

Freedom

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Threepence

INCREASING ARMED MIGHT

EVERYWHERE in the world today rulers are commenting with satisfaction on the armed strength they have achieved, or pointing with concern at weaknesses which require to be filled in. The U.S. Director of Defence Mobilisation, making his quarterly report to President Truman, records "impressive progress in developing the military and economic strength to oppose aggression and" (rather surprisingly) "promote peace". He warned however that "adequate strength is by no means achieved yet".

"Although much has been accomplished in enlarging the nation's industrial base and in raising the flow of military equipment, the greater part of the defence mobilisation effort still lies ahead. Most of the military goods authorised by Congress are yet to be delivered."

The *Times* calls this "painting this encouraging picture . . ."

N.A.T.O. Power in Europe

General Ridgway, Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, had much the same kind of thing to say in Paris on October 6th: "There is military power in being, in Western Europe," he said, "far greater today than that which existed when the North Atlantic Treaty became effective. Any assailant can today find it harder and more costly should he now assault us than would have been the case at that time."

Lord Ismay had much of the same honor to say recently.

Meanwhile, the recent air defence exercise, said to involve a quarter of a million persons, is described as the largest ever known.

In Russia, Too

It is needless to say that the "peace-loving Soviet Union" is in the same state of readiness. Marshal Vassilievsky claimed at the Communist Party Congress in Mos-

cow that "the new five-year plan (1951-56) would create conditions for a better supply of first-class modern arms and munitions in considerably greater quantities than during the war."

In Germany, armies are arising on each side of the frontier with the East. Within seven years of the ending of the war, arms production is in full swing, every nation is prepared not merely with vast supplies of arms, but with shadow factories ready for conversion overnight to enormously increased armaments production.

Drain on Human Wealth

Such "economic" activity is an appalling drain on the potential

wealth production of the world. In such an atmosphere, with its anxiety, its short-term perspectives, how can any social progress attain to a wide vision? No one seriously believes that armaments prevent wars, and it is becoming increasingly apparent that their production provides the means whereby wages are still paid out, though wealth is not increased. How few people believe that war will not come? And how dreary is the prospect of "peace" devoted to an armaments race which strangles all schemes for social improvement!

This is the "encouraging picture" of the newspapers.

After Morecambe "MOB RULE"

WHATEVER can be said against Herbert Morrison—and it is plenty—there is no doubt that his attitude to his own defeat in the elections for the Labour Party National Executive, at Morecambe, earned him the respect of the delegates who had just rejected him.

Morrison, of course, is the supreme Party man. He has been through the Party from bottom to top; he is the committee-man, organiser and wire-puller-in-chief, and it is because of this that he knew well enough how to react to the conference's decision. Bitter as the pill was to swallow, he swallowed it with relatively good grace—knowing, no doubt, as everybody knows, that whatever the Delegate Conference may resolve it is the Parliamentary Party which has the final say in the actions of the Party in Parliament.

The same compromise was not shown by some other supporters of the "orthodox" Party line. Hugh Gaitskell, for example, must have done himself (and the anti-Bevanites) a considerable amount of harm among the rank-and-file of the Party, by his bad-tempered reference to "mob rule".

It is always amusing to see how, when supporting their established leaders (and established leaders are invariably reactionary) the membership of any organisation are regarded as responsible and right-thinking. But as soon as they begin to criticise, or worse still, to act against the Executive, they become the tools of agitators practising mob rule.

Clement Attlee, too, leader of the Party, emerged from his long silence about the Bevanites, by bringing up the well-worn phrase about "a Party within a Party". But it's too late, Clem. To go into the attack now looks too much like being a bad loser, and if there is anything the jolly sporting British public does not like, it's a bad loser.

Another ex-Minister, John Strachey, had the sense to see this, and gently rebuked Hugh Gaitskell for his remark about mob rule. The democratic decisions of the conference, said Strachey, must be carried out. Strachey has been, up to now, more or less a supporter of the Attlee "orthodox" leadership. By his rebuke of Gaitskell he has at least moved to a centre position—a more convenient position from which to jump on to the Bevan bandwagon when the time comes. This would be right in the tradition of the man who in the past has jumped from the Fascists to the Communists to the Labour Party when he has seen which way the political wind was blowing.

But what of Bevan himself? In my opinion, Bevan has done no harm to the Labour Party at all. In fact, quite the contrary—he has done it a world of good. Since their triumphant entry into power in 1945 the Labour Party has undergone a steady decline in the support it received from its rank and file. The inspiration and enthusiasm for the Welfare State that swept the Party to power has withered away in the face of the reality. It has long since been realised by the rank and file that things were not going to be so radically different after all—troops were still sent into the docks to break a strike—dockers could be prosecuted for encouraging their fellows to go on strike—wage freezes could be introduced—

conscripted made permanent and the period of National Service extended—export drives and rearmament programmes, resulting in harder work and sacrifices for workers—all these went on under the Labour Government just as they would have done under the Conservatives.

So naturally the rank and file was getting fed-up. The 1950 election, leaving Labour with only a tiny fraction of its 1945 majority gave the warning signal. And Nye Bevan was that much ahead of Attlee and the rest of the leaders to see and take heed of it. Labour was due to be slung out in 1951 whether Bevan had resigned or not. He lost only a few months' pay at Ministerial rate (part of which he recovered by having the time to pay a visit to Yugoslavia and write a series of articles on Tito for the *Tory Evening Standard*!) and in return has steadily built himself up as the next leader of the Labour Party, while bringing back to the Party a liveliness, appeal, and support such as it had not had since 1947.

Once again there is a sense of militancy within the Party. By continually talking about socialism, the Bevan group are bringing back many Party workers who had drifted away from the deadly dullness of the Cripps-Bevin-Attlee leadership. The ups and downs of the Bevanites' paper, *Tribune*, gives a reliable guide to all this. At about the same time that *FREEDOM* was becoming a weekly, last year (a very short time before Bevan's resignation), *Tribune* fell from a weekly to a fortnightly. It has now gone back to a weekly with a new format, with, it tells us, a bigger circulation than ever before.

The Bevan group has revived support for the Labour Party—and if at the next election Labour gets back into power, they will have "the ambitious demagogue who called one-half of his fellow countrymen 'vermin'" as Churchill called Bevan, to thank for it.

Of course, in the process, heads will roll. Just as Ernest Bevin kicked out George Lansbury when he had served his purpose, Aneurin Bevan will kick out Clement Attlee when the time is ripe. It is the inevitable process up the ladder to power.

But for the rank and file? No change. A change at the top does not affect the relationship between the top and the bottom. There is no such thing as mob rule. A mob is always ruled by somebody. When the working-class becomes a collection of thinking and responsible human beings they will cease to be ruled by anybody. And they will cease to follow leaders, whether orthodox or heretic. Right, Left or Centre.

Then it will be the turn of the Bevanites, or their future equivalent, to howl about "mob rule". P.S.

"WHO WILL DO THE DIRTY WORK?"

IN response to readers' requests, the recent *FREEDOM* article by Tony Gibson on "Who will do the dirty work?" has been reprinted as a twopenny leaflet.

AFRICAN AFFAIRS

MAU MAU: SYMPTOM OF A SICK SOCIETY

The old chief prayed: "In your kindness you gave our fathers this beautiful land; do not let it pass from us now. There are those who came as friends but now they would take our land; look down and do not let it pass from us now. We were born in this beautiful land; our fathers and mothers were born in this beautiful land; our children were born in this beautiful land, and their children were born in it, too. Do not let it pass from us now. We pray that you should lead us as you led your servant Moses out of bondage to freedom. We pray that you should keep us under your protection and guard us from our enemies. And again we pray for our land for our land is the blood of our life. Look down in mercy, God, and hear our prayer."

