruvius, whose *De Architectura* exercised an enormous influence when rediscovered, envisaged a circular walled city in which "the radial arrangement of the assumed

*THE IDEAL CITY by Helen Rosenau, (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 30s.).

A Fine and Private Place

"YOU can't miss it, it's too big." These were the cheery words of the gravedigger. Actually, we had missed it. Finding ourselves in Highgate on the way to Hampstead, we decided to make The Pilgrimage.

We climbed the steep hill where tradition has it, Whittington turned back. If he did turn back to the foot of Highgate Hill we do not blame him but it is unlikely that he would become a cat tycoon with such faint-heartedness, and is unworthy of perpetuation by Dorothy Ward or Ruby Miller.

We made our way into the cemetery on the higher slopes. Cemeteries are a monstrous display of morbidity, bad taste and conspicuous consumption, their very existence with a gross consumption of land suitable for housing or farming is in itself a conspicuous wastage. The ecology of cemeteries guarantees a luxurious growth of foliage and Highgate Cemetery is no exception. Here there are graves which no-one has visited for decades, the immortal is moss-covered, the imperishable memory has crumbled. The family vaults are there in number, the continuation of private property into eternity. But many, as if impatient for judgment day are yawning, cracking and sagging. There is the sad inscription on one vault "Miss So-and-So. The end of the family line." But there is plenty of room inside. The crosses, the rocks of ages, the tastefully draped urns (like headless female busts), the angels, the cherubs and the headstones proliferated like a harvest of stone. We wandered on amidst the rank weeds and crumbling paths. Where was he? Where was Charlie?

The gravedigger was working on a new section opened up in the framework of the old. (Burial grounds are allowed to be re-developed by a new population of bodies after a lapse of time). It was a familiar question that was put to him: "Where is Karl Marx's grave?"

"Over in the other section, down the hill, first turn on the left and it's past the water-tank. You can't miss it, it's too big."

The other section was newer, with better-tended graves, more promise of eternity and less corruption of time (and

acid-laden soot) upon the even more conspicuous consumption of marble.

By the gateway was a joint grave with the simple inscription "Be kind to one another". The more legible praises of the dead became more incredible, the merchants were philanthropists, the bankers were saints, the manufacturers angels. The cherubs and angels and broken columns with bay leaves multiplied—and then we saw it.

Newspaper pictures had hardened me for the shock but the impact was stunning. It was the grave of Karl Marx surmounted by a giant bust of K.M. himself in the best monolith style. I remembered a speaker of the *only* socialist party talking about the 'concretization of the individual' and somebody else's

saying that his organisation 'wasn't a bloody party, it was a bloody monument.'

Now here was the concretization of the individual indeed. What stone it was done from I have no idea but the stone was patchily discoloured. ("The uneven development of capitalism"?)

The pediment had arrogantly got little blocks set in it for the hanging of wreaths. Alas, it had been many months since flowers had been placed on the memorial, some joker had put some weeds in a milk-bottle on the podium.

Around the base was written "Workers of the World Unite," but Karl Marx's back was turned on London, and the plan for wreaths had not been fulfilled.

Members of Marx's family (excepting his errant son-in-law) were buried with him. The whole showpiece was put up for the delectation of Krushchev, that connoisseur of cemeteries, and gravedigger of capitalism. Prior to his arrival in company with Bulganin (the well-know bank-manager) the bones of Karl Marx were transferred from the old cemetery to the new and this gigantic paperweight was placed atop to stop Karl turning in his grave so often.

We turned away from the basilisk stare of the last of the Old Testament prophets and regarded Karl Marx's neighbours. Opposite him was the grave of Herbert Spencer. We made the expected comment, but Spencer's grave lacks any of the flowery embroideries. Simply a stone casket 'Herbert Spencer' and the dates. The quiet self-confidence of Spencer "ask any grave-digger, they'll know who I was", compares favourably with the brash Ozymandius-like head. "My name is Karl Marx, king of philosophers, look on my works ye mighty and despair . . . the lone and level sands stretch far away." (Keats).

