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Freedom

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Twopence

"Liberty consists, not in having a just ruler, but in not having one at all"
CICERO.
"Mankind's subjection will continue just so long as it is tolerated."
PROUDHON.

Where is 'Progress' Leading Us?

It is often somewhat easily assumed that we are living in an era of progress. Yet a survey of the conditions of the world to-day, the state of body and mind of its people, and the events in which humanity has been involved in recent years, gives us much reason to ask whether, in fact, what we see about us can be called progress, and, if so, whether such progress is of any benefit whatever to the human race. For real progress cannot be measured in material improvements alone, in new inventions and enhanced comforts for the lucky; on the contrary, the main and abiding object of human efforts should be the attainment of a concrete condition of freedom and equality, and material improvements are beneficial only in so far as they promote the attainment of this end.

If we look at the world to-day from this point of view, we find little scope for satisfaction. We have to admit that at present, whatever may happen in the future, there is neither any widespread movement towards freedom, nor any deep consciousness among most people of its paramount necessity. In the last few decades freedom has tended to lose its living meaning, and to become an abstraction on the lips of politicians, a myth which ordinary men tend to see as something disconnected from their own lives. Whereas it should be some-

thing which we experience every day in the ordinary actions and relationships of our work and leisure.

Indifference To Individual Liberty

The attitude of the majority even of the workers is shown in the marked decline in the consciousness of individual freedom which has taken place well within living memory. Attacks on freedom which, at the beginning of the present century, would have raised a

storm of protests, now pass almost unnoticed. Important political trials arouse a mere fragment of the interest they would have aroused in a previous generation. Campaigns over concrete issues of freedom, like the amnesty campaign for releasing wartime prisoners, have been received with public indifference. The reintroduction of conscription as a permanent peacetime measure has aroused protests which have involved only a minute proportion of the population, and have done nothing to deter the government in its authoritarian intentions.

Nor is the indifference confined to questions of freedom merely. The old radical humanitarian ideas, inadequate and class-bound as they were, represented something better than the blunted sensibilities of our own day, when concentration camps become subjects of horror only in obedience to the voice of government propagandists, when famine in Europe and the East arouses no response among so many people, when armed repressions in all parts of the world are allowed to continue with hardly any protests from the workers of other lands. An example of the state of public consciousness on such broadly humanitarian issues can be seen by the response to the appeals for food parcels for Europe. Large as the figures may seem in themselves, taken in relation to the whole population of England they represent little more than one or two people in every thousand who are really willing to do anything concrete towards ending starvation in Europe.

This question of the deterioration of popular feelings must be regarded in the light of the growth of the political conception and concrete reality of the state. Forty years ago this institution was widely challenged even among non-

anarchists. In those days almost all socialists followed Marx in talking of the withering away of the state as a desirable possibility of the near future. Now they never mention it. On the contrary, the only solution they see to the world's problems is more state control, a more powerful bureaucracy, more regulation and conscription.

Paralysing Effect Of The State

Yet at present we are already seeing the paralysing and stultifying influence of the state in action. Among the workers to-day there is no longer any incentive to work. Income tax has removed the old profit incentive of the capitalist world; and it has been replaced by no socially constructive motive. Solidarity, interest in work, the sense of social responsibility, the direct control of industry by the workers, and all the other factors that give men the feeling of working for their own good rather than for the profit of the state or of private capitalists, are totally lacking in work to-day.

The result is an apathy and irresponsibility among the workers, and this in turn has resulted in an industrial crisis which, it must be admitted, is so serious as to show really great danger of paralysing the country. To-day, men no longer have any need to fear the bogey of unemployment, and, as there is no positive reason for them to work, they quite rightly do no more than they need.

But unless the Labour Government is prepared to give some positive gains to the workers—which its own system of austerity and hard work renders unlikely—it will have little alternative but to fall back on the old capitalist method of creating a pool of unemployed labour

which will force those in employment to toil in order to keep off the dole. Already, with the threats of closing down factories, we can see this policy in the offing. The state, in fact, is failing to provide for the workers what they expected of it when they elected the Labour Government, and the whole development of private capitalism is beginning again, with the creation of economic crises which in their turn will lead to further wars as a last resort for preventing internal disruption of the state.

Real Progress Is The Achievement Of Freedom

The workers will have to give up their illusions about the socialist state. They will have to cease believing in the possibility that a perfect bureaucratic state, with millions of regulations, forms, laws, etc., will ever give them the life of free and whole men. If progress is to have any real human meaning, it must lie in the achievement of freedom and equality, and this will only be attained when men have recovered their powers of free activity.

