

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Man, we are taught in our childhood, is a sociable animal. . . . He marches in a flock, like sheep. Only the sheep is less stupid. It does not create its own shepherd."

—HENRY MARET

SIT DOWN - WITHOUT ILLUSIONS

THE participants at today's sit-down in Whitehall will include a number of anarchists, most of whom, we suspect, are joining in the demonstration more out of a feeling of solidarity than because they wish any illusions such as that the government will take notice of their demand that they should "immediately" scrap the Polaris agreement with the U.S. On the other hand, the government may well take a note of the demonstrators' declaration that "they can no longer stand aside while preparations are being made for the destruction of mankind".

But today's demonstration, at least the sit-down part of it, though symbolically it may do all these things, in reality resolves itself into a demonstration against the laws on obstruction, and a trial of strength between the law-breakers and the police, and it is that aspect of the demonstration which the Press and radio will, if at all, give the headlines.

BERTRAND RUSSELL in a letter to the Press declares that

"We have been driven to a policy of civil disobedience by the lack of representation or the misrepresentation of the policy of unilateralists in the organs of public information. Broadcasting and television are practically closed to us. It is difficult, almost impossible, to get articles or even letters into the daily papers. Most of the press has gone over to Authority—possibly in fear of being, otherwise, gobbled up."

And he goes on to argue that while all sorts of legal methods should continue to be employed, other methods must be used which have "news value" and will make it possible for the legal methods to "carry their full weight". In other words, by civil disobedience—in this case the four-hour sit-down in

Whitehall—will the Press take notice of the unilateralists' case, and that "only by such means can the barrier of ignorance and indifference concerning" this point of view be broken down.

Bertrand Russell is most probably right when he says that the public in general is ignorant of the facts supporting the unilateralists case, but even assuming that the organs of mass communications made amends, there are no grounds for assuming that this knowledge will break down the other "barrier" of indifference. We are not saying that the sit-down demonstration is a waste of time. What we are saying is that it is a mistake to assume as so many do nowadays, who are the backbone of the sit-down demonstrations, marches, picketings, fastings, etc., that *this* is "real action" and everything else from publishing papers and addressing small meetings or attending discussions, etc., are academic, intellectual, and a sheer waste of time.

In fact the demonstrations, etc., are simply other forms of propaganda which depend for their success not only on mass support but equally on publicity by the organs of mass communications. It is surely true to say that the Aldermaston March receives less publicity from the Press in spite of the fact that the demonstration has grown in size each year. To what extent growing support for the March so far has been the result of propaganda by the marchers themselves among their friends and work-mates or the result of Press publicity is difficult to ascertain.

Our guess is that it is the former and for the simple reason that the indirect propaganda we can expect for a cause through the publicity it receives in the daily press is the result of a fleeting "splash" in one day's issue—a splash which is but a drop in an ocean of daily "splashes" which are so indiscriminate that a gory murder or a juicy sex case will invariably make a bigger "splash" as well as a bigger impact in the minds and in the conversation of the mass-fed public, than the serious issues of nuclear disarmament or the cold-war. On the other hand the kind of propaganda which is conveyed by word of mouth in the day-to-day contacts we all have with friends and the people we work with, or through the regular publication of independent

organs of ideas, reaches, perhaps, a smaller public (to begin with though there is no reason to assume that it should not be an expanding public) but the chances that its effect will be more radical and lasting are infinitely greater.

IT is surely unnecessary for us to point out that anarchists are very much in favour of movements which are prepared to engage in acts of civil disobedience. But whereas the Committee of 100 are principally concerned with the non-violent aspect of their actions.

(Bertrand Russell writes: "The demonstration is to be non-violent, and any individual who allows himself to become violent will be disowned by the Committee".)

we anarchists consider that the chances of success depend much more on the firm conviction that all governments are an obstacle to the creation of a world society based on co-operation and understanding, and in which any real differences between men will be settled by discussion and not force. Government is authority from above; and that authority can only be maintained by the use, or the threat, of force.

Force is the language of government and it is therefore utopian to hope that it may be persuaded into believing that its message will be more convincing if it sheds its armour.

A MOVEMENT of civil disobedience to achieve something positive must strike at the roots of power. If it's the law of obstruction that we are fighting against, by all means let's squat in the middle of Piccadilly Circus in our thousands when the police behave as they did during the picketing of South Africa House, or as they have done towards literature sellers at Hyde Park and elsewhere. If it's the control of the Press by a handful of tycoons or trusts that we want to break down we must encourage a mass boycott of the Press (assuming we cannot persuade journalists, printers and distributors to refuse to write, print and distribute for the monopolists) and at the same time set about producing newspapers to replace them.

If we want this country to disarm it is only by directing our efforts to the workers in the armament industry—not to the government—that we may hope to succeed. To sit

down outside the Defence Ministry is what Herbert Read in an article in *Peace News* (20/1/61) called "instinctive action. We may feel all the better for it, and some we know, are hoping that they will be selected by the police to spend the night in the cells—the charge will be for obstruction and not for threatening the power of the State. But if we paused to give a little more thought to our generous "instincts" then we should start by squatting in our thousands outside the factories producing the missiles and the planes and the bombs and all the electronic and other paraphernalia that comprise the modern war "machine". We should, in persuading the workers and scientists and technologists engaged in the perfection of annihilation, of the anti-social aspects of their activities, offer not only arguments but a willingness to share with them our last crust of bread until such time as they are able to secure other employment. But assuming that our arguments fail we should also be prepared to deny them entry to their factories of death. And if they object that we are preventing them from earning their living, or charge that in the name of freedom we are denying them theirs—of choosing the kind of job they will do—we must have the courage of our convictions and declare that we have no objection

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Mutual Aid

'HAPPIEST STREET IN LONDON'

No one is lonely in happy Humberstone Road, Plaistow—the East End street where neighbours do the shopping for old folk and send each other birthday cards or visit the sick in hospital with a large bunch of flowers and some fruit.

There are even annual outings to the seaside for the children and old folk—all paid for by the rest of the families in the street.

It costs only 2s. 6d. to join the Happy Humberstone Road Club, but you must live in the street or be "one of the family".

Chairman of the club, 52-year-old Mr. Richard Wilson, said: "This must be the happiest street in London and no one ever feels lonely or unwanted.