On the slope above Herbert Spencer are the graves of Mary Ann Evans (George Eliot), of George Jacob Holyoake and of one who 'George Eliot' called 'daughter', who discovered some principle of homeopathy. Who shall say which made the greater contribution to individual happiness? J.R.

A Good Week

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FREEDOM

eight of the prevailing winds were avoided for hygienic purposes by eight streets bisecting them".

THE recurrence of geometric plans in the ideal cities of all ages is partly explained of course by the nature of the walled and fortified towns of classical and mediaeval times, and partly by the fact that these schemes are often the nature of what the economist would call "models" and the sociologist "ideal types", which if ever given real existence would be modified to accommodate existing physical features and artifacts though amongst their designers there is little recognition of this until we come to the humanistic writers of the Italian renaissance. Leone Battista Alberti, for instance (although his projects included an ideal Fortress for a Tyrant in which the palace is protected equally against the external and the internal enemy.

"did not attempt the layout of a complete ideal town and advocated *commoditas* and the functional adaptation of sites to needs."

And three centuries later the influential eighteenth century French academician Quatremère de Quincy "appeared to demand a desire for planning and the 'liberté de se loger' which he, a liberal-minded thinker, could not help advocating", which is exactly our contemporary dilemma.

Dr. Rosenau does not distinguish between those cities which represented an incursion into social planning by architects and those which were the architectural expression of the ideas of social reformers. The two seem in many respects equally authoritarian. She quotes for example Marie Louise Berneri's description of More's Utopia in which all cities are identical and are not to contain more than six thousand families, surplus children being forcibly removed to ensure this aim, and she illustrates Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon to accommodate 2,000 people, and equally adapted for use as school, prison or workhouse, and Robert Pemberton's Happy Colony, which was circular in plan, because Pemberton misread the perspective view of a similar scheme by the architect Ledoux, which was in fact oval. A similar slavery to geometry is to be found in some of the disciples of Ebenezer Howard, whose claim to originality nevertheless, as Dr. Rosenau observes, "rests on the singular emphasis on liberty found in his work". Howard too was anxious to emphasise that his diagrams of radial cities, based on concentric circles was meant as a universal diagram rather than a particular model, since the "plan cannot be drawn until site selected." That he should feel such a warning necessary indicates the danger that the generalisations of originators will become the regulations of bureaucrats, is exactly what has happened with the town-planners' fetish of "zoning".

This conscientious survey of ideal cities has the unintended effect of making the reader feel that Sydney is infinitely preferable to Canberra, even though the author declares that "the consistent striving for perfection is a clear indication of the recurrent human desire to attain a state in which conditioned necessity is replaced by liberty and harmony". But if we reject the notion of ideal cities, does it mean that we should welcome the muddle and confusion that comes from lack of foresight? Dr. Rosenau declares that "It is a common experience that in order to reach the possible the impossible has to be attempted, or to put it in other words, a society and its members largely live on hope." But as a society what kind of city do we hope for. In next week's FREEDOM a different set of "ideal types", those set out by the American brothers Paul and Percival Goodman, will be discussed. C.W.

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Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

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The Nationalisation of Leisure

Continued from p. 1

them of education that needs to be overhauled as well as our attitude to the economics of "Culture". Indeed, never was Eric Gill's *cri coeur* "to hell with Culture", more meaningful than today, when Culture has become a commodity commercialised and nationalised, exploited by politicians, no less than the artists, the writers and their agents (the impresarios and the publishers) as something apart, or as a thing put it, "a thing added like a garnish to otherwise unpalatable stale

"Culture" is viewed as a luxury, extra in which the people participate only as spectators: we read books, we listen to music, we cast a critical or appreciative eye on another man's paintings; we attend the theatre and the cinema and hiss or cheer at what we have seen, but how many of us make music or try to express our thoughts on paper or on canvas? It is modern capitalism with its fetish for efficiency that has created the specialist and destroyed the individual. But neither Tory nor Labour propose to disturb an educational system which turns out obedient, uncritical but efficient wage-slaves and technicians.

"Culture" they will provide through the Arts Council and a body of professional culture-managers who can be relied on to entertain but never to startle the people on to the trail of dangerous thinking, or that of doing things for themselves. And even if it cost £10 m. to subsidise, it is a bargain!

