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Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"The great political superstition of the past was the divine right of kings. The great political superstition of the present is the divine right of parliaments."
 —HERBERT SPENCER

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Threepence

ACT OR PERISH

The Manifesto of the Committee of 100

Disaster Almost Certain
 Every day, and at every moment of every day, a trivial accident, a failure to distinguish a meteor from a bomber, a fit of temporary insanity in one single man, may cause a nuclear world war, which in all likelihood, will put an end to man and to all higher forms of animal life. The populations of the Eastern and Western blocs are, in the great majority, unaware of the magnitude of the peril. Almost all experts who have studied the situation without being in the employment of some Government have come to the conclusion that, if present policies continue, disaster is almost certain within a fairly short time.

Public Misled
 It is difficult to make the facts known to ordinary men and women, because Governments do not wish them known and powerful forces are opposed to dissemination of knowledge which might cause dissatisfaction with Government policies. Although it is possible to ascertain the probabilities by patient and careful study, statements entirely destitute of scientific validity are put out authoritatively with a view to misleading those who have not time for careful study. What is officially said about civil defence, both here and in America, is grossly misleading. The danger from fall-out is much greater than the Authorities wish the population to believe. Above all, the imminence of all-out nuclear war is ignorantly, or mendaciously, under-estimated both in the statements of politicians and in the vast majority of newspapers. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that most of the makers of opinion consider it more important to secure defeat of the "enemy" than to safeguard the continued existence of our species. The fact that the defeat of the "enemy" must involve our own defeat, is carefully kept from the consciousness of those who give only a fleeting and occasional attention to political matters.

Action Imperative
 Much has already been accomplished towards creating a public opinion opposed to nuclear weapons, but not enough, so far, to influence Governments. The threatening disaster is so enormous that we feel compelled to take every action that is possible with a view to awakening our compatriots, and ultimately all mankind, to the need of urgent and drastic changes of policy. We should wish every parent of young children, and every person capable of feelings of mercy, to feel it the most important part of their duty to secure for those who are still young a normal span of life, and to understand that Governments, at present, are making this very unlikely. To us, the vast scheme of mass murder which is being hatched—nominally for our protection, but in fact for universal extermination—is a horror and an abomination. What we can do to prevent this horror, we feel to be a profound and imperative duty which must remain paramount while the danger persists.

Constitutional Action Not Enough
 We are told to wait for the beneficent activities of Congresses, Committees, and Summit meetings. Bitter experience has persuaded us that to follow such advice would be utterly futile while the Great Powers remain stubbornly determined to prevent agreement. Against the major forces that normally determine opinion, it is difficult to achieve more than a limited success by ordinary constitutional methods. We are told that in a democracy only lawful methods of persuasion should be used. Unfortunately, the opposition to sanity and mercy on the part of those who have power is such as to make persuasion by ordinary methods difficult and slow, with the result that, if such methods alone are employed, we shall probably all be dead before our purpose can be achieved. Respect for law is important and only a very profound

conviction can justify actions which flout the law. It is generally admitted that, in the past, many such actions have been justified. Christian martyrs broke the law, and there can be no doubt that majority opinion at the time condemned them for doing so. We, in our day, are asked to acquiesce, passively if not actively, in policies clearly leading to tyrannical brutalities compared with which all former horrors sink into insignificance. We cannot do this any more than Christian Martyrs could acquiesce in worship of the Emperor. Their steadfastness in the end achieved victory. It is for us to show equal steadfastness and willingness to suffer hardship and thereby to persuade the world that our cause is worthy of such devotion.

Towards World Peace
 We hope, and we believe, that those who may come to share our belief can form a body of such irresistible persuasive force that the present madness of East and West may give way to a new hope, a new realisation of the common destinies of the human family and a determination that men shall no longer seek elaborate and devilish ways of injuring each other but shall, instead, unite in permitting happiness and co-operation. Our immediate purpose, in so far as it is political, is only to persuade Britain to abandon reliance upon the illusory protection of nuclear weapons. But, if this can be achieved, a wider horizon will open before our eyes. We shall become aware of the immense possibilities of nature when harnessed by the creative intelligence of man to the purposes and arts of peace. We shall continue, while life permits, to pursue the goal of world peace and universal human fellowship. We appeal, as human beings to human beings: remember your humanity, and forget the rest. If you can do so, the way lies open to a new Paradise; if you cannot, nothing lies before you but universal death.



'Indigestion' in Car Industry Getting Worse!

EARLY last month the Managing Director of the British Motor Corporation, was describing the motor slump as "a bit of indigestion in stocking" in the N. American markets. There are still no signs that the "indigestion" has been cured. We will probably be told that Xmas is no time for curing

"indigestions" and that we must wait a bit longer. In the meantime workers are being dismissed or put on short time in the car industry.

Last week Vauxhall Motors confirmed that 500 more of their car production men would be dismissed. 1,100 were dismissed in October and the firm went on to a 4-day week. Two weeks ago the managing director told shop stewards that there would be a return to the 5-day week "soon". It is not surprising therefore, that the dismissal of a further 500 men came as a "big blow".

Workers at the B.M.C. factories whose managing director talked about "indigestion" are now working a 2½ day week and there is no reason to doubt that in the months ahead more men will be dismissed in the car industry as well as put onto an even shorter working week.

A delegation of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Union which attended a special meeting in York last month of the Board of Trade Motor Vehicle Industry reported that manufacturers expect the recession to last into the Autumn and had warned the union to prepare for a "readjustment of the industry's labour force".

If the industry is waiting for recovery in the N. American markets they will have to wait a long time. According to the *Industrial Worker* Some [American] observers have claimed that the Auto industry pushed ahead on its production schedule to "make work" as an influence on the elections. Certainly with many of last year's cars still unsold, there is no evidence that a market exists to keep auto production rates at such a pace.

AMERICAN INDUSTRY & THE "COLD WAR"

In fiscal 1959 the defence expenditures in America were \$32.8 billion. Defence orders accounted for 24 per cent of General Electric's total sales, and for 73 to 88 per cent of the total business of the major aircraft companies. Most of this was without bids, and on negotiated contracts.

