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Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

I believe in the individual and deny the existence of the so called masses; I believe in abstract love of country and deplore patriotism; I believe in moral courage and suspect physical courage for its own sake.
 PETER IUSTINOV
 ("This I believe")

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Threepence

ARE WE HEADING FOR A GENERAL STRIKE?

THE threatened strike of railwaymen, following so closely after the token strike of nearly 2 million engineering and shipbuilding workers, points to the extent of discontent and grievance felt by industrial workers throughout the country.

These official, union-led strikes represent organised working-class action on a scale not equalled since the days of the General Strike of 1926 and they give a clear example of the way in which mass action suddenly and unexpectedly appears as a result of steady oppression of the workers.

Two months ago, in spite of the strikes of electricians and of the petrol-drivers, few of us would have thought it likely that, before Christmas, direct action involving nearly three million workers would be a serious possibility.

Working class action is like that: unpredictable. Although certainly those of us who try to analyse the workers' struggles, and consistently maintain that direct action contains the main weapons in the workers' armoury, have for some time seen the storm clouds gathering. But even so, when the storm breaks, we are taken by surprise.

Spontaneous

But then, mass action is never planned. Its impetus comes from a boiling over of a patient people's anger and the conception of conspiracies and plots behind either strikes, mutinies or revolutions is a fiction of ruling class propaganda. Revolutionaries are nearly always taken by surprise when large numbers of people who have seemed contented and sheep-like suddenly show spirit, energy and solidarity.

In Britain, for years now, the massive strikes which have shaken other countries seemed almost unthinkable. The organised might with

which the French workers, for example, resisted Laniel's attempts to cut their standards of living last summer, seemed to be something beyond the scope of the British workers to emulate. And yet—it is plain now that all that is needed is the coincidence of time to see the British ruling class facing a general strike on a scale equal to that in France.

The electricians have not yet received a satisfactory answer to the demand that led to their "guerilla" strikes last July. The miners have an outstanding wage claim over which they are getting somewhat impatient. Busmen are holding meetings to discuss wage increases. If strike action by these workers were to coincide with further action by the engineers, shipbuilders and railwaymen, the employing class would be faced by an army of workers whose strength it could not possibly match.

What Would They Gain?

But what would be the motive for such action? Wage increases. And how would the employers react? Probably by granting increases just large enough to stem the tide of discontent and get the workers back to work. The workers would have wielded a sledge-hammer—to kill a gnat.

For as soon as we returned to "normality", those who own and control the means of economic life would begin immediately to manipulate prices and costs so that the gains of the workers would be offset—and in a very short time workers would look at themselves and ask "What did we gain by our efforts?"

Clever people would answer "Nothing". Politicians would describe the general strike as a calamity, injurious to the national economy and the workers alike. But for anar-

chists, anything which adds to working class experience is valuable for that if for nothing else—and a general strike which may only win a short-term, limited victory, nevertheless can show a working class where its power really lies.

For anarchists, the general strike is a revolutionary weapon. The ruling class recognises it as such also, which is why it will go to any lengths to crush or avoid it. But it is a weapon the use of which has to be learned, like any other, and the strike actions at present on the horizon can be regarded, revolutionarily speaking, as nothing more than firing practice.

Wanted—a Revolutionary Movement

If there is a general strike in the near future it will have no immediate revolutionary significance. There is no conscious revolutionary movement, either anarchist or syndicalist, sufficiently widespread to infuse any insurrectionary spirit into any imminent strike movement. This work has to be done all the time—in times of apparent apathy, as we have

Wheat Stocks Mount in America

WASHINGTON, DECEMBER 6.

The Department of Agriculture reported that United States wheat exports in the first five months of the 1953-4 marketing year totalled about 90 million bushels, compared with 125 million in the same period last year. World wheat production this year was about 7,000 million bushels, 4 per cent. below the record 1952 crop but 20 per cent. above the average for the years 1945-9. The decline from a year ago was mainly caused by smaller crops in the four principal exporting countries—the United States, Canada, Argentina, and Australia. Unused wheat from the last crop in those countries totalled more than 1,200 million bushels, almost double the level of July 1, 1952. The 1953 crop of nearly 1,300 million bushels in Western Europe—the main deficit area of the world—is above that of a year ago, and exceeds the 1945-9 average by about 325 million bushels.—Reuter.

Government Terrorism in Malaya

FREEDOM has continually stressed the essential similarity of government brutality in Malaya and Kenya. And we stress the word government because it is terrorism towards recalcitrants immaterial whether called "communists" as in Malaya, or in Kenya where such an appellation would be absurd.

Following on Graham Greene's letter to the *Times* quoted in FREEDOM last week, an M.P. has written pointing out that similar gruesome practices occur in Malaya (*Times* 11/12/53):

"Sir,—The practice of exposing dead bodies of terrorists outside police stations as mentioned by Mr. Graham Greene in his letter of December 4 is not confined to Kenya. On September 17 *The Times of Malaya* reported, without any expression of surprise and clearly as a matter of routine, that the body of a 17-year-old Chinese girl terrorist, shot and killed by security forces, had been brought down from the jungle, then strapped to an upright plank, and put on exhibition outside the Kulim police station. The body of an Indian, said the newspaper, had been so exhibited the day before.

"The official explanation that was given to me when I raised this in the House of Commons was that the bodies

passed through since the war—and in times of mounting militancy, as now. It is only when large numbers of workers begin, more or less spontaneously, to take action themselves, that the seed spread by revolutionary propaganda may bear fruit.

And the fruit will be bitter or sweet in strict proportion to the degree of revolutionary consciousness achieved throughout the working class. Britain's workers are getting impatient. They want more wages. But their degree of revolutionary consciousness will become apparent when they become impatient for *no wages at all*. When they cease to think in terms of remaining wage earners—ambitious merely to be

CONCESSIONS IN EAST GERMANY

THE East German Communist government is still trying to placate the population after the uprising of June 17 last. More consumer goods are demanded, and the present variety and quality of such are declared by the government to be unsatisfactory.

At a "public" Cabinet meeting in Dec. 10, an audience of 300 workers were present, and all speeches were broadcast. Moreover, all factories and workers were ordered to tune in to them:

"The object was to bring home to the Soviet zone public the full advantage of a number of Christmas concessions. A 'new order' on the improvement of living and working conditions was announced by Herr Ulbricht as the most important step in labour legislation since the labour law of 1950. It appears to include a reduction in working hours for men employed in a number of especially difficult or arduous professions; railway fare concessions for holiday travel to all members of the trade union organization; the provision of 700 extra buses and vehicles to take workers to and from their places of work; and improvements in canteen meals. Full details of the order are not yet known, and Herr Ulbricht was not very clear about them.