AFTER Mr. Dulles visited General Franco in December of 1957, he said that the Spanish Caudillo was a genuine representative of the "Free World." But if "free elections" are considered to be characteristic of a Free World, then Mr. Dulles was not quite right.

There is in fact a Parliament in Spain: one third of the members are nominated by the Government, the second third by the fascist unions, and the last third is elected by all married men; women and unmarried men having no franchise. The Parliament, however, has no real importance. And yet, among a people as freedom-loving as the Spanish, real freedom has not perished, even under a dictatorial régime.

Visitors coming from modern countries are amazed about the backwardness of Spanish life, especially in technical things. Recently, a writer in Madrid made a joke which amused all Spain. He wrote: "Our engineers are the best of the world. They have invented wonderful devices, which are an admiration of mankind. Now they have a new far-reaching plan: they are going to design door-handles by which the doors of our houses can really be opened and closed!"

How is this possible? The Spanish people are not less intelligent than other peoples. But they do not get the education and training which a working man is given in more modern countries. As the schools are entirely under the domination of the Roman Church, all practical things rank last, learning prayers by heart first. I knew a man who had been a lieutenant in the Army and later wanted to learn bookkeeping. But his teacher had to dissuade him from such an endeavour, since the man did not know what a decimal fraction was. It had never been mentioned to him in school. For any career whatsoever, a young boy or girl must pass an examination in the Catholic religion. Other qualifications are neglected.

When you consider the necessity in this country of having friends with influence in order to obtain any position at all, it becomes evident that young people who are not agreeable to the almighty clergy have no chance to rise, regardless of their talents.

But while in practical things Spain is one of the most backward

countries of the world, in another respect she is so far advanced that many other peoples could learn a lot from Spanish life. Our world is, as we all know, not suffering from a lack of clever technicians. The weakness is in human relations, in the living together of people.

Franco's régime stands firm, but few people are satisfied with it—very few. Even most of that minority of the Spanish nation who fought for Franco's victory in the horrible years of the Civil War, now openly confess, "This is not what we wanted." And yet, there is no chance of the people to get rid of their dictator in any foreseeable future, i.e., as long as Franco lives. There are two reasons.

(1) The Civil War was so cruel in both its physical and moral effects that nobody, not even the fiercest adversaries of Franco, want a repetition of those horrors.

(2) The Americans are in Spain. They brought with them their favourite hobby—building military strongholds against what they consider to be the "Communist danger," which in fact lies, if anywhere, more in the inner than the outer circumstances of Spanish life. And as long as the Americans are here, no attempt to overthrow the Franco régime can have the slightest chance of success. Franco would cry out as loudly as possible, "I am menaced by Communism!", and then the U.S.A. with all its tremendous power would help Franco to subdue the revolt. This makes Americans very unpopular here, as the vast majority of the Spanish nation is solidly against the régime.

But Spaniards are very realistic. In the years of the Civil War they tried to defend their liberties against their own rebellious generals plus two great powers, Italy and Germany. Never will they attempt to fight against Franco plus the United States.

Still, they have found a way to get along under any régime. Those who live in the country, not too near to Madrid, do not feel all the hardships of the dictatorial government.

During the Civil War, when all passions were aroused and hatred swelled high on both sides, ugly

things happened. Good friends, even blood relations, shot at each other, informed against each other, and the once harmonious Spanish life entirely disintegrated. This is over. The sentiments of the Spaniards towards Franco and his government range from disappointment to contempt. And an attitude which prevailed before the Civil War is even more strongly established now: Denouncing others to the State is an indecent act.

In a cinema at Barcelona, when Franco appeared on the screen, a man lost his temper and hurled a shoe at the General's figure. The shoe was left up there in the stage and the police, who happened to be present, barred the exits in order to catch the man who had but one shoe. But that did not work. Some two hundred others took one shoe off and limped home with only one!

