FREEDOM

Through Anarchism

Incorporates WAR

COMMENTARY

Vol. 6 No.

25th AUGUST, 1945.

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ANIMAL FARM—A Fairy Story By George Orwell. (Secker & Warburg, 6/-).

This novel by George Orwell is described by the publishers as "a simple satire for a child of our time", which is in fact an accurate commentary on the book: simple-yes, a satire-yes, and very many individuals in the world to-day are childlike. As Jonathan Swift commented: "Credulity is a more peaceful Possession of the Mind, than Curiosity". And, to-day as then, great numbers of people find it vastly easier and more gratifying to accept unthinkingly the vulgar lies and shallow pretensions of propaganda agencies rather than to expend any effort or research in an attempt to reach a true evaluation of the actual worth of various contemporary enterprises and institutions. This seems most ovious at the moment in the case of the Soviet Animal Farm may well prove to be an excellent First Primer in the hands of the Political Child of Our Time, the member of any one

of Father Stalin's many Innocents' Clubs. The book under review is in fact, as the publishers suggest, directly in the tradition of Jonathan Swift's great satirical works-Gulliver's travels to Lilliput, Brobdingnag, Laputa and the Country of the Houyhnhms, the Drapier's Letters, A Modest Proposal and, above all, The Tale of a Tub, Swift's brilliant allegorical onslaught upon the worthlessness and pedantry of some political, philosophic and literary charla-tans of his time. Swift wrote: "The Reason why those Ancient Writers treated this Subject only by Types and Figures, was, because they durst not make open Attacks against a Party so Potent and so Terrible . . . whose very Voice was so Dreadful, that a Legion of Authors would tremble, and drop their Pens at the Sound." Probably George Orwell makes use of the weapon of allegory less from fear of the wrath of Fellow Travellers than from a realization that such "fairy-tales" provide perhaps the most effective means in general of penetrating beneath the accumulated fantasies woven by the Heralds of the Grave New World—the sound principle of counteracting myth by myth.

For new readers

What is Anarchism?

Socialism and communism have a fairly clear meaning for most thinking people; they mean the abolition of private property, the holding of "all things in common". But Anarchism still remains a mysterious word which merely pictures bomb throwing and chaos. The Anarchists want to go a step further than the socialists; they want the abolition of property, but they want the abolition of the State as well. Anarchists believe that so long as there are rulers there will be privileges and oppression.

Anarchism is a word derived from the Greek "anarkhos", which means "without ruler". This does not mean "without order", as order and harmony can more easily be achieved through mutual aid and co-operation than through the competition existing under the capitalist system.

The anarchists want complete freedom for men where they will be able fully to develop their personalities. To achieve this they refuse to invest power in any leader or organisation. The words of a Victorian liberal, "Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely" can be taken as a formula of anarchist theory.

Anarchism has often been described as a destructive and negative creed and it is undeniably destructive, as it wants to uproot altogether the present system of society. One of the principal enerchist theoreticiens, Michael Bakunin, denied however that his was a destructive creed; "in destroying we construct", he said. The anarchist utopie becomes a reality as the old order is destroyed. The state, the church, the wage system, the slavery of work, the yoke of the family, would all fall to give place to an anarchist society in which the principle of organisation would be, not the government of men, but the administration of economic resources by means of the voluntary co-operation of the workers.

The vehicle to achieve anarchism is anarchosyndicalism, i.e. the organisation of workers in syndicates at their places of work on an industrial basis. Anarcho-syndicalism does not merely wish to ameliorate the conditions of the workers under capitalism; it aims at carrying out the social revolution by means of economic action.

Modern enerchism is not a vague, romentic theory. It has been given a sound philosophical basis by deep thinkers like William Godwin, Proudhon, Stirner and Bakunin. It has received a scientific foundation from Peter Kropotkin, who wrote many books and pamphlets in which he showed the intimate connection that exists between the natural sciences and anarchism. His book, "Mutual Aid," which has been described by H. L. Beeles as "a Book that may yet help to make an epoch" shows how mutual aid is to be found everywhere both in Nature and in human society and how, therefore, co-operation should be the basis

That Anarchism was not merely the creed of a set of cranks was paradoxically enough realised by a German judge, Dr. Paul Eltzbacher, who in his book "Anarchismus" has given the best objective study of Anerchist doctrines.

Many books have been written on anarchism and by anarchist writers, but many have not been translated into English, and some, like Godwin's "Political Justice", are out of print. In this country, Freedom Press, which was founded by Peter Kropotkin in 1886, has steadfastly published anarchist books and pamphlets. These include not only reprints of enerchist classics, such as Kropotkin's pamphlets and Alexander Berkman's "A.B.C. of Anarchism", but modern books which bring anarchist theory and methods into the context of the modern social situation.

The most recent additions to their publications include works by Herbert Read, such as "The Philosophy of Anarchism" and "The Education of Free Men", which have had a considerable influence on the younger generation of writers and artists. George Woodcock has made a valuable contribution on the theoretical and historical aspacts of anarchism in his book, "Anarchy or Chaos," and on the practical applications of anarchist theory in his series of pamphlets on the land, railways and housing.

Anarchism in England is attracting to itself many of the young people who are seriously concerned with social problems. There is arising a native body of thought which relates anarchism to the circumstances of modern society and makes it a living and relevant doctrine.

M. L. B.

Legion of Authors in King Street and the Arts Theatre Club trembles with awe and febrile emotion at the mention of the Soviet Myth, the South Sea Bubble of the twentieth century, but Mr. Orwell remains (and has long remained) serene and admirably iconoclastic. Animal Farm is lucidly—and horrifyingly—logical: stage by stage we are shown the inevitable results accompanying a political revolution, (the overthrow of a particular hierarchy and the consequent usurpation of authority by a new hierarchy, basing its power on the retention of the State apparatus and the old moral order). The picture of gradual and ineluctable degeneration and regression which such a process presents is under the pleasant veneer of this political Charade, at once sobering and instructive. It is not this reviewer's aim to be heavy-handed and pompous in his treatment of this novel, which is in itself delightfully amusing and witty story of a Revolution that Went Wrong-the revolution achieved by the animals on a farm, the expulsion of all humans, the inauguration of a new era of Soviet Animalism and the subsequent betrayal of the animals by their leaders, whose superior intelligence was equalled only by their personal opportunism and cunning, and their aptitude for copying the ways of the very humans they had ejected in the beginning. The story itself is extremely pleasurable to read (the Song of Revolt "Beasts of England"; the new Commandments which changed with the times, especially the last one, "all animals are equal" which finally became "all animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others"; the rise to power of Napoleon the pig-Comrade Napo-

Father of all Animals, Terror of Mankind, Protector of the Sheep-fold, Duckling's Friend . . .) But one cannot avoid a serious consideration of the implications of this modern fable, for the moral is grim indeed. It is one which anarchists have been repeating to a hitherto deaf world for many decades: power corrupts all who succeed in achieving it, and no one with power in his hands escapes its taint. Further, not only is this corruption inevitable but it always shows itself on an increasingly virulent scale, and the history of a man or group of men in whose hands power is vested is always the history of a gradual degeneration and reactionhowever slow and concealed this process may be. It is this all-important fact which our Tame Communists, living in their two-dimensional world of Party and Leadership, seem utterly unable to realize. Perhaps this "simple satire" may assist in planting a grain of understanding in those doctrinaire brains.

leon, Animal Hero, First Class and invoked as

It is related of Jonathan Swift that, at the end of his life, on being handed a copy of The Tale of a Tub he remarked: "Good God! What a genius I had when I wrote that book!" Likewise, I am prepared to claim on behalf of Mr. Orwell that Animal Farm is of far greater significance than its unassuming title would

SIMON WATSON TAYLOR.

Atomic Energy and Anarchism Discussion on Revolutionary Methods

The Editors, War Commentary, Dear Comrades.