"The old age pensioners can join free of charge and someone else 'down the street' will always do their shopping for them and keep an eye on the milk bottles or newspapers to make sure they are not ill.

"The whole idea started about nine years ago when we organised a very successful party for the children in a garage at the bottom of the road.

"Since then we have had socials and other things to make the money to keep our kitty full enough so that no one wants down our street."

Evening Standard 13/2/61.

Mau Mau in Rhodesia?

IN the grim battle for power that is being fought over the territories of Northern and Southern Rhodesia there is little to interest the anarcho-syndicalist in more than an academic sense. The various tactical battles between Welensky (the Federal Prime Minister), Macleod and the African political leaders over Northern Rhodesia and the agreement between Sir Edgar Whitehead and Joshua Nkomo in Southern Rhodesia for a new constitution are all important in one sense, that they effect the lives of countless Africans in Rhodesia, but from a revolutionary point of view they can only be seen as insignificant.

However, Mr. Kenneth Kaunda, leader of the most important African political party, has warned that if the conference on Northern Rhodesia does not meet the constitutional demands of the African people there would be an uprising far worse than Mau Mau. Mr. Kaunda is nevertheless a politician and a man pledged to non-violence. All he is

really saying is that if he cannot get power by constitutional methods he will be unable to control his rank and file who will resort without his wise guidance to Mau Mau methods.

What is very significant is that the Europeans in Rhodesia are now demanding the arrest of Mr. Kaunda on his return to Northern Rhodesia, and that he be charged with subversion, they, whatever their faults are realistic people. There is nothing to fear from "reasonable" Africans taking over the "Reins of Government" in a slow and sensible "democratic" way, but talk of direct action sounds like the end for them.

Now I am not going to oblige Mr. Kaunda with tales of undercover subversive activities in Rhodesia, I do not intend to boost his political game, which is nothing more than the use of a threat. The threat is no more than bluff, but what makes the bluff so obnoxious is that Kaunda, a peaceful man of non-violence, claims that without his leadership the African people would turn to

violence and murder. I should have thought that Kaunda's African friends had been scourged with this monstrous and ludicrous kind of statement enough before now from the mouths of unknowing Whites in Africa and in this country. So let me bare the facts about these terrible African people who will resort to Mau Mau methods if their hero Kaunda does not get his way.

Like all people who love life the Africans of Rhodesia are peaceful people, they are not pathologically inclined to violence or to hatred. For years they have suffered the exploitation of the Europeans with a patience and a humour that I personally find quite admirable. I am not speaking of "Uncle Tomism", there is only a little of that in a minority of Africans. The vast majority bear with their European masters with pride. However I do not wish to become romantic about the "noble savage", there are Africans, usually de-tribalised and living in the towns, working in the Copper mines in Rhodesia who through contact with the Europeans have learnt ways of violence and bitterness. They learnt that when a European does not get his way that he hates; they learnt that to be happy a European has to escape from himself. They learnt the religion of the white men.

These Africans have tried to copy their masters while accusing their fellow Africans, who are proud of their heritage and customs, of bowing down to the white man. These ambitious Africans became the political power-seekers and when Kaunda speaks of "Mau Mau" elements he has these associates in mind not the African people of Rhodesia. The opposition to the young political Africans comes largely from the institutionalised Chiefs of Rhodesia,

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Ye Are Many — They Are Few

ALL these methods of social action—the strike, the boycott, sabotage, direct action and 'propaganda of the deed' have within themselves the factors for success. They are active, they should be constructive (in stating the aims of the campaign); aggressive (in rejecting compromise and affirming principles) and synthesising (in relating the means employed to the end to be attained and in enlisting public sympathy in the objects of the campaign).

It has been argued that these methods are not capable of being used against a totalitarian regime, that the thoroughness of a dictatorship and the power of its terror is so great that nothing of this kind can succeed.

Knowledge of resistance movements—particularly in Norway and Denmark show the fallacy of this statement. It may be argued that Norway and Denmark were special cases—but indeed, every country is a special case and required different methods of resistance according to political and social outlooks, economic factors and industry position.

The very thoroughness of totalitarianism (which is debatable), makes necessary a different approach from the conventional violent seizure of power, methods which the totalitarians understand and can deal with. The secrecy makes for spontaneity. The dangers of centralized leadership are never more obvious and lead to individual responsibility. The principle of mutual aid is demonstrated in action in the strike, the boycott, sabotage, direct action and the propaganda of the deed. The decentralised system of organization has its lessons for the organization of society. The attractions of leadership are not so great when responsibility for any deed means imprisonment or death.

The most effective method of terror by the Gestapo was the hostage system which it is difficult to see any conventional resistance movement defeating. Any community which has allowed the abrogation of its rights to the extent of allowing an Army of Occupation is fragmented enough for the conqueror to

wreak his will to any further extent he requires.

Histories of resistance movements now appearing show that the whole matter was bedevilled by 'allies' whose interventions were often disastrous and when it was a question of choice preferred a puppet resistance to the native resistance. The Greek resistance had to ask the British to stop bringing reprisals upon the Greek people whilst the assassination of Heydrich caused utter havoc to the Czech underground without making any substantial gains for them.

Post-war history, including the fate of Mihailovitch and the Polish 'Home Army' show the gratitude of governments to resistance movements. The spontaneity and flexibility of resistance demands freedom from government and parties.

The most thorny point in the problems of resistance to power is very often put forward as "What about the Jews?"

It is not possible to dismiss the destruction of six million Jews as a minor detail. The Jews are not an example of resistance or non-resistance. They were divided from the general community by active and passive anti-semitism, and also, by their own free choice. Thus divided, they were easily conquered. Jews were even found for minor administrative posts in the police that picked out victims for the camps from Warsaw and in the attendants at the gas-chambers. These poor individuals were persuaded that their own survival was guaranteed if they continued to help. Not being heroes, as few of us are, they decided for personal survival. There was no continued united resistance to the Nazis by the Jews or Gentiles either before or during the war. There were many incidents of Jews being sheltered, of Danish strikes and resistance against persecution of Jews, there was the Warsaw ghetto but until the Jewish organization of illegal immigration to Palestine (Israel) there was no successful demonstration of resistance.