In an election day column, Ed Lahey gives these figures and ponders on the "withdrawal symptoms" in event defence spending should be abruptly cut. Of the \$32.8 billion, \$6.8 billion was spent in California, \$1.4 billion in Massachusetts, \$2.25 billion in Ohio and close to a billion in the small state of Connecticut.

The restoration of world sanity would be most unwelcome in these quarters unless there is economic planning to put workers on the payroll doing something useful.

(Industrial Worker)

ANARCHIST NOTEBOOK

The 'Problem' of Food Surpluses

ACCORDING to Dr. Ancel Keys, Physiologist at the University of Minnesota, Americans eat too much. The typical U.S. daily menu contains 3,000 calories, where a reasonable diet would be 2,300. The U.S. Department of Agriculture averaged the amount of food consumed per person last year at 1,488 lbs.; which figure presumably includes the 17 million Americans cited by John Kennedy as the number who go to bed hungry every night).

Dr. Keys is concerned with the damage to health caused by over-eating, but the problem of half the world's population is how to get enough food to sustain life.

Professional economists claim that surplus food production has created "a problem" in the West. The simple solution of giving it away may have occurred to some, but in capitalist terms a "give away" policy might upset the "economic balance" and remove the incentive from food producers. The principle of limiting food production is insane by any standards in a world where so many

people are starving, but in the mysterious language of capitalist economics this is one of the solutions.

Even so food surpluses continue to build up:

For the first time in history, the U.S. has produced a society in which less than one-tenth of the people turn out so much food that the Government's most embarrassing problem is how to dispose inconspicuously of 100 million tons of surplus farm produce.

The *Observer's* agricultural correspondent (15/1/61) discussing the recent farmer's conference at Oxford

said that they were given:

"... a disturbing picture of the tremendous upward surge of food production in all the advanced countries of the West, which to British farmers means that they "face a price war of intensity not seen since the thirties."

Prosperous European Governments, it seems, share the U.S. dilemma in that:

"The farmers of the capitalist world are on the move in a quite startling way and the blunt truth is that none of the Western Governments know how to stop this extra food being produced and none of them know how to get rid of it."

The *Observer* correspondent, however, suggests a reasonable plan which governments are unlikely to adopt without the usual political conditions. He writes:

"The only sane answer to the problem is to find some way soon, through international action, of channelling these mounting surpluses into the underdeveloped countries where there are so many hungry mouths. Instead of driving our farmers into a common throat-cutting exercise we could mobilise their technical triumph to impressive effect.

PLEASE help us to secure many new readers for FREEDOM this year

Continued on p. 4

HIGHER & HIGHER

WASHINGTON, DEC. 21.
 The last aircraft to be made by the Martin Aircraft Company, a Marlin flying boat, has been handed over to the Navy. In future the company, which was founded in 1909, six years after the Wright Brothers' first flight, will be concerned entirely with missiles and electronic equipment for space exploration.

The Problem of Promiscuity

[The following article was received at the same time as "V.D. & Sexual Freedom" which we published in our November 26th issue. The subject is such an important one that we do not think it matters that some of the points made by N.W. have already been made in G.'s contribution—EDITORS].

SO the authorities are getting worried about teenage promiscuity again. The scribes are chalking up increases in the rates of venereal disease and the pharisees are crying up the immorality of modern youth. As usual no one seems to have realised some obvious and very relevant points that should be realised.

First, to say that venereal disease is caused by promiscuity is rather like saying that poliomyelitis is caused by swimming or typhoid by eating. The trouble is that a lot of people are more shocked by promiscuity than by VD—indeed at one time it was thought impious to cure syphilis, because it was so obviously a punishment for deadly sin. But this didn't stop Schaudinn and Wasserman and Ehrlich working out what caused the disease and what cured it; and now there is no reason—when we have so many antibiotic drugs—why venereal disease shouldn't be eliminated, as smallpox and cholera and diphtheria have been in the past. Is it old-fashioned to suggest that medical authorities have no business in expressing moral condemnation of their patients? Their business is to cure disease, however it is contracted. If they attacked the spirochaete and gonococcus with half the resolution and innocuousness they employ in attacking the unfortunate victims of syphilis and gonorrhoea they might be able to do their business properly.

Second, the relationship between venereal disease and contraception has not been properly examined. It was stated in the Report that 14-year-old "children" have been attending VD clinics and have been found carrying contraceptives. The

same children? How many people using contraceptives contract VD, and how many people who contract VD use contraceptives? In the Forces stationed overseas contraceptives are distributed free to those who ask for them—not to reduce foreign birth-rates but to protect British troops from VD (prophylaxis, not prevention). No nonsense about warning them against promiscuity; in some matters the military authorities are more sensible than the medical ones. I well remember being subjected to films and lectures on this subject when I began National Service, and the only moral (in the sexual sense) warning came from a doctor! It was the regular officers who were realistic. So if the medical authorities in this country are really concerned about getting rid of venereal disease, one of their first steps should be to encourage contraception among young people. What a hope!

Third, it would be interesting to know how much the spread of venereal disease is caused by neither ignorance of contraception nor carelessness in its use, but by the deliberate refusal to use contraceptives—not so much for ethical as for aesthetic reasons. For it is a fact that the most simple and effective (and, above all, available, method of contraception—i.e. the "french letter"—is also the most displeasing. Unlike the "dutch cap" (it is interesting how contraceptives, like venereal diseases, are always blamed on foreigners), it is troublesome before, during and after sexual intercourse; it reduces spontaneity and pleasure for both sexes; and in general it tends to bring sex into the chemist's shop and lavatory. So it wouldn't be surprising—to me at least—if a growing number of sophisticated young people who want the kicks they live for to be real kicks, who want their pleasures to be sudden and intense, who are sick of being told to be careful, should decide to dispense with contraception as it is known to most unmarried people. It is no coincidence that the heroes of *Room at the Top* and *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* are

no more likely to use contraceptives than the game keeper in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. And when girls can get oral contraceptives this tendency will become general—then what about VD! Even the grim business of attending VD clinics will not deter promiscuity among people in the widening no-man's-land between puberty and marriage.