In the editorial in your last issue you say, quite rightly, that "in a free and co-operative society the discovery of how to use atomic energy could be turned to the lasting benefit of the human race." What you omit to say, and what is of the utmost importance that you should say, and clearly, is how this free and co-operative society is to be achieved. I know what answer I would give, as a pacifist-I have expounded it in my recent book Bread and Roses; it is the revolution-in-the-human-heart answer. I know what answer you would once have given-you would have replied that the workers must seize power by any means at their disposal, with the implication of armed revolution if possible-or if events shaped that way, as in Spain.

I say that this is the answer you would 'once' have given, because with the discovery of the atomic bomb the world is different. Now, it seems to me, all who have hitherto advocated the use of violence (when it seemed necessary) as a means to an end must reconsider their position. The atomic bomb is the logical, inevitable conclusion of the use of violence as a means to an end. The pacifist slogan that violence begets violence has been demonstrated in practice, step by frightful step, all through the war-bigger and better bombs all the time, then on to flybombs, and on to the rocket, and so on to the atomic bomb, the supreme 'miracle of destruction', as it has been called. Atomic bomb No. 1, the one that destroyed Hiroshima, is already outof-date, we learn; the one that destroyed Nagasaki was bigger and better; the one that destroys the next place (London, say, or Moscow, or New York) will be bigger and better still. In time there is no reason why the entire planet should not be destroyed with a single bomb. That man should ultimately destroy mankind is the supreme and final achievement of violence. It means that unless the world abandons the use of violence, of force, as a means to an end, it must ultimately destroy itself. The pacifist is finally vindicated in his

What, then, is the revolutionary answer? What is the anarchist answer? I have given you the pacifist answer. (I? It is the scientists who have given it you with their atomic bomb). Is violence still to be the answer? And if so, isn't it, now, all rather like shooting at tanks with peashooters? The bombing plane alone made the barricades-romantic symbol of revolutionary violence-out of date in Spain. The bombing plane defeated the Spanish revolution-Quite recently in Greece it was demonstrated all over again that henceforth victory must always be to those who commanded the tanks and bombers. But now the bombers and tanks are out of date, too. The old-style anarchist, we know, used to fling home-made bombs (and usually miss!) Machine-guns and tommyguns made the home-made bomb as out of date as the atomic bomb has now made 'the block-And the atomic bomb is, as you have buster'. yourself said, the final weapon in the hands of the ruling-class! The revolutionary can have no recourse to it-even if he would. What Where does the revolutionary go from there? Along the pacifist road to his free and co-operative and stateless society, making the revolution first in the human heart?

The time has come for revolutionaries to face the issues raised by the atomic bomb-by the revolution it itself represents. Is violence still the answer to the How of the Good Society? If so, then we shall know that good society only in heaven . . .

Fraternally, ETHEL MANNIN.

Comrade Mannin conveys a somewhat distorted picture of the anarchist attitude towards violence. The use of violence is not a fundamental principle of anarchism. The only fundamental principle of anarchism is that no man should be under the domination of his fellows, and, while a rich and varied body of theory has arisen as to the means by which we shall attain a society devoid of domination, this body of theory does not, as in political parties, take on the rigidity of a dogmatic system. Therefore, while many anarchists have held that violence may be a necessary part of the struggle for the achievement of such a society, it has never been regarded as necessary to believe in violence to be an anarchist.

To-day, in the anarchist movement generally and also within the group that publish "Freedom", there are anarchists who believe and anarchists who do not believe that the use of violence is practicable as a means of struggle for the free society. What unites them in common action is their belief in the fundamental aims of anarchism and their belief that these aims will not be reached without some kind of struggle. Anarchists do not reject the idea that a change of heart is necessary for the achievement of a good society. Indeed, they regard the change within and the change without as mutually inter-dependent. The attitude of men in general will certainly have to change radically before a revolutionary change in society is possible. A new consciousness of social principles will have to emerge, and it is the function of the anarchist to bring about this emergence of consciousness. But even when the majority of men have reached the desired change of heart, it is unlikely that this condition will be universal. Many men will still continue to wish to retain their power

and property and privileges, and in the last resort they will have to be prevented by means of direct action from halting the final emancipa-

As to the means of struggle that will be necessary, anarchists are not unanimous in their opinions. There are those who regard nonviolent forms of direct action, such as the strike, boycott, sabotage, as being the only practical methods. There are others who consider that violence is likely to occur on both sides during the struggle, and that if it does the anarchist must accept this fact and endeavour to turn it to the right end. But even those anarchists who accept violence are not primarily concerned with it, as one might suppose from Comrade Mannin's letter. They do not want it if possible, but only if necessary, and even then they regard it as an extremely dangerous weapon whose use must be regarded with the greatest caution. Their attitude might best be summed up in the words of Bakunin, "Bloody revolutions are often necessary, thanks to human stupidity; yet they are always an evil, a monstrous evil and a great disaster, not only with regard to the victims, but also for the sake of the purity and the perfection of the purpose in whose name they take place."

The arrival of the atomic bomb obviously alters the nature of the class struggle in that it places a new weapon into the hands of the ruling class, and makes it easier for them to do without a large, and for that reason unreliable army. But the change is quantitative rather than qualitative. The ruling class have always been in possession of weapons which were bevond the attainment of the workers, and which might have been used with devastating effect against an insurrectionary body of workers, In this class, poison gas is only less formidable than the atomic bomb. But these catastrophic weapons, by very reason of their wide and undiscriminating effect, are the last which the ruling class are likely to use against the workers in an area where a great deal of property and a great many of the allies of the ruling class are likely to remain. Furthermore, it should be remembered that the anarchists do not envisage their struggle in military terms. It would be a struggle of the people, anonymous, without uniforms, and carrying on their action in the places where they live and work. Whether or not they used violent methods, they would not organise themselves into regimented armies, for in this way they would both be denying the spirit of the revolution and placing themselves at the mercy of their opponents.

When violence has reached such great heights as the atomic bombs, it is obvious that the revolutionary, who cannot even desire to use such methods, must make it his primary object to destroy them and to prevent their use by others.

THE invention of the atomic bomb, and its revelation of vast new fields for destruction and construction, brings us abruptly to the problem of the social relevance of science and

the relationship of the scientist to society.

Science itself is neutral. It is the knowledge gained by methods of experiment and inductive reasoning, and as such is neither good nor bad, neither beneficial nor harmful. Science lues only when it is applied, by enters the world of human va technicians, to functions which affect the lives of men, individually or in society. Then its application can become good or bad, according to whether it is used for destructive or constructive

Its eventual results depend entirely on the moral attitude of the people who use it. For this reason, we must beware of the tendency during the last hundred years to elevate science into something approaching a system of religious dogma. The unthinking acceptance of the statements of scientists is as harmful as a similar acceptance of the statements of theologians. Indeed, it may even be worse, for it tends to encourage scientific knowledge to harden into a dogmatic system, while the nature of science is to change and grow with the increasing spread of human knowledge into the world of nature.

If we embrace science uncritically, without attempting to direct its results to a definite social purpose, we shall find that it will be used by irresponsible individuals for their own ends, and will result in harm as well as benefit to humanity. We should avoid the unthinking attitude which desires to reject science entirely because of the evil results that have accrued from some of its discoveries. On the other hand, we should see a certain grain of truth in the motive behind this attitude, for it is equally dangerous to go to the other extreme of certain enthusiasts who regard science as being inevitably a positive benefit to humanity.

The Dangers Of Science

Science in the hands of men with no social consciousness, or with erroneous social ideas, is quite capable of wrecking all the beneficial institutions of society and creating a desert from which men will have to start again in the long and painful process of building up a social order that will satisfy the material needs of men and give them the freedom from fear and coercion which will enable them to develop their individual personalities. The anarchist regards science as the necessary means of attaining the material basis of such a society, but also recognises in it a potential enemy of great power, if it is used in the hands of reactionary capitalists or centralised states, as it is used to-day.

Here we should pay certain attention to faults which occur in the contemporary practice of science. And, because of the neutrality of science itself, the comments will inevitably become criticisms of the attitudes and practice of scientists.