This organization exposed the hollowness of the Allies' claim that they were in the war to save the Jews from the concentration camps. The Eichmann-Joel Brand negotiations are a debatable point as to the genuineness, but the turning back of refugee ships after the escape route through Italy show that the Jewish people could only save themselves by their own efforts. Unfortunately, as usual, the politicians took over, and the State of Israel became a persecutor in its turn.

Those readers who have stayed with me so far on this exhaustive (if not exhausting) survey will have noticed one notable omission. There has been no discussion of *satyagraha* or soul-force; or *ahimsa* otherwise known as harmlessness. One grows a little tired of the saintly-politician figure who triggered off all these hair-splitting about non-resistance, non-violent resistance, coercion, force and violence. It can be summed up as 'Violence is the sort of force we

disapprove of'. Or *vice versa*. However beyond Gregg's statement that non-violent resistance was psychological jujitsu we must avoid moral and mystical judgments, merely agreeing with Jack Common that 'non-violent resistance was as lousy a method of getting your own way as any other'.

It will be seen that violent seizure (or destruction) of power by the masses is not the only method of social change. Violence as a social agent has its limitations which become more obvious with time: consciousness of its own strength is the first requisite of any movement towards social change. Violence is so imprecise a means and so arbitrary in its results that it is quite often the weapon of the weak.

Through all these methods runs the necessity for responsibility, self-sufficiency and co-operation. Individuals partaking in these methods must have an anarchist attitude in order that they may believe in the eventual success of their methods.

These methods reveal the myth of the state. Its inability to accomplish and its failure to shake the really determined individual. It affirms the sovereignty of the self.

Its means are proportionate to its end, the end of a free society and a responsible individual, are demonstrated in the means employed.

The message to the oppressed must be that their strength is in their own hands. In the words of Shelley:

Rise like Lions after slumber,
In unvanquishable number;
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you—
Ye are many, they are few.

JACK ROBINSON.

The Struggle in Belgium

BELGIUM: THE GENERAL STRIKE, "Agitator" — "New Generation", 6d.

THIS pamphlet has been produced jointly by the groups centred around the "New Generation" (I.L.P.) and "Agitator". It consists of 50 duplicated pages of reading matter plus five photographs (all of them good). There is no attempt here at a serious analysis of the significance of the Belgian Strike nor should one expect it. It comprises an eye-witness account by Martin Grainger of four days spent in Brussels and Liege in close contact with the strikers.

One of the most significant facts that emerges is the tremendous solidarity and ingenuity shown by the rank and file workers. Many spontaneous decisions made by the rank and file were only ratified by the leadership after a long delay: official endorsement of the workers' action came 48 hours after the strike had started!

A number of incidents are worth quoting: the slogans carried by the Brussels workers included "Eyskens to the Gallows", "The Bankers must Pay", "The Factories to the Workers". This last was, of course, opposed by the Communists but tremendous pressure from the Socialist Youth resulted in its inclusion. In Liege where the strike was far more widespread than in Brussels, distribution of coal to old people and free food supplies to families in need was organised by a system of strike committees. The appeal published in "La Wallonie" asking troops "Don't be traitors to your class" which resulted in

the seizure of this, and other papers subsequently published it. Workers pairing a burst water-main in Liege carried posters "We are strikers. We are working of our own free will, and we have the permission of our union, and our consideration for the local population."

The overall impression is the emergence in an affluent society of the struggle as a tremendous reality. While it is true that there was no apparent conscious desire on the part of the workers to change the whole structure of society and that the strike failed in that it did not bring about the repeal of the "Loi Unique", yet there is no doubt that the Belgian Workers must have learnt a tremendous amount from this experience. During this last week, groups of militants have been meeting to discuss the setting up of a Belgian Rank and File movement.

Martin Grainger writes with conviction and this publication sets a standard by which any further publications of this kind will have to be judged. It is recommended to all who are interested in the details of the Belgian workers' struggle.

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The Native Air of Anarchism

I FOUND the oriental religions very boring when Peter Kropotkin asked me to do an extract of their ethical principles for him, near sixty years ago; especially the Chinese, which seemed to be obsessed by theories of government; until I came across Taoism and made the acquaintance of the Old Philosopher, Lao-tzu. I eagerly read all the rather poor bits of translation of the Tao-te-ching I could find, and along with notes on its ethics made some enthusiastic remarks about the politics of it as approximating if not anticipating anarchist theory. The ideal of Taoism was a Do-Nothing Government, an administration that would not interfere with the individual, of which he might be quite unaware. Peter of course liked that, but he pointed out that a Do-Nothing Government was still a government, a Liberal Government in extremis. I found hints of some further radical development of the idea, but nothing more posi-

tively anarchistic. How pleased Peter would have been if I could have presented him with extracts from his translation of *The Book of Lieh-tzu* by A. C. Graham, which John Murray have just published! For here indeed you breathe the native air of anarchism.

Taoism was always individualist and for a few hundred years, from perhaps about 600 BC, contested the rising prestige of Confucianism. The final establishment of the latter as the Conservative standard in politics and the moral code of the ruling class, the official theory of government, about 100 BC, together with the spreading of Buddhism from India, was a challenge to individualism. When Taoism emerges again, in a period of political disunion and social disruption, about AD 200, it has various spokesmen whom Dr. Graham can only call 'anarchists', in the philosophical meaning of the word. "They completely rejected the political institutions of the empire, and imagined a simpler society without ruler and subject." Some of the stories in the *Book of Lieh-tzu*, which contains material dating back to 300 BC but written possibly six centuries later, tell what happened when things went beyond the point of Do-Nothing. Here in brief is one of them:

"When Yao had ruled the Empire for fifty years, he did not know whether the Empire was in good order or not, whether the millions desired to carry him on their heads or not. He turned to his courtiers and asked them, but his courtiers did not know. He questioned visitors who came to court, but his visitors did not know . . . Then Yao wandered in disguise on the highroads. He heard a boy singing a ballad which told how 'the multitudes all observe your standards, unknowing, unremembering . . .' Yao, delighted, asked him who had taught him to repeat that saying. The boy said he had heard it from a high official; but when Yao asked the official about it, all he learned was that it was an old saying. So Yao returned to his palace only to abdicate—and leave the country without an unnecessary government.