"He added that there would be wage increases for workers in private industry, who have hitherto always been at a disadvantage in comparison with those in publicly owned enterprises. Herr Ulbricht said that private employers would be able to deduct the amount of wage increases

more prosperous wage earners—but recognise the necessity to exert their enormous strength to expropriate the means of production and distribution—the factories and power stations, mines and railways, the land and all the means of life—and abolish the wage system, symbol of their slavery, in favour of free production and distribution, free access to the means of life for all.

Whether the workers win or lose the coming wage struggles, there will be much to be learnt from them. For that reason, and because the generation of self-confidence and self-reliance is a prime factor for success in a revolutionary struggle, and experience in organisation and encouragement of militancy essential for the final victory, we support the working class in any action it takes in its own interest against the employers and the State.

This seems designed to encourage private enterprise to provide more of the consumer goods which must be made available if the Government is to keep up its promise to raise the standard of living. Herr Ulbricht also said that the director's fund in each factory—a fund expendable at his discretion for social improvement—would be used to make awards to specially deserving workers." (*Times* 10/12/53)

Ulbricht is the "strong man" of the government and the most seasoned Moscow man. There is obviously an attempt to soften the repression of opposition by a new line of consumer concessions.

Wrongfully Imprisoned for 41 years

BROCKTON, Mass., Oct. 23.

Seven men, found to have been illegally committed as prisoners, were freed to-day after serving terms in state institutions ranging from six to 41 years.

All seven men wept with joy when their freedom was ordered yesterday by Superior Court Judge Felix Forte on the grounds their commitment was illegal and without even a hearing in some cases.

Judge Forte found one of the men, Elmer Bridges, had been a prisoner for 41 of his 51 years on a case of mistaken identity.

The judge said Bridges was locked up as a boy of 10 on a charge of truancy from Tewksbury schools when, in fact, it was Bridges' brother who was the truant.

Bridges was so overjoyed on his release he shook hands with everyone in the courtroom, from the judge to reporters covering the hearing.

All seven were sentenced to indefinite terms as defective delinquents.

Judge Forte found many of the men were transferred from detention homes to state prison institutions for minor infractions during their commitments.

During the hearing, Judge Forte criticized State Attorney General George Fingold, who, he said, "up to now, it seems, has found no merit in any of these cases. The attorney general seems to have prejudged all these cases."

Fingold was not in court and could not be reached for comment. He was represented by Assistant Attorney General Caspar Dorfman, who did not comment.—A.P.

Judge on Punishment of Homosexuals

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES, DEC. 7

"At the annual meeting of Surrey County magistrates at Surrey Quarter Sessions to-day, Judge Tudor Rees, the chairman, speaking of the increased number of sexual offences dealt with, said that the assessment of sentences in such cases caused him acute anxiety, an anxiety which he knew was shared by Assize Judges.

"In my view," he said, "except for the removal of the corrupting influence, prison is not the answer to the problem. To lock up in solitary confinement for 18 hours out of 24 a man convicted of an unnatural offence is to do him far more harm than good. In the innumerable hours that he has to spend alone he quite naturally contemplates those very things he ought to be encouraged to forget.

"I have had talks with governors and medical officers of prisons, and with probation officers and others, and I am sure that, instead of reforming the offenders, a prison sentence aggravates the cause of the trouble, and so inevitably leads him into further mischief when he leaves prison."

"A graver side of the problem was the effect on the victims of the crime. That effect, often permanent upon boys, was incalculable, and potential victims must be protected.

"The criminal courts were not clinics, yet in these cases they were faced with a most puzzling pathological problem, with which they were ill-equipped to deal."

(*Times*, 8/12/53)

Anyone who has spent much time in

prison knows that these views about imprisoning homosexuals are sound, and that they are so obvious that even warders can see that it is so. It does seem necessary however, if a Royal Commission is appointed, that this question of the effect upon boys, so readily described as "permanent" and "incalculable" is in fact investigated and approached with an open mind. There is at present no study of the actual effect of homosexual experience upon boys. When such information is sought it will be important to assess also the effect of the legal proceedings upon such boys.

At the meeting reported above more orthodox opinions were also expressed:

PROTECTION OF PUBLIC

"Brigadier A. C. C. Willway, deputy chairman of quarter sessions, said that it might be true that some offenders were actuated by a power which they could not control; that was an aspect which needed investigation. Meanwhile, the only rule the courts could follow was to act for the protection of the public.

"Mr. Erskine Simes, Q.C., said that it was for the Prison Commission to decide what was the best way to treat offenders after conviction. He felt strongly that too much stress was put upon uncontrollable impulses; the real trouble was that there had been a sad lapse in the moral sense of the community.

"The magistrates passed a resolution, to be sent to the Home Secretary, expressing their sense of the gravity of the problem and welcoming the suggestion for investigation by a royal commission or other body."

HAVE YOU
 INTRODUCED
 A NEW READER TO
 FREEDOM?

THE CAPTIVE MIND, by Czeslaw Milosz. (Secker & Warburg, London).

THERE is no lack of scientists who look to Russia as their paradise, presumably because they have reasons to believe that their work there would not be hampered by the type of economic obstacles and interference by which they feel hindered here. Presumably also they have no direct or imagined experience of obstacles and interference of a political nature, and would consequently reject any suggestion of their existence in Russia as capitalist propaganda. To look at Russia as the artists' and writers' paradise is, however, a little more difficult as the creative acts obviously require a greater element of freedom than scientific research. Nothing really impressive in the arts and literature has yet been produced by communist Russia, and so one feels that the situation is more satisfactory here where one is free to write and paint what one likes, though somebody else is equally free not to publish the book or exhibiting the painting. Czeslaw Milosz who gives us a lively and factual account of intellectuals' ups and downs in a Russian-dominated country, reaches the deep and poignant conclusion that "the creative act cannot be understood as a submission to 'the wave of the future'," and that "the creative man has no choice but to trust his inner command and place everything at stake in order to express what seems to him to be true. This inner command is absurd if it is not supported by a belief in an order of values that exists beyond the changeability of human affairs, that is by a metaphysical belief. Herein lies the tragedy of the twentieth century. To-day only those people can create who still have this faith, or who hold a position of lay stoicism which, after all, is probably another form of faith." (pp. 217-218).

