

A CHANGE IN THE INTERESTS OF THE POWERS MAY RESULT IN

## Ending Korean War

THE possibility that the great powers may now bring the fighting in Korea to a close raises hopes once more in the minds of all reasonable people—though we have learned to become cautious against the likelihood of disappointment. The occasion for the renewed hope is the speech of Jacob Malik, the Soviet delegate to the "United" Nations last week-end. But it would be unrealistic to think that the speech created the hope: it is merely the expression of a change in the interests of the Powers.

### Stalemate

After a year's fighting, the course the war has been widely summarised in the press by means of maps showing the relative disposition of Korean territory between the contestants. The Chinese and Russian bloc would no doubt have liked the war to end in the early autumn of 1950 when their adversaries were holding out in the very tip of the peninsula. The Anglo-American bloc would have preferred December last, when the North Korean forces were beaten against the Chinese frontier.

But it is needless to point out to a rational observer that in a war waged with puppets while major reserves and resources lie in the background, such an outcome is impossible. For the past 3 or 4 months fighting has oscillated about the thirty-eighth parallel and it is clear that a balance of forces has been attained, and the usefulness of further fighting becomes doubtful. Hence some kind of nego-

tiated termination has been likely for some time, the problems to be solved being not in Korea; but in government offices and propaganda departments. It has been recalled that Mr. Trygve Lie, the secretary-general of the "United" Nations, issued a call for a cease-fire four weeks ago.

We may note that while diplomacy proceeds, and the nations wait for suitable moments to deliver their speeches, the death-roll in Korea continues.

### Propaganda Uses

The call to negotiation issued by Malik, illustrates the incidental dividends which the great powers expect to draw from such a change in policy. Russia seeks to appear in the rôle of the peace-loving, unaggressive force for good, and Malik's

speech has already been written up in that light by the Communist Parties and fellow-travellers. The Anglo-American bloc seeks to appear as the patient and long-suffering peace-lovers also content to bide their time, and ready to swallow insults, etc., etc.

The fact is, of course, that Korea has served many useful military ends for both sides as an exercise. For the British and the Americans, at all events, it has also provided an opportunity for the partial resumption of a war economy and thereby perhaps hold off the inevitable trade depressions of a consumer goods economy.

Nor will the Truman administration and their Republican rivals be slow to exploit a cessation of hostilities in the sphere of General MacArthur's former activities.

In the remote background, the welfare of the Koreans, and the lives of the troops may perhaps receive consideration.

## PAYING FOR REARMAMENT BY BUILDING CUTS

WHEN the Government's "defence" plan for a £4,700 million armament programme was announced earlier this year, Mr. Dalton, Minister of Local Government and Planning declared that "the Government does not intend to reduce the housing programme as a whole".

But last week, Mr. Gaitskell, Chancellor of the Exchequer, said that "The housing programme will be maintained at 200,000 houses a year, but there may have to be some local interference with house building in the interests of defence work."

It is hard not to feel that this is the thin end of the wedge, as more and more building materials and labour are being devoted to "defence" work. Mr. Gaitskell was announcing cuts of at least £100 million in buildings and in equipment for industry. There is to be an immediate ban on new office building. (As Londoners, we are no very worried about this—almost all the new office buildings in

London have been those built under the "Lessor" scheme for use by government departments, and there are not many of them which cannot be considered architectural anachronisms). Far more disturbing was Mr. Gaitskell's remark that, "We have also considered carefully whether in the new circumstances further progress can be made with the reconstruction of war-damaged towns and cities. We propose to make a special survey of the position, area by area."

It is clear, he said, that during the next two years it will not be possible to do much.

There will be less money for the health services—presumably new hospitals—and some local government services.

Farm, school, and university building will be cut. So will new equipment for schools.

As always, the satisfaction of human needs is sacrificed to the current crisis. Ever since the war, we were told that precedence must be given to that economic miasma, the "overseas balance of payments". No sooner had this "balance" been achieved than the new needs of "defence" were thrown upon us, and the increased cost of raw materials caused by the scramble between governments for them, has now upset the balance again. Mr. Gaitskell said: "We cannot afford a serious decline in exports when the rapidly rising cost of imports presents a serious threat to the stability of our overseas balance of payments."

So it goes on, and still the needs of the people are unsatisfied. In the County of London the waiting list for houses has trebled since 1946. The total last January was 200,388, of which 43,000 were "very urgent" and 20,000 "urgent".

In Lancashire one person in every eight of the 5,000,000 inhabitants is a member of a family seeking a house. In Manchester there are more than 20,000 on the waiting list, and only 2,000 houses a year are being built. In Edinburgh two years ago, the waiting list was 15,000 and it is now 18,000.

In overcrowded Paddington last week, a boy died after eating food infected with typhoid by a mouse. His mother, interviewed by a newspaper reporter, looked around her two rooms and said: "It's as good as you will get in Lord Hills-road. We are not on any housing list. What's the use? There are hundreds there already."

Then she looked into the street and said: "They buried me when they buried my son."

The rates of sickness, infantile mortality, juvenile delinquency and crime, always relate to the degree of overcrowding and unsatisfactory housing. Private enterprise could not provide houses at rents which the people whose need is most urgent could afford; public authorities do so at a pitifully slow pace which is continually threatened by the concentration of public expenditure on armaments and export trade; if you attempt to build your own house you will be prosecuted. Meanwhile, landlords are letting their property go to ruin because the Rent Restrictions Act prevents them from making the profits they believe to be their due—an example of the inadequacy of reformist legislation.

The time is overdue for a further campaign of direct action for houses by the public, like the "Vigilante" and "Squatters" movements of a few years ago. Or are people already so supine as to acquiesce in the denial of the most elementary human needs?

(A later article will discuss proposals for increasing house production by lowering housing standards.)

as a means of lessening the demand for scarce goods but remains as a source of government income. A reader tells us an instructive story. He works for a firm of manufacturing milliners who also own their own retail shops. They wanted to reduce the selling price in their own shops below that charged by other retailers, but were prevented by the Purchase Tax authorities because since the tax is based on the selling price, less would be payable if it were reduced.

Take, too, the example of fruit and vegetable and fish trades, where price-fixing agreements do not apply and the retailer's price is based on how much he can extort from the customer and varies widely in different districts according to the general "income-group" of the area.

All these things indicate the futility of reformist measures over retail prices, and also the dishonesty of politicians whose interest in them is dictated solely by vote-getting stunts.

### SYNDICALIST NOTEBOOK

## Strikes Against Redundancy

THE managing director of the Austin Motor Company, Mr. Lord, was reported last year as sourly remarking, at a banquet, that, in the Austin factories, the workers were in control. Shortly after that, the Company awarded Mr. Lord the sum of £100,000, as a recognition of his worth to the firm, at the same time getting him to agree not to sell his services to any rival car manufacturers for a period of at least seven years.

Now a firm that can pay £100,000 to a managing director who has lost control of the business, must be in a fairly prosperous position, but we have yet to see any report that the controlling workers have been able to vote themselves any substantial bonus. Indeed, if they are in control, we can only say how generous it was of them to have voted their boss, who is clearly not on very good terms with them, a sum equal to £6 per head for each of the 17,000 workers employed at the Longbridge, Birmingham, factory.

The management, however, are not as generous in their attitude to the workers. Last week over 80% of the workers had to go on strike to resist redundancy notices served on seven of their fellows.

At the time the material shortages developed this year the management assured the shop stewards that people already employed would be given preference to new labour if any redundancy dismissals were necessary. But, according to one shop steward:

"The shop stewards now have definite proof that in the last three months 504 new people have been employed, and now seven old employees—six members of the Amalgamated Engineering Union and one member of the Transport and General Workers' Union—were on Tuesday declared redundant. The management has not honoured the agreement it made with us."