We have reached a turning point in history, where our fight must be against all those illusory ideas of progress which are associated with the state and its pretensions. We must go back to the elementary human principles of freedom and equality, and transform them, from the vague terms in politicians' speeches, into the real substance of our social life. But we can only do this when the mass of the workers recover their concern for these values and are ready to express them on a large scale by their own initiative, in action against the state.

Closed Shop Climbdown

As we prophesied, since the Industrial Notes in the last issue of *Freedom* were written the Willesden Borough Council has bowed to the great public support for the resistance of the nurses in that district to a move attempting to force them into a trade union. The notices issued to the nurses have been withdrawn, and the first effective resistance to this most recent form of industrial tyranny has been successful.

An interesting aspect of this affair has been the attitude of the Government spokesmen. Throughout the closed shop campaign, the various ministers have evaded any open discussion of the matter, but at various times Isaacs and others have made statements which would seem to show sympathy for the closed shop. Now, however, realising that public opinion is beginning to realise the threat to freedom implicit in this campaign and is reacting against it, the ministers have seen that such a crude means of imposing a Labour Front on English workers is unwise in their interests. So they have turned round and slashed their own faithful followers. Bevan, Morrison and Isaacs have all come out in public speeches with attacks on the Labour

majority of Willesden Borough Council. At first sight it seems surprising that the official representatives of the Government party in Willesden should be castigated for pursuing a policy which is obviously sponsored by the Trade Union and Labour bureaucrats. But there always have to be scapegoats for policies which become unpopular, and the Willesden councillors can console themselves with the cold comfort of being used for this purpose.

Meanwhile, the closed shop campaign continues, sporadically, with rather despicable attempts by union branches to put Jehovah's Witnesses, and other people who do not like the official unions, out of work. The latest news on a large scale is that there will possibly be talks soon among the railway managements and the three railway unions on the question of enforcing the closed shop in the railway industry. It will be interesting to see how this situation develops, as there are always considerable jealousies and dissensions among the railway unions. The N.U.R. claims to be an industrial union and has always wished to eliminate both the R.C.A. and the A.S.L.E. & F. The last two bodies are very anxious to maintain their integrity. But there is a great

deal of borderline membership between the three organisations, and poaching members has been a regular contest between officials of the various unions.

Another point is that there are large bodies of railway clerks which are unorganised, particularly head office clerks, whose attitude of non-membership has up to now been encouraged by the Companies. It will be interesting to see whether, in the new circumstances of collaboration between unions and employers, the railway managements will turn over to a policy of inducing their central bureaucracies to join the union.

SPAIN AND U.N.O.

The United Nations have discussed the Spanish question with a great deal of publicity, and, as it has become clear to them that the workers of the other nations are becoming impatient of the attitude of tolerance towards Franco shown up to now by their governments, they have at last decided to take some action. The action is purely a token one; after all the discussions the only result was that Franco's government was to be denied participation in the UNO conferences and that members of UNO were to recall their diplomatic representatives from Madrid. But no measure of any kind was adopted that might assist in any way the workers' movement of resistance and revolt within Spain.

The UNO decisions will clearly do nothing to harm Franco's government. Indeed, acts of this kind usually give a dictatorship a new lease of life, because they externalise a country's troubles; the leader is able to blame them on to outside agents, and thus divert a certain amount of discontent from himself. Remembering the way in which the Nazis managed to use such a situation to perpetuate their rule, it is difficult to imagine that UNO delegates were unaware of the likely consequences of their action. Indeed, the majority of them probably adopted it deliberately as a means of doing Franco no harm while appearing to accede to the wishes of the people of their own countries.

Meanwhile, the Spanish people are continuing to show their spirit of resistance. In spite of the frequent recent arrests of anarchists and syndicalists, the working class of Barcelona are showing an increasingly active spirit of revolt. The *Daily Mirror* on the 5th December went so far as to quote an official report which stated that "anarchy" prevailed in Barcelona owing to a "workers' rebellion in which workers are dominating the managements." The same report also stated that revolutionaries from North Africa had attempted to land on the coast near Malaga. A further report in the *Manchester Guardian*, emanating from Madrid on the 8th December, described the large numbers of bomb explosions which had taken place recently in Barcelona, and described an attempted general strike against the "spontaneous" demonstrations in support of

Franco. While it is unwise to give too much credence to isolated reports of "rebellions", the whole tenor of the recent news which reaches us from Spain shows a great resurgence of revolutionary feeling among the workers there. It is clear that many Spaniards want to get rid of Franco, and equally clear that few of them want Giral's government in his place. Undoubtedly, when the Franco dictatorship does collapse, the anarchist movement will be as important a factor as ever it was in Spanish social life, and the more uncompromising this movement is, the more influential it will become.