When, in 1867, Karl Marx split the Workers International and founded the second, out of which later the third International developed, the Spanish workers did not follow him. They remained loyal to the first, the anarchist International. They never wanted to conquer the State in order to use its power to bring about the social changes they longed for. Their ideal was—and is—not the strong but the weak State, as weak as possible, and better no State at all. And this tradition is alive today, even, I dare say, growing stronger. When the State tends to become totalitarian, the tacit but very effective Spanish resistance to it also becomes totalitarian—that is, uniform.

Spain is the country which was virtually untouched by the two great movements at the end of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the Reformation. But the present great movement, Bureaucratism, also has passed by. There are not so many "authorities" in Spain on their own initiative. They simply have to help each other; this is what they have learned, and what they do.

When I said that creating military strongholds is the hobby of the Americans, I should have added that the Spaniards have a hobby of their own. It is cheating the State! They do it under any régime, but under

the present one, which is thoroughly unpopular, it has become a real hobby. The man who has managed to outwit the Customs regulations, smuggling whatever he can into the country, or he who avoids paying his taxes, may openly boast of his achievements. People will praise him for being clever and will never betray him to the police. A man who would punctually pay all that is due to the State would be called a fool. "How can you pay so much to the biggest robber on Earth?" people would ask.

What can the State do against this? Appoint more clerks to control the people? It would not help. Still more clerks would soon have to be appointed, in order to watch and control the first lot, lest they co-operate with offenders in that human solidarity from which Spanish life is famous.

And so long as human solidarity exists—during the Civil War it broke down, only to revive, afterwards, and become even stronger than ever before—no régime, however totalitarian its character may be, will be able to break this spirit of the Spanish people. They will live their own lives, as they always have, while Madrid is far away.

And what about ourselves, we of the countries of the "Free World"?

Yes, we have a better constitution, we have our famous "free elections", and we have, now and again, a new master to govern us, not always the same one, as the Spaniards. And yet, in many of our "free" countries, there are institutions, as for instance the American "Committee for Un-American Activities," which depend upon an enormous army of informers who are willing to denounce their neighbours or anybody else.

I know of no Committee for Un-Spanish activities in this country. It would not be able to work, for utter lack of people willing to inform against anybody, even against a political adversary. That is why the Spaniards enjoy a certain freedom under this totalitarian dictatorship.

CORRESPONDENT IN SPAIN,
(Reprinted from *Manas*
Los Angeles, Calif.)

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Freedom to Read

EVERY State has to prevent its subjects doing some things: that is part of the regrettable function of government. Nearly every State has also prevented its subjects saying some things. The mechanism that stops some people saying and reading things, seeing plays and films, looking at pictures and statues, that other people think unsuitable, is called "censorship". Censorship in the State is the same as a parent confiscating a horror-comic from a child, taking it away from copulating dogs or telling it not to swear. In theory it protects those who cannot protect themselves; in practice it more often does no more than express the fear or disgust of the censors themselves.

In England the details of our censorship are typically vague and illogical. We can say what we like (subject to laws of slander) until we might cause a "breach of the peace" (a phrase, like "contrary to good order and discipline", which can mean almost anything). We can also write what we like, but we can't publish it—that is, show it to anyone else—or post it if it is libellous, seditious or obscene; breaches of this code are punished in an unpredictable and sometimes downright unjust way. Pictures and statues are much the same. Stage plays have been licensed by the Lord Chamberlain since Walpole lost his temper in the 1730's. Cinemas are controlled by local authorities, who usually follow the trade's own censorship. Radio and television broadcasting is also self-censored.

Some odd inconsistencies naturally turn up. Artists can show things and dramatists can say things that films can't touch; plays of a certain age, like women, acquire respectability, but books and pictures do not. Stage nudes must

not move: canvas ones cannot have pubic hair. These are details of the official censorship. There is also an even vaguer and more unobtrusive one, exercised by people like editors, publishers, producers, film-makers, designed to steer clear of possible trouble with the law or the powers that be.