At the same time, 44 sheet metal workers, belonging to a different union, had also been declared redundant.

### WAS IT A COMMUNIST STUNT?

JUST as the above was going to press, we read of the Austin workers voting to go back. They were divided among themselves by the assertions of a machine-shop steward who alleged Communist influence, and several workers struggled to get the microphone at a mass meeting.

The shop steward quoted above, convenor R. Etheridge, was a C.P. candidate at the last election, and at the works meeting was howled down by cries of "You are trying to mislead us."

We are as pleased as anyone to see the workers rumble the Communists, but to what end? One of the redundant men was also a Communist. Because of that must he and all the others be sacked without a murmur from the workers?

Just as the division of workers by craft union is against their interests, so is their division by politics. The C.P. itself knows, and plays, the game of "divide and rule", but class-conscious workers should not play it, either for or against the Commies.

### AT AERO WORKS REDUNDANCY ACCEPTED

AT the works of Essex Aero Ltd., Gravesend, a similar issue to the above brought 230 workers out on a four-week strike which has just ended.

Nine men were declared redundant without consultation with the shop stewards. It now transpires that it was because they were fired *without consultation*. That became the important issue, for the union are happy and have sent the workers back to work on the understanding that there will be consultation in future. Very nice, but not for the nine men, who no doubt, thought that the strike was being fought to prevent their being sacked.

Not so. The union have now agreed with the management that they were redundant—but unionism has now been established at the works! For what, is not stated.

## POLITICAL POSTURING AND RETAIL PRICES

"Between 8/- and 10/- of every pound we spend goes on distribution expenses to the wholesalers and retailers."—Public Opinion, 22/6/51

THE debate on monopolies in the House of Commons last week, presented the pleasing spectacle of the Labour Party as the champions of "free enterprise" and the Conservatives as the enemies of competition.

Sir Hartley Shawcross was introducing the Government's White Paper on Resale Price Maintenance ("a trade practice which prevents shopkeepers from reducing certain prices to the public"). In his new rôle of Housewives' Friend, he described the shady way in which retail prices are fixed, and traders fined and boycotted if they sell below authorised prices. The situation is epitomised by a letter from a shop-keeper, which he read:

"I bought some hand cream to retail at 1s. 4d. a tube. After a while, the price rose to 1s. 8d. I did not raise my prices. A woman bought a tube from me at 1s. 4d. She had been sent in by the PAT Association, who reported me for not raising the price to 1s. 8d. A man from the PATA told me that unless I raised my price to 1s. 8d. I would have my name placed on the PATA stop list and supplies would be stopped..."

The Labour Party has welcomed the proposals which naturally have a great electioneering value in giving the impression that the Government really intends to do something about rising prices. The Conservatives contrast this concern for the welfare of the housewife and antipathy to monopolistic practices with the

ever-rising prices in State monopolies—the nationalised industries.

Both sides of retail distribution are worried. The general secretary of the National Chamber of Trade said, "Sir Hartley wants traders to commit suicide. If you have a price-cutting war a lot of people will eventually go to the wall. Full employment is likely to suffer."

And Mr. Walter Padley, president of the shop assistants' union, said that "the suppression of fixed prices portends a return to the low wages and sweated conditions from which shop assistants have just rescued themselves."

It seems very unlikely anyway that anything helpful to the consumer will come from the government's proposals. Certainly nothing is contemplated to cut out the enormous middleman's profits on consumer goods. A sensible comment on Sir Hartley Shawcross's statement was made by *Public Opinion* which said, "However steeply prices climb, the retailers insist on their percentage, and profit mightily at the public expense from inflation. These percentages were fixed in the competitive days before the war when a retailer had to earn his money and a rival might always appear across the way. Nowadays, and probably for some time to come in many trades, the retailer does not strictly sell, he only distributes. Many of these margins, especially on rationed and utility goods, are fixed by the Board of Trade. Here is something Sir Hartley can have a tilt at now, instead of waiting for that unfortunately distant day when monopoly and retail price maintenance commissions actually achieve something."

Then there is the question of Purchase Tax, which was introduced during the war



# THE JEWS IN AMERICA

"If the Jewish participation in banking and finance is negligible, it is virtually non-existent in heavy industry. There is not a single sector of the heavy industry front in which their influence amounts to dominance or control or in which it can even be regarded as significant. A minor exception might be noted in the scrap-iron and steel business, an outgrowth of the junk business, which has been a direct contribution of Jewish im-

migrants to the American economy. The scrap-iron business, it should be emphasized, is wholly peripheral to heavy industry in general. Similarly, the waste-products industry, including non-ferrous scrap metal, paper, cotton rags, wool rags, and rubber, is largely Jewish controlled. But, here again, control of waste products..."

—CAREY MCWILLIAMS in  
"A Mask for Privilege"

1

IF the Negroes are at the bottom of the minority ladder in America, then the Jews are at the top. This (anti-Semites notwithstanding) is not to be confused with being at the top of the American ladder, for the Jews (as a group) are closer to a middle than an upper class position vis-a-vis America as a whole.

For instance, according to the well-known Fortune survey of 1936 (*Jews in America*): Jews are a minor influence in money and banking. "Of 420 listed directors of the 19 members of the New York City Clearing House in 1933 only 33 were Jews... the absence of Jews in the insurance business is noteworthy", etc., etc. No Jew can be elected president of the U.S. to-day. The number of Jewish Congressmen is negligible and almost always restricted to the States with large Jewish populations. Obviously the pinnacles of the society and the important positions in all basic industries: such as mining, steel, auto, rubber, cement, etc., are held by the lily white (Protestant) Aryans.

Yet it cannot be denied that the Jews (as a group) have reached a degree of success and prosperity which other groups which immigrated with them (say the

Italians or Poles) have not yet reached (and will probably not reach under the present underdog society) and which Negroes who have been here for generations longer than the Jews will also never reach in this exploitative society.

2

Jewish mass immigration to America began about 1880. This decade marked the beginning of a vast new period of Russian repression and anti-Semitic persecution (which was the negative push); and that final forward thrust of American industrial expansion which was to make her the world's leader by 1914 as the positive attraction, drawing 2,000,000 Jewish immigrants (among about 18,000,000 of other nationalities) to the gold-plated shores of the Western Empire.

"A feier oif Columbus mit zein golden land" is the title of a comic song and dialogue record, lying dusty and broken, somewhere in my father's house. For this Jewish immigration was to go through hell and blood to reach its present seemingly comparatively comfortable position.

Drying to death like straw in the broken roots of a feudal-artisan economy being swiftly torn to pieces in a scenic railway Austro-Hungary (with the scenery

falling apart), and tied to the tracks of that great new apoplectic Russian locomotive called Kapitalismus, the Jewish artisans and storekeepers of Galicia and the Baltic Provinces, the tired inn keepers of Podolia and Bukovina, the wild-eyed "merchants" of Odessa, the Jewish mechanics of the Ukraine and the German border towns started on their way West: To the United States of North America, to the much-promised land, some few stopping in Vienna, Paris, Brussels, London (and leaving beginnings of Yiddish anarchist movements) on and further onward to America; the golden land; *di goldene medina*."

And this was a unique immigration in Jewish and perhaps in world history. For (according to various estimates) it was an immigration 60 to 90% proletarian. Jewish tailors, furriers, hatmakers, carpenters, tinworkers, textile workers were leaving an old world hostile to them and coming to the land of which Emma Lazarus could write that it spoke in these words:

"Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

(This and the obviously anti-Semitic quota laws of 1924 bound together would make very interesting reading.)

But in those legendary days there was some truth in this poetry and the Jews came in masses to this country.

And of the comparatively small percentage of "luft mershen" reaching here

practically none retained that status very long.