In another story the truth comes to light from the spoilt sons of a Prime Minister, who reasons with them against their way of living for liquor and lust. (Apparently they have already mended their ways). Success in ruling the state has made you proud, they tell him; and they add: "We in our turn would like to dispute the issue with you. The man who is good at ordering the lives of others does not necessarily succeed, but

is good at ordering his own life and scope to his nature without needing disorder the lives of others. Your method of ruling others may be realised temporarily in a single state, but it is not of accord with men's hearts. Our method of ruling ourselves may be extended to the whole world, until the Way of ruler and subject is brought to an end. "Father was bewildered" and had no answer to give; he told his adviser about it but had no consolation. "You have been living with True Men," he was told, "without knowing it. Who can say you are a wise man? The good government of the state is mere chance; you cannot take the credit for it."

There are several descriptions of ideal communities, some highly imaginative and touched with the mysticism of the book of Lao-tzu; but Dr. Graham suggests that the following sounds more as though inspired by confused reports of real primitive peoples—or, it might be asked, a section of that vast congeries of peoples which had already progressed beyond Do-Nothing liberalism?

The climate is mild, and there are no epidemics. The people are gentle and compliant by nature, do not quarrel or contend, have soft hearts and weak bones, are never proud or envious. Old and young live as equals, and no one is ruler or subject; men and women mingle freely, without go-betweens and betrothal presents.

There are other political moments in the book, but it is essentially a collection of aphorisms, poetry and parable. The translator has done his work so effectively that one may say of the translation what he says of the original, that the book is remarkable purely as literature and that its stories retain the quality of being "vivid, lively, full of marvels, often humorous, to all appearances guilelessly simple." The notes he adds to some of them are also enlightening. One gets a period impression, of its place in time as well as its character. It is a less austere and somewhat less mystic world than that of Lao-tzu, and the book is by the same token more easy reading. Compared with that of Confucianism, it is a spontaneous community that is depicted—imaginative, private, unconventional, romantic, rebellious under authority, but self-ruled and orderly in progress on the Way. And the Way—what is the Way? There is a good deal of mysticism or mystification—some of it certainly mischievous—among the many references to the Way; but most of the parables have direct application to life and on that experimental plane there is quite enough to suggest that the Way, after all, is simple.

Theatre GORKY'S BITTER TRUTH

MAXIM GORKY is one of the most revered authors of the Soviet Union; so much so, that Stalin was able to make his death by natural causes a Trotskyist plot. His early life as a vagabond gave him the material which he has used to good effect in many of his works including *The Lower Depths*, the bulk of his work is pre-revolutionary so he is freed from the dreadful trap of "socialist realism".

His play is given what seems to be a new translation by Henry Burke. The guest producer, Léveche Zeravchev of Bulgaria has not set the Thames, or even the players on fire. It may be "the art which conceals art", but one is not aware of any skill or genius in production which made the journey from Belgrade necessary.

The difficulties of Unity's small stage may be insuperable (even to a Bulgar) but the uninspired black backcloth of the backyard scene carried no conviction and the inexplicable death of the husband was even more mysterious because it was not fully conveyed that he had crashed on to the cobbles. Also, in the lodging house itself the impression that it was a cellar was not adequately conveyed, this again may be an insuperable difficulty but surely, the triumph of any art lies in surmounting difficulties.

The acting is of a quite high standard

is usually apparent in Unity productions, credit for this may go to the producer. The Irish accents of three of the players were particularly appropriate, Bubnov being particularly well-played by Declan Mulholland.

There was the difficulty, as in all works translated of identifying characters in an unfamiliar and complicated tongue so it is difficult to single out actors for praise, the sisters were magnificently Russian, the Tolstoy-like vagabond was excellent.

And what was it all about? It could be taken as an exposé in social realist terms of the conditions under which the poor live. But it is not just this. It is an examination of the effects of truth and illusions. The Baron who lives in the past, his mistress who lives in her romances, the actor living momentarily in hope of a cure, the locksmith living awaiting the death of his wife, the thief living from day to day and finding hope in his love and so on. The Tolstoyan figure is a purveyor of illusions, but Gorky does not commit himself as to whether he is a dangerous influence. The final curtain with the suicide of the actor has a Tchechevian strain which accords ill with the concept of Gorky as a social-realist.

On the whole this was a worthwhile and thought-provoking production.

Freedom

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Sit Down - Without Illusions

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their working for their own destruction but that we have a right to defend ourselves when their work not only threatens them with annihilation but those of us who want to live as well.

Just as the employer has no unchallenged right to a privileged existence at the expense of those he employs, neither has a worker the right to engage in work which threatens the lives of others as well as his own, without, at least, their acquiescence. But neither can those of us who seek to persuade others to abandon that work, rely on moral argument if we are not, at the same time, prepared to cushion the economic sacrifices we are also exacting from them to make for the cause of peace, by sharing our wage sheets with them.

WE must release the imagination of the people so that they become conscious of the fate that is threatening them, and we can best reach their imagination by our actions, by our fearlessness, by our liberty, and even our death to the end that mankind shall be freed from pain and suffering and moral death.

With these words Herbert Read included his *Peace News* "Protest Against Polarisation" article. Fine words, sentiments, but in the circumstances, it all rings a bit phoney! Herbert Read is right when he declares that "the statesmen and scientists of the world have forfeited all moral authority". But are intellectuals in any better moral position to criticise?

Let us cite an example where we have direct experience. For more than two decades we have been trying to build up a free press, free in the sense that in content it should be a forum for ideas outside the confines of the Establishment. Like Herbert Read we believe in releasing the "imagination of the people", confident that this, and not party lines will lead to a libertarian way of thinking and living. When we have approached the writers and intellectuals who had something to say, the almost universal excuse for not writing for a paper such as FREEDOM has been that their time was limited, and it seemed to them that what time they had was better spent writing for the capitalist press, for the "unconverted" public.