Fourth, far too few people seem to recognise that promiscuity—like contraception—is really a problem of taste, not morality. Once we get away from the old idea of a single-life-long marriage following a brief and chaste adolescence and unaccompanied by adultery (as I assume most of us have), we have agreed that sexual intercourse is not necessarily the product of romantic passion hallowed by both Church and State. It is in fact the responsibility of each individual to establish his or her own standards. The moral problem is how we treat our partners, not how many partners we have—though of course it may be true for someone that right treatment involves fidelity. An extraordinarily small number of people in high places realise that a considerable degree of promiscuity does not always mean complete depravity or irresponsibility. And especially in the present environment, when a long attachment to one person in circumstances that make marriage impossible can be very disturbing, promiscuity among young people may actually appear preferable to chastity or fidelity (exactly the same is true of homosexual relationships among schoolboys). The trouble is that it becomes a habit, which is not always wicked but is usually in very bad taste.

One point at least is realised by most people. Puberty gets earlier every year, while the ability to support a family gets later; the gap between the onset of sexual desire and the chance of satisfying it in a socially acceptable way increases. The people involved—the "teenagers", from 14 to 24—have more pocket-money, more independence, and more contempt for older people and

ideas than ever before. They are surrounded by a society whose commercial values excuse the deliberate stimulation of sexual feelings for profit and whose forms of art and communication are largely devoted to that end. Their parents fought in one stupid war, their grandparents in an even more stupid one; their stupid war—if it comes—will not last long enough for them to fight, but it will kill them all the same. No wonder many of them doubt if they will live to be 30. Their lords and masters (whom most of them are not allowed to vote for, or against) tell them how lucky they are, and rule them with remarkable injustice and incompetence. They see their religious and social leaders for the fools that most of them are. They see a sick nation today and the prospect of horrible death tomorrow.

No wonder that, without realising it, they follow Lawrence's prophecy:

Ours is essentially a tragic age, so we refuse to take it tragically. The cataclysm has happened, we are among the ruins, we start to build up new little habitats, to have new little hopes. It is rather hard work; there is now no smooth road into the future;

but we go round, or scramble over obstacles. We've got to live, no matter how many skies have fallen. One way of doing this is to settle down in a suburb, watching the telly and do it yourself. But for those who can't afford this, or don't want it, and have been educated well enough to make much of their lives, and haven't picked up by becoming cabbages or crooks for these, what is left? One thing is left is to live for kicks, openly and affectedly. Promiscuity is simply a way of doing this. In a peculiar fashion it is a way of cultivating one's garden, gathering rosebuds while one can. Politicians will object that it is anti-social to gather rosebuds while there are works to be dug, and puritans will object that it is immoral to gather rosebuds from more than one rose-tree; but sensible people will tell them to dig their own earthworks and mind their own rosebuds. That age is best which is the first. When youth and blood are wasted. But being spent, the worse and wiser. Times still succeed the former. Or, as Catullus said to his very promiscuous girl-friend a long, long time ago: Let us live and love. N.W.

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BOOK REVIEW

A Beat on Beating

WHO are these by-products of the H-bomb cum organization man age, called Beatniks? From the descriptions of literary critics, journalists, and social scientists, emerges a picture of the typical Beat as the Great Unwashed, counting himself out of society, using a strange language improvised by himself, and breaking—for kicks—every accepted moral rule. The value of such commentaries is limited by the fact that their authors stand on the outside looking in. And, too often, we have been given sensationally written caricatures, especially where the popular press has had a hand.

From the inside looking out, there are the novels and poems of Beat writers, but these, although they may capture the feel and swing of the movement, are not adequate as analyses. In the absence of a Beat Manifesto (hardly likely to be produced by so engagingly unorganized a body), Tuli Kupferberg's *Beating** helps satisfy the need for an analysis.

The opting out of conventional social obligations is the result of a positive evaluation of life. Kupferberg sees himself and his fellow-Beats as attempting a new society, a society of friends. This distinguishes them from the Hipsters who withdrew from all society, and the Bohemians, who revolted against the old society. The Beats are irresponsible, but only to Job, Family, Church, State, and the whole social context which has produced war, hate, depression, and the inability to love and enjoy the world.

In attempting a society of friends, the Beat links himself to "the new rising energies of Africa and Asia, to the primitive current life-loving peoples of Mexico and the Caribbean, to the old wisdoms of Asia, to the crazy Bohemian poets of 19th century France breaking their heads against the coming calamities and yet raging after joy, digging life." Because he, too, is an "outsider", he seeks mutual aid, comfort, sympathy, friendship, and understanding, with all others trapped or victimized by, or fighting against, existing society. He seeks to liberate his positive sexual and loving urges. In all of this, poetry plays an

important role. Kupferberg sees it as an instrument of joy by which the spoken word and the living audience can be brought into living contact for their mutual benefit. These attitudes are symbolized by the drawing on the outside back cover which depicts a small white hand, reaching out of a womb, being clasped in a large black hand, presumably a negro's.

The trouble with any artistic cum intellectual movement is that it is apt to be seized upon by the glossy papers and thus become modish among those who really have no understanding of what is vital and living in art and ideas. This happened to existentialism. It is also happening to Beat. It would be silly, however, to be put off simply by the fear of seeming to swim with fashion. The list of Beat ancestors shows that this way of feeling and thinking has, like existentialism, deep roots. At first sight, the ancestors named by Kupferberg seem to have been capriciously selected (e.g. Ikhnaton!). Then one sees that each of the names is a symbol for a Beat value. Bakunin is a symbol for anti-politics and anti-institution attitudes, Rabelais and Bacchus-Dionysos (!) for bawdiness and zestful love of life, Rimbaud and Baudelaire for poetry, the Three Stooges for uninhibited craziness, and so on.