Because in America everyone worked. (It was the land of opportunity.) And the expanding country grabbed these Jewish youth into the pounding sweatshops of New York and Boston, disquieted Philadelphia, roaring Chicago.

Out of this maelstrom of terrific exploitation: of 12-hour days and miserable housing and T.B. (it used to be called "the tailor's disease"): of comparative civic freedoms and opportunity for secular education (asleep in the night school): of an expanding ever-expanding economy bursting its class seams and creating great new movements of labour like the A.F. of L. and the I.W.W.—a Jewish revolutionary movement was born.

Split almost from the beginning into a Marxist and Anarchist wing; creating two great clothing unions: the Amalgamated and the I.L.G.W.U. (and many others); playing a leading role in the I.W.W. attempt at N.Y.; with a huge labouring class in N.Y.C. in fervent turmoil; creating a proletarian literature (the poetry of Bovshover, Edelman, Rosenfeld; the *Freie Arbeiter Stimme*, the *Zukunft*, the *Forwards* (the Kropotkin Literary Society published Kropotkin and Marx, Bakunin and Lasalle and boasted 3,000 subscribing members!); a Jewish revolutionary movement was born, ascended... and died in the sloughs of Stalinism and... success.

(There is something terribly depressing about going over old beginnings and successes and seeing where they have led: because this makes us doubt even the minor successes of our own time.)

3

Success! that guerrilla on caterpillar tank treads!

American society burgeoned from 1900 onward and created new middle class positions in accounting and controls, in retailing (salesmen and small storekeepers), in the "free" professions of law and medicine and in entertainment, in the "service" industries and the lower echelons of an expanding governmental society:

From the start of the New Immigration for total populations (Jew and non-Jew): "In terms of absolute numbers one can say that employment in the primary industries fell far behind the population increase, the secondary industries merely kept pace with the growth of population, while the group engaged in the tertiary industries increased at a rate many times faster than that of the increase in the population. In the United States, for instance, the total number of employed was quadrupled between 1870 and 1940. But during this period employment in the primary industries increased by little more than one-half; the manufacturing group quadrupled, that is increased in the same proportion as the total population; but those engaged in trade increased more than elevenfold [for, instance in 1940 America boasted 3,188,854 salesmen... I.G.] the clerical group more than fivefold (!) and the public service group more than twenty-onefold" (Nathan Reich in *The Jews: Their History, Culture and Religion*, by L. Finkelstein, Vol. II, p. 1257.)

Jews, with special cultural abilities and developed talents: urbanization, tradition of education and literacy, business tradition stepped right into the vacuum.

Of Americans as a whole, 14% are in trade, 7% in professions, 26% in industry and 10% in farming. Of American Jews 40-50% are in trade, 10-12% in professions, 15-20% in industry, and more than 1% in farming.

And this is where the Jews are to-day. The impassioned Jewish revolutionaries who started co-operative farms in Oregon is now the big butter and egg man on the street.

Of course, this was a universal American pattern and the German Socialist movement in America has appeared and the sons of the Italian anarchists in America, where are they? And if the truth be told: both the Italian and Yiddish anarchist journals in America (*Adunata* and the *Freie Arbeiter Stimme*) are able to publish more often than the English journal *Resistance*.

4

Yet the Jews in America (although having just about almost reversed their immigrant proletarian-middle class ratio [most Jews, however, are still employed] remain like the bride after a shotgun wedding: wondering what is going to happen when the honeymoon is over and the loving relatives have gone away.

For staring in their face is the fate of the Jews of that (up till now) perhaps most successful Jewish community of the (Continued on page 3)

## THE PACIFIC COAST INDIANS by GEORGE WOODCOCK

In this article, the first of three, George Woodcock who has spent the last two years in the far west of Canada, discusses the old tribal organisation of the Coast Indians, which though not so frequently discussed as that of the Hopi or Zuni, is of no less interest to the student of human society in all its manifold forms.

ONE of the factors which strikes one immediately in travelling through the part of Canada west of the Rockies, is the effect on the native peoples of the arrival of western culture and institutions. British Columbia has about 26,000 Indians, between 2 and 3 per cent. of the population, and a higher proportion than in any other part of Canada, and, once one gets out of the more urban areas, one immediately realises that they still play a considerable part in the life of the area; this is particularly the case in the centre and north of the province, and also in the coastal fiords and the islands.

Indian society in British Columbia was probably more complex than in any other part of America before the arrival of the white men. There were no less than eight completely distinct linguistic families (Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian, Nootka, Kwakiutl, Salish, Athapaskan and Kootenay), and the dialects within these groupings were often so different as to form virtually separate languages which were mutually incomprehensible. An inadequate trading jargon called Chinook provided a primitive medium of inter-tribal communication.

There were also distinctions between the economic life of the tribes. The Kootenays, who inhabited the series of valleys and mountain ranges now known by their name, retained the organisation and the ways of life of the prairie Indians, crossing the mountains every year to hunt the buffalo in the plains of Alberta. The Athapaskan and Interior Salish tribes lived a nomadic hunting life and depended a great deal on the salmon runs up the great rivers of the province. The remaining five tribes, as well as the Coast Salish, formed the Coast Indian culture. They built enormous ocean-going canoes and great wooden community houses; they

carved and painted totem poles and followed other forms of craftsmanship with a vigour and originality of design rarely excelled among primitive peoples, and their dancing and dramatic festivals reached a relatively high degree of imaginative achievement. All this was made possible because in the rank, rain forests of the coastal regions, they had an abundance of easily workable wood, while the seas provided them with a wealth of fish and the woods with a variety of berries which enabled them to live in a plenty rarely equalled in a primitive environment, as well as allowing them a winter of leisure to carry on their artistic and ritualistic pursuits.

Their social structure was complex, and it already showed many degenerative factors which are not found among more primitive peoples. There was a rigid class system which in some tribes included an approximation to royalty, and always included noblemen, commoners and slaves. The slaves were treated as chattels, and could be killed at will. At the same time, economic equality was less than might at first sight seem probable under such a society, for among almost all the North American Indians it was unthinkable that any man should be allowed to starve while there was food in the tribe, and the products of fishing and the chase were usually shared out so that all the people, whether they had themselves been successful or not, had at least enough. This applied even to the slaves. Only after this measure of justice had been achieved might the chiefs claim the surplus by their right as heads of the clans.

There were two parallel forms of social organisation, at least among the more northern tribes. The basic unit was the house, a group of relatives with their dependents and slaves, who lived in a large community building. The "houses" were united into clans under the badges of supernatural patrons (the Coast Indians were not strictly totemistic in that they believed that animal spirits were not their ancestors but their spiritual guides and protectors). These clans were matrilineal, and, although actual matriarchy had not survived, the women in these tribes enjoyed a large measure of equality; it was they who conducted most of the trading and sometimes women were even chiefs and were admitted to the ritualistic secret societies.

Outside the village, these clans were united into a number of *phratries*, or brotherhoods based on a common patron, and these *phratries* extended over linguistic as well as tribal barriers. They were exogamous, so that a member of the Ravens could not marry another member of the same *phratry*, no matter whether she was measurably related or belonged to a completely different tribe. But the *phratry* also created a kind of bond between individuals in various tribes, and a man in a strange village would go to his fellows in the same *phratry* for protection and hospitality, which were rarely

refused. In a society racked by petty wars and blood feuds it can be seen how important such an institution could be.

The actual political organisation of the tribes was rather slight and little centralised. Each "house" had its own chief. But even within the village, though the chief of the leading clan was regarded as the head man, the allegiance of the various houses to him was often voluntary, and the links between villages of the same tribe was even more tenuous. They might unite for war or trading expeditions and they might have mutual agreements, based on traditional usage, for the exploitation of fishing grounds, berry grounds and clam beaches, but there was relatively little rigidity about their co-operation.