There was nothing more to say then; there is nothing more to say now, except that I left Kenya feeling there was desperately little time left for God to grant the old chief's prayer. PETER ABRAHAM, in a broadcast last August.

★

IT is very difficult to get reliable information about the activities of the Mau Mau secret society in Kenya. To the popular press secret oaths to drive out Europeans and the beheading of headmen loyal to the British are a news story likely to bring out all its powers of sensational misrepresentation. The *New Statesman* on the other hand, tells us that, "When the press in Kenya began to publish hysterical speeches and letters about the danger of Mau Mau, the African members of the Legislative Council, with the Chiefs and leading figures in the Kenya African Union (now recognised to be the most representative African organisation), called a meeting of thirty thousand people not only to denounce violence but to warn Africans against participation in secret and subversive activities, and to appeal to them

to discipline themselves against any provocation to break the law.

It can be stated beyond doubt that the significance of Mau Mau has been fantastically exaggerated by a group of European settlers, small in number but influential, who are conscious of the instability of their domination of Kenya." Miss Elspeth Huxley, a well-informed observer of African affairs, does not believe that the mainspring of Mau Mau activities is political. She says:

"Discontent arising from other causes is, I believe, being cleverly manipulated by a small group of politically-minded men, who stay behind the actual scene of politics and whose director, a subtle, clever and possibly even diabolic man, is well-known to everyone but eludes implication. These men have watched over and encouraged the growth of the Mau Mau for several years and are now quite cynically using it for their own purposes. It seems likely, however, that a movement fostered in its earlier stages by the more sophisticated has now got out of hand.

"The roots of the Mau Mau spring from a maladjustment of society. Boredom, I am sure, is one of the major causes. British rule has brought many benefits and they are real ones; but also it has taken much away. It has taken most of the colour, excitement and open satisfaction of the passions which tribal life amply provided for. Gone are the cattle raids, the tribal wars, the prospect of loot, the sacrifices, the public executions, the numerous festivals and the dances condemned by Western opinion as indecent; gone, too, in large measure, the secret societies which were so much a part, in many regions, of tribal organisation. Almost everything that made life exciting, unexpected and stimulating has, in fact, disappeared."

This may very well be true, but the political conditions for an outburst of irresponsible terrorism. Mr. Mbiyu Koinage said in London last January, "The Africans are knocking in a peaceful way at the door of co-operation, and that door is not even open." He was speaking at the press conference called by the Kenya African Union after its delegation had been refused an interview by both

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Shops to Stay Open Later

THE Home Office has announced that shops will soon be allowed to return to the pre-war closing time of 8 p.m., and one night a week they may stay open till 9 p.m. Great news for shop assistants!

Mr. Alan Birch, general secretary of the Union of Shop Distributive and Allied Workers (membership 350,000), last night commented: "The union opposes any attempt to extend present shopping hours."

But it is undoubtedly true that present shopping hours are very inconvenient—especially for single working people who find the shops opening and closing at the same times as they have to go to work and to lunch.

Nevertheless, the shop assistants are right to resist extension of working hours. The only answer at the moment seems to be a shift system.

The real answer, of course, is the abolition of the money, wage and price machinery, then customers could help themselves to what they wanted and shops could be left open all the time!

THE WEALDSTONE DISASTER

THE train disaster at Harrow had all the horror of such catastrophes in a machine civilisation. One feels just the same sense of the appalling as with mining disasters or when large ships are lost at sea.

Over and above the horror of the accident itself, however, is the way in which such events are received. On the spot there is an immediate manifestation of mutual aid, and all the social virtues immediately show themselves. But beyond the immediate vicinity there is all the distastefulness of an obsessive interest in horror.

Dwelling on Details

The newspapers treat such events as the most important happening of the time. No detail is too small to be brought out in relief. Already on the day of the accident it was realised to be the worst disaster since 1915. But as the number of the dead began to rise, the newspapers almost seemed to be hoping that it would surpass the former disaster and become the worst accident on record in the history of railways in Britain.

Although one cannot fail to be repelled by the attitude of the newspapers, there can be little doubt that they do no more than reflect the attitude of the public. At the cinemas, the news-reels were showing the latest pictures of the tragedy, with enormous announcements outside.

Abnormal Response of Society

Once again, therefore, we have the spectacle of a ghastly human disaster becoming a source of increased income to the newspaper organisations and the cinema. We see a public evincing an altogether too avid interest in it—an interest which testifies to an abnormal attitude lying only just below the surface, ready to seize on an occasion like this for respectable and legitimate manifestations of interest.

To an objective observer, the response of the public to death by violence whether in such accidents or in the murders of women or children is plainly abnormal. It is clear evidence of the abnormal pathological nature of our society, and cannot be overlooked.

Religious Leaders Condemn "Apartheid"

THE official doctrines of Dr. Malan's government recently received further official condemnation in this country, when the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Chief Rabbi presided over the tenth anniversary dinner of the Council of Christians and Jews, on October 8th.

The Archbishop said that, "The present age had seen the growth of a new term, *apartheid*, meaning separateness; the doctrine that the right way to deal with mankind in their groups was to keep them apart from one another. One separated fighting dogs, it was the only thing one could do about it, and, if men were like animals then *apartheid* was the answer, but it was not a human remedy and certainly not a divine remedy. The Council of Christians and Jews sought to rise above it to an atmosphere in which there might be tolerance; not a mere inactive attitude, but a positive exercise of human brotherhood by understanding between one another and a feeling for one another."

The Archbishop of Canterbury was supported by the Chief Rabbi, the Lord Mayor, and the Home Secretary, Sir David Maxwell Fyfe. Messages of good will were read from Mr. Churchill and the American Ambassador.

Point of View: USES OF PUNISHMENT

THE effects of a generous and regular allowance of punishments—expensive ones, too—are conveniently apparent in the case of the old lag. It is a waste of time and money to go on punishing someone in the same old way for something he is going to go on doing. The recidivist looks on society as his enemy, and every fresh term of imprisonment confirms this impression. Why should he put himself out for an institution which dislikes him so much?

A similar frame of mind, as parents know to their cost, can sometimes develop in children. Prof. Richard Ellis, in his Blackader oration to the Canadian Medical Association this year, pointed out that the response of a child to punishment depends, in the first place, on his relation with his parents. Where the child is secure in the knowledge that the predominant feeling his parents have for him is love, where the parents are at one with each other, and where the child is able to express his own affection for them, punishment is likely to be most often effective and least often necessary. But the child feels for his parents hostility as well as love, and rightly opines that they feel much the same for him. If at some moment he fears that their hostility outweighs their love, he may go on provoking them to punish him, in order to prove to himself that they are not as dangerous as he fears, and—more important still—to make certain there will be a satisfactory reconciliation afterwards. He is seeking reassurance and love, though his behaviour often gives the opposite impression. But if his fears are well grounded—if he believes with some justice that one or other of his parents is rejecting him—punishment assumes a much more frightening and damaging rôle. It is no longer an incident imposed on a background of affection: it is an expression of enmity; and every time he is punished without satisfactory reconciliation he becomes further estranged from his parents and more convinced that at bottom they hate him. Punishment then loses its effect on his behaviour; and of course this may lead to excessive punishment. From being defiant the child assumes a "don't care" attitude, which is the despair of parents because it makes him inaccessible. Really it is the child's defence against his "intensely painful and damaging" sense of being unloved. Punishment is now an incident against a background of hostility, which the child feels powerless to change. Professor Ellis might have added that the parents, too, may feel powerless to change it. Love is not to be commanded, and some emotionally disturbed children, like some normal children, are harder to love than others. The very utmost their parents may feel able to offer them is kindly treatment; but very few disturbed children are taken in by the counterfeit. In such circumstances they may well be less harassed, and less harassing, with others, anyhow for a time, than they are with their own family: better tepidity from a stranger than dislike from one's own flesh and blood.