Thus the censorship, whatever its forms, stops us—all of us, not just children—saying or writing or painting, or hearing or reading or seeing what other adults say or write or paint, if it offends the authorities—the Lord Chamberlain, the Home Office, Customs officers, the police, magistrates, local councils, heaven knows who else. Why do we let other people regulate our reading-matter (and the rest) like parents and schoolteachers when we are no longer children? For the same reason that we let policemen and officials regulate our actions in other ways. Most people believe that other people shouldn't read certain books (to take literature as representative of all forms of expression), even if they aren't quite sure why they think so. People don't usually admit to being corrupted or depraved by books, but they do agree that some books can corrupt and deprave other people; thus book-critics who think *Lolita* should be banned have presumably read it unharmed, and intellectuals who loathe commercial pornography chuckle over the *Decameron*. Censorship in our democracy does not depend on a tyranny (as it did once in England and still does in several countries); it is a self-censorship that depends on public opinion, chiefly that of Top People.

This explains why what is censored changes from year to year—why we can now read *The Rainbow* and *Ulysses*, and why our children may one day be

able to read *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and *Lolita*. It also explains the peculiar flavour of our censorship today. Censorship has several aspects: in the Middle Ages books were banned for religious reasons; in the 17th and 18th centuries for political ones; now for moral ones. There is too little feeling and agreement about religion and politics for heresy and sedition to be banned in England as it still is, say, in Spain or Poland. But enough is still left of the morality of the last century for moral censorship to be exercised in this one.

The interesting thing is that the morality thus favoured is almost exclusively sexual; "corrupt and deprave" means in practice "arouse sexual feelings". Books that deal in cruelty and violence are seldom banned (the obvious exception—horror comics—is explained by their audience, who were children), but those that deal in sex can be and often are. Thus *Lolita* has two climaxes—the seduction of a twelve-year-old girl (if you can call it a seduction) and the murder of a drug-addict; which is the one that all the fuss has been about? It is more dangerous to hear or see in print words that most men use every day than to see or read about men being beaten to death; look at television or read a few paper-backs and you will see what I mean.

The new and widely praised Obscene Publications Bill (which apparently has the support of writers and publishers) would certainly improve the situation, but it retains the principle of sexual taboo in books and art, ostensibly to protect the young and susceptible. But as we know from bitter experience, the intentions of our law-makers have nothing to do with the enforcement of our laws. The position will remain funda-

mentally unchanged: all of us, however mature and incorruptible, will have our books, papers, plays, films, pictures, statues, examined in case we might be corrupted or depraved. We shall have Brigitte Bardot half-undressed, but not Lady Chatterley completely undressed.

I cannot see how sexual censorship is any better than religious or political censorship, and I hope it will die as they did. It is essentially a matter of tolerating other people even if we disapprove of them (like the problem of consenting homosexuals). Perhaps young people should be protected, but is this the way to do it? Obviously public order must be retained and libel must be checked. But I insist on the right to read what I like; and—much more important—I insist on the right of other people to read what they like, even if I don't like it. It is the recognition of other people's rights that seems to me to be the central issue. We are coming round to the view that a man's private life is just that; it is time art and literature—even debased art and literature—were freed from moral restraints and admitted to the province of private life.

In all this I think we should bear in mind Article 19 of the Declaration of Human Rights: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression . . ." I would add "freedom of reading"; there is no point in being able to believe and write as we wish if other people can't hear us. When Milton's enemies were in power, he wrote *Areopagitica*; when his friends were in power, he took part in the censorship. This is the tendency we must guard against. Censorship is just as evil when it applies to other people as when it applies to us, and sexual censorship is no better than any other kind. As Tom Paine said, "Mankind are not now to be told they shall not think, or they shall not read".

NICHOLAS WALTER.
(From "The London Letter".)

Prejudice and Satire

GEORGE ORWELL, in one of his essays, expressed a mistrust of anarchists and pacifists because they were people who had a thwarted longing for power over other people and a morbid interest in violence. At an informal meeting Woodcock challenged Orwell on this, and pointed out that he, Orwell, although neither an anarchist nor a pacifist had by his writings and activities manifested a quite unusual degree of preoccupation with power and violence (this was even before Orwell had published either "Animal Farm" or "1984"). I well remember the frankness of Orwell's admission that he was himself a bundle of assorted prejudices and thwarted strivings. These provided the dynamism for his efforts, but by the use of his intellect he claimed to be able to produce what was humane in spirit and of aesthetic value.