SMUTS JUSTIFIES HIMSELF

General Smuts, fresh from the UNO conference, has made two speeches in South Africa, in which he has sought to justify the actions of the government of the Union in imposing legislation based on racial discrimination. He tried to contend that equality did not fit the facts of the world to-day, and his argument on this point showed a remarkable lack of logic for such a celebrated philosopher.

"If it applied to South Africa," he said, "we see at once the difficulties in which we would be placed—a couple of million whites in Africa surrounded by 150,000,000 coloured peoples. If there is to be equality in all respects, where do we come in? Had we better not pack up and go? It is a concept which does not fit the facts in South Africa."

"The fact is that equality does not prevail anywhere in the world. India, who attacked us, is the country of the greatest discrimination in God's world. What we stand for in South Africa is fairness and justice, and as long as we are fair and just we shall get through." Such paltry reasoning, of course, presents no justification at all for the actions of Smuts and his supporters. The fact that equality does not exist anywhere in the world is no argument against its desirability. And it is clearly impossible to have fairness and justice without complete equality of rights.

Fighting Continues in Indo-China

(From a French Correspondent)

It is not easy to have a clear idea of the events taking place in Indo-China. It one accepted the simple Marxist pattern one would see in them the struggle for emancipation of colonial people. But this does not take into consideration the Viet Namian bourgeoisie, anxious to exploit the Indo-Chinese proletariat for its exclusive benefit. It does not take into consideration either Russian and American imperialists, as well as Chinese capitalists, who would be glad to see the end of French influence in Indo-China in order to take its place.

Should one accept the hypocritical attitude of the socialists who talk of pacifying the country and forget the essential elements of the situation: invested capitals, exports and imports, cheap labour? Should one support crumbling French imperialism against the growing imperialism of Russia and America? Should one side with the mandarins of Hanoi and the business men of Saigon?

No. These are all impossible attitudes which are not even defended by bourgeois papers. Even the catholic *Témoignage Chrétien* has denounced Admiral Thierry d'Argenlieu, French High Commissioner in Indo-China (also a Catholic). The left-wing paper *Combat* has for months attacked the double-faced policy of the Government towards the young Viet Namian republic. Many bourgeois papers and Swiss dailies have predicted that the methods of violence used in Indo-China would be a failure.

But these newspapers will, in the end, through lack of courage and class bias, rally themselves to the French flag, to the nation and "civilisation".

We shall remain alone in resisting the sending of soldiers, arms and material to preserve intact France's prestige and capital invested in rice plantations.

The imperialist policy of France begins to bear its fruits. In order to recapture a country which after five years in the South Asiatic orbit has lost every contact with Europe France, drained of its resources, ruined, without a fleet, will spend its last thousand millions and thousands of men it can ill afford to lose.

The Communist Party may well denounce the policy of the trusts but it has contributed to awaken patriotism and a desire to see France powerful in the hearts of the workers; the Socialist Party may well talk about peace when it represents in the cabinet not only its electors but also financiers and the Bank of Indo-China; the Trotskists may well appeal to the Annamites to fight in a war of independence, but their own militants have been assassinated by Viet Namian leaders.

We refuse to call revolutionary a war amongst the bourgeoisie. Our action is to refuse to participate, under the flag of French imperialism, in a new colonial expedition to country which has already cost rivers of blood.

Not a penny, not a man should be given to maintain French financial interests in Indo-China.

The workers and peasants of Indo-China must fight with all their strength against their own exploiters. Between National Liberation and social emancipation the struggle is a long one. We should know!

dancing.

The only barrier to action is shyness, and even that barrier is soon overcome in an atmosphere where people are not self-conscious either of their lack of skill at games or of their figures! I watched a middle-aged mother dressed in a bathing costume which accentuated her lack of waist-line, obviously quite unconcerned about the fact that everybody could see her through the windows, dive off the highest board! And there was a member of the staff making strenuous effort to master the art of diving, whilst two other members of the staff gave her doubtful encouragement and advice. They were enjoying themselves, and providing their own enjoyment; that was surely no cause for shyness!