Most of his friends and writers he knew apparently did not reach this conclusion, and submitted to 'the wave of the future'. I do not dare pass a moral judgment on them as I have not experienced a tenth of what the best of them have gone through to reach a total surrender revokable only by suicide. Integrity is a rarer virtue among intellectuals than it is among some other classes of men, and that mainly because of the greater temptations to which they are exposed. "To belong to the masses is the great longing of the 'alienated' intellectual" (p. 8), and by offering to satisfy this longing communism easily succeeds in winning over their allegiance. Moreover, "in the East anyone who displays any talent is used" (p. 39), and it is not unreasonable to assume that many intellectuals in the West would gladly bow to a communist or any other state that would take notice of them, and be intelligent enough to use them. If communists should come to power in Britain a great many intellectuals would watch the persecution of the bourgeoisie, and of bourgeois mentality with a twinkle of delight, just as they did in Milosz' country, so bitter, degrading, or futile is the

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role that capitalist society has made them play.

The standard of living is generally higher in the West than in the East, and the atmosphere of Western towns is less strained, less poisoned and unpleasant than that in Eastern towns. But it would be a mistake to infer from that the people of the East look at the West as at a land of higher civilization. If there is a point that Milosz brings home it is that the reflective person in the East is persuaded that the communist-dominated countries have more to teach the West than they have to learn from it. Western broadcasts addressed to the people of the Russian Imperium, puffing up the blessings and achievements of the capitalist system, are worse than useless. The general conviction behind the Iron Curtain is that there is no going back to pre-communist days. They have learnt to think dialectically, partly because they are not allowed to think otherwise, but also because all the facts of history by which they are effected fit with the doctrine promulgated by their masters. Only the military defeat of the Red Army in a third world war will shatter their belief in a system of thought which tallies perfectly with the system of the world they know as did the world of medieval man tally with the doctrines of the catholic church. The West has no philosophy of history to oppose to that of the East, and if the man in the West can do without such philosophy the man in the East cannot, gripped and shaped as he is by history in all the aspects of his life. The democracy of which some people in the West are so naively proud and enthusiastic is for him only a means of capitalist exploitation which is thrown overboard as soon as it fails to serve its purpose. News from the West such as that of the recent action of the British government in Guiana can do nothing but confirm him in this opinion, and in his admiration for the masters of dialectical thinking.

I do not believe in "the wave of the

future" in the sense that all the world has to become communist, and that anyone working for the future in a capitalist country should do his utmost to precipitate the advent of communism. The signs are that confronted by the communist menace the capitalist world has to assimilate communist methods in order to meet it. Such signs range from the Schuman plan or measures to nationalize industries in Great Britain to McCarthyism in America and extermination of Mau Mau adepts in Africa. But the might of the fatherland of the communist revolution may be defeated by countries still mainly capitalist in structure in the same way as the fatherland of the bourgeois revolution was defeated by countries still loyal to the 'ancien régime'. More important still, in the same way as the communist revolution took place in a country which had hardly entered the capitalist phase, so the passage from communism to anarchism may well be instanced first in a country that is still predominantly capitalist.

There are many things in the concrete reality of a capitalist system, some of which older than capitalism, must be preserved and defended. For example, "what the man of the East calls the 'lifeless formalism of the bourgeoisie' does afford some guarantee that the father of a family will return home for supper instead of taking a trip to a region where polar bears thrive but human beings do not" (p. 32). Siding with the 'wave of the future' is more often than not an act dictated by cowardice, a siding with strength against weakness, and it is a rude awakening when weakness defeats strength. "In Eastern Europe," Milosz writes, "there took place what one might call the elimination of emotional luxuries". "The liberals of the older generation mouthing nineteenth-century phrases about respect for man—while all about them hundreds of thousands of people were being massacred—were fossil remains" (p. 113). But, when all is said and done, emotional luxuries and respect

for man are precisely the things most hankered after when their destruction appears complete, and it is found that anger against them does not diminish the sense of guilt that comes from having left them defenceless. In order to recognize them as values and to defend them accordingly maybe our century had to reach the present state of despair, see them excluded from historical reality and feel sick at heart, see them excluded from its thoughts, and shudder at the touch of all-pervading nothingness. Health is really appraised when the body is sick, and there is hope for the future out of the horror of the recent past. May the man in the East, if not from any other source, draw hope from his dialectical thought, from something like the following statement that is from the pen of Croce, but could have been written by Marx: "Individuality is nothing but the vehicle of universality, the process of its being effective . . . So much it is true that particular interest is the vehicle of the universal, that men by the very pursuit of their own private ends realize the universal. For instance, one man makes a slave of another, and from the strife between slave and master, there arises

in both the true idea of liberty and humanity" ("What is living and what is dead in the philosophy of Hegel", pp. 63-64).

Anarchists who hold fast to the belief in the autonomy of the individual and to other emotional luxuries may appear fossils like the liberals mouthing nineteenth-century phrases, but the alternative is pitifully put by Milosz in the following terms: "To-day man believes there is nothing in him, so he accepts anything" (p. 81). Milosz himself has made his choice. He refuses to be sentimental about the crimes and injustices of a past nobody can do anything about, but there are crimes and injustices the perpetrators of which are still alive and unpunished. In rebelling against them and against those who still perpetrate crimes and injustices he believes he is protecting the fruits of to-morrow better than his friend who keeps silent (p. 225). Fossils never rebelled. If anarchists and all who still believe in values beyond the changeability of human affairs were truly fossils why this urge of the totalitarian states to persecute them and make them die?

GIOVANNI BALDELLI.

Anarchism: Fact and Fiction

"A dagger in one hand, a torch in the other, and all his pockets brimful with dynamite bombs—that is the picture of the anarchist such as it has been drawn by his enemies. They look upon him simply as a mixture of a fool and a knave, whose sole purpose is universal topsy-turvy, and whose only means to that purpose is to slay anyone and everyone who differs with him. "The picture is an ugly caricature, but its general acceptance is not to be wondered at, since for years all non-anarchistic papers have been busy in circulating it. Even in certain labour organs one may find the anarchist represented as merely a man of violence, destitute of all noble aspirations, and the most absurd views of the principles

of anarchism occur in these very papers.

"Anarchism means a new social order, and anyone who knows human life from its depths to its heights and has the courage to fling aside all patching up and smoothing down, all bargaining and compromising, and draw the necessary conclusion from the past evolution, must arrive at the very principle upon which this new order shall be built. Our principle is: to prevent all command over man by his fellow-man, to make State, government, laws, or whatsoever form of compulsion existing a thing of the past, to establish full freedom for all. Anarchism means first and foremost, emancipation from all government."

—JOHANN MOST (1846-1906).

Notes for the Malatesta Centenary—3

Anarchists and Collaboration

MALATESTA'S views on collaboration by anarchists with other revolutionary organisations and with governments were as unequivocal as his views on the use of violence (FREEDOM Dec. 12).