Orwell's criticism of anarchists and pacifists may seem a little trite to the more sophisticated of the anarchist-pacifist movement. The mechanism of "reaction-formation", so emphasised by the Freudians, is not a very original explanation these days. What is of greater interest is why out of their mass of prejudices and thwarted strivings, do some people produce humane and aesthetic results, and others, like Adolf Hitler, produce cruel muck.

Dean Swift is the classic case of a writer of great ability driven on by his "neurosis" (Swift is generally claimed to be an outstanding case of someone suffering from "obsessional compulsive neurosis"). In his earlier writings he

tended to be a champion of the oppressed, scourge of the follies and hypocrisies of his age. Yet eventually he became a hater of all mankind, reviling man because he was human. The final book of *Gulliver's Travels*, the *Voyage to the Houyhnhnms*, is simply an essay of hatred, a measured invective of cold disgust with every human quality. Swift's morbid end should be a warning to all satirists; by mocking at the follies of human society we may approach to a dislike of the human animal simply because he is human.

Now Jack Robinson, in discussing my objection to his article (signed "Goy") questions whether my objection can be construed as a "hidden racial prejudice, over-compensating itself". Surely one's "prejudices" are a function of the situation. If an Irishman annoys me by his constant harping on the injustices which the Irish have to bear at the hands of the cold-hearted English, and expatiates on Irish virtues at tedious lengths, I may refer to him as a "bloody bog-trotter". Also, if a homosexual man happens to annoy me by tedious affectations and insistence on the myth of the superiority of "the third sex", I may even refer to him as a "bloody pansy". That is because I have an irritable nature, and not because I have either an anti-Irish or anti-homosexual prejudice. If however I happened to dislike the Irishman's opinions on art or the homosexual's political opinions, it would be grossly impertinent, in the true sense of the word, if I were to refer to the one's race or the other's sexual preferences in any public controversy.

I am not sorry that I used a heavy hammer to crack the nut of the "Goy" article, particularly as it produced so good and reasonable a letter from Jack Robinson in reply. I think that we who live in London and are therefore apt to be fairly well acquainted with the personalities who are associated with FREEDOM, forget that the very great majority of its readers do not have that personal acquaintanceship. Something in the nature of a "family joke" appearing in FREEDOM, can be badly misinterpreted in the U.S.A., Australia or India. Again, FREEDOM has no lack of political enemies who have welcomed every chance to smear the paper in the past. Thus, while I am prepared to be impertinent to my acquaintances by guing their personal appearance, place of origin, sexual proclivities, etc., to their face in private, it is another matter to mix such impertinences in public controversy. As to whether I personally suffer from any racial or other "hidden" prejudices—I deny that I suffer from prejudices. I enjoy them.

To return to George Orwell's point about the "hidden" sources of anarchists' and pacifists' activity, I think that it is well if we can admit the degree of truth which there is in the charge. If we can enjoy our prejudices they are the less likely to do us or anyone else any harm. George Orwell did not enjoy his prejudices, and was on the whole a very miserable man. Swift did not enjoy his either, and much of his life was hell to him. Can one then argue that, for the sake of the great works which Orwell and Swift produced, it is best that men should be crucified on their own prejudices? But the Orwells and Swifts are rare creatures; more often we get the

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

combination of great ability with great prejudice producing a Calvin, Knox, Loyola, Cromwell, Stalin, Hitler . . . the list is very long.

The essence of the satirist is that his protest is barbed with humour. Jack Robinson has pointed out that "a sense of humour is rather devilish and does become rather aggressive at times". Yet humour provides the common bond of humanity between the satirist and his victim, since if we mock at another person, anyone with the wit to see it sees that we mock at ourselves.

TONY GIBSON.

MISTAKEN EMPHASIS?

I HAVE to confess I also found the article signed "Goy" (it is a popular illusion that Jews outside American novels use this term when there are so much less, or more, offensive terms to use), a trifle offensive, although I did not know the "background" and am still somewhat mystified as to why, for instance, it was written in Brooklynes rather than, say, Cockney-Yiddish.