In all, hundreds of scientists and scientific technicans have taken some part in the researches leading to the invention of the atomic bomb. They have worked deliberately in order to use their knowledge for an end which involved the destruction of whole cities and of hundreds of thousands of their fellow men without the possibility of escape or self-defence. They have sold their knowledge to the state in order that it might be used to achieve the ends of particular groups of individuals at the expense of the rest of humanity. Some of the minor technicians and research workers may not have known the exact nature of the work in which they were employed, but at least they must have realised that its ultimate purpose was the making of bigger. and more terrible instruments for the destruction of other men.

We cannot class these scientists as monsters of cold-blooded sadism. They are ordinary men and women who accept the prevailing standards of the society in which they live, who produce instruments of death because the government requires it of them, and who, in spite of their acute scientific brains, have too little imagination and too little sense of responsibility to realise the consequences of their actions. It has been a depressing thing in the past few days to read self-congratulatory articles in the newspapers by scientists who have just been responsible for hundreds of thousands of deaths and who have created a great new fear to beset humanity for the years to come. It has been even more shocking to find that no single scientist has come forward to denounce this complete perversion of the function of scientific work to serve the interests of war. One of the scientists who took a leading part in the research declared that she worked for science, not for war. In that case, she should have refused to allow the results of her work to be used for military purposes. She and all other scientists sh refused to work for the state, whose only object in encouraging science is to increase the profits of its supporters or to attain the destruction of its enemies

Nevertheless, the scientists did take part in this destructive work, and it is important to discover why there exists such a gap between their scientific ability and their social consciousness.

Divorce From Reality

The general tendency of modern science is towards steadily increased specialisation. The vast increase in the field of scientific knowledge, and the increasingly technical nature of the practice of scientific research, have rendered it impossible for the old-fashioned universal scientist to survive. It is not even possible for one man to keep contact with all the knowledge available in one branch of science, such as biology or physics. Consequently, each scientist tends to become a specialist, and to carry on his particular fragment of narrowly defined research without reference to the outside world or even other aspects of science. Added to this, while the scientist of a hundred or even fifty years ago was concerned mainly with objects or forces which impinged directly upon the life of man, the modern scientist has reached the stage where he has to conduct his enquiries largely in an abstract and mathematical vacuum, using an esoteric symbolism and a specialist jargon which have no direct relationship with the concrete world in which men live. This tends to isolate him from social realities, so that the sound humanism which characterised many of the older scientists has given place to an abstract attitude that tends more and more to be the enclosed province of a relatively restricted circle of men with limited interests. It is probable that no scientist is deliberately obscurantist in his language, or deliberately avoids social interests, but the nature of his work is such that he is continually tempted to retreat from human realities and to keep himself contained in a world where his thoughts have little in common with those of ordinary men and women. Similarly, other men are cut off from scientific knowledge and from scientists largely because of the same difficulty of finding means to transmit scientific knowledge to people who are not specialists.

Scientists And Totalitarianism

In these circumstances, scientists tend to ignore social movements and to drift with the dominant tendencies in society. Those who think socially at all have a tendency to embrace abstract social theories, like Marxism, which mirror the character of their own formulation of knowledge. So long as they can carry on their research, so long as they can pursue their particular channel of knowledge, they are as willing to work for a bad as for a good cause. Moreover, dealing continually in dehumanised thoughts, figures, diagrams, they tend to lose sight of the human beings whom their actions will affect, and so, because their imaginations have been concerned with abstractions and cease to envisage concrete human situations, they very easily become the creatures of seekers after power, or even themselves seek power.

For this reason, totalitarian régimes have found it well to draw their scientists into the conspiracy of power. In England the scientist was treated badly in peacetime, and is only given some temporary encouragement when war makes his intervention necessary. On the other hand, in Germany and Russia scientists have become formed into privileged classes. Very few of them have failed to make the necessary equivocation of adjusting their knowledge to the political mumbo-jumbo of dialectical materialism or Aryan racialism. To carry on their research and to be given money and privilege have been sufficient for most of them. And it is an interesting fact that among English scientists Russia is generally regarded as the scientific paradise, and that so many scientists have taken over positions of power in the puppet governments which spring up under Russian domination.
While scientists are thus willing to ally themselves to gov-

ernments, and to sell their knowledge to the highest bidder, irrespective of the purpose for which he uses it, they will remain enemies of humanity and will impede the development of a free

What Science Could Give

Yet the application of science is capable of being the most potent material factor in the achievement of the aims of anarchism, which are freedom from the rule of other men and from the domination of toil. But before it can be used for this end, there must be a radical change in the attitude of scientists. They must return to a humanist outlook, in which the service of man is the central object of their work, rather than the determination of certain abstract problems which may lead to destructive as easily as to constructive ends. They must adopt a militant attitude towards those who endeavour to exploit science for ends other than the general good. They must refuse to use their knowledge for making instruments of war, and must temper their isolation with a knowledge of the realities of social life, so that their scientific work can be permeated by a feeling of the need to serve for the good of all humanity.

In return, a free anarchist society can offer the scientists much more than any governing clique. The scientists who are pampered by totalitarian governments are kept to strictly defined lines of research. In a capitalist environment many of the most fruitful lines of research are halted or delayed for many years, because of the opposition of vested interests which regard their profit as endangered by the new invention. And the scientist only comes into his own in such societies when he is willing to use all his energies in inventing methods of wholesale destruction

But in a free society, the scientist would not find any of these circumstances which stifle and warp his work in the world to-day. He would have abundant material for his research, and, because there were no institutions wishing to use his knowledge to keep their power or individuals wishing to hinder his work to keep their profits, he would be able to devote himself to the continual improvement of the conditions of humanity, so that men would become free from want and the need for excessive work. Thus science can achieve its true ends only in a society of freedom.

GEORGE WOODCOCK.

THOUGHTS ON FREEDOM. 2

"I am really sorry to see my Countrymen trouble themselves about Politics. If men were Wise, the Most arbitrary Prince could not hurt them. If they were not wise, the Freest Government is compell'd to be a Tyranny. Princes appear to me to be fools; Houses of Commons & Houses of Lords appear to me to be fools; they seem to me to be something Else besides Human Life." WILLIAM BLAKE.

"What do these knaves mean by virtue? Do they mean war and its horrors, and its heroic villains?"

WILLIAM BLAKE.

"A tyrant is the worst disease, and the cause of all others." WILLIAM BLAKE.

LABOUR PUSS IN TORY BOOTS

THE Labour Party, in gaining such immense electoral success, becomes the political overlord in Britain and the Empire. Bureaucratic Transport House has suddenly to adapt itself to its new regal and Olympian status; into the hands of Bevin, Attlee and Morrison comes political power far greater than any ever before invested in organisations such as theirs.

The repercussions on political developments both in Britain and abroad may well be wide. While, in these early days, the propaganda-fed British public and the restless masses abroad are hailing the change of government with evident satisfaction, the full implication of such a government is not yet appreciated by a deluded

The Labour Party gained support in the country mainly because the people, suffering too long under the heel of exploitation and persecution, emphasised by war conditions. desire radical changes, changes which they believe will be effected by a Labour government. The spectre of sordid pre-war conditions is before them; unrest and discontent have been revealed for some considerable time and it is only through intimidation by defence regulations and emergency orders, backed up by heavily fortified police and military forces, that the coalition government has succeeded in holding the people in abject obedience. Conscription, restrictions, rationing, suppressions with personal disturbance and suffering by bombing and bad housing have been superimposed on the memories of pre-war unemployment and social indignities, and were all contributing factors to the loss of faith in the late governm

Out Of Step

The electorate are attributing to the Labour leaders a very much greater desire for fundamental change than the Labour bosses claim for themselves. Although the common people may desire the social revolution necessary to break down the present order and replace it with a workers' society, they will soon be disillusioned by the new Government. Revolutionaries and libertarians are not tolerated either at Transport House or Westminster.