"We have always sought the alliance of all those who wish to make the revolution in order to overthrow the material strength of the common enemy, but we have always loudly proclaimed that this alliance should last only for the duration of the insurrectionary act, and that immediately after, or better still, if possible during, the insurrection itself we shall try to put our ideas into practise, opposing the constitution of any kind of government, of any authoritarian central body, and inducing the masses to take immediate possession of all the means of production and all the social wealth and to practise the direct organisation of the new social order according to the extent of their political development and aspirations in the different localities."

—(Umanità Nova, Nov. 25, 1922).

The fact that the authoritarian parties of the opposition in Italy lacked the capacity and the willingness to make the revolution when the moment was ripe, did not prevent the anarchists, though unable to carry through the revolution on their own, from "being on the alert for those situations which might, even against the wishes of the leaders, determine an insurrectional movement".

Malatesta adds that even if the anarchists saw the possibilities of carrying out a victorious insurrection alone "should we not appeal to all the opposition parties, all the workers' organisations in an attempt to draw into this movement the masses who are divided among the various parties and organisations?" He explains his affirmative answer by pointing to "our objectives which are not to carry out a coup d'état in order to seize power for ourselves, but of arousing general action and initiating a period of libera evoluzione (free development—see FREEDOM Dec. 12)

Again and again Malatesta stresses his view that anarchists should never lost their identity as anarchists what-

ever the outcome of the revolutionary struggle.

"Our task after our participation in the struggle to overthrow the existing régimes, is that of preventing, or trying to prevent, the creation of a new government; or, in the event of not succeeding, at least of struggling to prevent the new government from holding absolute power in its hands; seeing to it that it remains weak and unstable, and unable to command sufficient military and financial means, and is obeyed as little as possible. In any case, we anarchists must never join it nor recognise it but instead we must combat it just as we combat the existing government."

Ten years later, and only a few months before his death, Malatesta returns to this subject of anarchists and governments when replying to the anarchist "revisionists":

"It is a dangerous illusion that of wanting to create a simulacrum of government to facilitate the triumph of anarchy. The anarchists who will be able to and must, in coming uprisings, exert a powerful action among the people in favour of integral emancipation, could not, even assuming they possessed the material strength, become a government without disavowing themselves and all their teachings; and in such a case they would form a government like the others, perhaps worse than the others. . . . Let us be on our guard against the deviationists, and let us not forget the fundamental criterion of anarchism: to arrive at freedom through freedom."

—(L'Adunata, Mar. 12, 1932).

These wise counsels—which spare considerations prevent us from expanding with other quotations from Malatesta's writings and thus doing him full justice—came from a man who could not be accused of expounding on the problems of revolution from the confines of the reading room of the British Museum! Malatesta had observed, and participated in, revolutionary and insurrectionary struggles for more than half a century; he believed in the efficacy of revolution and in the need to use violence. But, as we have already shown he also understood the dangers inherent in these struggles. With the knowledge we have of subsequent events, such as the Spanish revolution of 1936, how prophetic

are Malatesta's words! From the anarchists' point of view the potentialities of the Spanish struggle were greater than those in Italy in 1920, yet every pitfall against which Malatesta uttered his simple warnings appeared in the course of it. And how necessary it was—and is—for anarchists to have a clear understanding of their rôle in the revolutionary struggle, and the limits beyond which collaboration with other movements and parties becomes impossible, is only too tragically revealed by the disastrous situation in which the anarchist and anarcho-syndicalist movements found themselves at the end of the Spanish struggle.

BY contrast with his intransigent position in relation to governments and all organisms of coercion Malatesta always opposed those anarchists who considered that their sole mission was to destroy every vestige of capitalist society.

"Certainly, [I agree] where repressive institutions are concerned; but these are in fact only a small section of the complex machinery of social life. The police, the army, prisons, the magistracy, though powerful instruments for evil, have only a parasitic existence. Other are the institutions and organisations which, for good or bad, manage to ensure life for mankind; and these institutions cannot be usefully destroyed if one does not put something better in their place.

"The exchange of raw materials and manufactures, the distribution of food, the railways, the postal and all public services administered by the State or by private enterprise, have been organized to serve monopolistic and capitalist interests, but they serve real needs of the population as well. We cannot disorganise them (and in any case the people as a whole would not allow us to do so) unless we reorganize them in a more satisfactory manner. And this cannot be achieved in a day; nor, as things are, have we the necessary capacities to do so. . . . Social life does not admit of interruptions, and people wish to live the day of the revolution, the day after and always. Woe unto us and to the future of our ideas should we take upon ourselves the responsibility of a senseless

destruction which might jeopardise the continuity of life." —(U.N. Oct. 7, 1922).

This preoccupation with the problem that life must continue uninterrupted during and after the revolution was also the reason for Malatesta attacking the views widely held at the beginning of the century, and fostered by Kropotkin, that the revolution would automatically ensure plenty for everybody, by releasing the vast stocks of food and goods held in reserve by the capitalists. Malatesta demonstrated that the contrary was nearer the truth. Whilst recognizing that the advances in science and mechanisation and modern techniques in production made possible almost unlimited production, he nevertheless distinguished between "what might be produced and what has been produced."

"Landowners and capitalists, partly through inability or indifference and largely because of the system which results in smaller profits being made when their is abundance and higher profits when there are shortages, do not use to capacity the means of production at their disposal and prevent others from doing so.

"As a result of the disorder inherent in private economy, there is unbalance between one region and another, crises of over-production, etc., but on the whole production always tends towards scarcity.

"On this basis we have to bear in mind that on the morrow of the revolution we shall be faced with the danger of hunger. This is not a reason for delaying the revolution . . . but it is a reason for giving attention to the problem and of working out how to avoid wastefulness during the revolution; how to advocate the necessary cutting down of consumption and prepare for the immediate encouragement of increased production, especially in agriculture."

LINKED with his considerations on the problems of feeding the population during a revolution are the views expressed by Malatesta on the question of abolishing money. Once again he faces the problem not as one for the anarchist society but in the world as it is, and assuming as he has done all along, that a revolution in the present cannot be an anarchist one.

"Money is a powerful means for exploitation and oppression; but it is also the only means (outside the most

LED BY THE NOSE

THE popular press for many months before the Bermuda Conference had been pushing the idea that the way to settle the world's problems was for the heads of States "to get together". By implication those who demand these affairs are saying that strong practical men like Churchill and Eisenhower—Malenkov if he had been willing—in the past it had been Stalin and Hitler and Mussolini and Daladier and Chamberlain, are more successful at these things than "normal diplomatic procedures" can be. Arguments about "the necessity to cut through official red tape" are always attractive and are freely banded about on such occasions.