The emotionally disturbed child is, of course, likely to get into conflict with more than his parents, and to make himself a nuisance to society at large; and

the part which punishment should play in helping him to adjust himself needs consideration. Professor Ellis recognises five types of punishment—vengeance, deterrent punishment, punishment by restitution or atonement, vicarious punishment, and self punishment. While vengeance notoriously relieves the feelings of the bystanders, public opinion has gradually reacted against it. We no longer favour public executions, or the pillory; and we are, he thinks, slowly turning against the use of corporal punishment in schools. Whether or not a given punishment will act as a deterrent, either of the offender, or of others minded to commit his fault, will depend on the attitudes and relationships of the people concerned. If a boy at the gang age feels more loyalty to the gang than to the society he has offended, the deterrent effects of punishment may well be small. Punishment by atonement is a function of self-punishment: a lively conscience demands that the wrongs done to others are made good. Vicarious punishment went out with whipping boys. In the last analysis, punishment by a parent with whom the child is on good terms is reassuring, enabling him in time to take over the ethical standards of the community he lives in, and also the responsibility for seeing that he maintains them. Those who have to deal with maladjusted or delinquent children have therefore to remedy the underlying defect rather than to concentrate on the superficial manifestations of emotional disorder. Their first task is to get the child to realise that adults are not fundamentally hostile, and to provide the background of affection and security which the child lacked in his own home; for, unlike the old lag, he has seldom acquired an irreversible belief in society's hostile intentions. But it is both useless and harmful to persist with methods which have already convinced him that he is among enemies.

This constructive view of punishment, so plainly stated by Professor Ellis, is also implicit in a London County Council pamphlet, "Punishment in Schools," intended by the council's education inspectorate, who are responsible for the suggestions in it, to stimulate discussion. They note that punishment in schools is declining, that harsh methods by teachers

foster harsh standards in pupils, and that corporal punishment should be reserved for special cases which threaten the well-being of the school or class and then used only after other methods have failed. Even then, the pamphlet says, is corporal punishment likely to succeed? The staff, in some schools are so doubtful of its results that they have given it up altogether. Criticism should be good-humoured, sarcasm discarded, detention ordered sparingly. The children should share in the task of maintaining discipline, and be encouraged to take responsibility for their acts and to control their desires. "To be lasting, conformity must come from within, not imposed from without."

—The Lancet, 11/10/52.

The foregoing is not taken from an anarchist paper or, indeed, from any political adherent of radical social change. It appeared as an editorial-comment in the *Lancet* of 11/10/52, a medical paper which for more than a hundred years has

THE LIBERTARIAN

THE North-East London Anarchist Group has issued a duplicated bulletin, "primarily for the purpose of bringing the ideas of the group to a wider audience".

The first issue of *The Libertarian* contains an article on "The Meaning of Anarchism," an extract from a talk given to the group by Arthur Uloth on "Sex and the Colour Bar," and from a talk by Edgar Priddy on "The Myth of the Superman," an account of the life of Errico Malatesta, and the first of a series by Peter Green, called "Round the World," which surveys the world's anarchist movement.

The Libertarian costs threepence and is on sale at Freedom Bookshop.

maintained an attitude of radicalism and humanitarianism. The outlook it expresses on the question of punishment shows how far advanced ideas have progressed towards the anarchist point of view.

FREEDOM, or anarchists generally, will not agree with all the views expressed above, and would reject punishment even more radically. But it must be remembered that even advanced ideas see punishment as a necessary, though dwindling,

FILMS

Men at their best & their worst

"KON-TIKI" & "STRANGERS IN THE HOUSE" (Curzon Cinema, London)

AS a general rule, the double feature programme is a thing to be avoided, for it seems it was invented to solve the problem of how to get people out of the cinema after having seen the programme once. However, with "Strangers in the House" and "Kon-Tiki" it can be truthfully said that either alone is worth seeing and that the programme as a whole forms an organic unity.

"Kon-Tiki" is a cine-film record of the expedition about which a book was written. The book was a best-seller and it is always interesting to observe what books are best-sellers. The present run is on escape books and adventure books; there was at one time a doctor phase (*The Citadel, San Michele*), an animal phase (*Owd Bob, My Friend Flicka*), a sheikh phase, a South Sea Island phase. These books are clues to the public feeling of the time. The present phase is an admiration of (or an assent in) the efforts of an individual, or a small group to attain an object by defeating authority. In prison camp escapes, it is the authority of the prison guards. There is the remarkable narrative of the prisoners who escaped to climb a mountain, and the mountain duly climbed, returned to prison again.

In "Kon-Tiki" there is the assertion of the supremacy of a small band of men

adjunct to an education which aims at fitting a child to take its place in society—society as we know it. Anarchists are concerned to fit society and social institutions to its individual members and so have much less use for punishment than the more orthodox progressives. But the conclusions of the *Lancet* article are an important indication of the extent to which well-informed people find themselves in sympathy with views expressed and fought for by anarchists, even when they are unaware that such convergence is occurring.

over scientific pundits who said "it didn't happen like that" and "you can't do that". These men of the Kon-Tiki proved that it did and you could. Such a film and such a book restores one's faith in the powers of individual men and in the values of human relationships after mass warfare, power politics and welfare states.

"Strangers in the House" presents us with another facet of the same phenomena. It is a detective story and the detective story is another guide to the sickness of our time. Simonon, the author is not just a detective story writer but shows in this a deep psychological awareness. The climax of the film comes when Raimu, as Loursat the defence advocat, delivers an attack on the parents of the young gangsters and the lack of social life in the French provincial town. He lists the café-bars and brothels and notes that there are no swimming pools or recreation clubs in which these children can work off a craving for excitement.

Loursat's criticism is a little too limited and specialised, but he does make the point that we live in a delinquent society (i.e., one that has failed in its duty) and it is society that is in need of reform and not the young gangsters.

With "Kon-Tiki" to show us men at their best, and "Strangers in the House" mankind at its worst, the reflective mind can derive benefit from this programme. J.R.

Lessons of the Spanish Revolution - 14

The Communists: Spearhead of the Counter-revolution

BY giving pride of place to the Communists as the spearhead of the counter-revolution in Spain, we do not in any way wish to minimise the responsibility shared with them by the Socialists and other "anti-fascist" parties. Nor does their action in any way detract from the often counter-revolutionary policies of the C.N.T.-F.A.I. leadership. We propose to deal with the rôle of the Communists in order to dispose of the myth, that dies hard, of the important rôle played by the C.P. in the struggle against Franco and which has been spread far and wide by millions of books and pamphlets published during those eventful years and since, both by the Communists themselves and by the fellow travelling writers of the time. These were completely taken in by the stories of Communist "efficiency", of the "disinterested" aid given to Spain by Russia, and last but not least, by the Popular Front tactics of the C.P. Perhaps it will also explain how a party insignificant in influence and numbers, was able to play the dominating rôle that the C.P. did play in Spain, not for unity and victory over Franco, but as the architects of disunity, counter-revolution and defeat.