The most that the electorate can hope for is a mild economic reformism and a change of faces in the familiar seats of political and industrial authority, with the main injustices of ex-ploitation, restriction on liberties and a governing oligarchy carried on in a more acute form

The Labour Party will operate a machine of government carefully built up over the course of three centuries by landlords, financiers, industrialists, lawyers and political careerists. Mild reforms have been introduced from time to time, usually after war, by whatever group operated the governing machine, to pacify a dis-contented people—reforms which have generally been bought at a cost of personal freedom.

Law's Long Arm

The British parliamentary system has been constructed carefully and cunningly to serve the interests and purposes of a ruling class. This ruling class has for a very long time foregathered at Westminster to concert its interests behind a cloak of pomp and ceremony which has become traditional. In the development of this parliamentary method of imperious government, one fifth of the world has come under British domination, as a result of imperial conquest and exploration for profitable exploitation. The mon people of Britain have in turn been subjugated and allotted a classified place in society by the owners and their martinets.

The possessing classes seized the opportunity to establish, through constitutional means, the legal right to hold on to the loot and possessions which had become theirs through criminal conquest at home and overseas.

It is into this structure of social order that the Labour and T.U. bosses go as executors and administrators-a structure under the conthe people have been filched and social liberties demolished.

Taking advantage of the natural law that we must have food, clothing, shelter and an outlet for energy, the rulers have produced a satisfactory condition of subservience. Prime necessities have been used as blackmail: acquiescent slavery has been rewarded by a near satisfaction of these material needs, backed up where and when necessary by force.

King And Constitution

The earlier Socialists such as Owen, Morris and Blatchford recognised the injustices of the existing capitalist society and advocated drastic and fundamental social and economic changes as the remedy. The Attlees, Morrisons and Bevins are no Morrisses, Owens and Blatchfords; and the Labour Party's reformist policy is not the ideal propounded by these Socialist pioneers.

The Labour Party in power to-day pledges itself to defend the King and Constitution, to maintain the structure of ordered society and the principle of government by force, working through an elaborate set of acts of parliament and legal codes. It intends to operate the capitalist machine built up assiduously by capitalists to serve capitalist ends. Tom Pearce's grey mare will still be ridden to Widdicombe Fair, but with a different crowd of adventurers on its

Analysis of Labour's programme indicates little alteration from the policies of the Tories or Liberals. Nationalisation of the coal industries and Bank of England, and conversion of the iron and steel industries into public corporations is the main difference-all the smaller improvements are almost identical in all party programmes, better housing, family allowances and various other social reforms. All parties are agreed that competition and private interest should continue, profit on labour remain, and militarism continue as a national virtue. Mili-tary and industrial conscription, with its attendant restrictions and suppressions, is to be carried into the post-war period.

Reform versus Revolution

The social revolution has not taken place. It would not be propitious to start referring to the King as Comrade Windsor or treating Field Marshal Montgomery as one of the proletariat. What will happen is that two small minorities will vie with each other for positions of power. The nationalisation of the Bank of England will not destroy the directorship. A board of highly paid directors and financial advisers will continue and the power and evil of money will remain. While there may be a few changes of faces, this democratic sanctuary, performing the same artificial tasks, will remain very much as it is to-day.

The same conditions of change will apply to the other industries. The new employers still be a select few quite as remote and highly paid as those already known to us, assisted by even more managers and bureaucratic "secretaries". The new government will do very little to improve the conditions of the people while it continues to operate this exploiting and suppressive out-of-date system, and, in the long run, could do a very great deal of harm.

The Labour government will not so alter or damage the machine of the state that the Tories could not, in ten or twenty years hence, take back that machine and with little inconvenience run it on its accustomed capitalistic lines.

The great danger resulting from a period of mild reformist Labour government is twofold, caused by the disillusionment and frustration of the people and their subsequent reaction. The common people of Britain and throughout 'civilisation' are nearer to universal revolution now than ever before. Once the emotions and conflicts of war have been dissipated, then the populations who have suffered too long for so many foul causes will turn a decided opinion to their personal circumstances. Already the workers in most European countries are convinced that the old order must go if they are to obtain better conditions of living. Reliance on old methods of privilege and private ownership has given way before a political awakening.

Twofold Danger

The war has brought the apathy and drift of the pre-war period to a rude stop. We are not deluded into believing that the mass of the people have, in the past few years, gained a greater intellectual appreciation of political science-the awakening has come mainly through the sufferings and deprivations of war, producing a cynicism and desperation accompanied by a loss of faith in politicians and the existing order. The desire is for change, quick and radical change,

without the realisation of any political objective. The Labour Party, while they remain the parliamentary party that they are, will not and cannot implement the wishes of the people.

As time goes on, and the capitalists become less nervous, stocks and shares will boom again in the City and the industrial bosses will become less and less apprehensive of the "rebels in Westminster"; disillusionment will set in amongst the inspired people.

They will realise that at this time when the people are united in a desire for great changes, confidence placed in Labour politicians was abused and the chance lost. The Labour Party will play a tremendous part in absorbing the aspirations of the workers, and destroying the conditions of revolutionary change. The upsurge will temporarily have been satisfied by a general election and a change of government. But when, as a result of frustration and betrayal, hatred and loathing are added to revolutionary conviction, the resulting civil war may become uncontrolled and dangerous, throwing up in consequence new tyrannies and tyrants just as has happened in Russia, Germany, Italy and

Second Danger

The other great danger is the narcotic of political power. To politicians a political fortune will be as dear as a million pounds is to an industrialist; experience has shown over and over again that of the two the politically drunk is the more dangerous. There are no limits to which the political gods will confine themselves to hang on to positions of power and influence, a circumstance which, when faced with a recalcitrant people, can very easily cause the tipping of the balance into complete fascism.

The principle on which the drastic changes must be decided is that of treating all ownership as theft, and obstructions such as the police, institutions of law and governments as accessories and conspirators to theft. Fulfil the natural desire of people to live full, healthy, free lives under conditions in which their inherent gifts and talents are released and the police, military prisons and law courts become superfluous; government, which is the right hand of the pirate rulers will be described by future historians as a privateering institution which has housed greater and more rapacious "yeggmen" than ever passed through Dartmoor prison.

Conditions that produce government produce slaves. Destroy the conditions which produce slavery, and automatically the purpose of government disappears. Were there no subjects there would be no king: willing subjugation produces dictatorship, but free men govern themselves.

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AMNESTY CAMPAIGN

We reproduce below a statement which has been issued to the press by the Freedom Defence Committee in connection with their campaign for an amnesty for all people held in British prisons under wartime regulations and laws. The campaign was initiated by the display of posters calling upon the people to demand such an amnesty, and we reproduce the photograph of one of these posters. Already there have been many signatures to the demand for an amnesty, and the activities of the committee have received the support of many people, of various opinions, who realise the danger at the present time of the complete loss of our elementary civil liberties unless some really vigorous body exists for resisting the progress of reaction and regimentation, even when it appears under the guise of a Labour government.

The Committee intends shortly to start a second campaign against the continuance of military and industrial conscription.

Although the war in Europe has ended, and the Fascist internees have been released from their confinement, thousands of men and women are still in prison under wartime laws. These prisoners are not offenders against the common law, and the regulations under which they were incarcerated are admitted to be extraordinary measures necessitated only by the emergency of

They include political prisoners (whom the law chooses to class as felons), conscientious objectors, deserters, absentees and offenders under many bureaucratic regulations. The civil prisons are overcrowded with them, and many more are held under appalling conditions in military concentration camps, often undergoing long sentences for trifling offences.