Unhappily, history records that the great men are no more successful than the officials at solving the problems for there still are wars and situations still keep on recurring which demand that strong men shall meet and thrash out their common problems man to man, etc., etc.

Anarchists are scarcely surprised at this for the supposed antithesis between "normal diplomatic channels" and heads of States hardly exists for them. It is not a question of political leaders or bureaucrats solving international problems, but one for those whom these people lead and govern. International problems spring from certain ways of organizing economy which bring different nations into conflict: from certain necessities imposed by the financial structures of society. But these features of social and economic organization also express themselves in the pyramidal structure of politics—they require governments and politicians. It is scarcely to be wondered at that such people are incapable of tackling problems arising from the very forms of social and economic organization that give their jobs and activities any justification and reason for existence.

Yet it is at these times that one hears the platitudes about the peoples having no basic cause for disagreement, but on the contrary every interest in mutual co-operation. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that in our sort of society the peoples of different nations have every reason for conflict.

Thus at the present time German industry is making inroads into British export markets. The result is a relative recession of British industry with unemployment, etc. The way to defeat it under a market economy is for British workers to produce more for less, cut prices and so drive German export trade out of the market. German workers then go out of work, and so on *ad infinitum*.

But despite the fact that their economic interests invite international discord, people in all countries have the common-sense idea that man progresses by helping each other and that, fundamentally, the peoples share a common interest in the welfare of all. There can be little doubt that if competition were eliminated, and production were directed towards the satisfaction of human needs, the majority of the problems that vex the heads of State would no longer present themselves for solution. They would not exist any longer.

To return to Bermuda. The official *communiqués* are so vague, formal and empty that even those who shouted loudest for such a conference to be held feel apologetic. The *Times* first leader on 9 December, for example, begins by saying, "The imprecise and general wording of the *communiqué* issued from Bermuda raises the question whether the three-Power conference there was necessary and worth while." One can only gasp at this!

Churchill has said that it would be proper to make a detailed ac-

"Opposition" to Lyttelton's Colonial Policy

IN his justification of the deportation of the Kabaka of Buganda, Mr. Lyttelton made great play of the fact that it had been the Labour Government that deposed Seretse Khama. Similarly in regard to Guiana, though with scarcely as strong a point, he quoted criticisms of Dr. Jagan's government which Mr. James Griffiths had once made. The Labour Party can make but a poor show of opposition on these issues where they have supplied the Tories with a precedent.

Their "opposition" is even more trifling when one finds their speakers so poorly briefed. The *Times* (8/12/53) duly remarked that the Colonial Secretary "seemed relieved that the Labour Party for this immediate challenge had chosen Mr. Ede, an infrequent protagonist on Colonial matters, whose introduction was well calculated to keep the fires of controversy low. Mr. Ede did not seem to relish his task, and the fact that he slipped into the error of calling British Guiana an island may have betrayed a certain detachment from the issue".

Those who feel strongly about authoritarian methods may wonder whether parliamentary ignoramuses (who in this case for many years held Cabinet office) are the best mouthpieces for their misgivings. Yet Parliament is the democratic outlet for criticism of government. In this case it seemed an inadequate outlet.

Bad Faith in Central Africa

Central African Federation was pushed through with the aid of several promises to African doubters of the good will and intentions of the white settlers and the Colonial Office. With elections imminent, bad faith is already apparent as the following comment shows:

"Mr. Lyttelton has unfortunately made a serious surrender to pressure by the White settlers' leaders in Northern Rhodesia. In order to end the constitutional deadlock, caused by the settlers' refusal to co-operate with the Government, he has agreed that no changes in the franchise shall be made for the next five years. This means that there will be no common voters' roll. It was Mr. Lyttelton himself who first raised the possibility of a common roll as the way to solve the territory's future constitutional problems. But the settlers objected and Mr. Lyttelton has given way.

"Sir Roy Welensky does not disguise his glee, for in five years, he suggests, the federal—i.e., settler-dominated—authority

will be so strong that no constitutional change will be possible without its consent. It is a brazen boast, as the most solemn assurances have been given that internal constitutional changes in the protectorates would not be affected by the federal constitution.

"Mr. Lyttelton's action in Northern Rhodesia, coming at a time when he was discussing Kenya's new constitutional proposals with the Governor, Sir Evelyn Baring, raises serious questions about his intentions in that colony. There too, the major issue in dispute hinges on the common voters' roll, which the settlers' leaders have refused to support. Will Mr. Lyttelton give way in Kenya as well?" (*Observer*, 13/12/53).

The answer to this query is plain: when governments feel weak, they make promises; when they feel strong enough to break them with impunity, they do so.

Loan for Kenya Agriculture

From the beginning of the Mau Mau troubles FREEDOM has stressed two things: the basic social injustice underlying Kikuyu land hunger, and the example which government offers in the resort to force. All independent observers have urged for decades the necessity for agrarian reform in Kenya. The gov-

ernment and the settlers have ignored them, preferring to rely on force to maintain order. When Africans see the governmental attitude towards promises, and feel themselves duped, can one wonder that they adopt the morality of their opponents and resort to brutality and violence with the same lack of discrimination that the police use when they fire on demonstrating crowds.

It is now proposed to grant £11 million to Kenya. Six million of this sum will be as a contribution towards the cost of the emergency—that is, the war against Mau Mau. The remaining five million is to finance a five year plan for Kenya agricultural development and rehabilitation.

It thus appears that the Kikuyu uprising has forced recognition of the necessity for agricultural reform where prudent counsels had been ignored. Even so it is a costly recognition that requires £6 million to finance repression, while £5 million is conceded to reform.

Reports from Kenya also indicate that the administration of the colony are now considering concessions whereby more African representation will be introduced, and the Indian community is also advancing its claims.

Justifying Corporal Punishment for Africans

DAR-ES-SALAAM, DECEMBER.

The report of the committee on corporal punishment which has been laid on the table of the Tanganyika Legislative Council states that "public opinion is in favour of retaining corporal punishment as a penal sanction for both juveniles and adults."

A great majority of witnesses who appeared before the committee thought that imprisonment had little deterrent, punitive, or reformative value, and that, except in the case of the more educated and cultured persons, no social stigma attached to it. There was also a general opinion that, under present prison conditions, prisoners had "first-class medical attention, were well clothed, housed, and fed, and many lived in better conditions than those in their own homes." Since Africans represented nearly 99 per cent. of the population, the question of corporal punishment primarily affected the indigenous peoples. Commenting on this, the report says:

"The African is inherently law-abiding within his own community or tribe since the society in which he lives demands certain standards of behaviour and decency. Until little more than half a century ago anyone deeply offending the tenets of the society of which he was a member was eliminated, either falling a victim to a well-aimed spear or being sold into slavery."