The *phratry* system extended to the Haida, the Tlingit, the Tsimshian and the northern Kwakiutl, and was also imitated by some of the nomadic interior tribes. Among the Kwakiutl it was largely replaced by the ritualistic secret societies, which were so powerful that in winter, after the fishing was over, they almost usurped the authority of the chiefs.

The economic life of the coast tribes, and even of many of the interior bands, was closely bound up with that strange ritualistic institution, the *potlatch*. This was a feast given to celebrate a variety of occasions, such as the assumption of a title, or of the right to dance a certain dance or sing a song (such immaterial things were as strictly held as a copy-right in modern society), or the building of a house or raising of a pole. The peculiar part of the feast was that it included the giving away of large quantities of goods to the guests, so that a chief would often impoverish himself in the process, but at the same time gain the prestige which counted most among Indian ambitions. But this distribution

### WORLD HEALTH

THE budget for 1952 of the World Health Organisation which recently held its annual Assembly at Geneva, shows that 70.39% of its income is to go as "expenditure on permanent staff", 7.31% on temporary expert advisers, 12.70% on subsidies and technical services and 9.60% on other expenses. Mr. Peter Price in a letter to the press, comments: "It is well known that international bodies spend money freely, but it is not always realised how much of their generosity is lavished on themselves." "No-one would deny," he continues, "that the W.H.O. renders valuable services to humanity, or that a budget of \$8.7 millions is reasonable; but would not the value of its work be enhanced if a smaller proportion of its income (say, 35% instead of 70%) were devoted to its own nourishment? Such a proposal was, in fact, made by the Yugoslav delegate, but it was turned down in committee and never reached the floor of the Assembly."

### COMMENT THE INFORMER

WHEN an Aidrie boot-repairer, Mr. James Morrison, boasted in a public-house that he was successfully "diddling" the income tax authorities, one of his listeners went home and wrote an anonymous letter to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, with the result that the man was sentenced to prison for four months for fraud.

Mr. John Betjeman discussed some aspects of the case recently in *Time & Tide*. One surprising thing, he says, is that the man was a boot-repairer. Here was not one of those cases of restaurants "where the waiter will buy your bill from you if you have paid in cash, and sell it at a profit to an executive who can show it in for expenses. I doubt if Mr. James Morrison did this kind of thing. He was a boot-repairer. But it will not do if we have mere manual workers defrauding the State."

What were the motives of the sender of the anonymous letter? Perhaps, speculates John Betjeman, "he is a young man, fresh from a course in Civics, and anxious to prove to himself that he is 'a good citizen'. Perhaps he feels a loyalty to the Inland Revenue, as a soldier to the Flag. Perhaps he is willing to die for National Savings. Perhaps he is personally devoted to one of the Commissioners for Income Tax. Whichever of these absurd reasons inspired him, he is a neo-Nazi, traitor to the mutual trust of human society, a humourless prude, a pedant, a hypocrite and a coward."

Mr. Betjeman then considers the "twisted official mind" which decided to investigate the charge. "Perhaps some underlying opened it at first" and saw a chance of promotion. "He attached a minute to it, and sent it up higher. Thence what minuting and self-righteous shifting of responsibility must have gone up and up the Income Tax department! Finally one man, in a mist of power-mania and self-glorification, visualizing the CMGs and MBEs, or whatever the

decorations are with which the Income Tax officials reward one another—official decided to strike a blow for Income Tax, Democracy and Freedom. So Mr. James Morrison, boot-repairer, is in prison. The anonymous letter-writer is still at large. And the Income Tax officials continue their good work. They probably feel that they have given us all a reprimand which we justly deserve. Perhaps they followed the advice of their PRO and I expect they think Justice has been done. Has it? Or has the Police State stepped a long stride nearer?"

The following issue of the paper in which Mr. Betjeman's article appeared, contained a selection of readers' letters protesting about his "unintelligent and anti-social" views. One letter, however, came from someone who had worked as an income tax clerk, whose view it was that Mr. Betjeman stated less than the truth. The correspondent wrote: "Invariably, and as a matter of policy, anonymous letters are acted on—they are one of the stand-bys of the inspector."

"Local gossip is also acted upon. The classified advertisements in the local Press are thoroughly examined and any apparently significant ones ringed for further investigation."

"A zealous clerk will quite often say to an inspector: 'B— has bought an expensive car. I saw him driving around in it last night.'"

"Immediately B—'s affairs are subjected to thorough investigation. "As you hint—there is another side. Wealthy men and large concerns employ lawyers and accountants to quibble over assessments. Each quibble involves lengthy correspondence. As soon as one is settled another begins. While queries are outstanding the tax is unpaid. This goes on for years. Naturally the interest on the money more than pays the lawyer's fee. If a little man tries it on they bankrupt him—I saw them do it."

### FREEDOM BOOKSHOP

- The House & the Fort Charles Humano 9/6  
"A beautifully written and original novel."  
—DANIEL GEORGE.
- Seretse Khama and the Bamangwato Julian Mockford 12/6  
The background to recent events.
- Thrill Books each 1/-  
Titles include: *Getting to Know English Literature: Evolution in Outline; Finding Out About Atomic Energy; Theatregoing; Signpost to Mathematics; A Short History of Our Own Times (1919-1950).*
- The Objector Job Stuart 10/6  
Novel about an American who decided that war is murder.
- Wayward Youth August Aichhorn 9/-  
"... one of those truly creative books."—Observer.
- The Broken Root Arturo Borea 15/-  
"Reveals as much of the character of the Spanish people as of the condition of Franco's Spain."—Manchester Guardian.

... Obtainable from  
27 red lion st, london,  
W.C.1



## THE HOLLOW YEAR

AFTER one year of fighting in Korea it is proper to stand back and review the whole affair. To recall the original issues, the reasons for intervention and whether they have been justified, is no doubt salutary; but it will be found still more advantageous to take an even remoter standpoint and see in Korea how our world deals with a problem. This is the standpoint which it has been the policy of *Freedom* to urge on all its readers: to try and see here and now the light which contemporary history sheds on the social and economic structure of our time.

After one year it can be confidently stated—as in all recent wars—that the alleged moral causes which enlist honest people's sympathy for distasteful action have proved completely hollow, at all events in practice, even if we care to concede some honesty of intention.

For months now the war has settled down in the vicinity of the frontier line between North and South Korea. It is being said that the United Nations has now succeeded in its declared aim of stopping aggression, we even hear of restoring the *status quo*. But for the Koreans the achievements of a year's fighting are not summed up thus. The stalemate on the 38th parallel does not restore any *status quo* which is intelligible to peasants. For them there is devastation of fields, of industries which might have made some progress. There is slaughter unimaginable, the uprooting of families, political repression on a far greater scale than ever before. And there is the accompaniment of civil war especially: the rule of the informer, the atmosphere of suspicion and anxiety, and the need for the sake of one's skin to exhibit loyalty to one or the other power which ever is dominant. Peasants' natural loyalties are to themselves, their families, and their land; the destructive power of such twentieth century twisting is difficult to imagine, impossible fully to assess.

And what of the United Nations' losses? Many lives have been destroyed to restore the 38th parallel and the relatives of those killed and wounded have every emotional reason for thinking such suffering contains achievement. But the facts are—the present state of Korea and the Koreans. War and its casualties have achieved just that, and on such achievements is it to be assessed, not on the speeches of politicians.

Here lies the difficulty of the attempt that *Freedom* makes: our world and its actions are so horrible that it is nearly impossible to look upon its true aspect; still more difficult to dissect and assess it. The dreadfulness of Korea is not a local manifestation; it is the reflection of the age of national states and their economic activities and rivalries. That we are—as a whole—so indifferent to the face of suffering, so supine, reflects the emotional stunting which such a social system bestows.