Whatever excuse may have been given during the past few years for such imprisonments is surely invalidated now that the war in Europe is ended and we are told that the nation will gradually return to peacetime conditions. The most important task of a return to peace, more urgent even than housing or food, would appear to be a rectification of those injustices which were committed during wartime when the fundamental rights of the citizen were suspended under the pretext of an emergency situation. It is to be hoped that the new Labour government will take

UNDER WAR TIME LAWS

Apply for Signature Forms to:-FREEDOM DEFENCE COMMITTEE, 17, St. Goorge Street, W.J.

early action to alter this situation. The Freedom Defence Committee intends to begin an immediate campaign for an amnesty for all civilian and military offenders against wartime laws, and would welcome the support of all who are anxious for the liberation of the British prisoners of war in British prisons. A demand for such an amnesty will be presented to the Home Secretary, and signature forms are available from the offices of the Committee, 17 St. George Street, Hanover Square, London,

The Freedom Defence Committee was originated in February of this year, under the name of the Freedom Press Defence Committee, to assist the four anarchists who were being tried under Regulation 39A. At that time it became evident that there was a need for a permanent vigilance body to fight for the preservation of elementary civil liberties, and the Freedom Defence Committee, consisting of individuals of many different shades of liberal, socialist and libertarian opinion, was formed for that purpose.

HERBERT READ,

Chairman, Freedom Defence Committee.

Criminal Lunacy Exposed

We have just witnessed an act of criminal lunacy which must be without parallel in recorded history. A city of 300,000 people has been suddenly and deliberately obliterated and its inhabitants murdered by the English and American Governments. For this action we are held responsible. It is difficult to express in coherent language the contempt and shame which we feel. That this thing should be done in our name makes us feel physically bespattered with the filth of it. Even a public slowly and deliberately accustomed by propaganda to acquiesce in irresponsible murder is stricken by it. We have dissented and protested in the past, but the time for dissent and protest are over. The men who did this are criminal lunatics. Unless this final atrocity is irrevocably and unquestionably brought home to them by public opinion, we have no claim to be human beings, we have no right to condemn any excess of the past or the future, we do not deserve any vestige of freedom.

No alliance of nations fostering such pretensions has ever covered itself with such utter disgrace. The sickening cant about indiscriminate bombardment, the lies about liberty and justice, have appeared for what they are-the restoration of Moral Order for what it is, a death's-head. This action is not to be judged by men-men will be judged by it, as they were judged by the atrocities of Dachau: the only question that

will be asked is-"Did you resist it to your utmost?" One need only consider how last Monday's announcement would have affected the nation if it had been made in 1937 to realise how profoundly our responsibility has degenerated, and how much of the practice of Fascism has been sold to us since then. An endless iteration of enemy brutality has been used to acclimatise us to crimes which have now reached the magnitude of this massacre.

The only remedy which is possible to us, if we are to remain human beings, and not to be lepers in the eyes of every decent person and every period of history, is the condign punishment of the men who are responsible. Not one political leader who has tolerated this filthy thing, or the indiscriminate bombardment of Germany which preceded it, should be permitted to escape the consequence of what he has done. Apart from the fantastic irresponsibility of scientists who are prepared to put such a weapon into the hands of our present rulers, the responsibility for seeing that no political or military figure associated with this action shall be permitted to remain rests upon us. It is high time that we tried our own war criminals, or history will rightly and justly try and condemn us to permanent hatred and contempt.

ALEX COMFORT.

CRAZY "JUSTICE"

FRANKFURT .-- A 21-year-old German was 20 12 years' imprisonment for possessing and firing a rifle. In a fit of despondency over an unhappy love affair he attempted to commit suicide. His former sweet-

heart then told the police he had the rifle. FARMERS V. SHEPHERDS

Thirty farmers from three counties went to Winchester gaol to-day to seek the release of a fellow-farmer who had been sent there yesterday for 14 days after he had refused to pay tithe arrears amounting to £37 7s. 6d.

Mr. E. V. E. Parsons, chairman of the Salisbury branch of the National Tithe Association, on behalf of the farmers, said: "Mr. Thorne is the first martyr to fight this

"We are fighting now to abolish the tithe and also this terrible 1936 Act which has altered the foundation of the tithe.

"It is now made a personal debt, and there are clever lawyers who try to make you bankrupt if you do not pay. We shall carry on the fight

until we are victorious."

Mr. Ronald Farquharson, a Dorset farmer and county councillor, declared, "We shear the sheep, but the Church shears us."

Evening Standard, 9/8/45. You see what they mean when they talk of

"their flock". RAVAGES OF WAR

Two thousand cases of venereal disease were reported among American troops in Germany during the first week after the non-fraternisation ban was lifted on July 14, an increase of 1,500 cases over the weekly figure for May.

A huge increase in the disease among American soldiers in all parts of Europe is recorded in an official report issued to-day. During the two months following D-Day 43,752 men (the equivalent of almost three full divisions) contracted the disease on the Continent.

Manchester Guardian, 18/8/45. "JUDGE NOT, LEST YE BE CONDEMNED"

There are risks in every job. The collier, in an honourable calling, runs the risks of fire, falls and flood,"

That comment was made by Judge Temple Morris yesterday, when he gave judgment with costs in Swansea County Court against two Ammanford miners sued for causing loss of 2,600 tons output by absenting themselves from

The defence was that the men feared an inrush of water which was seen dripping from the Daily Herald, 9/8/45. Lord Justice MacKinnon said recently: "It

is easier to sit in Court than to work in a What risks are attached to Judge Temple Morris's job that he can pass judgment?

VICTORY FEELINGS Barely finished with its welcome to Eisen-

New Work last week greeted 14,526 of Ike's men returning from Europe aboard the 81,000-ton Queen Mary. One blonde Army nurse kept waving a pair of filmy black panties out of a porthole and shouting, "Hey, we won!" Life, 2/7/45.

What U.S. won-from the same page of

What is the upshot of victory for our country? First and most obviously, an enormous increase in America's relative power in the world. That has been a result of practically all our wars. We have never won a war without expanding whether in realm or influence.

EVERYTHING CAN BE BOUGHT

The council of the Yorkshire Mine-workers' Association decided at Barnsley on Monday to recommend to their members for acceptance an agreement with the West Yorkshire Coalowners' Association under which £35 will be paid in respect of any miner killed at work and £17 10s. in the case of any boy under 16 years of age if the men at the pit where the fatal accident occurs continue working.

At many Yorkshire collieries it has been a long-established custom for the men to cease work for a day after a fatal accident.

Manchester Guardian, 15/8/45.

VICAR OF BRAY

LISBON, Tuesday.—Sir Owen O'Malley, new British Ambassador to Portugal, told the Portuguese Press:

Whatever Government is in office, British foreign policy serves the interests of Britain, which do not greatly change.
"The Anglo-Portuguese alliance has served

those interests for 600 years, and I see no reason why it should not continue to do so."-Reuter. Evening News, 9/8/45.

Surely no-one thought a Labour Government would break off relations with the Fascist Doctor Salazar, that pillar of democracy?

Mr. Churchill had an attack of pneumonia early last autumn, it was disclosed last night.

WAR SECRET

It was kept secret at the time, I understand, at Mr. Churchill's own wish. News Chronicle, 14/8/45.

BRASS HATS AT WORK

Astonishing preparations made by the Australian Army to receive the Duke of Gloucester, when he visited troops stationed in Queensland

were revealed by soldiers on leave this week. Army authorities, before he reached Atherton, had gone to the following pains: They transported an eight-roomed timber house 60 miles, from Cairns to Atherton,

moving it by road on two tank-carriers harnessed together; Engineers worked 24 hours laying down the

foundations and installing a hot-water system; Trees 15 miles away were dug up, hauled to Atherton and planted round the house;

Turf was brought five miles to provide a lawn round the house. Before the Duke reviewed the units near

Atherton the men were ordered not to shave for two days, then on the day the Duke arrived they were told to let mud from a nearby river

cake on their hands, faces and uniforms.

The Brass Hats' idea was to give the Duke the impression that the men were dirty and their

uniforms stained after a long route march. Actually they marched only a mile. News Chronicle, 13/8/45.