It is obvious that Beats and anarchists have a good deal in common (at least if we accept Kupferberg's interpretation). Their respective positions overlap and, in individual cases, the two will probably be represented in the same person. One difference would be that anarchism has been aware of itself much longer than Beat. The Beat is not anti-intellectual, but he doesn't like intellectuals who are wooden and inhibited. Because he has kept the streams of love and creation open, he feels no need to "pour his unexpressed emotions into a constipated eagle or a swinging swastika or fall in love with a baby-faced, clean-shaven, fat-jowled 'leader of nations.'" Instead, he has enthusiasms which are "immediate, pressing, emotional, friendly, face to face (and belly to belly)."

"Hail here," cries Kupferberg, "a new revolutionary movement that has as its aim the restoration of joy!"

K.J.M.

BOOK REVIEW

Men in Battle

ALVAH BESSIE is an American writer who fought with the Internationals in the last full year of the Spanish War, and who has been victimised in his own country ever since. On his return from Spain—so we are informed in a biographical note—he was declared unemployable by commercial newspapers and magazines. In 1943, he succeeded in finding employment in Hollywood as a film writer, but this ended when he was called before the un-American activities committee. He was jailed and black-listed. Since then he has again become unemployable.

This book,* now issued as a paperback, was first published in 1939. That it should be reprinted twenty-one years later is a proof of its merit. Although Bessie seems to be a Communist (see the footnote reference to the Communist apostate, John Gates, at p. 131), ideology hardly enters his book. What he does give is an account of life at the front in which he conveys alternating action and inaction. He also conveys—though apparently unintentionally—the tragic hopelessness of the Republican cause. In the face of the guns and aircraft poured in by Franco's backers, Hitler and Mussolini, what could even the best men do? By the time Bessie arrived the Internationals had been decimated and their ranks were being filled by raw Spanish conscripts, many of them under twenty. Their propaganda value was potent in keeping the International Brigades going long after they had ceased to be an effective fighting force.

Food, always short and often bad, emerges as being more important than just about anything else. Bessie's comrades at the front are portrayed, not always flatteringly. We are shown the differences which developed between the Spaniards and their foreign allies, arising

**Men in Battle* by Alvah Bessie (Seven Seas Books), 5s. 9d.

from inability to communicate, and loss of morale among the troops, and out of action. The internal dissensions which split the Republican side passed over; Bessie is giving a soldier's impressions of war. An account of factions and of the way in which struggles between them impeded the job of fighting the war must be sought in other men's books, in Orwell's example.

The anarchists are mentioned explicitly only once, but then the book is concerned to untangle the ideological configurations of the War. We are simply told that, as always, they were in unknown quantity! Somewhere else, separatist tendencies of Catalonia are mentioned.

What made Bessie go to Spain? To help Spaniards resist fascism? He explains why: "... love must come alive into the world. What other reason could there be for dying? What other reason for this blood upon your hands?" (p. 273). This of course is an intellectual's formulation, but from what I have read I should think that he speaks also for many of the others who fought, especially in the earlier stages of the War. This spirit must have burnt lower in the later stages when hopelessness was setting in and conscripts were making up the appalling losses.

A word about the publishers: Seven Seas Books is an East German undertaking. The books, which are English language, are clearly printed and strongly bound. The covers avoid the sexy tastelessness of many of the lower priced British and American paperbacks. No doubt they are being issued to make propaganda on the cultural front but their low price and other qualities make them well worth buying, and the range of titles is interesting, including books not to be easily had elsewhere. *Men in Battle* is a case in point, especially with the shortage of books on the Spanish War. K.J.M.

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Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

No. 3 January 21, 1961

Anarchist Principles and Respect for Life

Our correspondence columns last week one critic of our editorials in the United Nations and the "crisis" suggested that intervening the U.N. might well avert a worse carving-up of the world in my opinion they did. Thus one accepts the doubtful argument that U.N. intervention caused all the troubles which the U.N. then tried to solve, even if one accepts this, it does not follow that the U.N. is worthless if they averted a catastrophe:

He draws the following conclusions: "I believe this is an urgent matter for the world. If one is inflexible about principles then no amount of argument will move one to see that LIFE is more important than purity. I am very much in favour of sticking to principles but compromising but the situations are judged as they come along."

Our minds our correspondent said things a bit mixed up. Anarchist principles are based on respect for human life, and our "flexible" opposition to government and all authoritarian institutions in whatever guise they may appear stems from an awareness that any group of people have over the lives of others their policies, are primarily determined by the interests of the group and not the interests, well-being and happiness, of the people over whom they wield their

power. I also believe that such a state of affairs can only be changed once the people are made aware, and conscious of their relationship of inferiority to the ruling classes in society. As propagandists of anarchist ideas our task is to break down the authoritarian structures which govern the relationships between men, which determine the organisational and administrative structure of our society and on which the whole economic life of the nations of the world are founded. That is to say we seek to do this not by political alliances, which at most will replace one set of rulers by another of "honest revolutionaries", but by the direct approach—by addressing ourselves to the intelligence and humanity of our fellow beings, because so far as we understand human behaviour, we are convinced that the social and economic changes that matter—that is, which lead in a libertarian direction—can only come about by a movement from below, from the people against the existing authoritarian, power, institutions.

★
We have never belonged to the starry-eyed category of utopians who believe that this change will come overnight. Indeed, we have been saying for years that there is nothing inevitable about the "social evolution" of mankind; that the chances of a libertarian society replacing the authoritarian society in which we live are not dependent on increased production nor even on a more equitable distribution of the necessities of life (after all, during and immediately after the war, in Britain, there was a strict rationing system in operation, yet never was the government more authoritarian and all-powerful than during those years). To bring about radical changes in society, enough people in all walks of life must not only reject with all their intellectual faculties the political régime which denies individuality by seeking to press human beings into a common mould of conformity and uniformity; which fosters racial and national antagonisms which otherwise would not exist; whose economic policies are

based on the profits of the few and not the needs of the many—hence the wasted human efforts and valuable raw materials which result from under-production just as much as from over-production. But this intellectual rejection of existing values important as it is as a first step, unless it is translated into some form of action, will make no impact on the existing régime which shows its contempt for radical ideas and the intellectuals in its midst by allowing them free rein and at the same time totally ignoring what they have to say!