## FREEDOM

may be obtained each week from the following newsagents in

LONDON  
Freedom Bookshop, 27 Red Lion St., W.C.1

Solosy, 53 Charing Cross Rd., W.C.1  
Librairie Populaire, 67 Shaftesbury Street, W.1

Librairie Populaire, 67 Shaftesbury Avenue, W.1

Newsagent, Coptic Street, W.C.1  
W. H. Smith branches at Finchley Road, Hampstead, Golders Green, Chalk Farm, Camden Town Underground Stations.

SOON after the Indian Cultural Conference, came and went the so-called Peace Convention. Whether the Cultural Conference was Anglo-American in inspiration or not, as is alleged by the so-called Peace Convention and even some neutrals and outsiders of both conferences, the claim that the 'Peace' conference was not inspired by the Communists is not proved. In fact, this "Peace Conference" was once held in Prague which is within the Russian orbit. That in itself is enough to damn the organisers of the Peace Conference as champions of Stalin's régime. Of course, their argument will be, because it was not allowed to be held in London or Paris it had to be held in Soviet territory. But the so-called Cultural Conference would not be allowed to be held in the land of "Freedom", because no conference which had the smell of neutrality can be held in Russia or satellite countries. Hence the Czech Communist government allowed the so-called Peace Conference in its territory which is sufficient proof to damn it as Bolshevik-inspired. It was reported that there was some opposition to communism by delegates in the Convention. It only shows that these so-called delegates were either ignoramuses and have been gulled, or the conference has nothing to do with Communism but was only meant to support *Stalinism*. That they proclaim peace does not make them less the agents of *Stalinism*. They may not themselves know it. I asked one Gandhian why he signed the peace pledge placed before him by an avowed communist. He having been gulled and being not willing to ad-

mit it, said: There was nothing in the wording of the pledge which I could object to!

## PEACE HUMBUB

When the Peace Pledge was issued in Stockholm, I received an air-letter from one of the organisers which participated in the so-called Stockholm Peace Conference saying that it was inspired by the Bolsheviks and the truth was discovered only after the issuance of the Pledge and so they held a conference to denounce it as a Bolshevik, Stalinist machination. When I gave the news to one of the biggest dailies in Bombay—they refused to publish it, saying it was not important. Yes, Reuter had not telegraphed it, hence the news had no value.

A friend of mine who had been asked to sign the pledge but refused to do so, saying he was against and outside all politics, tells me that his name has been included in some list issued in Delhi. Pure swindle! Many who had signed the pledge in Europe protested and withdrew.

Many of the organisations which participated in the Stockholm Peace Conference originally, have now set up an office to denounce the Peace Pledge as a Bolshevik contrivance and its office (*Sveviges Fredsrad*) is situated at Jungfrugatan 30, Stockholm. They must know better than our leaders and editors, being

on the spot and being *au courant* from the beginning. But in the kingdom of the blind, the one-eyed man is the wisest! Two-eyed men are not wanted.

If quackery and humbug will achieve world peace, it will, as a result of peace conferences, official, quasi-official, demi-official and officially inspired. The real makers of war conceal themselves behind these conferences—in the distance in government offices and they do all the intrigue which makes the war inevitable.

Dr. Atal—a nephew of Pandit Nehru—recently returned from a 12-day tour as a government guest, of course, or as a conducted tourist in Russia and gave a flamboyant interview in London saying that the Russian people are thoroughly against war. Who says that the Russian people want war? For that matter no people want war. Do the American and British or any other people want war? Dr. Atal means only Russian people do not want war. People do not want war but that is different from saying that their governments are also against war.

## BUSY-BODIES OF PEACE

Who are these delegates to appeal to governments not to make war? Are the governments only waiting for their conferences to know what they should do! Are governments there to carry out their resolutions? They will do what they think they must do at any moment. Mr.

Karanjia said cheaply that others are "Washington patriots", they can retort "You are Moscow patriots." / We need not take film actors who participated in the Convention seriously—they are only well directed!

Dr. Atal said bombastically that the peace movement—meaning *Stalinism*—has caught the imagination of the people and "nobody can stop it". They thought so on the platform before every war but when war came, they had to go in defence of their régimes or go into concentration camps. Neutrality in another war is impossible for any government. Even during the last war—Switzerland, Sweden and Turkey had to help their powerful neighbours, for fear of being invaded and occupied. Picasso's Peace Dove—a dead symbol—will not make war impossible. It will remain a taxidermist's stuffed bird, without life.

The fact is peace cannot be made by governments. It is governments which make wars. To appeal to one's own or foreign governments to keep peace is irresponsible advice. They can claim that they are heroes of peace when they support their own or foreign governments. If peace were wanted, governments would be made impossible in all countries. But the heroes of peace are supporters of one government against others.

MARCOPOLO.

Bombay.

# Indian Peace Convention

## FOREIGN COMMENTARY

# Drug Pedlars and Drugged Minds

IN the course of a discussion I was having last week with an American radical who is on a visit to this country, he pointed out that the American people "easily panic". This seemed a somewhat sweeping generalisation, yet could not one in fact trace a kind of panic in so many actions taken by America, urged on by public opinion? Two recent examples come to mind. The first is the revelation that teen-agers were among the growing number of drug addicts. The arrests for narcotic offences increased from 1,731 in 1944 to 8,539 in 1950 while the number of offenders under 25 years of age increased from 30 to 44.6 per cent.

Obviously, it is a serious matter, but hardly justifying the extreme measures proposed in a narcotics-control bill which has been introduced and which would make the sale of drugs to minors a capital offence, nor the hysterical outburst of the President of the General Federation of Women's Clubs (with a membership of 11 million) when she urged Mr. Truman to declare "a national emergency" and to support legislation calling for the death penalty for narcotic pedlars. "The mothers of America are horrified," etc., etc.

The second example is, of course, the Communist witch-hunt. As a result of the Supreme Court upholding the Smith Act which was used against the eleven convicted Communists, the police have swooped on 17 more Communists and at the time of writing were looking for another four, all of whom are accused of "advocating or teaching the violent overthrow of the government". The authorities believe that the arrested C.P.s. were scheduled to take over the leadership of the party when the 11 convicted leaders begin their prison terms. While, as we have written before, the Communists can hardly complain at such treatment, since it is the least they would do if they had the power, nevertheless to say that such actions are democratic is really asking too much of the stupidity and gullibility even of American democrats! But though they may not think it democratic, they are so scared by the Communist bogey that they are prepared to agree to anything... even fascism, some say.

THE American magazine *The New Leader* which has been smelling out Communist plots week after week for years now has found room, for a change, to discuss the racial discrimination in the Groveland Case, and what their "investigator" reveals of conditions in Florida so far as Negroes are concerned makes terrible reading. "The outstanding fact I stumbled on," he writes, "is that within a period of little more than a year, and in a country that is the metropolitan heart of the citrus region—Orange County—three known attacks by lynch-bent night-

riders have been made on Negroes, one Negro has been brutally beaten and two killed." One of them, Willie Vincent, "was abducted by a band of white men, flogged, then flung from a speeding automobile. He died." Another, Melvin Womack, was seized in his home by four white kidnapers, dragged into the orange groves, flogged, then shot to death."

And the *New Leader's* investigator points out that "these, it must be emphasised, are a compendium only of known cases of outright violence against Negroes in Florida within the space of twelve months in a single community. No one can possibly gauge the number of unknown, or less violent incidents and insults that Negroes have been subjected to over the same period."