THE CHURCH AND THE ATOMIC BOMB

To show his disapproval of the use of the atomic bomb the Dean of St. Albans, the Very Rev. C. C. Thicknesse, banned the use of St. Albans Abbey for a Civic Service of Thanksgiving planned for yesterday.

He said last night: "I cannot give thanks to

God for an event brought about by a wrong use of force, by an act of wholesale indiscriminate

He added that, having made his gesture, he was willing to allow a service in the Abbey

on Sunday At a Methodist service in St. Albans the Rev. L. C. Fogg said we should thank God for the work of our scientist which had shortened the

war and saved thousands of lives. News Chronicle, 16/8/45.

SOLIDARITY

Australian investigations following the escape of eight prisoners from a building built specially to accommodate Navy personnel proved that in each of the cells the workmen who built the building left a hacksaw.

When questioned, they told the authorities that they had made the "gift" as a "goodwill gesture."

Glasgow Evening News.

Through the Press

FOR A PERMANENT WAR

Present Red Army plans call for demobilization of the thirteen eldest age groups (ages unspecified) by the end of this year. Soviet Chief of Staff Antinoff, in announcing this, remarked that Russian forces should "remain on a level commensurate with our country's greatness" and "we cannot rest on our laurels."

At Moscow's victory celebration Marshal Zhukoff said: "In the future, too, we must strengthen the economic might of our country, unceasingly perfect our military skill, study the abundant experience of the Fatherland-warand develop our military science."

The regular programme for introductory military training for 15-year olds continues to operate in Russia. The Call (U.S.A.), 2/7/45.

PEOPLE IN REVOLT There are reported almost daily in Italy ex-plosions of public exasperation at the difficulties

Recently there have been a series of riotous disorders in various towns in Southern Italy which are all traceable in the main to the fact that the harvests failed owing to drought, and many people are suffering great hardship.

Strikes and demonstrations against the high cost

of living follow one another in endless succes-

Other outbursts of spontaneous irritation have occurred owing to the shortage of transport. The other day 300 people, some of whom were armed, took forcible possession at Civitavecchia of the small steamer which is at present the only means of public transport between Sardinia and the mainland. The steamer is only licensed to carry 200 passengers, so the captain refused to sail, but the 500 would-be travellers likewise refused to budge. After a two days' deadlock the Government stepped in and provided two destroyers to carry the excess passengers. Manchester Guardian, 6/8/45.

MUSSOLINI ON WAR

Another point of the capitulationists is that 'the people's heart is not in the war.' Now the people's heart never is in any war. Not even in those of the Risorgimento, as can be proved by unimpeachable documents . . . Was the people's heart in the 1915-1918 war, by any chance? Not in the least. Was the people's heart in a war which produced 535,000 deserters in the country? The 'people's heart' seems to have been far less in that than in the present

"The truth is that no war is ever 'popular' when it starts, and it is easy to see why; it becomes popular if it goes well, and if it goes badly it becomes extremely unpopular. Even the war for the conquest of Abyssinia became popular only after the victory of Mai Dev."

From Mussolini's Diary published in ·Reynold's News, 22/7/45. DIRECT ACTION BY **FARMERS**

Sharecropping farmers and agricultural labourers in Pisa province, Italy, passed a resolution at a recent meeting of "Workers of the Soil," which represents more than two-thirds which represents more than two-thirds of the sharecroppers and farm workers of the province. Here is a part of the resolution: "The war was made and supported by those who supported Fascism: the industrial and land-owning capitalists. We farmers, fully aware of the predicament of the nation and of the people's need of our produce, have sown, are sowing and will continue to sow every inch of our fields and will work night and day. But, if the owners of the land which we work do not repair our houses at once, if they do not re-purchase for us at acceptable conditions the livestock which was taken away, we will make good our expenses and our damages by increasing our share of the crops." New Leader, U.S.A., 9/5/45.

"THE OPIUM OF THE PEOPLE"

The Soviet government last week released, in the U.S., official pictures of a scene that must have made Lenin spin in his glass case on Red Square: the election and coronation Feb. 4 in Moscow of a new patriarch, the 13th, of the czars' own Holy Orthodox Eastern Catholic and Apostolic Church, the so-called Russian Orthodox Church. A Communist official, who really governs the Church, gave Patriarch Alexei his blessing. Soviet cameramen made a half-hour movie of this, the first Church Sober (Congress) since that of 1917-18, during the Bolshevik Revolution.

The re-established Church, politically powerless within Russia, may further Soviet aims outside Russia. Its value to Stalin is indicated by the fact that last week the new patriarch was on a round of visits to the patriarchs of Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria in the explosive Middle East. And the Moscow Patriarchate has offered forgiveness to the North American Church, which broke off in 1934, if it will promise to "abstain from political activities against the U.S.S.R."

Life (U.S.A.) 2/7/45.

READY FOR THE NEXT WAR?

The United States had more Atom Bombs ready to drop on Japan when the war ended, and the production of the new super-weapon has continued since the surrender, Colonel Franklin Matthias, director of the Atom Bomb plant at Richland, Washington, said to-day.

He added that the 5000 workers at the Richland plant "have no instructions about slowing down production, and will produce until they are ordered to quit."

Evening Standard, 16/8/45.

Liberated by Red Army Anarchist Commentary

A French Soldier's Experiences

The Editors believe this account by a French soldier of his 'liberation' the Russians at the end of this war to be of considerable factual interest. This does not of course imply that we necessarily hold the views expressed during this account, but its value as an eye-witness report fully warrants, in our opinion, its publication. For obvious reasons it has been deemed unwise to publish the writer's identity, but we are in possession of the name, prisoner of war number and Stalag identification of this soldier.

For several days already rumours had been circulating that the Soviet troops, impatiently awaited my us prisoners, had occupied the town of Millau and were already storming into East Prussia. The German radio had denied the truth of these rumours, but in the afternoon of January 20th the mayor gave the order to evacuate the village that very evening. So we set out and, by the evening of January 22nd, after having crossed the town of Saafeld, we arrived at a large farm-estate 5 kms. away from that town. We were at Ebenau. The evacuated Germans entered this extensive property and slept there, whilst we, French prisoners of war, Polish men and women workers and Russian deporters, took refuge in the barns. At about ten portees, took refuge in the barns. At about ten o'clock in the evening a Pole came running towards us telling us that a Soviet tank was waiting on the road. We could hardly believe it; going outside, we saw the sky all lit up, the fown of Saafeld was burning, and yet we had heard neither gun or rifle fire-we decided to resent ourselves to our liberators next morning. In the morning at 8 o'clock, a comrade who had been grooming his horses ran back towards us saying: "The Russians are arriving!"

Meeting The Russians

At this, we go out quickly and find ourselves face to face with two Russian soldiers dressed in white overalls, who levelled tommy-guns at us and demanded our identity. The young Russian nen who were with us refused their identity, the Poles also, and explained to the Russians that we were French prisoners of war. The Russian soldiers came up to us without a word, pressed their guns against our stomachs and began to rifle our pockets, removing all our watches. We were indignant but in view of their attitude we had no alternative but to give in. They told us that everything was in order and that we could remain there. They then walked towards the manor and, to announce their arrival to the Germans, fired a few bursts from their guns in the courtyard. They entered the house, reappearing a few minutes later and

The Germans emerged a short time afterwards and hurried towards us, begging us to protect them. We replied that we were glad to see their present predicament and that they were only getting what they deserved; the women all returned to the manor in tears, but this sight only made us feel better. We were now revenged for all the sufferings we had undergone during our captivity; this people, with all its boastfulness and haughtiness, was beginning to realize the situation at last.

Later, other Russian soldiers arrived, always threatening us with their tommy-guns, and demanding our watches; luckily, we had the Poles and young Russian women to answer for us. Some Poles had discovered in the outhouses of the farm a distillery, with a reserve of 8,000 litres still in the casks. They filled various receptacles with this brew and offered it to the Russian soldiers who, by now, were arriving more or less continuously, but all on the sides of tanks or in armoured trucks. Remembering the reception we had had from the first Russians, we thought it prudent to remain inside one of the stables.