Figures for the membership of the C.P. in Spain before the February 1936 elections are consistent among non-Communist observers at 3,000, but even pro-Communist sources admit to only ten times this number. The fact remains that during the fifteen years of their existence as a Party they had not succeeded in building up a solid working-class following except in Seville and Asturias. Until 1934, faithfully following the Comintern line, their policy was one of Left extremism and of opposition to all compromise with the bourgeois state. But at the time of the signing of the pact between France and Russia the Comintern dropped its Left extremist tactics in favour of support for Popular Fronts, and infiltration in the once despised bourgeois parties. The programme of the Popular Front in Spain was of such a mild nature that even the Socialist proposal that the land should be nationalised was dropped because it was not acceptable to the republicans. But this did not disturb the Communists with whose ability to switch policies without even the slightest blush of shame, we are all too well aware. Moscow was, at that time anxious to prove to the Western Powers that it had ceased to be revolutionary and was a desirable ally. This twist of Russian foreign policy explains the swing to the Right by the C.P. in Spain as well as in other countries and the reluctance with which Russia took any part in the Spanish armed struggle. It was not the first occasion that the Russian leaders were prepared to sacrifice revolutionary situations, including those in which their own supporters were concerned, where such struggles conflict with Russia's foreign policy.

In the elections of February 1936 which resulted in a victory for the Popular Front, the Communists were allocated 16 parliamentary seats as against one in the previous parliament, an increase out of all proportion to their increase in numerical strength. During the months before the Franco rising, the Communists had been seeking ways and means for increasing their numbers, for clearly whilst their membership remained at 3,000 (or even 30,000) their hope of imposing their dictatorship was doomed to failure. In spite of their lip-service to unity of the working-classes as the basis for workers' emancipation, their rôle in these struggles has always been that of dividing the workers. They appear to have taken a leaf out of the book of traditional

British foreign policy, with equal success! In Spain their tactic was no exception to this rule.²⁷ The reader may recall a reference from Gerald Brenan's *Spanish Labyrinth*, quoted earlier in this study, in which he pointed out that in those areas where the anarchists were strongest the socialist movement was most reactionary, whereas where the anarchists were in a minority they succeeded by their militancy in driving the socialists to the Left. It was natural, therefore, that the Communists, once they had dropped their revolutionary intransigence in favour of bourgeois democracy and popular frontism, should seek to infiltrate the socialist movement in those areas where the anarchists were strongest. And in fact their first success was in Catalonia. There, the weak Socialists under the leadership of one of the most sinister figures of Spanish Socialism, Juan Comorera y Soler, "were more to the Right than any other section of the Spanish Socialists. In Barcelona, where the labour movement was anarchist, they saw their chief task in fighting anarchism" (Borkenau, *The Communist International*). Only four days after the Franco uprising, the Communists merged with the Catalan socialists to form the P.S.U.C. (Catalan Unified Socialist Party). It was the first example of a socialist party merging with the Communists, and represented a move most favourable to the Communists who had no more than 200 members in the whole of Catalonia at that time. The next step was to win the support of the other opponents of the anarchists such as the shopkeepers, certain sections of the intelligentsia, the white-collared workers and bourgeois republicans. Little wonder then that the membership figures of the P.S.U.C. rose by leaps and bounds during those first months. But its revolutionary content was nil.

The next step by the Communists was to exploit the split in the ranks of the Socialist-dominated trade union U.G.T. Their task was made all the easier by the merging of the Socialist Youth Movement (with 200,000 members, according to Brenan) with the numerically weaker Communist Youth to form the J.S.U. (Unified Socialist Youth).

But clearly, before the Communists could impose their reactionary policies and tactics on the revolutionary workers, Russian support had to be forthcoming. Russia's adhesion to the non-intervention pact coupled with the Spanish Communists' counter-revolutionary activities (in opposing expropriation of the landed estates and the factories by the workers and the creation of workers' militias; in helping the government to restore its authority, and supporting the formation of a regular police force and gendarmerie) did not foment communist influence among the workers.

Russian intervention in Spain, when it did take place, was dictated not by revolutionary motives or Stalin's love for the Spanish people, but by the need for strengthening Russia's position in international politics. According to General Krivitsky—who, in his book, *I Was Stalin's Agent* (London, 1939), claims to be the

"sole survivor abroad of the group of Soviet officials who had a direct hand in organising Soviet intervention in Spain"—ever since Hitler's rise to power in 1933 "Stalin's foreign policy had been an anxious one. He was driven by the fear of isolation". Only when he was sure that Franco would not have "a quick and easy" victory did he decide to intervene in Spain. "His idea was—and this was common knowledge among us who served him—to include Spain in the sphere of the Kremlin's influence. Such a domination would secure his ties with Paris and London, and thus strengthen, on the other hand, his bargaining position with Berlin. Once he was master of the Spanish Government—of vital strategic importance to France and Great Britain—he would find what he was seeking. He would be a force to be reckoned with, an ally to be coveted". This may seem a somewhat far-fetched explanation viewed in a present-day context, but not so if one recalls that up to 1933 "there was no single country outside Russia where the Communists counted as a political force".²⁸ And again, according to Krivitsky, Stalin "launched his intervention under the slogan: 'Stay out of range of artillery fire!' Fewer than 2,000 Russians were in Spain at any time, and they were military experts and technicians, political agitators and members of the O.G.P.U., the notorious Russian secret police. So far as the fighting was concerned, the Russian's organised the International Brigades, composed of men of all nationalities except Russian.

Not only did Russia see to it that no Russian soldier would be involved, but also made quite sure that intervention was paid for in advance to the tune of 500 tons of gold from the Bank of Spain which were transferred to Russia following the result of a secret arrangement made between the then Prime Minister, Largo Caballero and the Russian representative in Spain. At the same time, Stalin sent one Arthur Stashevsky to manipulate the political and financial reins, and General Berzin to organise and direct the army. The Russians had no doubts that whoever controlled the economics of a country controlled it politically, and Stashevsky immediately set about "exerting all his efforts to gather into Soviet hands the control of the finances of the republic". The hostility of the Communists to the industrial and agricultural collectives was undoubtedly politically motivated, linked with the aims of the Russian controlled Negrin government to centralise all the economic life of the country so as to bring the workers' organisations under its control. It had nothing to do with the alleged reasons, advanced by the Communists, that land was being collectivised by force and that industry was not being operated in the interests of the armed struggle.

The Russians also saw to it that not only were the International Brigades controlled by them but managed after only a few months' intervention in Spanish affairs to ensure that 90% of all important posts in the Spanish War Department were in their hands, and that most of the political Commissars with the Republican Army were Communist stalwarts.

The heroic struggle of the Spanish people in July 1936 had acted as a powerful magnet in drawing hundreds of militant anti-fascist exiles from Italy and Germany, as well as anti-Communist revolutionaries from all parts

Continued on p. 4

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²⁷ "At Seville the more militant sections of the workers, the dock hands and the café waiters belonged to them [the Communists]. The situation here was one of perpetual war with the C.N.T. with small sections of the U.G.T. looking on. . . . Even allowing for the fact that the atmosphere of Seville . . . was not propitious to the formation of a disciplined proletarian movement, it must be agreed that the Communist penetration had destroyed all possibility of working-class solidarity. The consequences of this were felt when in July General Queipo de Llano was able to capture the city—one of the key points of the Civil War—with a handful of men. [Our italics.] (*Spanish Labyrinth*, pp. 306-7.)