In an editorial on the subject, the *New Leader* (June 4th) shows considerable disquiet over the whole problem of racism. This is particularly interesting in view of their underwriting the statements issued by the pro-American Peace Front (which it may be recalled staged its first meeting in Berlin) which adopted the attitude that the Negro question, and the obvious contradiction of a Franco as an ally of the "democratic" cause, were only details and that the Communists were hoping that our attention would be diverted from the main issue, which was the Communist menace, into trying to put our own house in order. In the process we should be

overwhelmed by the Communists! So their attitude was: first things first. Now the *New Leader* has obviously had second thoughts in the matter, though the arguments on the whole are practical ones and not put forward on the sole ground of Justice for the Negroes.

Firstly, though the Negro—according to the *New Leader*, "is a patriot—a better patriot than many—as his sacrifices in many a war amply attest", yet "he has less stomach for this war than for any other which we have experienced, for he has been made cynical by a surfeit of unfulfilled promises and sceptical by a repetition of unpleasant realities." Secondly, the people who have been "bombed out and rendered barefoot and hungry inquire, not about our peaceful homes and well-stocked tables, but about the underdog in our community? Do they do so out of perverse satisfaction at contemplating our primary failure? In part, yes. Fundamentally, however, they are really asking, in a spirit of identification with our Negroes: 'Is this an earnest

## FREEDOM PRESS

M. BAKUNIN:  
*Marxism, Freedom and the State*—  
paper 2/6, cloth 5/-

HERBERT READ:  
*Art and the Evolution of Man*—4/-  
*Existentialism, Marxism and Anarchism*—3/6  
*Poetry and Anarchism*, cloth 5/-,  
paper 2/6

*The Philosophy of Anarchism*—  
boards 2/6, paper 1/2

*The Education of Free Men*—1/-

GEORGE WOODCOCK:  
*Anarchy or Chaos*—2/6, cloth 4/6  
*New Life to the Land*—6d.  
*Railways and Society*—3d.  
*Homes orhovels?*—6d.  
*What is Anarchism?*—1d.  
*The Basis of Communal Living*—  
1/-

ALEXANDER BERKMAN:  
*A.B.C. of Anarchism*—1/-

JOHN HEWETSON:  
*Ill-health, Poverty and the State*—  
cloth 2/6, paper 1/-

PETER KROPOTKIN:  
*The State: Its Historic Role*—1/-  
*The Wage System*—3d.  
*Revolutionary Government*—3d.  
*Organised Vengeance Called Justice*—  
2d.

M. L. BERNERI:  
*Workers in Stalin's Russia*—1/-

F. A. RIDLEY:  
*The Roman Catholic Church and  
the Modern Age*—2d.

Marie Louise Berneri Memorial  
Committee publications:  
*Marie Louise Berneri, 1918-1949:  
A Tribute*—cloth 5/-  
*Journey Through Utopia*—  
cloth 10/- (U.S.A. \$2.50)

★  
27, Red Lion Street,  
London, W.C.1.

of the leadership which the United States offers us?"

It might be said that the Negro is only incidental to such arguments on tactics. And more and more as people make compromises, choosing between what they consider the lesser and greater evils, they reflect the lowering of their esteem for themselves by no longer having the confidence to say to others, "I am opposed to racism because it is immoral" or "I am opposed to the death penalty because it is degrading". To-day you have to draw attention to the manpower potential represented by the Negro, and the adverse affect such cases as the Martinsville Seven and that of Willie McGee have on Asiatic countries so far as the "democratic cause" is concerned. And to oppose the death penalty you have to produce pages of figures to show that it doesn't in fact prevent other murders from being committed. To say that it is a disgusting and barbarous practice cuts no ice in our atomic age. And yet it seems to us that until we can capture something of the social indignation which characterised the radical movements in their early days, the future of civil liberties will be indeed black.

LIBERTARIAN.

## THE JEWS IN AMERICA

(Continued from page 2)

post-Emancipation generations: the Jews of 19th and first-half 20th century Germany.

Destruction, death was the fate of these successful Jews: and America has already seen lynchings of Jews and ritual murder trials and sees to-day nation-wide practices of discrimination in housing, education (old Eastern colleges used to have classes containing 20, 30, 40% Jewish medical students, but to-day a numerous caudex of 2% or less is almost universally observed and hypocritically denied, i.e., selection by cities (limiting N.Y.C., etc.) and various other dodges (of course, the real rub of this question which pro-Semites seldom touch is that so many competent students of whatever nationality are stopped from becoming doctors, (and if the Jews were chosen it would mean exclusion of other students), are excluded simply because of the medical monopoly of the American Medical Association and the lack of funds which "society" is willing to donate to this not too profitable job of teaching the healing, life-saving skills [in dentistry, law (they can have that), engineering, the same holds]; discrimination in the engineering and chemical professions, in banking, insurance and finance (they can keep that); little Jewish penetration of mining, lumbering, farming (and the Jews as a group proved no more able to resist the opportunity of middle class status, than any other group: their special skills and cultural traditions of city dwelling, literacy, and trade gave them the "advantage" over their South and East European peasant brother immigrants. When the economy opened up they jumped out of the proletariat into the white collar and middle class interstices. But if there seems to be a limit to the height they can climb, they must remember there is no limit to the depths they can fall); anti-Semitic gang wars in Eastern seaboard cities (particularly with other immigrant groups); literally hundreds of going anti-Semitic newspapers and grouplets throughout the nation (with the example of the Father Coughlin successes before them) and a tradition of thousands of years of torture behind him—uneasy sleeps the beardless although air-foamed Jew.

5

Concentrated in half-a-dozen major cities of the U.S. (about 40% of the Jews

in America live in N.Y.C. Add Chicago and you have 50%. Add Boston, Philadelphia, Detroit and Los Angeles and you have 60%). (You do find Jews in all sections of the country and in most small towns, too, but in small numbers and almost entirely middle class), and having too many marks of the perfect scapegoat:

- (1) weak: less than 3.5% of the population;
- (2) easily identifiable: names, sections of the city, occupation, accent;
- (3) tradition of being scapegoat;
- (4) economic position: conspicuously middle class: "in the middle of the middle".

Economically, psychologically and sociologically the Jews of America are once again in their classical position of "the middle".

As they once collected the rents for the Polish landlords from the Ukrainian peasants, to-day they collect the pennies for the food trust in the corner grocery. The first collections ended in the 17th century Chmelnicki uprisings and massacres against the Poles and Jews, the greatest Jewish slaughter until modern times.

Subject to the pushing pressures upward from the minorities below and the kicking pressure from the well-shod heel of the upper classes, the Jews find the middle position as always exceedingly unrelaxing, and the ladder of success more like a tightrope with no net below but a gas chamber. And, after all, Jacob isn't wrestling an angel to-day but more probably a devil.

Considered in the light of these scapegoat qualifications, the Jews to-day are in a terribly precarious position.

Yet, lulled by a superficial calm and murder-manufacturing economy (America booming attracts Jews even from Palestine: the traffic the other way is made up of a handful of idealist socialist-zionist youth headed for the *Kibbutzim*) the Jews of this land go on their own way. The stench of the concentration camps never reached America because America uses *Lifebuoy*. But what if the world comes atom-bombing down?

It is said that the gas chambers used by the Germans in Poland were made by Swiss manufacturers of baking equipment. But should the need ever arise here, rest assured, America can make her own.

JACK GALLIGO.

Next: Mexican Americans.



# Six Shopping Days a Year

DOES that sound modest? I raised the question recently at a trade union meeting to cause the biggest sensation since Oliver Twist asked for more. It wanted Mr. Bateman's cartoon to do it justice.

The secretary was reminding us of all the benefits we had derived from trade unionism and how so much had been achieved. So far as we were concerned we had got a 44 hour week (I was loudly shushed on mentioning "Now let's make it 40, then," but the worst was yet to come) paid holidays and Saturday mornings were slowly being freed. We had so much for which to be thankful and everyone was counting their blessings when my bombshell exploded.

"After all, trade unions aren't just a thing of the past (Certainly not!) What are we going to press for now?"