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During the day, an extremely correct Russian officer, after verifying that we were French, told us to leave the next day with our employers and return to the villages whence we had come. During this time, the Poles had already given the best horses to the Russian soldiers, ransacked the Germans' belongings and climbed into some sledges which were in the courtyard (all of which was quite understandable); we ourselves had already entered these carriages and removed wine, cigars and cigarettes which the Germans had stacked there, and we were enjoying a terrific feast washed down with a large quantity of alcohol . . . Next morning we came across some French prisoners who advised us to go with them and leave the Germans to fend for themselves. So we all went off with them. It was then that we saw the first dead Germans-soldiers, old people, women, children, sprawled in the snow all with a bullet through the head.

Looting Continues

We came in view of Saafeld: the town was still burning. On the outskirts of the town, at the entrance to a large factory where we read on a placard "We will never surrender," more corpses were lying, mostly women with their skirts dragged up, exposing naked stomachs. We went on a few hundred metres further and met up with the first units of the Russian infantry (unshaven, in rags and tatters, dirty, without packs or helmets, but one and all carrying on a shoulder-strap a tommy-gun which we immediately christened 'cheese box' or 'coat dusting machine').

I was walking at the head of our column, right on the side of the road, for the tanks were still passing at great speed and we had to make way for them; the tanks were lined with soldiers who raised their fists to us, and we noticed many women-soldiers on these tanks. A Russian crossed the road, caught sight of my Sam-Browne belt and without a word unbuckled it and tore it off me; others had also approached other comrades, taking from them as they passed any haversack or kit-bag they might be carrying. We continued on our way, and, a few metres further on, another soldier tore off my fur gloves; I began to grow disheartened.

A Ravaged Town

We entered Saafeld, an acrid smoke choking us; some Russian soldiers were throwing out of the windows the furniture and kitchen utensils from the houses, and we quickened our pace as the spot seemed dangerous. Saafeld was already almost completely destroyed, all the houses were burning and the Russians were occupied in setting fire to those which had not already caught alight. We saw them busy at lighting up other fires; when the fires were well under way the Russians sat down in the snow, took from their pockets a chunk of black bread, a bit of bacon of a tin of bully beef and gazed contentedly at the blazing fires. We reached the square and a Russian, on seeing us, said to us in excellent French: "Long live De Gaulle, long live France!" We asked him to direct us to headquarters, and he led us into a half-charred house where he presented us to an officer who immediately demanded whether we had any revolvers; when we replied in the negative, he ordered us to hand over our watches, knives and razors. We made him understand that our watches had already been "requisitioned"; he laughed at this and told us we could continue on our way. asked to be escorted by a Russian guard and to be given an official pass, to which he agreed and told us to go outside.

During the search we had undergone some Russian prisoners liberated by their brothers in arms had arrived in the town square. The officer lined them up beside us and made them a speech. Judging by his gestures and tone of voice we realized that he must be reproaching them. At last we moved off and, curious to know what this officer can have been talking about, I approached a Russian and asked him in German what he had said to them. The Russian replied that the officer was condemning them for having allowed themselves to be made prisoners, that they had behaved like traitors to their country and that they should have died rather than surrender.

Women In Tears

We continued on our way; along the roads there was an endless succession of overturned, ransacked vehicles, corpses of women and children and occasionally isolated German soldiers, and disembowelled horses still harnessed to the

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Osterode, we were stopped once again, this time by an armed mongol, whilst an urchin of hardly sixteen years searched us. Finding nothing, he let us pass after making threatening gestures. This town was also partly destroyed and still burning. The Russian prisoners advised us to enter the houses and sleep there that night, The next day we reached Reichenau. In a nearby house there were also some French prisoners, some Polish women and some young Russian women who were trying to regain their own country. In the evening, some Russians, all in a state of advanced intoxication, came to verify our identity.

The next day we took up our journey again and came across some of the Polish and Russian women, whom we found in tears. We asked them what had happened. They explained to us that some Russian officers and soldiers had made them go up one storey higher in the house to prove their identity. But as soon as they entered the upper room the officers proceeded to rape them and then handed them over to their soldiers. Disheartened, we continued on our

(The concluding part of this article will be published in the next issue of "Freedom.")

AMNESTY! AMNESTY!

More people are in prisons in this country than at any time since 1914. The total is approximately 15,000,

which compares with 15,700 in 1914. During the last war, the figure fell to 9,600 in 1917, but it rose to 12,000 in 1920. During the next five years it fell to an average of about 10,500. It was 13,000 in 1933, but it had fallen to 11,000 just before the outbreak of the war in 1939.

"I weep for you" the Walrus said . . .

The directive issued during July by the military authorities in Poland for the commemora-tion of the anniversary of the Warsaw rising demonstrates a sickening hypocrisy. The way in which the Russian armies stood aside and let the Warsaw rising be drowned in blood, in order that they might have no revolutionary forces to deal with when they entered Warsaw, came as a shock to all decent men, even to those who had a fairly good knowledge of Kremlin perfidy.

The Warsaw military authorities assert that the rising was engineered by the London Poles, without proper consultation with the Red Army, and was therefore doomed from the outset. This of course does not explain the curious fact that the Red Army, which had swept on without interruption to the opposite bank of the Vistula, suddenly halted when the Warsaw rising began, and only sent scanty supplies after the R.A.F. had already done so for some days.

The directive goes on to say that: 'Nevertheless the two months' struggle of the Home Army and other military formations backed by the entire population, is a marvellous feat of arms and a most glorious page in Polish history. It also records the unity of all Poles which evoked patriotism all over the

country and admiration throughout the demo-

cratic world. Therefore homage is to be paid to all who took part in it."

Dead insurgents thus became heroes. But live ones are hunted down systematically. Not long ago twenty-five underground fighters escaped from Poland into Czechosloval to avoid the Communists and reach American occupied Germany. They were arrested by Czech officers who began to take them to the Soviet Command. The Poles then disarmed and shot the Czechs. They escaped, but two days later were intercepted and in a pitched battle seven of them were killed, eight escaped and the rest were captured. An interrogation proved that they were in fact merely escaping from the Lublin government, which they feared would

Since then, however, completely false reports were concocted by the Czech and Polish authorities, and by the time the story reached the London press it had become transformed into a matter of Polish reactionaries carrying out banditry on behalf of underground Nazi organ-

As many incidents of this kind may happen in Europe in the near future, we should always be on our guard not to accept the official explanation, which may well make an accusation of reactionary activity merely in order to cover up something to the discredit of the authorities concerned. Even revolutionary actions on the part of the workers may well appear in the English press under a similar distorted guise.

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"LOYALTY TO LABOUR" -WHY?

Labour's conquest of power is due in a very small measure to the to-called "Left-swing" (new-fangled name for discontent) in Europe, but came primarily because it has stolen the thunder of the Tories. It used to be a reformist drag on the workers. Now it is a party of the professional and middle-classes.

The Daily Express is the first of the Tories to welcome this heartening fact (for them)

'More than half the Socialist M.P.s to-day spring from the professional and middle classes. Less than half of them have ever carned a day's pay by manual labour.

Inevitably the weight of the new professional and middle class elements in the party will be felt with a consequent change of emphasis on legislation." (1/8/45). An examination of the candidates' background,

plus one's own observations of the electoral campaign, confirm this report entirely. What emerged above all in the election is the apathy of the working-class, as compared with the rising enthusiasm of the middle-class for the policy of the Labour Party.

In the old Labour strongholds, there were the usual ten, twenty and thirty thousand majorities for Labour, but there were quietness, apathy and lack of interest as compared with the rallies, enthusiasm and busy activity in the middle-class areas where Labour got the most "unexpected"

This signifies clearly that Labour is going to carry out a programme which may or may not please the Tories but will definitely please that stratum of the population on whom the Tories depend. This is in particular the case with nationalisation, for it has never been shown that the workers would benefit at all from it. Mr. Attlee once stated he did not see that a worker on the L.N.E.R. was any less a cog in the machine under private enterprise than he would be under State control. The benefit of nationalisation goes to the State, that is to say to the technician, the manager, the professional man, whose class party is now in power.