How different is the attitude of governments when faced with a body of thinking people who are also prepared to act in harmony with and towards the realisation of, their ideas and ideals.

★
THE betrayal of the intellectuals (one would like to believe that the Committee of 100 in this country and the Manifesto of 121 in France are indications that some at least are no longer satisfied to have the right ideas but also feel moved to expose their persons to the inconveniences which come from actually challenging the authority of the ruling classes); the brainwashing of the working people which has left them perhaps uninflectible in a positive sense, but sufficiently apathetic to be obedient and as manageable as a flock of sheep—these signs of *malaise* in the affluent society far from persuading us that the advocacy of anarchism and the need for principles and the kind of action that stems from them is a waste of time and unrealistic, on the contrary convinces us how necessary it is to intensify our propaganda.

Unlike that of the political parties our propaganda depends for its success that in the long run the advocacy of reason combined with humanity will influence our fellow men more deeply and positively than all the slogans and the short cuts to "salvation" which pour forth from the party machines and the organs of mass communications.

Yes, to our critic we may appear "inflexible" in "our opinions". It is not a question of wanting to be "pure" and we challenge our critic to point to any of our writings in which we declare that "purity is more important than LIFE". But we do not apologise for giving the impression that we hold strong, "inflexible" opinions on governments and all the institutions that stem from them. Indeed, if after living the years we have, and for at least 25 of them being "politically and socially conscious" of the world around us we were still trying to make up our minds whether we should support some government institutions and oppose others; or whether we should vote for one political party in order to keep out another; or one politician because he promises to disobey the whip on unilateral disarmament, or hanging or nature cure or Sunday observance—we were saying, if after so many years we were still trying to make up our minds where we stood, then we certainly should not be writing for an anarchist journal!

We have never denied that there are honest, well intentioned, human, decent people working in government institutions. Neither have we denied that some of the activities of government are socially useful. With the State assuming always more and more functions in the management of our lives it is inevitable that some are useful. But this does not convert us into being supporters of government or the State! On the contrary we maintain that all the useful things which the government administers could be done better by the people through their own organisations without having to be subjected to the evils of government. To achieve this independence from governments, however, presupposes a far-reaching education in self-government. This is the basis of anarchist propaganda and a function of a journal such as FREEDOM.

(Continued from previous issue)
THE boycott is being used against South African goods with some effect, although South African sources have denied any repercussions but it is significant that fruit is appearing on the market with the 'Swaziland' stamp on it—Swaziland is a dependency of South Africa.

According to Bart de Ligt in his *Conquest of Violence*, boycotts were operated with success for their limited objectives in 1867 by Hungary against Austria, in 1919 Egypt against Lord Milner's commission, in Persia that year there was a boycott against the tobacco monopoly; in 1906 there was a Chinese boycott against the United States; and in 1908 there was a Chinese boycott of Japan (for this purpose a National Disgrace Society was founded), in 1911 Tibet boycotted the British, in 1915 China boycotted Japan. The danger of national boycotts is the encouragement of extreme nationalism, often it is only fanaticism engendered by extreme nationalism that sustains such boycotts often this is coupled with a terrorist campaign, as in Cyprus.

But with certain safeguards this is an effective weapon. Grace Scott writes in the *Spectator* (February 13th, 1960):

"Africans are inveterate boycotters. Hardly a season has passed in Central Africa in the past decade without somebody boycotting something, somewhere. Very few Africans would agree with the view expressed by Mr. Macmillan in Cape Town, deprecating the proposed British boycott of South African goods before the South African Houses of Assembly, when he declared, 'Boycotts will never get you anywhere'; they have played an important part in emancipation."

For example; a few years ago, before Federation, by boycotting shops in which Europeans were served at the front counter and Africans through a hole in the back wall, Northern Rhodesian Africans succeeded in having the 'hatch' system removed once and for all, and gained for themselves the right to be served inside the shops like any other self-respecting customer. By boycotting butchers' shops for weeks on end they not only managed to get the black/white barriers broken down, but won the right to choose their own cuts of meat."

The ultimate in national boycotts lies in contracting out, in setting up another society. Refugees and emigrées are examples of "contracting out". The Long March in China and the Dukhobors in Russia are examples of the boycott on a massive scale.

On an individual scale the boycott or

"contracting out" leads to the deliberate choice of becoming a hermit, a criminal or a bohemian. One of our most respected comrades, Amnon Hennacy, is known as "the one-man social revolution" for his persistent following of his life of protest. These courses are logical and lead many to dream of a utopian community where the necessity and possibility of compromise with corrupt institutions is ruled out.

The boycott can be, and is, used in the industrial field. The *Industrial Worker* frequently carries names of 'black' firms and the picket-line is more common in the U.S. than here, but industrial boycotts can be continued over years. Two examples are the Pullman Car boycott in America, and the boycott of John Lewis & Co. of London, both of which lasted for many years and since neither company seems to have come to terms with the Unions, are still maintained by some people yet. (It is ironical that the highly individualistic anti-union boss of John Lewis' was recently voted out of control of his own company.)

The union label is another method of operating a boycott but it is very rarely used in this country.

The boycott has probably received its most unwelcome and sensational publicity by the press in the action of union members in sending non-strikers to

Coventry'. In any society, social disapproval would take such a form—in fact it may be said that by anti-social behaviour (in the widest sense of the term), an individual has sent himself 'to Coventry'. This is not to say that the automatic reactions of union members to directives from on high bear any more resemblance to adult responsible behaviour than that of a lynch mob does. Each case should be judged on its methods.

On a lower level the actions of the Catholic Church in excommunication is 'sending to Coventry' on the grand scale. The boycott has possibilities in the consumers' field and Consumer Research has listed many products which should be boycotted. Boycotting is, after all, a question of choice and our lives are made up of choices. One's tastes are formed by such choices. A certain amount of so-called 'snobbery' in intellectual and artistic tastes is merely the operation of the boycott in order to save time.

The boycott is always operative in the choice of ways one earns one's living. Certain ways of earning a living are automatically 'boycotted' by us. These vary in example from generation to generation, for example "the while slave traffic" seems to have died out.