"To see everyone gets up to our standard!" he cries.

"By all means, let us take part in any sympathetic strike action . . ."

"I didn't say that!"

" . . . But how about pushing for something else as well. Let us lead the way for a change . . . I'm sure another week wouldn't hurt them. But I tell you what: six shopping days a year."

Everybody stared as if I had gone mad.

"After all, what time does the average worker get for shopping? And then maybe he can fit in a football match or even peep on the gilded preserves of Ascot . . . why not? People do seem to get to Ascot anyway."

"Do you mean instead of Bank Holidays?" asked somebody.

"Oh, no, in addition."

"In addition!" gasped the secretary scandalised. "And in the middle of a rearmament drive?"

"Well, we're not on rearmament, are we? We can take the lead much more easily than, say, the engineers could. It needn't be six days altogether—say one every two months, or just take them whenever it fits in—when the firm is slack, for instance."

"Surely we've had enough slack time already?"

"Ah, but this would be a paid six days. It makes a difference."

"Are you suggesting this seriously? What about its effect on the export drive?"

"Well, it would cut out absenteeism, wouldn't it? At least, it would canalise it. Or nationalise it, if you want to use your favourite word." A couple of socialists immediately swung over to my side. "No need for married women to have to 'let down the firm' or apprentices to 'bury their grandpa' . . . just take off one of the six shopping days and they can go and queue for nylons or see the Spurs . . . It happens anyway and it's just a question of recognising it. After all, surely we have to put forward new demands."

"But we've a Labour Government in power now!"

"Yes," I admitted, "that's certainly an obstacle. It's doubtful, perhaps, if the workers in the nationalised industries could get it at once. It's so much simpler for us to take the lead. Plenty of employers would give way. It's certain that the Chambers of Commerce wouldn't raise too many objections as they're dominated by small traders who would probably find it gave them a boom. Very likely the shop assistants would be the

first to get it. Or office workers—with a few offices it's almost accepted practice but it's just a question of getting the matter straight . . . Then when it was accepted in industry that you could draw on your six days to have time off, the nationalised industries even on arms might come round to it. Look what a boon it would be to the cotton industry. They have to accept the fact that women operatives need time off. And then, for a change, look what a boon it would be for us to know that you don't have to go and slog way at it day after day and week after week with only the few miserable Bank Holidays to atone for it, working just so you can get a holiday once a year."

The solitary Communist who could not support anything I proposed though solid for anything that might embarrass the present trade union secretary (he was the last one) admits that it's a thing that might come about in time in Soviet Russia.

"Oh, certainly," I agreed. "It's only a question of blowing up the Kremlin and revolting against the dictatorship . . . But

## CLINICAL AFFECTION

In the House of Commons on Monday, the Minister of Transport was asked to inquire into complaints made by Servicemen and their families about bad conditions on the troopship *Empire Orwell*, which recently arrived in Southampton from the Far East. Among other things, Dr. King said that soldiers below the rank of sergeant were not allowed to see their wives *en voyage* unless they produced a medical certificate, which was explained by Mr. Barnes, the Minister, as "a matter of Service discipline."

At the rank of sergeant, apparently, affection ceases to be clinical.

Public Opinion, 22/6/51.

it's not a Utopian idea—far from it. Under the Roman Catholic Church there were a few dozen days a year set aside for saints and as the Reformation coincided with capitalism we lost the holy-days when they sacked the Virgin Mary.

"We mustn't discuss religious matters," says the secretary, on surer ground. "We're only concerned with the Economic Question."

"I can't think of a more economic question than this," says one of the brothers, who has been pondering the matter. "It saves you fares for six days a year, that's another thing . . . and you could be sure people wouldn't take time off and leave you hanging around waiting for them when they knew in advance it would come off their six shopping days."

"I don't think there's another union in the country where you could come forward with such a harebrained scheme," says an old chap who is one of the pillars of the branch. "Why, the union isn't out to bring about crackpot ideas like that. It's got solid achievements behind it. If you were out doing the work you should we'd have a hundred per cent. membership in the area by now."

"We'll have it soon, we've got an arrangement with the employers," murmured the secretary . . .

ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST.

## OH, I SAY!

A member of one of our Overseas Information organisations was trying to explain what his job was to a Yorkshire audience. "In a nutshell," he said at last, "I suppose it's trying to export the British way of life."

Silence followed for a moment, then a slow voice said: "That's champion! We don't want the mucking thing here."

Time and Tide.

# Plight of the Gardener

NOTHING could be more ridiculous than the haphazard way in which vegetables are grown in this country. Every year we read of acres of cabbages, lettuces, parsnips and other produce being ploughed back into the ground because it does not pay to market them. Dominating the scene is Covent Garden, a scarcity market whose main concern is to limit supplies so that prices can be kept up. And our wonderful Board of Trade shocks growers periodically by bringing all sorts of vegetables from the Continent when home supplies are more than adequate.

In France they at least do things better. Instead of the joint and two veg. so beloved over here, it is meat and salad. The market of Les Halles, in Paris, handles over 2 million salads every weekday of the year. I once asked the manager of Les Halles how they were able to be sure of supplies. He replied: "All is grown to order. We tell every grower months beforehand what he has got to deliver each week."

Over here the profit motive leads to the stupidest scramble for easy money. News gets about that Joe Smith has made £1,500 out of a 50-acre field of Spring Greens and the following year everyone grows Spring Greens. Result: there is either no sale for most of them or the price falls to a point where it simply does not pay to cut them. A grower with a "Growers Stand" at Covent Garden told me last year that the safest plan is not to grow the thing which paid well the previous year, but the thing nobody wants. But how capricious is such speculative raising of our food supply! Everything shows the absurdity of large-scale centralisation.

In the South of England growers mistrust the London Marketing System and mostly grow for consumption in the seaside towns. And they are wise to do so. For capitalism has produced nothing more pitiable than plenty being a curse, and vegetables, coffee, fish, etc., being systematically destroyed in order to maintain prices at a high level. R.G.A.

# Class "Z" Objectors

AT the end of May, 421 applicants had been heard by the local tribunals, and 181 of these had been recommended as C.O.s. The appellate tribunal had allowed 11 out of 36 appeals. The London local tribunal, which hears most of the applications, steadfastly maintains that it is unable to exempt men who do not object to war as such, and might take part in a particular war.

The new Act makes it an offence to dissuade reservists from discharging their obligations under the Act. Strictly interpreted, it means that the mere possession of this copy of *The Objector* makes you

liable to two years' imprisonment and a fine of £200, since the right of objection on grounds of conscience is not legally recognized. One must accept in good faith the Government's assurance that this is not their intention, and hope that the courts, or another Government will not think differently.

—*The Objector*, (Bulletin of the C.B.C.O.), June 1951.

## MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

OPEN-AIR MEETINGS at HYDE PARK  
Every Sunday at 3.30 p.m.  
INDOOR MEETINGS  
Every Sunday at 7.30 p.m.  
at the PORCUPINE (corner Cleary's Cross Road at Gt. Newport Street, next Leicester Sq. Underground Stn.)

JULY 1—"Stormy Jones" on INDUSTRIAL STRUGGLE IN AMERICA.

### NORTH-EAST LONDON

DISCUSSION MEETINGS IN EAST HAM  
Every alternate Tuesday at 7.30  
Enquiries c/o Freedom Press

### SOUTH LONDON

Fortnightly meetings, sponsored by the S. London Anarchist Group, are held on alternate Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. at the KENTISH DROVERS Public House, Peckham (corner of High Street and Rye Lane)  
JULY 3—Francis Tonks THE STUDENT & POLITICS.  
JULY 17—A Meeting to Commemorate the SPANISH REVOLUTION

### GLASGOW

OUTDOOR MEETINGS at MAXWELL STREET  
Every Sunday at 7 p.m.  
With John Gaffney, Frank Leech, Jimmy Raeside, Eddie Shaw  
JULY 1st—Ernest Silverman

### KINGSTON

Any Comrades interested in forming a Group in the KINGSTON area, are invited to write to Freedom Press.