The various social, cultural, economic, and political changes which have come about in the last half-century—"inevitable and justifiable as many of them are"—were gradually breaking down clan life and lowering the standards of behaviour and loyalty, resulting in a steady increase in crime.

The report pointed out that, in African tribal life, the individual was important primarily as a member of the family or clan, and the stress was not laid, as in Europe, on the individual and his rights. Unless this was appreciated, the African conception of law and justice could not

be fully understood.

The contention that corporal punishment was merely a relic of the slave trade and the German occupation was not sustained by the facts. In pagan society it was a minor corrective for ill behaviour. For the more heinous offences more savage penalties were imposed, like stoning to death, death by torture, and the severing of an arm. A large majority of the indigenous population to-day was either pagan or Mohammedan, and both sections had recognised physical chastisement "since time immemorial." The Germans did not issue regulations on corporal punishment until eleven years after their influence began in 1885.

The present instrument of corporal punishment in Tanganyika is a light rattan cane free from knots, not more than 42 inches long and between half and five-eighths of an inch in diameter. The cane used for juveniles is lighter and "similar to that used in schools in most European countries."

Representatives of all three races—African, European, and Asian—were on the committee. They heard evidence from 227 witnesses in eighteen meetings throughout the territory.

(*Manchester Guardian* correspondent). It is true that everything is relative. That a flogging is not quite so drastic a measure as stoning to death or the severing of an arm. But that confirms no positive advantages to flogging which must remain a disgusting and humiliating experience for the flogger and the flogged (even if outwardly the former enjoys the experience). It would, furthermore be interesting to know whether the reference to public opinion means *white* opinion (representing 10% of the population) or includes *black* opinion too.

To give some moral justification to this barbarous custom by saying that pagans and Mohammedans had recognised physical chastisement "since time immemorial" is not very convincing. All society to-day is based on coercion and chastisement but among enlightened people the view has long been held that physical punishment, whether of children in the home or of criminals in the prisons, has no beneficial effect on the victim or on society. Should one not extend this enlightenment to our fellow humans in Africa, rather than encourage customs which we know to be harmful? If not, then why not encourage arm severing or stoning to death as a more effective deterrent?

A poor sheep-stealer is hanged for stealing of vituals, compelled per-adventure by necessity of that intolerable cold, hunger and thirst, to save himself from starving; but a great man in office may securely rob whole provinces, undo thousands, pill and pole, oppress *ad libitum*, fley, grind, tyrannize, enrich himself by spoils of the commons, be uncontrollable in his actions, and, after all, be recompensed with turgent titles, honoured for his good service, and no man dare find fault, or mutter at it.

BURTON. *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621)

MALATESTA Continued from p. 2

nical dictatorship or the most idyllic agreement) invented so far by human intelligence to automatically regulate production and distribution.

"For the present perhaps, rather than worrying oneself about the abolition of money, one should seek a way whereby money really represented the useful effort made by him who possesses it.

"But let us come to the question which we were actually discussing. Supposing that a successful insurrection were to take place in the immediate future. Anarchy or no anarchy, the population must go on eating and satisfying all its primordial needs. The large cities must be provisioned more or less as before.

"If the peasants and carters, etc., refuse to supply the goods they hold and their services free, without payment of money which they are accustomed to consider as real wealth, what is one to do?

"Oblige them by the use of force? In that case it is not only goodbye to anarchy but goodbye to every and any change of attitude for the better. Russia

count of the discussions public, and Eisenhower has employed a similar evasive formula in America. When such conferences were held during the war "military necessity" equally precluded any such publication. But international disputes since the war have revealed the kind of business that occupied the statesmen at Yalta and Potsdam and so on. They were questions of spheres of influence—Russia to have a free hand here, America there: ugly bargains of the same type as the Munich "free hand" for Hitler in Czechoslovakia. It certainly is not policy to show such dirty linen of politics in public.

The public are exhorted by their press of the need for strong leaders. But the long line of conferences, from Munich through Teheran, Yalta, and Bermuda, show only that they are led by the nose.

teaches us.

"Then?

"But, answer our comrades generally: the peasants will understand the advantages of communism or at least of the direct exchange of goods for goods.

"Very well; but certainly not in a day, and the people cannot stay without eating even for a day.

"I did not hear of any solutions being offered . . ." —(*U.N.* Oct. 7, 1922).

Malatesta returned to the subject to reply to Colomer the then editor of the French anarchist journal *Le Libertaire* who attacked him for his views about money. In his reply Malatesta points out that at the meeting in Bienna their discussions were not of the city of the future following the triumph of anarchism. "We discussed a more modest but more urgent question."

"Someone had said that on the day of the revolution it was necessary to occupy the banks and destroy all the money . . . Berton pointed out that money could be of use until victory was complete, and that it would be unwise to be deprived of every means of exchange with those sections of the population which were either not participating in the revolution or which in any case refused to hand over their produce without receiving in return the corresponding symbol of value to which they are accustomed and in which they have faith.

"And so I, accepting and enlarging on Berton's observations, spoke of the necessity for feeding the large cities and of the danger that the peasants might refuse to hand over their produce if one could not give them money in return."

—(*Il Risveglio*, Dec. 30, 1922).

Malatesta then quotes Colomer's remarks that the peasants will not bother about money when they will be convinced that they can obtain clothes, machinery, etc., without it and again points out that all this takes time and in the meantime the people in the cities must eat.

It may be felt by some readers

that Malatesta was being soft-hearted in his attitude to the hard-headed peasants and that Colomer was justified in putting forward the view that the peasants should not be allowed to hold back their produce, and that the fact of doing so justified considering them as "capitalists".

But rightly or wrongly Malatesta was simply defending principles which for him were basic to anarchism: "The revolution serves, and is necessary, to overthrow the violence of governments and of privilege; but the constitution of a society of free people can be but the result of free development."

And he was strengthened in his position by a demonstration of Colomer's views being put into practice in Russia at the time. Thus to Colomer's charges that the "recalcitrant" peasants are "capitalists" Malatesta gives this withering reply:

"Capitalists' even if they are workers who have cultivated the land with their own hands, or land workers who have expropriated the landowners and refuse to give to the citizens for nothing the produce of their labour which they have torn from the grasp of their exploiters!!! Just the same as the bolsheviks who indulge in the use of every form of violence against their adversaries and justify themselves by calling their victims 'counter-revolutionaries'.

But does not Colomer see that, apart from the question of time and that of justice, for its effective use, what he calls positive violence must be organised? And does he not see emerging from this the Red Army, the Cheka, the people's commissars, the bureaucrats who supervise the collection and distribution of the confiscated goods? Does he not see tyranny establishing itself in the name of the public interest and the revolutionary cause? And even perhaps in the name of holy anarchy?!