J.R.

VIEWPOINT

African Myopia

ALTHOUGH there are a great number of Leftist politicians still adamantly supporting the corrupt regimes emerging on the African continent, there are definite signs that the truth is being faced by the more honest sections of the Left—if that is not a too charitable interpretation of recent declarations.

The line that is slowly becoming discredited appeared in all its dishonesty in "The African Rebellion", an article by John Hatch that appeared in the *New Statesman* (31/12/60). This contained a typical statement of such Labourites. "The West," he claims, "will destroy its influence in the continent if it myopically equates one-party systems with totalitarianism." Although this kind of statement is directed at the Beaverbrook scum it is interesting to note the diplomatic, or shall we say the realistic, line

that Hatch takes; he emphasises that the reason we should not call African one-party systems potentially totalitarian is that the West would destroy "its influence" if it took such a "myopic" line. One is forced to ask: myopic about what? Hatch wants this influential nation of ours (my God what a myth that is!) to become diplomatic in order to retain such influence, or in other words we are to respect the lies of African scoundrels.

Readers of that fluctuating journal *Peace News*, at one moment reading downright anarchism to be faced on another page by reams of bilge about politicians, can notice a slightly different line emerging after all, with Nkrumah's militaristic pronouncements which Fenner Brockway (*PN* 23/12/60) reported thus: "Dr. Nkrumah has made the proposal that the African nations should unite their forces under an African High Command. It is possible that African forces may move into Stanleyville from Cairo through the Sudan, armed by Russia, possibly with Russian personnel. If this happens, the Congo may precede a Third World War." With this in mind how could a paper of unilateral disarmament and non-violence possibly continue their moral support of such a man, even though he is black. The next week Christopher Farley followed this in *PN* by commenting thus: "The African nations that have been coming to political freedom one after the other recently are all too often treading the road of their former masters; suppression, intolerance and militarism."

For another example of this "awakening" one can look at the words of an African who has every reason to know that it is certainly not myopic to equate one party systems with totalitarianism. He is Dr. K. A. Busia the former leader of the Opposition in Ghana who addressed a conference organised by the Council of Education in World Citizenship earlier in January. As the *Guardian* reported Dr. Busia (5/1/61): "He thought the danger of outright dictatorship was very real in several African countries, and he had harshly critical remarks to make about those apologists in the West who are all too ready to defend practices by certain African governments which they knew to be undemocratic." He asked of those who defended such procedures:—"Is the cause of democracy served by 'accepting different standards of tolerance, freedom, veracity, or human rights?'"

Of course anarchists will be the first to point out that "democracy" is non-existent in this country of intolerance, wage-slavery and press lies and it is quite consistent to support men set on dictatorial ambitions. After all morality and sentimental conceptions of "human rights" have never been believed in by politicians of left or right—why start now just because the African leaders are becoming "effective leaders of their growing nations", especially when "influence" would be lost as a result of such myopia.

News from the Affluent Society

Hunger in the Midst of Plenty

UNEMPLOYMENT figures are rising in the United States. Among the 4 million without jobs, some 600,000 have been jobless for extended periods. According to a report by a labour-management-government task force, headed by Senator Douglas of Illinois, surplus food was now being distributed to 3,200,000 people in the States affected by high unemployment. The areas concerned are populated by 20 to 25 million persons. The senator said that he thought the economic distress affected, directly or indirectly, "a considerable fraction of the people in these areas."

"In West Virginia alone," the Douglas report said, "in October, 281,000 people, out of a total population of 1,800,000, depended upon surplus food in order to sustain life."

The report also made it clear that such economic distress was not confined to West Virginia. It was also pointed out in large areas of Indiana, Illinois, the upper Great Lakes, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and the textile areas of New England.

Luxury in the Midst of Want

BUENOS AIRES, JAN. 1.

After two years of austerity, the Argentine public stood wide-eyed last week as affluent persons paid \$50,000 for Cadillacs at a Government-sponsored auction [on the occasion of the Commemoration of the 150th anniversary of Argentina's independence].

Over a ten-day period 600 automobiles of various makes were sold on the block for nearly \$10,000,000.

The press has referred to the spectacle as "the dance of millions" and political

parties have made an issue of the contrast between the few Argentines who are able to splurge and the majority who are pinched.

Working-class living standards have clearly declined as a result of the Government's austerity programme, which has eliminated subsidies in food and transportation, freed all prices except rents and imposed a strong curb on wages.

The highest price paid for any automobile was 4,000,000 pesos plus a 2 per cent auctioneer's commission—the equivalent of \$50,000—for a 1961 Cadillac four-door sedan. Oldsmobile 88's sold for \$30,000 and small European sports cars started at \$8,000.

The high-priced auction coincided with disclosures of illegal traffic in Argentina in nylons, gold-plated fountain pens and other luxury items. In one case the contraband came consigned as airplane fabric for the Argentine Air Force.

The extraordinary value of automobiles, nylons and such in the domestic market is a result of prohibitive duties established for luxuries as part of the austerity programme.

The Argentine working class is virtually deprived of the ability to purchase luxury items because its real income declined as a result of wage controls and the price increases that followed the devaluation of the peso in January, 1959.

On the other hand, the disposal of the properties sector has remained high enough to pay prices such as those reflected at the recent automobile auction.

The disparity led Nicolas Repetto Vereran, leader of the Democratic Socialist party, to comment that "the new rich in our country are leading a life that has eclipsed in fabulousness the ways of the old oligarchy."
(New York Times)

The 6,000 Mile Peace March

DEAR COMRADES,

On December 1st, 1960, 10 peace-marchers finished a rally at Union Square and started on their way down the mainstreets of San Francisco, at the beginning of a six-thousand mile walk to (if they can gain entrance) Moscow.

The March is sponsored by the CNVA—the same group that initiated "Polaris Action" (action against the U.S.'s new, missile carrying submarine).

On their way through many major cities, small towns, and "backwater" areas so far unreached by pacifist and anti-militaristic ideas, they will picket-protest all the military establishments and war industries and will try to pick up sympathy and get people to go along part or the rest of the way with them.