²⁸ F. Borkenau: *The Communist International* (London, 1934). This volume includes a chapter on Spain which was probably written at the end of 1937 and does not therefore present a complete picture of the C.P. rôle in Spain.

SCRATCH A RUSSIAN

ONE of the effects of the rise of the nation States—a phenomenon, after all, of only the past four hundred years of history—has been the attribution to individuals of supposed national characteristics. "Scratch a Russian," they used to say, "and you find a Tartar." In wartime such conceptions are used to an enormously inflated extent as hysteria-propaganda. "The only good German is a dead German." Jerry will always do . . . this, that or the next thing—and so on. For propaganda to foreign Communists and their dupes it is true that Stalin claimed early on in the Nazi-Soviet war that the German people were not to be identified with the Nazis, but that was only for external consumption. In Russia itself it was always "the Fascist beast".

So deeply ingrained is this habit of identifying individual men and women (and even children) with "their" nation and its supposed characteristics that great efforts were made after the defeat of Germany to prove that the population as a whole were responsible for what their rulers had done. Victorious governments and their ruling circles seemed unable to discard the concepts convenient to war hatred after their usefulness had passed. The fact that the German Government had had to employ the most ruthless and thorough apparatus of terror in order to get their population to accept their rule simply was unimportant to this trend of thought.

Fortunately, the common sense view soon prevailed and the men and women and children who happen to have been born in Germany were soon recognised to be no different from other folks. But it prevailed at least partly because there were people who never had accepted the "national characteristic" line, were prepared to point the common sense way, and were not drowned by a totalitarian propaganda system. It is obvious that anyone who believes in internationalism, or the brotherhood of man, or whatever other name the idea of mutual co-operation is clothed in, cannot possibly swallow the "characteristics of nations" view of men and women. Internationalists must think in terms of individuals and not of nations.

But it will not do to underestimate the extent to which this idea of national character has bitten into educated thought. In the following example it makes complete nonsense of his logic, but the writer is quite unaware of it. Here is O. M. Green writing in the *Observer* about the new China:

"It is a delusion to think of the Chinese as a peace-loving race. No doubt the 'stupid people' who make up nine-tenths of the nation want peace, but what they want has never counted with their rulers. From the remote days when the Chinese were spreading out all over China from the basin of the Yellow River, they have been warriors and empire builders. Every new dynasty, while it was young and lusty, followed the same course. That Communism has made no difference to the essential imperialism of Chinese nature is indicated by the fact . . . etc., etc."

The passages italicized show clearly the contradictions. Of course the contradictions disappear if one continues to insist on the distinction between the "stupid people" (who want peace) and their rulers. "The essential imperialism" then becomes an attribute not of Chinese nature but of successive Chinese governments. We are back at the Nazis and the German people.

This distinction is of vital importance to clear thought on world affairs. The example quoted shows

how easily the bad habits inculcated by education and propaganda can vitiate discussion. With increasing isolation of nations and suppression of independent news, it becomes ever easier for ordinary people to forget that the ordinary people over the frontiers are very much more like themselves, than their rulers (who take little account of their wishes—for peace or otherwise) represent.

The idea of nation characteristics is really only a respectable presentation of such vulgar habits of thought as are enshrined in such words as "Boches", "niggers", "dagoes", "gooks", and so on: words specifically designed to obscure the human individual who disappears under such labels. Internationalists and socialists have long discarded these repellent words. They now have to discard the whole concept which lies behind very much wider areas of contemporary thought on social affairs.

UNESCO & ILLITERACY

"Half the World Cannot Read or Write"

THE United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation having, as the *Times* says, "set out on a broad front to capture a rather unresponsive world," is now concentrating its efforts towards development of the vast backward regions. "Its rôle, or its chief one, now seems to be to do what is directly in its power to introduce fundamental education schemes into the swarming areas of illiteracy and technical incompetence, and, since its power to assist directly is limited, to awaken the conscience or self-interest of the more prosperous nations until they, too, shall 'refuse to take evil for granted.'"

Unesco's newly-published *Report to the United Nations 1951-52* (H.M.S.O., 15s. 6d.) declares that, "No less than half the population of the globe—more than 120,000 million—are unable to read and write." Much of the report is taken up by an account of Unesco's efforts to remedy this situation.

"Illiteracy," says the report, "is not merely the absence of schooling. It goes together with bad sanitary conditions, a backward economy, undernourishment, and a lack of social organisation. It is both the cause and the effect of these circumstances, but the vicious circle thus created must not be accepted as something pre-ordained and inevitable." Fundamental education must break in. It is "a prerequisite for the realisation of all programmes of technical development." Concerned not only or chiefly with literacy but with hygiene, techniques of cultivation, and social organisation, it is yet "essentially locally inspired and always respectful of traditional customs and attitudes of mind."

THE DIVERSITY OF HUMAN COMMUNITIES

THOUGH it is essential to Professor Macbeath's argument to show that primitive people, however limited their attainments and however extraordinary some of their ideas may seem, do in fact approach the same sort of social problems in the same sort of way as the civilised, he only does so in the latter part of his book after describing in detail the ways of life—the social structure and moral ideals—of the Trobriand Islanders, the Bantus of the Tonga tribe, the Crow Indians and the Australian aborigines. A short summary can do little justice to the amazing variety of these cultures, each of which is shown to be a single elaborate and coherent structure.

No doubt anyone who has reflected on the contrast, say, between ancient Athens and Sparta ought not to be surprised at the fantastic diversity of human communities; but Athens and Sparta were long ago, and have almost the aura of a fairy-tale. To find small primitive peoples of to-day displaying to so intense a degree outward dissimilarity and inward homogeneity is almost disconcerting. To take one small example, the Trobrianders (to whom two full chapters are devoted, based, needless to say, on the classical studies of Malinowski) allow complete sexual freedom to their youth, yet they have frequent contacts with the inhabitants of two neighbouring islands who have developed "as strict a code of sexual morals as the mid-Victorians". And how is one to explain such phenomena as that the Trobrianders have no laws, courts or police at all, while the apparently more primitive Bantus have developed an elaborate system of criminal and civil jurisdiction? Or the fact that by some tribes many or most of their rules of life are regarded as having a supernatural sanction; by others, none? Professor Macbeath devotes a special chapter to this last question, and concludes that "morality is in origin and authority independent of religion."

—The *Times Literary Supplement*, reviewing *Experiments in Living*, by A. Macbeath (Macmillan, 30/-).

THE UNTAKEN HARVEST

IN this column a few months ago, I quoted from a newspaper remarks of an Italian peasant girl who came to work in this country as a servant and was amazed at our complaining of our need for more home-produced food while we made, in her opinion, little attempt to bring unproductive land into use. I met recently another Italian who made the same comment. He was on a visit to his parents in Southern Italy from this country where he had come in 1943 as a prisoner of war. He had married here, had two children, and worked in a bakery in the Midlands and spoke derogatively of the flour—"a bit of British, a bit of Canadian, a bit of Australian and a lot of chalk," he said). But he also rented some land, had a cow and a pig and a lot of chickens, and kept his family in vegetables. He had in fact the small-holding that is the unfulfilled dream of every bank clerk. Of course, he spoke very warmly of his adopted country, but on one point he had very emphatic views. England, he declared, was so rich that it wasted everything and Italy he said was so poor that nothing was wasted there.