Apart from the cynical, but realistic, reflection that the capitalist press also pays handsomely and FREEDOM doesn't, our objection to this argument is that so long as intellectuals of integrity write for the capitalist Press and ignore the independent, free press, the set-up will remain unchanged. Herbert Read put it very well in *Anarchy and Order* when he wrote

The existing social order is outrageously unjust, and if we do not revolt against it, we are either morally insensitive or criminally selfish. But if all that our revolt secures is merely a reconstruction of the societal crystal along another axis, our action has been in vain. There has been no chemical change. (Our italics)

If tomorrow the capitalist press gave more space to unilateral disarmament, or even to anarchism this would not represent a revolution in the Press. It would still be in the hands of a few people whose principle interest was to make money and to maintain the system which protected them at all costs, including the freedom of the press.

Now if writers are not prepared to make material "sacrifices" to boycott the yellow press and to build the free press, what impact do they

Reflections on the American Anti-Trust Trials CAPITALISM—The Image of the Truth

IN sentencing executives of two electrical engineering companies, and twenty-one companies themselves, to fines of nearly two million dollars, and terms of imprisonment, an American Federal judge accused them of having "mocked the image" of the nation's free enterprise system by their offences against the Anti-Trust Laws.

It is a fundamental feature of the capitalist myth that capitalism is a system in which competition keeps the prices down and thereby benefits the consumer. Now while there is no reason to suspect that the capitalists themselves believe this tale, it is very widely accepted by people of all classes, and even of all political views. It is this "image" of free enterprise that ensures that most people fear socialism and support conservative parties at the polls and by buying their newspapers. Efforts by left-wing propagandists for the last few generations to point out that behind the

think such high-sounding platitudes as "willingness to sacrifice our comfort, our liberty and even our lives" have on the average reader?

INDEED we hope that today's sit-down protesters have been influenced by other considerations than the adulation of the "big names". We hope that, in the first place, they have been moved by a feeling of solidarity, the kind of solidarity which in the last war induced many anarchists to register as C.O.s in spite of the fact that they could not and did not recognise the competence of the Tribunals to assess their "consciences". Secondly we hope that they have taken part in this demonstration without any illusions as to its chances of bringing pressure on the government to change its policies. Thirdly we hope they have no illusions that the Press will be influenced by their willingness to go to prison, to accept and interpret their arguments. The Press defends the Establishment even when, like the *Guardian*, it exists "in the public interest"! Fourthly, we hope that they will not look upon sitting on a pavement in Whitehall for four hours as the cure-all for the problems of mankind. It's not governments that we must seek to change but the way of thinking among our fellow humans, and this is a long-term task which demands unremitting effort.

"But in the meantime mankind may well be annihilated". Undoubtedly the risk does exist. But the risk also exists that we will be so obsessed with the task of preventing mankind from being annihilated by an H-bomb war, that we will overlook the fact that every day of the week thousands of people are dying in Africa, in Asia, in Europe and the Americas, by such conventional weapons as bombing planes, and flame-throwing tanks, in old-established institutions as concentration camps and prisons or even of the oldest of mankind's complaints... starvation. For all these unfortunate death means annihilation. So far as they are concerned there is little consolation that their death does not in fact mean the annihilation of mankind. Who, other than the condemned man who sees no way of escape or the demagogue, who has no intention of dying for mankind, would be prepared to declare that the survival of mankind is more important than his own life?

For the past fifteen years we have lived in the "shadow" of a nuclear bomb that might "at any moment" plunge the world into darkness. For fifteen years we have been exhorted to do something about that specific problem; fifteen wasted years in which people might have spent their time more usefully tackling the problems and rejecting the values which have landed us in a world whose destruction requires only that one man should press one button. Do you think it possible?

facade of freedom, modern capitalism was a monolithic organisation designed to make the biggest possible profits by any means at all have had very little effect on the image. It is hard therefore to accept the view that the case against the American companies was brought mainly to preserve this image of free enterprise. A public trial must have brought the fact of capitalist monopoly to the attention of many Americans who were up to then blissfully unaware of it.

A more important feature of monopoly from the point of view of the state is that although in periods of rapid economic advance it can be a very efficient way of making progress, it accentuates trends towards stagnation and inefficiency when they begin to appear. One of the complaints against the electrical engineering price rings was that all the firms involved had made equal, high tenders to the government's Tennessee Valley Authority. Furthermore, some potential buyers were turning their attention to European suppliers. There, when the existence of price rings began to threaten the national economy, the State chose to step in. As the executives sit in their cells they will possibly compare their plight with that of similar people in East European countries who find themselves accused of "economic sabotage" when things go slightly wrong in their department. In either case the basic features of the economy include concentrations of power in the hands of a few individuals, driven on by incentives of power and financial gain, with a state behind everything to make sure that the greed and power-seeking of some of these individuals doesn't upset the apple cart for the rest of them.

Many British economists will probably applaud the firmness with which the American courts have applied their ruling in this case, and draw lessons for the Monopolies Commission in Britain, and in particular to the recent and potential newspaper take-overs. It is however important to know why a government is trying to curb tendencies towards monopoly. Naturally, the easiest answer is that they are doing so in the best interests of the subjects they rule over,

and the authoritarian school of socialism will applaud their actions and even cry out for more power to be placed in the hands of the state, and used.

On the other hand, what can the up and coming liberals complain of in this? Their argument has always been that unfettered competition brings desirable results, but in fact since the profit motive finds its expression in monopoly, and the anathematised state turns up as the champion of free enterprise, there is not much left of their theories.

For the vast majority of people, who are neither powerful men in the state nor shareholders, the question is how should industry be organised so as to serve their interests, as workers and consumers, best. To this we can only answer, not by presenting a blueprint, or a model set of

laws designed to hold the right balance between monopoly and "free enterprise", but by pointing out that all these forms of social institution in which the workers and consumers have no power, are bound to be operated to their disadvantage. It seems to be so straightforward to be hardly necessary to repeat, that the only way of getting industry organised so that the wealth is enjoyed by its producers, and that they are not just used as ends to producing someone else's profits, is that the people should take power into their own hands, and away from both state and private bosses. This, surely, would be the only worthwhile anti-monopoly action that can be envisaged, and one which would need and cause a revolution throughout our society.

P.H.