They have been granted passports by the US gov't. (as "peace educators") and plan to go through several European countries, including Britain (should reach London in early June), France, Austria, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Russia. If they are not granted formal admittance to any one of these countries they plan to conduct civil disobedience by attempting to cross over the borders of the country involved.

They advocate unilateral disarmament, aid to underdeveloped areas, free interchange of peoples and ideas, etc. The March will last until at least next August 1st, with an estimated cost of

\$25,000. Questions and donations should be directed to the CNVA, Room 10, 158 Grand Street, New York 13, New York.

Fraternally,
BETTY BLANCK.

San Francisco.

D. H. LAWRENCE, FASCISM AND ALL THAT

I AM sorry to have outraged "G's" Rational susceptibilities, but I feel that my interpretation of his words was a perfectly fair one: supposing, for example, I had asserted that "G" "thought with his blood" and had "put forward precisely the same message as" . . . Sir Oswald Mosley. Would it be really so outrageous to suggest that "G" was a sympathiser of Mosley's—was, in short, a Mosleyite? The qualification that "Lawrence and his followers" (sic) come to "no great harm" does nothing to excuse the quite unjustified linking of Lawrence's name with Hitler's. Which is what distressed me; which is why I wrote.

And now, dear Editors, will you persuade comrade "G" to stop dragging in these assorted red herrings and write another article as truly thought-provoking as we had recently from his pen on Sexual Morality?

DAVID MARKHAM.

Coleman's Hatch, Jan. 9.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

A "HALF-DEVELOPED FREETHINKER"

DEAR SIR,

I bought Herbert Read's pamphlet "The Philosophy of Anarchism" in 1947. I was at that time a brand new member of both the Rationalist Press Association and the National Secular Society.

I thought it was worthwhile to support their attack on superstition in general, and the Christian religion in particular. Then I read Herbert Read's pamphlet and he makes a "song" about the necessity of religion in any new society, and I think he means all the mumbo-jumbo of ritual, sacred tombs, effigies, etc., (Paraphernalia as he calls it).

He wants the new religion to have a real sensuous and aesthetic content and to be rich in ritual.

But he says "I am not a Christian revivalist—I have no religion to recommend and none to believe in."

Is he then an Atheist, and how can you have all the hocus pocus already mentioned if you don't believe in God?

I wonder if the other readers of FREEDOM agree with H. Read when he says "It is already clear that if you do not provide your new society with a new religion it will gradually revert to the old one."

Perhaps I am what Chapman Cohen called a half-developed Freethinker because ever since I first read Herbert Read's pamphlet I have hesitated to support any organisation which attacks Christianity.

I have an open mind and I am content to be an Atheist and Rationalist for myself but I am not so sure of persuading others to "Follow me".

And to the best of my ability I encourage thought and discussion.

Glasgow, Jan. 4

T.

Back to a Deficit!

PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT!

WEEK 2

Deficit on Freedom	£40
Contributions received	£33
DEFICIT	£7

January 9 to January 11

Oxford: Anon.* 5/-; New York: Workman's Circle, Ferrer Rucker Branch 203 £8/15/-; Wolverhampton: J.G.L.* 3/-; Whitby: P.R. 1/-; Caterham: F.B.* 5/-; Exmouth: A.B.H. 2/3; Worthing: R.G.A. 2/-; Sheffield: P.L. 14/-; Gypsy Larry: 7/-.	
Total	10 14 3
Previously acknowledged	22 16 4

1961 TOTAL TO DATE ... £33 10 7

*Indicates regular contributor.

Anarchist Notebook Continued from p. 1

The two negro students whose attendance at the University of Georgia has been suspended because of white anti-negro demonstrations were the first negroes to be accepted in its 175 years' existence, although the authorities always claimed that there was no discrimination on the basis of colour.

After the Federal District Judge ordered the university to admit two qualified negroes, one applicant, a negro boy, was rejected on the basis of an interview because he was "evasive".

His academic qualifications were sound but University officials were not satisfied with his answers to the question:

"Have you ever entered a beatnik parlour, a tea-house or a house of prostitution?"

Judge Bootle reversed the University's decision, which according to Georgia law, automatically loses the State grant if desegregated.

However, the University will probably not have its funds cut off since the two negro students have been suspended in the interests of "their own safety".

We are pleased with the news that Herbert Read will be one of the people taking part in the "four-hour sit down" outside the Ministry of Defence which has been organised by the direct action wing of the CND for February 18th.

It is hoped that the difference of opinion on methods will not prevent people who otherwise support a nuclear disarmament policy from turning up.

Timid people might be persuaded by the view that it is no more revolutionary to sit peacefully outside the Ministry of Defence in protest, than it is to stand at a meeting in Trafalgar Square. They can always move on if asked by the Police, remembering that it is going to take a very large number of policemen and a great deal of time to move 28,000 people.

We notice that the latest attempts to obstruct the march come from the Campaign for Democratic Socialism in a printed leaflet which wishes to remind unilateralists that the:

Communist Party has been extremely active in the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in the last year or so.

We are sure that the majority of CND members do not have to be reminded that the communists are always eager to exploit organisations of this kind, and that this attempt by the "Democratic Socialists" to smear the campaign will not influ-

ence anyone to stay away. Communists as a body, without fear of criticism, challenge the nuclear policies of Britain while Russia is still armed to the teeth.

ANY JOBS GOING?

Princess Margaret and Mr. Armstrong-Jones go to represent the Queen at a Norwegian wedding in which another princess married a commoner.

A Cinderella story like their own. But with a little difference, I gather.

On marriage the Norwegian princess loses her State allowance and her husband continues to work.

But when Princess Margaret married, her allowance was more than doubled and her husband gave up work. He now devotes himself chiefly to the aristocratic pastime of game shooting and attending royal weddings.

Now I don't object to paying our Princess more generously than the Norwegians are paying theirs. But I think it is time her husband got himself a real job—like the Norwegian husband.

JOHN GORDON,

Sunday Express 15/1/61.

What Kind of 'Freedom'?