This was a very sweeping statement, but Mr. Noel Armstrong of Norwich would agree with it. Mr. Armstrong was the founder of the Norwich and District Food Production Council which held its annual exhibition last week. He came back from the war, the paper says, "deeply impressed by the thorough use foreigners make of their land and appalled by the way the English

waste it." His council declares that: "Now that so much farmland is being lost under new housing estates, every council tenant must be encouraged to produce from his garden at least as much food as the dispossessed farmer produced from the same piece of land."

One of the fourteen clubs forming his council claims that its members have produced 211 different things, including "such exotic items as figs, raisins, tobacco and a fur coat". They urge that people who grow vegetables and fruit should also keep some kind of small livestock, thereby completing the production circle. The surplus vegetables feed the livestock and the livestock fertilise the ground. In his speech (after the homegrown luncheon to thirty guests), Mr. Armstrong declared his hope that it would one day be "a social stigma for a householder to have an uncultivated garden or for the local authority to have an idle piece of land or for schools to be without well-cultivated gardens."

A new book *Untaken Harvest*, by George Ordish (Constable, 15/-), describes a different aspect of what it has become quite fashionable to call the "battle for survival". More than ten per cent. of the world's crops, he says, is annually destroyed by insects, molluscs and worms, fungi and bacteria, viruses, weeds and mammals, but in some backward countries, the figure rises up to forty per cent. The average yearly loss to British crops between 1939 and 1947 from insects and fungi was £80,000,000—the equivalent of nearly two million 'untaken acres'. It is, however, not all gloom, for according to *Untaken Harvest*, the measures taken for plant protection in the last twenty years save to-day at least £600,000,000 of crops annually throughout the world, which

in human terms represents the food rations and textiles for over forty million people annually.

At this year's Town Planning Institute summer school, Mr. E. A. Rowse of the School of Planning & Research for Regional Development gave an address in which he discussed forecasts of the increase of the world's population in relation to the total amount of potentially cultivable land and concluded that "we should be turning our attention to the biology and technics of sea-farming—the cropping and stocking of the continental shelves and ultimately the depths of the ocean." The *Manchester Guardian* reports that in the subsequent discussion some speakers "found difficulty in taking his apocalyptic vision seriously." But whether you believe in Mr. Rowse's Malthusian nightmare or not, it is, as the *News Chronicle* says, "surely the depths of folly to stand idly by and watch productive fields given up to the sea." This is what is happening on the East Anglian coast where in East Suffolk alone there are 10,000 acres of marshland grazings that are either flooded or in monthly danger of being flooded. In some places we have not repaired the damage from the intentional flooding for defence purposes in wartime.

In Holland, two and a half years ago, I saw the beginning of the enclosing dyke for the South-West Polder, in the former Zuyder Zee. Two months ago I heard a broadcast by Mr. Lionel Fleming who described how he saw the stone facing being put on the dyke. In five years' time that Polder will be land, 220 square miles of it.

What will I see in those marshland grazings of the Stour estuary in five years' time? C.W.

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AFRICAN AFFAIRS

Continued from p. 1

the Colonial Secretary and the Minister of State (see *FREEDOM*, 2/2/52). When the Colonial Secretary in the Labour Government visited Kenya last year, he was told by Africans that "an economic disaster faces Kenya unless more land is provided," and Mr. Jomo Kenyatta has continually warned of the desperate position resulting from his countrymen's land hunger.

Yet the autumn issue of *The Times British Colonies Review* can open its leading article with the bland words, "The land problem in Kenya, of which little has been heard outside that colony for some time, has started once more to arouse interest in Great Britain."

The Legislative Council in Kenya has debated Emergency Acts because of the existence of Mau Mau and because of the "crime wave" in Nairobi. The *New Statesman* says, "Severe restrictions are proposed on freedom of speech, writing, meeting, association and movement. All printing presses are to be licensed; all societies with more than ten members are to be registered (except co-operatives and trade unions, already registered, and Freemasons); and Provincial Commissioners are given power to deport 'to a restricted area' any persons who they are satisfied are members of Mau Mau. At the same time the armed police are being heavily increased, a curfew has been imposed in districts adjacent to European communities, and public meetings have been banned. . . . Mr. St. A. Davies, the Chief Native Commissioner and member of the delegation which recently visited the Colonial Secretary to seek British endorsement of the new legislation, has acknowledged that its purpose is not so much to meet an immediate danger as to safeguard society against future subversion.

"The danger is, as Mr. J. E. Neep, O.C., urged in the Legislative Council debate on the new Bills, that they will be used to suppress activities far beyond those of the Mau Mau. There is evidence from Kenya that an atmosphere of hysteria is influencing many of the European settlers and even some Government officials. Recently, for instance, the police brought four boys, two aged 10 and 11 years respectively, into the Courts and charged them with having been present at a Mau Mau gathering. The magistrate was sensible enough to refuse to hear the case against them."

Of the "crime wave", the *Statesman*

comments: "Speaking in the Legislative Council in July, Mr. Whyatt, Member for Law and Order, said that in the first six months of this year there had been no increase of offences against the person, and that the increase in offences against property had been 24 per cent.—actually less than in the neighbouring Protectorate of Uganda. Mr. Whyatt himself had offered sufficient explanation of this increase—a rise in the cost of essentials out of all proportion to the rise in wages of the very poor. But the root cause is land hunger, particularly among the Kikuyu tribe. Africans are being driven from the land, their traditional means of life, just as the mining population of South Wales were driven from its valleys during the depression of the Thirties. They are crowding into the towns in thousands, homeless, without work, without wages."

Mau Mau, as Miss Huxley says, is a symptom of maladjustment of society. It is a symptom of the war of colour to which so many African lands seem almost inevitably destined. The population figures indicate who is to be the eventual victor; apart from its Indian and Arab inhabitants, Kenya contains 30,000 Europeans and 5,250,000 Africans. Mr. Peter Abrahams declares: "Whether, in fact, people who look on the blacks as the white of Kenya do can, at a later stage, readjust their attitude is highly questionable. One thing is certain. Imperceptibly, a 'master race' mentality is in the making. It is the easiest way of safeguarding and entrenching the position of privilege of the whites. And many government officials become, or plan to become, settlers at the end of their term of service, so their interests are, quite naturally, the same as those of the white settlers. They call for co-operation from the blacks. They talk about partnership. And many officials have complained to me about the unco-operative attitude of the black leaders. I confess that, if I were a Kenya African, I would be as bitter as Kenyatta and the other leaders of the Kenya African Union against the general white attitude that the only co-operation possible is on their terms, with its tacit assumption that my position must always be that of a social, political, and economic inferior. Like them, I would say: 'This partnership is a fraud.' . . ."

POWER, GOVERNMENT AND AUTHORITY

IN view of the editorial comments on my letter in FREEDOM, 4/10/52, I must again try to make my position clear. In certain circumstances, the granting of authority and power to a local council or some other executive committee may be desirable; on the other hand, it is always wrong to grant authority to impose executive decisions by force.

"They were nevertheless imposing their wishes on a minority." Certainly—and why not? I will impose my wishes on others, by force if necessary, whenever I consider such action is desirable.