FREEDOM PRESS

SELECTIONS FROM 'FREEDOM'

Vol. 1, 1951, *Mankind is One*
Vol. 2, 1952, *Postscript to Posterity*
Vol. 3, 1953, *Colonialism on Trial*
Vol. 4, 1954, *Living on a Volcano*
Vol. 5, 1955, *The Immoral Moralists Waters*
Vol. 6, 1956, *Oil and Trouble*
Vol. 7, 1957, *Year One—Sputnik Era*
Vol. 8, 1958, *Socialism in a Wheelchair*
Vol. 9, 1959, *Print, Press & Public*
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17a, Maxwell Road, Fulham
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AN ANARCHIST'S NOTEBOOK 'Boulevard Durand'

HOW MANY READERS, I WONDER, SWITCHED ON their radios to the play "Boulevard Durand" by Armand Salacrou which was given its second (recorded) broadcast last Sunday night in the Third Programme? It did not sound to me "good Theatre"—probably it was the translation that didn't flow or perhaps the actors were self-conscious in their roles as, by English standards, emotional French workers—but the subject was reality not fiction. The reality of 1910 when Syndicalist or Trade Union organisation in France or Britain required for its furtherance activists not bureaucrats. One such was Durand, who, as the play reveals, was also an anarchist. His syndicalism was informed by moral values which contrasted sharply with those of the "delegate from Paris" who came to Le Havre (scene of the railway strike on which Salacrou's drama is based), not to bring support and solidarity for the strikers, but to inform Durand that so far as Paris was concerned the struggle was over. In the broadcast play the real tragedy starts here, for in the course of the strike, which is continued in spite of the Paris delegate, a blackleg is killed. And in spite of the fact that the victim's own wife testifies for the strikers, Durand, though not even present when the blackleg was accidentally killed is condemned to die only because he is, as the *Radio Times* blurb puts it, "the chief agitator for social reform". Some of Durand's interjections in the course of the trial made this writer's heart beat faster with pride and joy!

Agitation in France among the workers and intellectuals and elsewhere, including Liverpool, succeeded in securing his reprieve and release, but when his family arrived at the prison gates they found a man who had lost his reason as a result of his incarceration and ill-treatment at the hands of his gaolers.

NEVER HAVING HEARD OF THIS CASE, I consulted the files of FREEDOM and in the *International Notes*, an excellent feature of the old monthly which one hopes might well be adopted by the new-

look FREEDOM, I found two references to the Durand Case. In the issue for February 1911 one reads:—

Once more the murder is out, and we learn that Durand, the trade unionist, recently sentenced to death for the alleged incitement to murder of a blackleg in the French railway strikes, has been the victim of a vile plot fabricated by one Delarue, in the employ of the Compagnie Transatlantique. . . . One of the witnesses for the prosecution has made a declaration in which he says their evidence was dictated to them by this man Delarue, and that it was at his instigation that they swore that the death of Dongé had been voted at the strike meeting at the suggestion of Durand. Delarue, the provocateur had paid their fares to Rouen, paid for their food and lodging, and given them money beside.

In the April 1911 issue of FREEDOM, again in the "International Notes", we are told that Durand, Secretary of the Coal Porters' Union at Havre, had been released from prison, thanks to his comrades "and the whole Socialist and Anarchist Press as well as the Confederation of Labour" who did not rest "till they had obtained, first, the commutation of the death sentence, and finally his release.

But it is too late. Durand has become mad, as the doctors declare, owing to the emotion and strain in prison. So the bourgeoisie of Havre has nevertheless succeeded in its vengeance on this poor worker.

I WAS INTERESTED TO SEE THAT A *Daily Herald* reader made the same observations as FREEDOM did in its front page article last week on the proposed increase in National Health contributions when she wrote:

What a world we live in! Two days after it is announced that the Exchequer must have millions on the Health Service, it is announced that we have offered to spend £23million on a joint satellite-launching project based on Blue Streak.

Mrs. Irene H. Cooper ought to be a reader of FREEDOM. Can any Macclesfield reader find her address and send

her this and last week's issues of FREEDOM?

★ ★ ★

LAST FRIDAY'S "EVENING STANDARD" HAS as its headline, "Six Find a Key to the Secrets of Universe", followed by a sub-head "How it all began" fits in with Bible Story". Well, of course the six scientists who, according to that worthy journal, were going "to announce to the world tonight that they have proof to explain one of man's greatest mysteries—how the Universe began", in fact did no more, so far as I can see, than propound yet another theory of the universe. And as to how this new theory fits in with the Bible story is obviously clear only to the Beaver's Boys. The scientists have now succeeded, so they tell us, by the use of radio-telescopes, to "see" no less than 100,000,000,000,000,000,000 miles into space and what they see are galaxies receding at speeds approaching the speed of light. Which means that unless they come up against a brick wall, they will have travelled a long way further by the time the scientists have another peep. The galaxies, well why waste space with these astronomical figures neither you nor I can conceive, even assuming we had a poet's imagination.

The following from the *Observer's* feature on the Cambridge scientists bombshell is worth reproducing:

The sources now being detected at Cambridge, in fact, are providing a picture of the universe as it was some 8,000 million years ago—and the sources themselves are receding at something approaching nine-tenths of the speed of light.

Well, they are welcome to it, as are the Christians to their God. If this new theory fits in with the Bible story, then God must sure be a very old man. At least 8,000 million years old and we still haven't reached the terminus. Gee, the Universe sure is Big! But don't worry buddy, it will be even bigger next year, and God's an awful long way away. He might not even hear your prayers or see the sins you commit. Of course he too might have a radio telescope. You never know!
LIBERTARIAN.

More About the New 'Freedom' & 'Autonomy'

WE write before readers have had time to comment on our announcement last week of the experiment we will be carrying out this year. On re-reading what we wrote, however, we feel that in order to avoid any misunderstanding with those readers who are postal subscribers to FREEDOM, we would add that if it is their wish not to support the experiment, we shall honour their subscriptions at the current subscription rate, but we do ask them to reciprocate by answering the circular letter they will be receiving after the publication of the first issue of the Review which will be sent to them automatically in lieu of FREEDOM.

THE new subscription rates to FREEDOM will be unchanged at 19/- (\$3), 9/6 (\$5.50) or 5/- (75 c.) for 1 year, 6 months, or 3 months respectively. The only difference will be that instead of 52 we shall be publishing 40 issues in a year. The subscription rate for *Autonomy* will also be 19/- (\$3) a year for 12 issues. These rates include postage. Naturally, we are hoping that our present subscribers will support both publications. Partly because they are conceived as complementary publications and therefore we feel we will not have stated the anarchist case effectively if our subscribers do not read both publications, and partly because the chances of this experiment succeeding depend on *Autonomy* starting its existence with the not inconsiderable support of the FREEDOM mailing list.