At the present time we must make it clear to the workers just what the Labour Party does represent, for it can quite easily be foreseen that for the purposes of "industrial peace" the workers will be appealed to for loyalty to "their" government and efforts will be made to divert the rising tide of ardour and discontent at this critical time away from direct action for food, housing, demobilisation and in industry, by saying "trust your leaders and don't embarrass them till they've had a chance.'

"HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN . . . ?"

Some questions pursue one on the platform meeting after meeting, reappear in correspondence in letter after letter-the questioners being convinced there is no answer possible, and yet the question itself is only a most threadbare coat in a new dye. Everyone nowadays jeers at the old Tory argument that we must have had a pretty good standard of living between the wars since the soldiers were so heroic at defending their heritage, etc., yet how often do we hear the stolid argument that Russia can't be what you Anarchists say it is, etc., etc., because look at the millions of Russians who went out to fight, who tore the guts out of Germany, drove Hitler back and so on and so on. (A recent letter put it that the writer had to admire Stalin because of the way his people had died!) I have got hoarse with repeating on the platform

Petain's Trial A LEGAL FARCE

After long days of trial, endless statements by the witnesses for the prosecution and for the defence, the sentence against Pétain has at last been given. Practically everyone in France expected the solution which has in fact been adopted. By finding Pétain guilty and condemning him to death the Court gave moral satisfaction to the Resistance; by not putting the sentence into effect the opinion of the pro-Vichy elements is respected.

The whole trial was absurd from beginning to end. It was pretended that the trial was conducted according to legal procedure whereas in fact Pétain having received his power from the National Assembly he should have been judged by that same Assembly. One also witnessed the grotesque situation of Pétain being prosecuted and judged by men who had taken their oath of fidelity to him as head of the State. Mornet, the public prosecutor had furthermore been appointed by Pétain as President of a Commis-

sion whose job was to denaturalise French Jews.

prosecution charged Pétain with having asked Hitler for an armistice in June 1940. But the witnesses called by the Prosecution had all shared in the responsibility of ending the war. Paul Reynaud who was Prime Minister at that time called Pétain to the government knowing full well that the Marshal preferred an armistice to military capitulation on the field. Daladier came into the witness box to try to prove that the French army could have carried on the struggle at the time when the armistice was signed. But Daladier was the man who signed together with Chamberlain, the Munich agreement in 1938. Albert Lebrun, who was President of the Republic in 1940, came to declare how desperate he was at the signing of the armistice. But evidence proved that this "witness" had sent letters of congratulation to Pétain after he had gained power. And a French paper reminded the public that Lebrun was present at a Council of Ministers when General de Gaulle was sentenced to death as a traitor.

In short, the whole trial proved that practically all the members of the Government of the Third Republic had accepted the armistace of 1940 as a necessity. The whole atmosphere of the trial could only have a demoralizing effect on the French people. It was a disgusting exhibition of dirty linen being washed in public. The trial is reported to have cost £1,000 a day, yet at one time the newspapers reported that the accused was asleep (he seems to have slept most of the time), as well as several of the jurors, while others were engaged in doing crossword

puzzles. The only possible conclusion from all this is that only revolutionary justice could have demanded an account from the men who are responsible for the sufferings of the French people. During the trial of Pétain a guilty man was judged by his accomplices and was merely condemned to satisfy public opinion: that is to say, in order to preserve the interests is going to play a major part to a total seat Whatever Ireland's or Sweden's political complexion, they would clearly have played no more "heroic" a role in the war than they have done. even with a "Communist" glortheatest of stellarises. On the other hand, the Russians, like surselves and the Americans and the Germans, are in a position is racrifice their fives for the greater glory of the beloved masters. As long as there is Imprevalent there will be was, and so long so certain conseries consein hig powers they will make the major sacrefices in war. The others are merificed to other wave-like India and Feland.

It arounds simple enough to them in terms of England and America and Germany; but when it comes to Risena a peculiar pan-Niabiam acomo to affect our so-called Lettins. At the Central Hall, Westminster, overflow rally is combined Labour's victory (26th July) their speak-comen called out for cheers for "Joe Scalin, who also belped to win the war"—which rather settled the crowd, Servicemen in particular, who had been so indigment about the suggestion that Churchill won the war. Of course, the "Communists" yelled their heads off.

"YOU DELIBERATELY THREW AWAY . . .

Another illusion is that about how the workers got the vote. Anarchists are often accound of wasting the vote for which our forefathers died, were transported, etc." In fact, the workers got the vote by a political wangle of the Tories. In giving the vote to the working-classes, Disracli rubbed his hands with gles and said, "But don't you see, we have dished the Whigs?" stole their primary argument—that the suffrage should be universal-he "found them bushing and walked off with their clothes"; every independent historian, and Disraeli's own words, year witness to the fact that universal suffrage was introduced as a party-political fight.

But our forefathers were imprisoned, treasported, killed, by the capitalist class. Yes, but not for the vote-in the class struggle, and in the struggle for civil liberties. But civil liberties are not the same as universal suffrage. Either can exist without the other.

There is too much sloppy thinking on this point. People say (you could read it in almost every newspaper) that "the democratic machine was getting runty" because there had been no election for ten years. Extraordinary! We missed only one Election-that of 1940-and the democratic machine goes rusty! These people who think civil libertles mean casting a vote do not know what civil libertles mean, and admit it by the fact that they never do anything else bar cast a vote. We did not vote, and yet we have exercised civil liberties so far as they would stretch-we may have gone a bit further at times but that's because the definition of civil liberties is being continually hedged and limited by capitalist governments. Civil liberties include 'unlicensed printing", free speech, free assembly, These we must take advantage of. When they are stolen from us, we will show we can use even more effective weapons in our

Don't tell us we neglect civil liberties because we neglect the vote. We use them all the time, not once every five years—and rusty if you miss one five-yearly stretch.

AMERICAN ATROCITIES

I have information to prove that Americans are just as guilty of war crimes as are any other Some of this information was related to me by Captain A, Captain B, and Chaplain C, at present all members of the X Engineer Combat Group. What they report took place in the South Pacific. These three officers agree that orders came down from "the General" that no prisoners were to be taken. Japanese prisoners were disarmed, questioned, and then murdered. On the Admiralty Islands, Captain A saw forty unarmed Japanese prisoners lined up and shot. Captain B saw similar killings in New Guinea. Also in New Guinea, Chaplain C reported that he was present when a few Japanese prisoners were "saved" to be photographed by a Life photographer. As soon as the photographer had enough shots, the prisoners were led off into the bushes and were beheaded. The reliable informants who related the above incidents were not trying to prove anything. They were merely relating their experiences while in the combat zone. These examples are certainly not usual cases. Almost every returned American soldier includes tales of American atrocities with his experiences abroad.

If we are to be objective, we must reject any theory of the moral superiority of one group or nation over another. During time of great stress, especially during war, base deeds will be committed by human beings. If we are to eliminate atrocities, we must eliminate war and the causes of war. The significance given to the atrocities committed by German and Japanese by American newspapers is false and foolishly misleading. This short-sighted interpretation of the causes of atrocities is detrimental to us and to the entire human family. It foments misunderstanding and hatred which are fundamental in bringing about more wars and more atrocities. Rather than spending our time hunting and prosecuting "war criminals" we could better devote ourselves to understanding their problems and the problems of the world. This would eventually bring about mutual understanding and the outlawing of war and atrocities.
U.S. ARMY LIEUTENANT.

(The C.O. has in its possession the name of the writer of this letter, together with the names of the officers mentioned, who witnessed the incidents described. In addition, the letter identifies the military unit to which each is attached. For the protection of the men, how-ever, the information is withheld.—The Editors.) Conscientious Objector (N.Y.), July 1945.

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