SIR,

I share your disquiet about FREEDOM—the journal, not the concept. Although it is not so brash as its contemporary and co-conceptual *The Freethinker*, it is not so entertaining—presumably because its reforming arrows are directed at the concrete realities of politics and economics rather than the abstract ideologies of religion. Otherwise—apart from its size (which is awkward to handle), its print (which can be exasperating small) its anonymity (which I suspect more often covers sins than virtues), and its name (Freedom is a word which every philosopher avoids and every fool wallows in) I should say that its main weaknesses are two.

1. The 'mist which descends' and the 'vague generalisations or routine denunciations' are all too noticeable. A monthly journal which gave you and your contributors time to think would be much more satisfactory. Your theme is, after all, the most difficult known to philosophers.

2. None of your contributors seem to be aware of the fact—though it was known to the Hindus and to Plato, and is implicit in the English Feudal System—that society falls naturally into three spheres of activity—Cultural, Political and Economic, in each of which freedom carries an entirely different meaning.

Only in the abstract Cultural Sphere can there be any genuine freedom. In

the Political Sphere which handles human relationships the most we can hope for is equality and liberty (in Herbert Read's sense—"Anarchy and Order"). In the Economic Sphere which handles commodity relationships, the most we can hope for is fraternity and responsibility.

Yours, etc.,

RICHARD HOPE (Petersfield).

Apropos CW's suggestion of a monthly FREEDOM: If it is at all possible, the best thing, surely, would be to produce a monthly in addition to FREEDOM. Failing that, could we try specimen or "souvenir" copies like the *ex-News Chronicle* people are attempting? What about sacrificing the annual *Selections From FREEDOM* in order to make a start on these lines? Perhaps readers would cough up adequately towards a fund specially devoted to such a monthly. If exceptionally popular it could usurp FREEDOM entirely. In suggesting these things I do not wish to give the impression that FREEDOM doesn't interest me; I like it very much—perhaps too much—and as far as I am concerned it would seem like a sacrifice. Forgive me if the things I suggest are quite out of the question—I am rather ignorant on these things, isolated as I am in the Slough of Despond. One thing that strikes me; some of the more lazy contributors would have to get writing more often.

Best wishes,

ERNE CROSSWELL (Slough).

On 'G' and Religion

DEAR SIR,

G's attack on what he chooses to call "religion" is so packed with clichés and so characteristic of the dreary "rationalism" of the last century that one is almost ashamed to reply to it. Hasn't he read anything written on the subject since Freud? How much longer will he persist in treating the Thinker's Library as a glittering paragon of anti-religious scholarship? One fears that in a few years he will discover the existence of Wittgenstein and hold him up to the anarchist world as the final answer to "religion", and then the theologians who read FREEDOM will have to put the clock back another thirty years until G. catches up. But G. will never catch up; if he is not anchored to reality he is certainly anchored somewhere!

The very title of his period-piece indicates its lack of contact with contemporary theology and psychology. For it is a long time now since the theologians and the psychoanalysts realised that their arguing was not really arguing at all but a case of shouting across a gulf. For not only was psychological explanation seen to be a double-headed axe which could be applied and with equally valid results to Freud's atheism as it could to religious belief (cf. H. L. Philip, *Freud and Religious Belief*); it was also clear that both accounts, tentative as they were, were irrelevant to the truth or untruth of either position. Two results followed from this, one psychological, the other logical. First, it became obvious very soon that the equation "religion=neurosis" (which G. naively accepts) did not do justice to the facts. For instance, the inadequacy of any concept of neurosis applicable to the holiness of the saints, the absence of any neurotic pattern into which religious believers could properly be fitted. Either the concept "neurosis" was to be evacuated of all significance or some other account of religious faith must be found. This realisation led to the creation of such alliances of theologians and psychotherapists as the Guild of Pastoral Psychology and to the possibility of genuine discourse between the two groups as well as interpenetration of both. One would hesitate to refer G. to so elementary a work as *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* were it not for the fact that he either ignorantly or deliberately ignores the crucial place in mental health studies held by such men as Jung, Fr. Victor White, Weatherhead, Michael Fordham, Philip Metman, etc. Such an omission by one anchored to reality is significant.

The second result was logical: clearly such essentially personal explanations as psychoanalysis offered, though it could account for theologians, could never account for theology. God does not cease to be God if some Christians project their father-images or some FREEDOM

readers their adolescent nihilism into the universe. The truth of belief can be vindicated or exploded by such means.

What is so pathetic about G's apparent refusal to accept that, or wrongly, traditional Christianity does has found the techniques of psychological revolution to be an and that argument about such things and other contemporary movements raise for faith has been tried on for years within orthodox level of intelligence and intellectual honesty compared with which Freud like a children's comic. I say not in scorn but in sorrow because not a devotee of any "established" political or ecclesiastical, however hackneyed slogans you may label me with, and there are many within the Church whose rebel at least as apparent as G's are there are not as many of us ought to be, true we often do not have discovered something new. We have read all G's nonsense heaven knows it has been trotted the same tedious phrases for a years! If that is the best the can do it is no wonder there is of orthodoxy. Yes, we have rejected it. May I beg that he rejects the Christian faith he something genuine about it for a

Yours sincerely,

Dukinfield, Dec. 30. K...

Meetings and Announcements

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP and MALATESTA DEBATING SOCIETY

IMPORTANT

MEETINGS WILL BE HELD in basement, 5, Caledonian Road (near King's Cross Station) Sundays at 7.30 p.m.

All Welcome.

JAN. 22—Jack Robinson on THE LIFE AND WORK OF LEO TOLSTOY

JAN. 29—Philip Holgate on SYNDICALISM

All Welcome.

Refreshment available after meeting.

London Anarchist Group AN EXPERIMENT IN OFF-CENTRE DISCUSSION MEETINGS

1st Thursday of each month at 8 p.m.

At Jack and Mary Stevenson's, 6 Stainton Road, Enfield, Middx.

Last Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m.

At Dorothy Barasi's,

45 Twyford Avenue, Fortis Green, N.2.

1st Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m.

At Colin Ward's,

33 Ellerby Street, Fulham, S.W.6.

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