To jump the subscription rate from 19/- to 30/- may seem a lot but most of the minority journals are now selling at 6d. a copy and subscription rates are more than the 30/- we ask which however includes a 32-page monthly journal which costs in materials, printing, wrapping and postage more than 1s. a copy.

LAST week we promised to tell readers something about the Contents of future issues of the two publications. The first issue of *Autonomy* which is ready for printing and will be sent to all subscribers to FREEDOM next week-end contains articles on the social function of education, on sex-and-violence in popular literature, on the "new wave" in Britain and on the implications of the ideas of the American economist J. K. Galbraith. The second issue which will appear at

Mau Mau in Rhodesia

Continued from p. 1

who are seldom more than pawns in the hands of the white administrators. The people do not really ignore the political agitators, they rather respect them for their education and their smart suits. If they disagree with these future leaders they find they have no ability to argue with them. But the Africans have a well of wisdom as deep as the wisdom of any people who live near the earth. They will not be fooled too often.

The only revolutionary rank and file movement the continent of Africa has known was Mau Mau, there were grave mistakes in the ways of the Kikuyu, but it was a genuine movement of the people. But for such a movement to appear in Rhodesia needs a people like the Kikuyu and it needs many other elements that made for the revolutionary movement in Kenya. Africans in Kenya are not just like Africans in Rhodesia and to speak wildly of Mau Mau in Rhodesia is ludicrous. There are few of the elements that make for Mau Mau and the movement for independence is not a genuine rank and file movement but a movement of bourgeois middle class Africans for political power. It is nothing more.

the end of March will be devoted to the topic of Workers' Control. Later one-subject issues projected include Spain, the breakdown of institutions, the police, and the problems of anarchist teachers in state schools. The topics to explore; the opportunity to do so and present them to you our readers depends on the support we receive from you when we send out subscription reminders, the solidarity as recorded in our weekly Deficit Fund list and the extent to which you help us to find new readers.

WE were almost forgetting to mention FREEDOM in our ap-

peals for *Autonomy*! As soon as we exhaust existing stocks of newsprint we are proposing to print FREEDOM on better quality paper. This will encourage us to consider using more illustrations, though as we pointed out last week, this involves quite considerable additional expenditure. However, we are hoping to publish our own photographic reportage of the Sit-Down Demonstration in the next issue of FREEDOM. With the review absorbing the long articles we are hoping to introduce in the course of the next few months a number of features each of which will interest at least some of our readers. No paper

can print articles and features which will interest all readers all the time. Our aim is to reach as wide a cross section of the public as possible and we must crave the indulgence of those readers who find that some of the material in FREEDOM leaves them cold. As our Readership Survey so clearly showed, FREEDOM readers cannot be categorised! But by the same token neither can FREEDOM. We must accept each other as we are... and we hope you will all find something each week in FREEDOM which will make you reflect that its continued publication is worthwhile!

What two Readers think

DEAR COMRADES,

I read with some consternation about the future plans of the Freedom group. One must applaud the "Churchillian" tenacity actually to redouble their efforts under adverse circumstances but its wisdom may be justifiably questioned. Unless the reservoir of literary contributors is greatly increased, which doesn't appear likely, taking past experience as a guide, it appears to me that the same limitations that governs FREEDOM at present will also limit the future "Autonomy". If, as the editors of FREEDOM have themselves recognised, there is a need for more time to plan and think about the production of the paper, it appears to me that no such time becomes available by just printing another FREEDOM in a different format at the end of each month.

Surely it would do much more for anarchist thought to produce a good monthly with perhaps one FREEDOM in between each issue than just to rename the last issue every month.

As a subscriber and an infrequent contributor I'm interested in keeping this kind of thought alive but I would rather have a well-planned thought-out and more informed periodical once a month than the cliché-ridden pages that one gets so often, partly due I think to the ever-present need to produce a paper at all costs at the end of each week.

Financial considerations aside, it's what is presented to the public rather than how it is presented that makes the difference in the long run.

As the appeal of the paper is not really to the "downtrodden overworked masses", 6d. per copy is not too much for a paper which is, after all, the product of the anarchist movement as a whole; costs, I think, would be covered much more easily by increasing the price of the paper than to wait for spontaneous contributions. Perhaps, not being a member of Freedom group, it may be presumptuous of me to make my criticism, but I do hope it is acknowledged as a helpful suggestion rather than a destructive criticism.

London. S.F.

DEAR FRIENDS,

I want to associate myself with the general sentiments of C.W. regarding the future of FREEDOM, but to propose a more promethean course of reform than he does.

1. There is an urgent need for a monthly or bi-monthly theoretical journal (something like the old *Studi* of the Spanish Anarchists). It should be possible now to launch one, perhaps with a contributing editorial equipe in the U.S. to be responsible for a fixed part of the contents of each issue.

2. Ideally—to keep our slight perch on the world of action—FREEDOM should continue as a weekly, but should be recast in a demotic form. It should become not a doctrinaire labour paper but a serial inquest on the quality of industrial life. It might move experimentally towards jobbing out individual issues to groups of militants in particular industries, shops, schools. FREEDOM ought to have a paid editor who could organize and sustain the dialogue between Anarchists and sympathetic specialists, workers, and technicians. A vigorous demotic weekly and a rigorous journal of theory would reinforce one another: the constructive propositions of Anarchism would be brought into tonic engagements with fact.

A sense of deadlock hangs over the movement, both in England and America, at a time when there is least reason for it. We can now have the attention of the people we want, but we can't hold it with rhetorical solutions to real problems. The costs of a project of the sort proposed above would be very high, but it seems to me at least possible that it might be easier to raise the volume of support for a promethean effort than to maintain a stable, slightly faltering, flow of support for a programme which promises only to leave things pretty much as they have been.

New York, Feb. 8. N.R.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Who would organise the people's militia?