"Oh! How true it is that in the breast of every 'individualist' slumbers an authoritarian!"

V.R.

(To be continued)

The House of Commons went into recess this Friday, until the new year. We doubt, however, if a single Christmas shopper will be inconvenienced by that. If the far more humble and anonymous railwaymen carry out their threat to strike from midnight on Sunday, a considerable amount of chaos will ensue.

We referred last week to the insulting offer of 4s. a week increase made to the railmen in reply to their demand for a rise of 15 per cent. Our opinion was shared, it seems, by all three unions involved—National Union of Railwaymen, Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, and the Transport Salaried Staff Association—for they have all rejected the award.

The last two organisations have agreed, however, to accept the Transport Commission's offer to discuss the wage structure of the entire industry. The N.U.R. is alone in deciding on strike action, but since its members total more than 400,000 railmen in all grades, the effect of a strike will undoubtedly be a practically complete stoppage. No engine driver (A.S.L.E.F.) can get far without a signalman (N.U.R.) and a clerk (T.S.S.A.) can fill in forms till he is blue in the face but goods won't get loaded if a porter (N.U.R.) isn't there.

In practice, most probably a great number of footplate men would strike alongside the N.U.R. men, but there is a great deal of competition between the unions, which can weaken them when united action is called for.

Grades of Workers

The different reactions to the situation arise from the fact that membership of the T.S.S.A. and the A.S.L.E.F. consists mainly of wage-earners in the top half of the railways' pay-scale, while the N.U.R. organises all the lower-paid grades of worker. They overlap, of course. There are low-paid clerks and higher-paid signalmen, but the N.U.R. thinks it has less to gain by the discussion on the wage structure in general than the other two organisations.

One of the arguments behind the wage claim was that there was no incentive, at present pay rates, for workers to accept the more responsible jobs—and behind the 15 per cent. figure was the fact that, although it would give a sizeable increase to the lowest paid, it would give more to the higher paid railway workers, and thus help to stop the drift away from the industry of those able to earn more elsewhere.

During and since the war, there has been a steady closing of the gap between the pay of skilled and unskilled workers. We mentioned this in connection with the engineers' pay claim, too, for the same changes have been taking place in their industries. In the railways before the war, the lowest-paid were very low-paid indeed, and the steady upward crawl of their wages has been a reflection of the general labour position, where there has been a shortage of unskilled workers in practically every industry—and where dilution of the skilled trades

has been allowed because of the needs of, first, the war effort and then, the export drive and, thirdly, the rearmament programme.

A Larger Differential

Now, however, the situation is easing for the employers. Their tougher attitude to wage claims indicate that. So the unions, in defence of their members, are trying once again to stretch the differential in the rates of pay so that skill is recognised by greater financial reward.

To some extent, the N.U.R. is in a cleft stick here. It is, in structure, nearer to an industrial union than a craft association. It has, therefore, to try and satisfy all its members in various grades of work, responsibility and reward—and the resultant wage structure in the railways is fantastically complicated.

For the smaller A.S.L.E.F. and T.S.S.A., the situation is much simpler, but like the N.U.R., they have rejected completely the 4s. offer, while accepting the Transport Commission's non-committal promise to discuss the wages structure in general.

Now we are hearing arguments that further consideration may be given to the wage claim if real efforts are made by railway workers to effect economic improvements in the efficiency of railway working. And no doubt many rank and file railmen and women could suggest a lot of possible economies—but they would not necessarily be acceptable to the Commission.

Fancy Salaries

For example, is it necessary to pay an ex-general £8,500 a year as Chairman of the Transport Commission? Is it essential that the other members of the Commission—like ex-N.U.R. leader John Benstead—get £5,000 a year for their gentle efforts? Could cuts not be made throughout the administration? And how about the interest paid to the share-

holders—a hangover from private ownership?

An industry like the railways is, by its nature, decentralised. Attempts to centralise administration are bound to lead to inefficiency and uneconomic handling. To tie such a public service to a money and wages system entails the maintenance of a vast army of paper workers, from ticket-collectors to cashiers, all contributing nothing to the actual running of the railways.

The only way out of the perpetual problems inseparable from present ways of working is the turning over of the railways to workers' control and a free economy. This is not likely to come from above. It can only be done through the agency of a railway workers' syndicate, consciously organising themselves for the revolutionary purpose of taking over the railways.

When the Spanish workers did this in 1936 they were able to reduce fares and increase wages at the same time as giving a better service to travellers and improving their equipment—because they didn't pay shareholders or fancy salaries to administrators. This was not completely anarchism, but they showed the capability of the workers to control their industry. And British workers could surely do the same.

Meanwhile, we are faced with the possibility of a strike in Christmas week. This will create tremendous inconvenience for the travelling public—but they should remind themselves that it is also a tremendous inconvenience to have to live on inadequate wages. And the 4s. insult wasn't a very good Christmas present for the railmen, was it? P.S.

NOTE:

The above was written while attempts were being made to solve the deadlock, and avoid the strike. Sir Walter Monckton, Minister of Labour, was being approached to intervene and maybe by the time this is published, the dispute will be settled.

The Black Flower of Civilisation THE PRISON

"Prisons are built with stones of law, Brothels with bricks of religion."

WILLIAM BLAKE.

WILLIAM GODWIN, in his novel *Caleb Williams* (1794) wrote of the prisons of the eighteenth century:

"Witness their unwholesomeness, their filth, the tyranny of their governors, the misery of their inhabitants!"

Since then, of course, the prisons have been reformed. Our model modern prisons are a hundred-fold more abominable than the dungeons of the middle ages. The more a prison is reformed the more detestable it becomes. The reformers made the oppression, neglect and physical torture of the old common jail the pretext for transforming it into that diabolical den of degradation, cruelty and mischief, the modern model penitentiary.

In prisons, everything possible is done to break the prisoner's spirit, to destroy his self-respect, and to kill a man's will. The rare occasions on which he can exercise his will are very brief. As prisons reduce men to machines, they are not on release the type which society wants. The prisoner is not accorded a single respect due to a human being. He is compelled to perform mechanical tasks, which do not exercise his mental faculties, chosen for their wearisomeness. This work, which has no attraction in itself, is so badly paid that it is looked upon as a punishment. The prisoner is kept in captivity in a cell from which all sight of the earth is shut out; and, as if his own cell were not punishment enough, a continual threat of starvation and confinement in a punishment cell is held over his head. He is subjected to harshness by warders who have too often become brutalised by their occupation. They are petty, mean persecutors; it is the institution which makes them so. They have a barbarous and sullen pleasure in issuing their detested mandates, and observing the mournful reluctance with which they are obeyed. They are bound by penalties not to speak to the prisoner except to give an order or a rebuke, and they address him as you would not dream of addressing your dog. They feel no man's sorrow: they are of all men the least capable of any sort of feeling. There are professions which necessarily render the soul pitiless—those of the soldier, the judge and the jailer; and all trades which are founded on the annoyance of others. Many warders are ex-professional soldiers.