In Jack Robinson's reply he asks, in effect, what is offensive about the "Momma" he presents? It is difficult to define what the term "Jewish" means—whether racial, religious, cultural, etc.—but it is obviously galling to somebody who specifically breaks with certain racial theories or religious affinities, to find that because of his folk origin it is seemingly held he could not have done so. If J.R. will translate the article to Italo-American he will find his "anarchist" momma talking of First Communion (bar-mitzvah), for instance.

While it is said that Tony Gibson slightly over-emphasised the point of what was intended as a humorous article, the same mistaken emphasis as J.R.'s was previously made in FREEDOM a little while ago, in an article asking where the "Jewish Anarchists" stood. This contained so many contradictions in terms that it quoted at least one man who was both a freethinker and an official of the Labour Party but managed to qualify under the heading of "Jewish Anarchist" by the somewhat vague definition given to both terms and even vaguer definition given to the combination.

London. A.M.

ANTI-SEMITISM

Further to Tony Gibson's protest against the supposed anti-semitism in "Goy's" article: nonsense! It was a happy piece which I enjoyed, although I am very sensitive to anti-semitism. Mr. Gibson gets hold of the wrong end of the stick frequently these days, it seems.

Nottingham, Sept. 1. PAUL RITTER.

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More on Control and the Majority

I AM sorry that comrade Parker has misunderstood my remarks on control by "all". I used quotes for emphasis, not to imply extraction from his letter.

It appears that our difference hinges on the definition of control which he seems to regard authoritarian whereas my interpretation is a positive one. For example, the child learns to control its limbs in order to move freely in its environment and further increases freedom by manipulative control of its material environment. And isn't the object of co-operative economic association to control the material environment for the mutual benefit of its members? Since there is a reaction between human relationships and the outside world such an activity must indirectly control the social environment.

As in my opinion control is implicit in co-operative activity, on humanitarian grounds, I would like to see maximum participation by all concerned. For reasons stated in my last letter, I believe control by all is impossible and therefore majority control is the only alternative.

Majority control is not necessarily contrary to anarchism and the freedom of association described by S. E. Parker. If most people in a certain area take up the same economic activity the economy in that region will be dominated, or controlled, by their work and if they form co-operative groups this influence will be even greater. This does not mean forcing the minority to join them but it does imply their non-participation in some important factors controlling the economy as a whole.

If most members of a co-operative enterprise are determined on a course of action it is inevitable that their activities will influence the development of that enterprise. Incidentally, my remarks concerning the choice of conforming or getting out applied specifically to a co-operative enterprise and then only as a last resort when a decision on policy had to be made. After all, the majority would only be exercising their freedom to choose their working associates.

The other form of majority control I had in mind was mutual defence against anti-social activity. This implies the limitation, or control, of harmful activities but not of other social behaviour.

The foregoing roughly summarises my position on majority control and I had hoped that the definition in my last letter had made this clear.

I did not imply that "the invalid or aged should not have a voice in matters that concern them." I merely included some children, invalids or aged people in the category of the physically and mentally incapable. This doesn't mean they should be prevented from making the effort.

And why should there not be a settlement of a dispute on a majority decision by all affected parties when negotiation or voluntary arbitration have failed and the difference is inconveniencing society? After all the difference doesn't concern the two parties only.

Certainly I avoided discussion on rights and duties for I am not sure that such concepts are compatible with an

anarchist morality. I do not regard majority control as a moral issue as it relates to voluntary co-operative activity, but when it interferes with individual's private life, that is another matter.

If S. E. Parker really believes there will be a definite distinction between compulsion and defection in a voluntary association he is obviously unaware of the subtleties of group pressure. My remarks about a voluntary arrangement with a friend are interesting. Don't also take into account the sacrifices, and small, that are often necessary to maintain a happy friendship or relationship? True they are made voluntarily but isn't this argument employed by liberal authoritarians? Most people have the choice between relative material comfort working for a boss and freedom with poverty. I agree that there is a difference in kind between authoritarianism and anarchism, but on the issue of social organisation, not complete individual sovereignty.