In the issue of 28th January is a letter from R. F. Tite who thinks a society controlled by a "people's militia" organised by "a special body of men" would be an anarchist society! There is no editorial comment on the letter, presumably because the editors feel that such a weird notion in a FREEDOM reader is a simple, self-explaining joke; and I would not bother to comment on it either, if I did not know of at least one person who is at present taking FREEDOM for a few weeks with the object of discovering how anarchists think.

As the institution of the nation-state spreads, so police forces, under various names (such as "people's militia"), become more numerous and more powerful. But there are still many places in the world where organisations like police forces and states count for nothing, where social behaviour is controlled by such forms of government as witchcraft, secret societies, and absolute despotism, or by such anarchistic institutions as force of habit, social conscience, and village conferences. The police, and the functions fulfilled by the police, are demonstrably not indispensable to human society.

And if it were true that there must always be a police force, or some body doing a similar job, this would not mean there would be one in an anarchist society. It would mean simply that there could never be an anarchist society.

London. D.R.

To the Editors of FREEDOM,

DEAR EDITORS,
I would like to thank C.D. for his excellent article "Who cares about the pawns in Algeria". The attitude of the French people to the Algerian war seems to be exactly the same as the attitude of the English people to Nuclear Weapons. And in England, also, it is the young people who are forming the bulk of the Marchers and supporters at Anti-Nuclear demonstrations. We are always being told that demonstrations of the kind

ruary 18th are inefficient and useless, but I agree with C.D., that if they have the effect of rousing others (it may be only a handful) to think responsibly and act courageously, then their value is incalculable.

Yours,
OLIVE MARKHAM.
Coleman's Hatch, Feb. 11th.

Unity in the Left

DEAR EDITORS,
I read with interest the letter from F. R. Iveney announcing a series of lectures on non-political lines in association with the East London Socialist Group, although as I do not live in London, I cannot myself attend these meetings.

Judging from the title of the first lecture—"Can the Left ever be united?"—unity is one of the objects sought, but some definition of "Left" becomes necessary. To be Left is obviously to form part of a larger body, as with the "rebel" elements of the Labour Party, or a group wishing to attach itself to a larger organisation, as with the Russian insured co-ercionist "Communist" Party. Even the Bow Group Conservatives can claim to be left of their party, and it is apparent

that if unity is to be attained, considerable pruning will be required.

After all possible elimination, many diverse currents of thought will remain, and this is as it should be. One overriding principle, one factor common to all, will be necessary, and this is already to be found in anarchist groupings, where amid many varied opinions, anti-authoritarianism is the central pivot around which all thought and action circles. The letters pages of FREEDOM indicate the diversity of thought among anarchists, ranging from the convinced materialist to whom mind can never be separated from matter, to the obscure doctrines of psychoanalysis and existentialists, from atheists to those who can accept Christian dogma, and from the anarchist-communist to the individual anarchist who sees in any form of organisation a threat to individual liberty. All these differing trends can combine in a movement essentially libertarian and I see no reason why Socialists who are libertarian in outlook and who reject in principle the avowed purpose of authoritarian socialists for the "conquest of power" should not join with anarchists in meetings and discussion, as suggested in Mr. Iveney's letter.

As a libertarian socialist, I hope to see greater emphasis on social organisation of the means of wealth production with complete common ownership. Any other form of producing and distributing wealth must of necessity result in conflicting interests and consequent authority to deal with disorder. Only with the identity of interests which common ownership alone can bring will complete individual freedom ever be attained in line with natural development. The conception of anarchism with "a people's militia to undertake criminal investigation" as seen by one of your correspondents, Mr. R. F. Tite, is evidence of the necessity of a clearer statement of anarchist principles. The failure of Mr. Tite to comprehend anarchist thought is, I think, due to the vagueness of the "anarchism from within" theory. Man as a social animal is inevitably conditioned by the circumstances surrounding him. Only within the framework of communal economic system can individual liberty ever survive.

PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT!

WEEK 6

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DEFICIT £16

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|-------------------------|------|---|---|
| Total | 21 | 0 | 0 |
| Previously acknowledged | 84 | 2 | 9 |
| 1961 TOTAL TO DATE | £104 | 2 | 9 |

GIFT OF BOOKS: London: H.M.
Yours sincerely,

Have you Introduced a New Member?

DEAR EDITORS,

You have been sending me your paper for some time now, at the generous expense of a friend of mine, I have enjoyed it immensely. Whilst not an anarchist myself, I feel a kindred spirit in your group, and wish to continue my subscription at my expense.

Your article on religion and mental illness was excellent. Until our most esteemed and famous psychiatrists, who are the only ones listened to and believed, come out in the open with *exposé* such as yours, our lot (the believer) will remain the same. Our being, if we are of the poor work class, one of ostracism, ridicule, and constant barrage of epithets such as "communist, immoral, bad, degenerate, etc., etc. To be branded a traitor to one's own country for no other reason than refusing to accept its particular religion is the lowest, dirtiest, scummiest, and most propagandist of all.

Until the rich, famous, mighty capitalist non-believer openly states his own non-belief we of the humble exploring working class must remain silent. However we can speak through papers such as FREEDOM, but who reads FREEDOM? Our kind who already think as we. It's like talking to oneself. But this is better than complete silence.

Thanks to 'G' for the article. My question is this: How did one manage to get so large a number of adherents to believe in its god? Was rest of humanity so devoid of imagination to not be able to create a god of its own? Did this inhuman, cruel, vindictive god of the Jew appeal to inhuman, vindictiveness which is parcel of all of us to some extent? Personally I could invent a much more appealing god. My god would be a goddess and represent the most just, humane, tolerant and beautiful qualities in the human race and be a god of all races and be devoid of that contemptible quality of racial discrimination.

Yours sincerely,
Springfield, Ill., Jan. 21 (Mrs. M. M.)

Meetings and Announcements

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

IMPORTANT

On and after February 12th—Meetings at "The Swan", Cosmo Place, Southampton Row, W.C.1. (Holborn Station).
FEB. 19.—TONY SMYTHE (W.R.I.) Subject to other engagements, on MY IMPRESSIONS OF INDIA.
FEB. 26.—Max Patrick on THE FUNCTION OF MONEY.
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.
3rd Thursday of each month at 8 p.m.
At Donald Room's, 148A Fellows Road, Swiss Cottage, N.W.3.

FREEDOM

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