During all his prison life the prisoner is subjected to treatment which shows the greatest contempt of his feelings. He must emerge from such treatment either defiant or hostile, or submissive and cringing, with a broken spirit and a loss of self-respect. Prisons destroy a man's self-respect; and if you destroy a man's self-respect you make a criminal out of him. If you are to reform him, you must improve him. The only excuse of prisons is the hope of correction; but you must know very little of man to imagine that prison can ever have that effect on him. So long as you deprive a man of liberty, you cannot make him better. The principle of all prisons is wrong because it deprives men of liberty. How could a man be made better by

Speaking at Philadelphia on Dec. 12, Mr. Adlai Stevenson, the defeated democrat candidate for the Presidency called for decisive administrative action to ward off depression. More public works, a better farm programme and an expanded social security system to maintain economic stability. This will probably mean some return to the subsidies of the thirties when farmers were subsidized for not rearing pigs, and other restrictions of production were encouraged to reduce output and so keep prices up.

Stevenson's warning about a depression, was also implicit in an address by the Secretary of Labour, Mr. James Mitchell, to the C.I.O. United Auto-workers' Union.

"Mr. Mitchell advised the union to study plans to offset the growing unemployment in the motor car and other industries. The Administration, he said,

The North Paddington Anti-Election Campaign

DURING the last ten days of the recent North Paddington bye-election a small group of comrades carried on a campaign calling upon the people not to vote. 2,500 four-page leaflets expounding our anti-electoral attitude were distributed outside almost every indoor meeting held by the three candidates and pushed through the letter boxes of many houses. In addition, one of our comrades took advantage of a 'challenge' meeting held by the S.P.G.B. at the Metropolitan Theatre to address an 800 strong audience on why we oppose elections.

Such bye-elections as these offer a good opportunity for us to propagate our ideas and to concentrate our meagre forces into one particular area for this purpose. It was a great pity, therefore, that so few responded to the appeal for help published in FREEDOM (as usual, those who so loudly clamour for 'action' were conspicuous by their absence), but I think that, even so, we succeeded in calling attention to the anarchist case against government to the maximum extent that our lack of financial resources and numbers would permit. Perhaps next time such an opportunity presents itself more comrades will see the necessity of giving their time and energy to 'spreading the light'.

As will be seen from the following financial statement we still have a deficit of 25/- in respect of the cost of the leaflets. Any comrade who feels that our campaign was worthwhile and would like to make a monetary contribution towards it can still do so by helping to wipe out this deficit. Contributions should be sent to the undersigned c/o Freedom Press.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT, December 13, 1953.

Contributions:	
J.B. £1; A.W.U. 10/-; S.E.P. 11/6;	
L.G. 10/-; P.B. 6/-; E.P. 2/6.	
	£3 0 0
Expenditure:	
Printing of leaflets £4 5s.	£4 5 0
Deficit	£1 5 0
S. E. PARKER, (Anti-Election Agent)	

imprisonment? How can he become better in the midst of depravity and degradation? He is given no incentive to self-improvement; his whole life is regulated and ordered in advance. He has only to swim with the current, to obey under pain of severe punishment. Under these conditions all the will power he may have had on entering disappears. In prisons, characters become degraded, morals corrupted. He becomes lying, sordid, mean, underhand, treacherous, vile, a perjurer like those who surround him; before entering prison he may not have lied or deceived, but in prison he will learn to lie and deceive so that it will become second nature to him. When he comes out, his feelings towards the community are no more friendly than they were at the beginning. Can he gain anything in the midst of the most contagious examples of greed, roguery and cruelty? In the sombre life of the prisoner, which flows by without passion or emotion, all the finer sentiments become atrophied. As William Godwin wrote: "To these men the sun brought no return of joy. Day after day went on but their state was immutable. Existence was to them a theatre of invariable melancholy; every moment was a moment of anguish, yet do they wish to prolong that moment, fearful that the coming period will bring a severer fate." (To be concluded)

was now considering a programme of loan guarantees 'should private capital sources begin to shrink' in the event of a slump.

"Other plans to meet an emergency would be introduced to Congress next month, and these would include 'substantial improvements' in unemployment benefits and action 'to improve the coverage and the minimum wage rate provided under the Fair Labour Standards Act.'

"During October there had been a considerable increase in laying-off practices in industry. The Bureau of Labour Statistics say that the rate was 50 per cent. higher than the post-war average for the month. Decline in the hiring rate was 'larger than usually reported at this time of year' and was one-third below the average for October since 1945. Statistics show that factories took in 34 workers per thousand employees in October compared with 40 per thousand in the previous month. They laid off 18 per thousand compared with 15 per thousand in September.

"This reduction in hiring was, the bureau states, most noticeable in ordnance, metals, electrical machinery, rubber, stone, clay, and glass factories. The largest increases in laying-off practices occurred in the food, lumber, ordnance, and rubber industries."

THE CLASS STRUGGLE

TREVIGLIO, Italy, Dec. 6.

A rebellious group of railroad passengers, angered because their train was put on a siding to let an express pass, captured the stationmaster and made him halt the express.

Then they threatened the crew of their own train and took off for their destination—ahead of the express.

Police, opening an investigation of the incident, said it occurred last night at the little station of Vidalengo, near this northern Italian city. The first train was carrying a group of workmen from Milan to Brescia when it arrived at Vidalengo behind schedule.

There it was put on a dead-end track to await the passage of the Milan-to-Venice "rapido".

Police said the angered passengers stormed into the small station and forced the stationmaster to signal the "rapido" to halt. They also kept other employees from telephoning other railroad stations.

With the express train stopped, they forced the conductor of their train to continue on to Brescia. Once in Brescia, they dispersed quickly. The express arrived in Vidalengo an hour and five minutes late.—(A.P.)

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP OPEN AIR MEETINGS

Weather Permitting
HYDE PARK
Sundays at 3.30 p.m.
TOWER HILL
Tuesdays at 12.30 p.m.

NORTH-EAST LONDON DISCUSSION MEETINGS IN EAST HAM Alternate Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m.

GLASGOW INDOOR MEETINGS every Friday at 7.30 p.m. at 200 Buchanan Street.

Speakers: Mark Kramisch, Hugh McCutcheon and others.

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