For instance, if I suspect that a man plans to shoot me, I make no apology for acquiring his gun by guile, force or otherwise. I then have the power to shoot him or anyone else, but I do not shrink from acquiring such power. Questions of principle arise only in considering how I use it.

Similarly, in this case, a minority was using the machinery of the law to injure the majority. The majority seized that machinery and prevented its use against them, thus "imposing their wishes" on the minority who wished to use it to injure them. They acquired the legal authority to injure the minority, if they so wished, but questions of principle arise only in considering how that power was used.

The example given of events in Spain does not affect my argument. A clear distinction can be made between the use of power to abolish a law and its use to enforce a decree, between the use of power to prevent injury and its use to inflict injury.

As it seems to be so difficult for my position to be appreciated, let me illustrate further. A teacher has the power to punish his pupils. By becoming a

teacher, I acquire this power, which is granted by law with the approval of the vast majority. But, in present circumstances, I gladly accept this power because I can use it to prevent any other teacher from punishing my pupils while they are in my care.

If the Editors are absolutely opposed to the delegation of authority and power, then they must divest themselves of the authority given them by us to edit FREEDOM, and abandon the power—which they certainly use—of deciding if and when this letter is to be printed. But until I am satisfied that the Editors do disagree with me, it would be unfair to call them "old-fashioned or sectarian or unrealistic"; it seems more likely that they are being led astray by emotional reactions towards such words as "government", "power", and "authority".
Leicester. P. L. LEWIS.

Editors' Reply:

COMRADE Lewis is now saying that in preventing a man from shooting him with a gun, he is imposing his wishes on the other man. He then goes on to say that having acquired the gun he has the power to shoot his would-be assailant "or anyone else". He uses this analogy in order to show that power is not dangerous if properly used. Actually he confuses the issue by making no distinction between the power that each of us possesses as thinking individuals and the power represented by the man who holds a loaded gun. In the first case, that power is more or less limited to one of persuasion; in the second, persuasion has been replaced by coercion. One is only splitting hairs by objecting that one attempts to persuade the other man before pointing a gun at his head! The hard realities of life show that the people who have the means, and who are prepared in the last resort to impose their wishes on others by "force if necessary," always become increasingly impatient of the power of persuasion, and find every reason for justifying the use of coercion as a short cut to what is "desirable".

Comrade Lewis says that in that little town of N. Sweden (which for convenience we will refer to as X) the minority was using the machinery of the law to injure the majority. (In passing one should point out that this is, in general, the purpose of the law everywhere, and why therefore anarchists should modify their attitude to government in this particular instance only, and remain hostile to participation in government in general, needs to be explained.) The majority "seized that machinery and prevented its use against them". In the first place, what comrade Lewis means when he writes "seized" is that the active members of the majority nominated their candidates and canvassed votes on their behalf at the local elections that took place at some later date. Having been elected they then used the machinery of government in order to abolish the particular local law to which they objected. Comrade Lewis says that there was nothing objectionable in that for principles come in only when "considering how that power was used". To our minds the question of principle arose the moment they decided to operate the machinery of the law. By so doing they have given moral approval to the institutions of government. How important this is can be shown again with the example of Spain. Caballero was

anxious to include members of the C.N.T. in his government, not because he thought that the Anarchist ministers were better ministers than the others, but because in so doing the whole syndicalist movement was morally committed to the authority and principle of government. By entering the local government the syndicalists of X were consenting to the principle of governmental authority—even if only to abolish a law. In actual fact they were also assuming the authority for the existing laws, and for the administration of justice—as well as for keeping the roads in a good state of repair. The use of legal powers to impose the will of the majority on the minority is as immoral as the coercion of the majority by a minority. There is no principle involved in minorities or majorities; the principle is in the fact of an individual or individuals being prepared to supplement their power, as workers or intellectuals, by having recourse to other weapons (whether they be the machinery of law or guns) to coerce others.

The analogy of the schoolteacher is an unfortunate one, because comrade Lewis is equating the useful occupation of the schoolteacher with, from the anarchist point of view, the useless and harmful institution of government, and the power which the teacher has of using the cane with the power of government to coerce. It is an unfortunate analogy because whereas the teacher can teach his pupil by love and understanding (and in many countries the cane has ceased to be the teacher's authority) no government has ever governed without authority and a police force at hand.

Having said all this, we must make one further point to avoid misunderstandings. We are not pacifists because we are revolutionists, and though we think that a social revolution which could be achieved in its initial stage without violence is the one which has the greatest chances of a successful outcome, we must face the fact that the ruling classes which maintain their position not through persuasion but by force will not consent to step down without attempting to defend their privileges by having recourse to violence. That this violence is answered with violence is inevitable, whether we like it or not. We think that for the social revolution to succeed in such circumstances the first objective is the destruction of those institutions which are the basis of privilege and which give individuals legal and armed power to coerce their fellow beings. Not to capture them for one's own use. How can we educate the people in this direction while there are so-called anarchists who cannot resist the temptation

to participate in these governmental institutions whenever it may suit their immediate purpose to do so?

As to the last paragraph of Comrade Lewis's letter, it is news to us that he and others have given us "authority to edit FREEDOM". We have never presumed to speak in the name of anyone but ourselves; our aim is to produce a paper which will incite people to think for themselves and which will, to the best of our ability, express anarchist thought. To this end, we welcome the collaboration of anarchists of all tendencies, as well as non-anarchists who are free from political party fetters and who can contribute something to the freeing of people's mind. It is true that we have the "power" to decide what shall or shall not be published. But since we publish FREEDOM and take all the responsibility for it—both in seeing that all bills are paid as well as "taking the can back" when the authorities use their legal powers to prosecute us for sedition—we see nothing inconsistent in also deciding what we print, the more so when no one has yet suggested that some mythical anarchist movement is paying us to do this work!

On the other hand, the publication of FREEDOM is made possible by those comrades and readers who subscribe and send donations to the paper, to those who assist with the dispatching and distribution (and Comrade Lewis is most active in this latter respect) and to those who contribute articles. May we suggest—without being accused of cynicism or of being influenced by Max Stirner—that our readers and those comrades and friends who support our work do so not because they think we are nice people (most of our readers do not know us as personalities, which is a good thing, since it allows them to disassociate ideas from personalities) but because they think FREEDOM is worth reading and/or distributing. When they cease to think this they generally disappear or fail to reply to our subscription renewal notices! We have no authority, no "power", to oblige them to read our paper nor they to "authorise" us to edit or publish it! If and when we should cease to have readers and supporters FREEDOM would automatically disappear. To our minds this would be a very clear indication that we had badly served our aims and our fate would be well deserved. So far this does not seem to have happened; for the past eighteen months we have been appearing as a weekly, our articles are reproduced with approval in the anarchist press throughout the world, and Comrade Lewis has, at the time of writing these words, sent us a large batch of new subscribers obtained for FREEDOM during his stay in Sweden!—EDITORS.

South Coast Building Progress

IT is now more than twelve years since the cities of Britain were being subjected to nightly destruction from the air. It is about eight years since the last flying bombs hurtled their terrifying way over "South-East England" and "bombs were dropped at random" by hit and run raiders.

During the war great plans were produced for the rebuilding of our shattered cities. Morale was kept high by the consoling thought that at least the clearances left by the Luftwaffe could be put to good use by giving opportunities for town planning and architectural development.

In two blitzed towns on the South Coast, the progress is not heartening, and as our industry is bound ever more tightly to the needs of export and re-arming, the "shortage" of steel for building is likely to increase rather than otherwise.