1951 SUMMER SCHOOL  
This year's Summer School will be held in

GLASGOW,  
25th & 26th AUGUST  
Further announcements shortly.

## FREEDOM

The Anarchist Weekly

Postal Subscription Rates  
12 months 17/- (U.S.A. \$3.00)  
6 months 8/6 (U.S.A. \$1.50)  
3 months 4/6 (U.S.A. \$0.75)  
Special Subscription Rates for 2 copies  
12 months 27/- (U.S.A. \$4.50)  
6 months 13/6 (U.S.A. \$2.25)

Cheques, P.O.'s and Money Orders should be made out to FREEDOM PRESS, crossed a/c. Rates, and addressed to the publishers.

FREEDOM PRESS  
27 Red Lion Street  
London, W.C.1 England  
Tel.: Chancery 8364

## SYNDICALISM — THE WORKERS' NEXT STEP—7

# THE GENERAL STRIKE

ALL the political opponents of Syndicalism, those who wish to achieve the classless society by Parliamentary means no less than those who are satisfied with things as they are, regard the General Strike as disastrous. And for them, so it is. For the Judge and his hangman, the Policeman and his mark, the establishment of a free society would seem disaster. Their minds bound by authority, their livelihood based upon the slavery of others, the abolition of authority and slavery would leave them dependent on—themselves.

And for those "working-class" theoreticians who have thought up complicated ways of using the capitalists' own constitution against them, the successful general strike would seem almost more hurtful, for—it would prove them wrong! And nothing hurts a theorist more than to find he has been wasting his time on theories when the workers have had the answer all the time if they had wanted to use it.

For politicians of all shades, as for the capitalist class, the general strike, therefore, is an object of attack and derision because it shows finally that the workers have no need of them.

But for the Syndicalist, looking at the situation from the workers' point of view and not seeking power under any pretext, the general strike remains the final expression of the class struggle. All the petty skirmishes, the little steps forward and the big-set-backs (and what workers' struggle is without these?) all the experience gained in a hundred battles, find their culmination in that moment when the workers decide they will work for the bosses no longer. For what is the general strike but this? What is it but the working-class deciding it will not go on working for the ruling class. That, regardless of the consequences, it will no longer tolerate the domination of man by man?

The general strike can be put to many uses. A general strike against war, for instance, was called by the Catalonian workers in 1909—with complete success. The Spanish Government, seeking to make war in Morocco, was answered by the militant Spanish workers—and the war had to be called off, for a hard-working industrial army is essential for a State at war. (A lesson for us to-day!) Spain, of course, gives us many examples of the general strike, and of every form of revolutionary activity, but workers in Russia (1905, for the granting of the constitution), Sweden (1909, for universal suffrage), Germany (1920, against the Kapp putsch) and other countries have also used the tremendous strength this weapon gives them.

In Britain in 1926, the general strike was called to oppose the attack by the ruling class upon the living standards of the workers. The main attack had been upon the miners and for the rest of the workers it began both as a sympathetic strike with the miners and because they saw that they would be the next to suffer. But the British general strike started off with the tremendous disadvantage of being in the hands of leaders who were terrified of its possible consequences before it started. Because they knew—what the workers only dimly grasped—that a successful general strike could only have one end—a social revolution. And that was the last thing the T.U.C. leaders wanted. As J. H. Thomas said: "I have never disguised that in a challenge to the Constitution, God help us unless the Constitution won."

The British general strike did not fail because the workers were not capable or courageous enough, but because the Labour leaders saw how capable they were to take over the whole thing and run it themselves. Before that happened, therefore, the leaders called the strike off, leaving the miners betrayed, but the Constitution secure, if somewhat shaken.

For the 1926 general strike did shake the British State. An attack by the workers on that scale is an attack in depth which a centralised authority just cannot meet. Any State is a minority propped up by the majority, and when that majority knocks away the props, the weakness of the façade is shown up. When there is, say, a strike in the London docks, the Government can send in a few thousand soldiers and the urgent work (like the transport of arms to Malaya, as in a recent instance!) can be carried on after a fashion. But if a majority of the productive workers refuse to work, how can the numerically small forces of the State do anything about it? There are nearly 14 million industrial workers in this country. These cannot be replaced by blacklegs, in uniform or out; they can only be misled, bamboozled or bullied into remaining at work. And when the workers are clear in their own minds as to what they want and how to get it, the bamboozling or bullying just does not work.

The general strike, then, is a deliberate attempt to disrupt capitalist economy. The examples I have briefly given were of general strikes with a limited aim—of achieving a specific target within a capitalist society by the exertion of the full pressure of which the workers are capable. The Syndicalist wishes to see it used further—as a means of achieving a social revolution, the unlimited aim of ending once and for all the rule of boss or State and of establishing the workers' right to the means of life. When this is the aim, we refer to the *Social General Strike*.

When the critics of Syndicalism sneer at the social general strike as being useless, saying that the State can crush the workers unless they have control of the State machine, they are ignoring history and at the same time showing their lack of understanding of the class struggle and of the strength of the working-class.

Faced with a stay-in social general strike, the State is all but helpless. In France in 1936, when the French workers staged their massive stay-in strikes, the government made no attempt to oust them from the factories and shops, because of the danger to the State such action would have brought. This was admitted later by Leon Blum, Prime Minister in 1936. "Danger to the State," you notice, not to the workers.

Where the workers have made their mistakes in the past has been in handing back the industries to the owners or the politicians, in being content with partial gains when all industry could have remained in their hands.

But the Syndicalist says: When the workers have the experience and are conscious of their own strength, when they have created their revolutionary organisations for the precise purpose of one day taking over the means of production and distribution, then, when the moment comes and they exert that strength through the *direct* means of the social general strike, there is no other power in society that can oppose them, and the social revolution can be achieved.

The attempt will, of course, be made to oppose them; the State will not stand idly by and make no attempt to crush the revolution. It will defend, as it always has, the system of inequality, frustration and misery the ruling classes depend upon for their domination. The revolutionary general strike will need to be defended against the State's attempted resistance. This I shall discuss in the next article.

PHILIP SANBOM.

Next Week: DEFENCE OF THE REVOLUTION.

## CLEAR THE TRACKS

Pride of craft . . . still survives and occasionally expresses itself. It has done so in the last few days in the case of the Great Western Railwaymen who have organised a petition for a public inquiry into Railway administration. The petition makes "a sincere appeal for the termination of the reckless and inefficient administration of the Railway Executive over the Western Region". It adds that the petitioners "feel it our solemn duty to see that at least one region of the British Railways should pay its way, run trains speedily, and above all safely".

Time & Tide, 23/6/51.

## Freedom — Weekly

### Special Appeal

June 10th to 21st:

Liverpool: I.D. 15/-; London: P. 3/-; Smettwick: E.W. 3/-; Llanelly: L.W. 4/8; Cheltenham: T.W.B. 3/-; Turtle Creek: D.L. £1/15/6; London: R.S. 2/-; London: Anon\* 5/-; Berkeley, Cal.: W.L.B. 7/-; London: V.T. £5/0/0; London: D.B. 3/-; York: H.A.A.\* 10/-; New York: M.K. 14/-; Anon\* 2/6; Colony: F.B. 3/-; London: W.E.D.\* 16/-; London: H.R.W.\* 2/6; Vista, Cal.: A.S. 3/3; Bromley: J.M.C. 1/2.

Total	11 13 7
Previously acknowledged	218 7 5
1951 TOTAL TO DATE	£230 1 0