I cannot accept F.B.'s generalisation that such complex characters as drug addicts, mental defectives, and criminals (who he prefers, delinquents), are largely not wholly, products of a society based on private property. It is physical control that counts, not theoretical ownership, and this control is almost identical with physical possession. In a State property is theoretically owned by the people but permanently controlled or possessed, by the State. In an anarcho-communistic society it is temporarily controlled, or owned, by working groups or individuals.

Also one should not underestimate the genetic factors involved and the complexity of human relationships.

Incidentally, I have no objections to drunks if they don't behave in an anti-social manner.

Yours fraternally,
London, Sept. 3. P.G.F.

ANARCHISM AND THE NEWCOMER—INDUSTRIAL CO-OPERATION

RECENTLY S. E. Parker expressed my doubt that maximum production combined with minimum of effort following the application of scientific discoveries to technology would make the human mind more receptive to libertarian ideas, and instanced the larger Anarchist movements in countries not advanced industrially.

My letter in reply, which was not published, drew attention to the fact that such countries are usually totalitarian where anti-government movements flourish naturally, in contrast to the astute velvet glove methods of the democracies, where the people are persuaded that they rule themselves. From this, it may be inferred that the people of the democratic countries are the more easily gulled, but I do not think this will persist with increased leisure and opportunities for study.

I might have added that much that passes for anarchism in the totalitarian states would be regarded very doubtfully here. I have a very lively respect for the opinions of S.E.P., and I shall be grateful if you can find space for this short reply.

Woldingham, Surrey. F.B.

In a Spanish Political Prison

The visit to this country of Franco's foreign minister, Fernando Castella, coincided with the following report in *The Times* (31/8/59) from a special correspondent in Burgos:

TOURISTS being conducted round the fine cathedral of Burgos are seldom aware that about three miles away more than 400 political prisoners are living under conditions which would shock them. They are men who hold political views unacceptable to the regime, and have been sentenced for 12, 14, 18, and 20 years. These are housed in a grim prison outside Burgos well screened from public view.

In June 357 of the political prisoners ventured to sign a petition addressed to the director of prisons. They respectfully appealed for the introduction of the "material and spiritual" conditions to which they felt they were entitled. "Exemplary" punishment was thereupon imposed on 10 of their number who were apparently considered the ringleaders.

These 10 entrusted one of their number with the delicate task of delivering the petition to the governor. He tried to explain that they were merely request-

ing that the rules and regulations be applied in accordance with the law and that there was no intention of causing disorder.

The petition complained that the prisoners had been tried without proper opportunities for defence, with no spirit of justice and in the atmosphere of hatred and passion engendered by the civil war. It suggested that the only possible way of correcting the errors that had been committed against them would be an amnesty, which would at the same time lead towards the co-existence desired for all Spaniards.

Improvement in the prisoners' conditions were asked for. These included a supply of reading matter, some entertainment, provision of the clothing to which they were entitled under the regulations, adequate medical attention, better sanitary conditions, the right to present written complaints against "irregularities and arbitrary actions" by the authorities, and better conditions for seeing members of their families on visiting days.

On these last occasions prisoners and their relatives have to be content with shouting through two partitions of wire mesh divided by a corridor along which

the guard marches up and down. Guards are on duty behind the prisoners and behind the relatives while they shout to each other through the two wire partitions. The petition asked for a change to a more humane system.

The poorness of the food was complained of; few could have lasted through the years without the food parcels sent by relatives.

The 10 men who were immediately penalized were put in unhealthy "punishment cells" after having had their heads shaved. They were *incomunicados*, were denied food parcels, and not allowed to breathe fresh air even for one hour in the prison courtyard. During the day they were deprived of the sleeping mat in the "punishment cell" so that they could not lie down and rest.

Some of those connected with the petition have had their sentences prolonged by the prison authorities.

Nothing can be done to improve their conditions by petitioning the Spanish authorities. Their wives, mothers, and relatives have appealed to the civil and ecclesiastical authorities for an amnesty for these political prisoners, but the Madrid Government calmly states that there are no political prisoners in Spain.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

London Anarchist Group meetings are suspended for the Summer. They will be resumed at new premises in the Autumn. Date and place to be announced.

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