By the end of 1944, Southampton had been raided 57 times; 21 per cent. of the property in the port has been written off. The central area of Southampton is a mess of temporary building and gaping bomb-sites, mercifully disguised by the willow herb and the yellow ragwort.

The industrial dockland has been well looked after. 400 acres have been re-built; a £750,000 ocean terminal has been built to welcome the travellers on the Cunard Lines mighty "Queens" and other great industrial buildings have risen. But in the shopping and public amenities and housing areas the result is practically nil.

About the other great South Coast port, Portsmouth, a correspondent gives us the following facts:

The commercial enterprises in Portsmouth are doing well. Among the city's new buildings since 1951 are: Montague Burtons (multiple tailors), Sandport Drapery Stores, Woolworths, C. & A.'s (multiple women's tailors), Timothy Whites (multiple chemists), a new Sailors' Home in Queen Street, Sailors' Rest in Edinburgh Road (500 rooms!), Odeon Cinema, Festing Road, and many other commercial buildings repaired and enlarged, including the Transport Headquarters at Eastney.

All of these buildings are very large, taking months to complete and using, of course, vast quantities of steel and other materials.

What about the housing progress? Of the original target of 1,000 homes by the end of 1952, not 500 had been completed in the City of Portsmouth by the end of September. Private enterprise is building a small estate of cottages for old

DRAUGHTSMEN THREATEN STRIKE FOR RECOGNITION

IT is not often that "white-collar" workers take, or even threaten to take, direct action against their bosses.

A group of 400 industrial draughtsmen, however, in West Wales' shipbuilding and engineering trades, have threatened to strike next Monday unless their association—the Association of Engineering and Shipbuilding Draughtsmen is recognised by their employers as a negotiating body.

The employers maintain that the draughtsmen are employed as individuals and do not need a trade union to negotiate for them.

It seems that the draughtsmen have no imminent wage claims to make. It is simply that they wish to be able to negotiate as a body.

The strike would affect the big Margam, Port Talbot and Trostre steel works and the National Oil Refineries, Llandarcy.

people in Arundel Street. In the Kings Road, which with 14 side streets was completely destroyed during the blitz, it is proposed to build houses and flats with a weekly rental of 2 and 3 guineas, plus rates, while out at Leigh Park, the Council are completing flats for workers at a lower rent, but costing them 1s. 9d. a day in fares to reach their work in the city. It is taking over two years to complete 600 flats at Leigh Park.

In the City of Portsmouth itself, where the work is, there are practically no new Council flats at all.

Thus we can see that there seems to be no difficulty in obtaining licences and labour for commercial building, but all the excuses are trotted out to quieten the patient people waiting for homes.

The chance to rebuild our cities in some pleasing manner is being completely thrown away. Ugly and ostentatious commercial buildings are simply being planted back in position with no discernible regard for town planning and the inadequate housing that is being produced is placed and priced without regard for the people who need it most.

We sometimes wish that some of the greed and envy and jealousy which are said to motivate all working-class aspirations, would in fact show themselves now and again! Then perhaps the greedy workers would make sure their basic needs were considered, instead of always being at the end of the queue.

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Irving St., Leicester Square
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THURS., OCT. 23—Albert Meltzer
on ANARCHISM TODAY

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of the world, to join in the resistance against Franco (They did not form part of the carefully screened C.P. organised International Brigades which only came to Spain towards the end of 1936.) With Russian intervention, Stalin transferred not only military and economic experts to Spain, but also the secret police. The Communist plan was to liquidate individual opponents (especially ex-Communists who "knew too much") and to destroy the revolutionary movement in Spain which had proved such a formidable barrier to any attempts by the Spanish Communist Party at political hegemony. "As for Catalonia—declared Pravda of 16th December, 1936—the purging of the Trotskyists and the Anarcho-Syndicalists has begun; it will be conducted with the same energy with which it was conducted in the U.S.S.R." And to this end, organised terror was instituted by the Communists. They, who protested loudest against the "uncontrolled elements", set up their own private prisons and torture chambers which they called "preventorios". No one, not even with the authority of the Minister of Justice, was permitted to visit these prisons. John McGovern, an Independent Labour Party M.P. at the time, went to Spain in November 1937 as a member of a delegation which included Professor Felicien Challaie of the Central Committee of the League for Human Rights, to visit members of the P.O.U.M. who were held in prison without trial as "Franco's agents", at the instigation of the Communists. In a pamphlet published on his return

Lessons of the Spanish Revolution-14

he describes his visits to the various prisons, but points out that though supplied by the Director of Prisons and the Minister of Justice with a permit to visit the Calle Vallmajor Prison (one of the Communist "preventorios") admission was refused, the official pointing out that "he did not take any orders from the Director of Prisons or the Minister of Justice as they were not his bosses. We enquired who was his boss, and he gave us an address to the Cheka headquarters." At headquarters permission was again refused, and not even the personal intervention of the Minister of Justice, Señor Irujo, affected the issue. And McGovern concluded: "The mask was off. We had torn aside the veil and shown where the real power lay. The Ministers were willing, but powerless. The Cheka was unwilling, and it had the power. We realised that if we pressed further, we ourselves would be in danger."

The C.N.T. had exposed these secret prisons months before. On March 15, 1937, sixteen members of the C.N.T. had been murdered by Communists in Villanueva de Alcardete. To their demands that the perpetrators of this crime should be punished, Murdo Obrero, the Communist mouthpiece, replied by justifying the murders. Subsequent judicial investigation had established the fact that an all-Communist gang, including the mayors of Villanueva and Villamajor had been operating as a "Defence Committee" murdering political enemies, looting, levying tributes, and raping a number of women. Five communists were sentenced to death. In April of the same year the C.N.T. revealed, with proof, the existence of a private prison in Murcia, in spite of the efforts of the police to suppress the details

by seizing the entire edition of the organisation's newspaper, Cartagena Nueva, which carried a first-hand account by a worker who had been taken there for questioning.† Amongst those involved were police officers and Spanish members of the O.G.P.U.

It is impossible in the space available to detail the hundreds of cases of Communist terror that took place following Stalin's intervention in Spain's destinies. So successfully had Communist propaganda and fellow travelling journalists succeeded in convincing liberal and progressive opinion in the democracies that they were the spearhead of the armed struggle against Franco aided by Stalin, the only friend the Spanish people could look to for help, that the voices of the revolutionary groups appealing to the workers of the world to save the lives of Stalin's victims in Spain went unheeded. And when in May 1937 the Communist-provoked fratricidal struggle took place in the streets of Barcelona, in which hundreds of workers lost their lives, followed in June by large-scale armed attacks on the agricultural collectives in Aragon, the Communists were hailed as the saviours of law and order against the uncontrollable anarchist terrorists who were attempting to seize power in Barcelona and forcing the peasants to collectivise their lands at the points of anarchist bayonets! It was not only Hitler who believed that the bigger the lie the more chances there were of it being believed!
(To be continued) V.R.

† Reprinted in La C.N.T. en la Revolucion Española, Vol. 2.

27 John McGovern, M.P.: *Terror in Spain* (London, 1938).
Emma Goldman: *Political Persecution in Republican Spain* (Spain and the World, 10/12/37) describes a visit to a number of Spanish prisons in September 1937 and refers to the many prisons where permission to visit was refused.

28 Hugo Dewar, *Assassins at Large* (London, 1951) is an account of the executions outside Russia ordered by the O.G.P.U. One chapter deals with these activities in Spain.