The Laboratory

The laboratory is situated over the cafeteria. It is the brightest part of the building with its painted walls. Everybody was cheerful in the waiting room. There were not the worried, hunted looks which one too often finds in the out-patients' departments of hospitals or in the dingy corridor waiting rooms in local

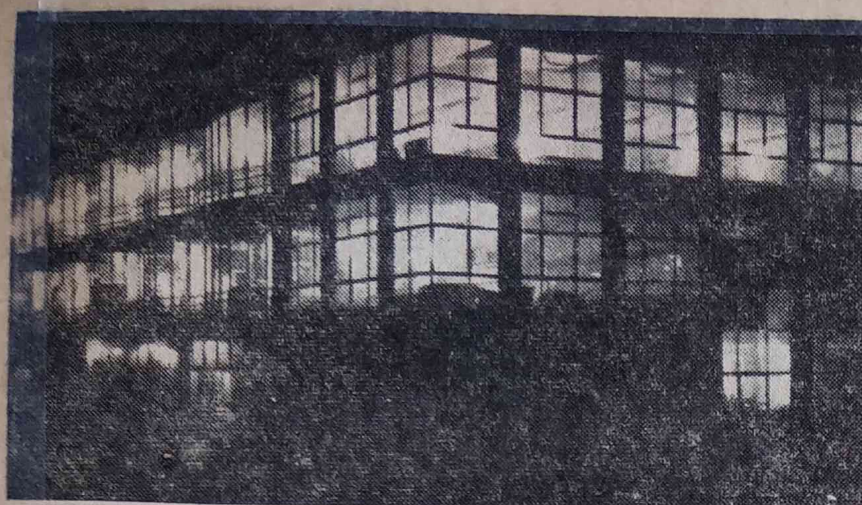
personal overhaul in the consulting room is carried out by the biologist. No detail escapes the staff's attention in their efforts to make the consultation a pleasant experience. For instance, for the women the examination wraps, which are made of artificial silk, are sterilized after each using by being run through a domestic dry-cleaning machine. Compare this with the out-patient's department at most hospitals where the same wrap must see the day through.

The Family Consultation

When all the members of a family have been examined, and all the facts relating to their overhauls collected, a family consultation takes place which is attended by the whole family and the man and woman biologists who have conducted the individual examinations. In an informal atmosphere the findings of the biologists are enumerated in simple non-medical language and this is followed by questions and discussion on both sides. By this time the children of the family have left the room, and the parents, who have gained confidence in this atmosphere of informality, start unburdening themselves

cause whereas in the case of the B.M.A. this argument is meaningless since for the majority of people no relationship exists, at Peckham that relationship is a reality. The Peckham experiment demands that the biologists should see the member-families not only in the consulting rooms but also in the social surroundings provided at the Centre. Indeed trouble is taken to engender between staff and members all the amenities of social contact. The visitor sees the results of these efforts whether in the nursery (which has not been mentioned so far, but which is one of the most important sections both for members and biologists), or in the cafeteria. In the swimming pool, at the whist drives, on the billiard tables or the badminton court, staff and members join in common activity.

The Peckham Health Centre was created in an attempt to seek the answers to many questions on the problem of Health. To the writer it has answered another question, which is undoubtedly connected with health, but which is perhaps incidental to the main problem of the experiment. On coming to the Centre



Peckham Health Centre photographed at night. The use of glass where normally there should be solid walls is a feature of its architecture.

A SUPERFICIAL visit to the Peckham

Health Centre might give one the impression that it is a social club where members can, for a small fee, pass their hours of leisure in a pleasant way, enjoying the many amenities provided such as the cafeteria, games, swimming, etc. Indeed, that may even be the attitude of a few of the Centre's members. But it is far from representing the views of Dr. Scott Williamson and Dr. Innes Pearce, co-founders of the Health Centre. Dr. Scott Williamson will in fact strenuously deny that he was in the least concerned with raising money for the purpose of providing Peckham with a social club. He wanted to study people, but he soon discovered that the environment in most cases was the cause of ill-health, and in the second stage of his experiment he set about creating an environment which would provide the "instruments of health". That environment is to be found in the "glass" building situated only a few yards from the busy Queen's Road in Peckham.

The Health Theory

If, then, our visit to Peckham is to be more than a superficial one, we should have some idea of Dr. Scott Williamson's theories about Health. He has always considered that the Victorian idea that Health and Sickness are the only alternatives is an unsound one. In spite of a decrease in infant mortality and the increased span of life, the standard of health in the country is still low. And the menace to health is not only disease but devitalization. He also noticed that the medical profession concentrated its efforts on diseases in the unfit while completely neglecting the development of health in the fit.

The medical profession, still content with palliation as its highest goal, cries for the earlier treatment of disease, the eugenicist, boldest of all in his despair, demands birth control or even sterilization of the unfit. But, says Dr. Williamson, the biologist alone still holds out hope. He hopes that the environment may be potent to save the individual. But it must be changed by the individual himself for "the essential of health is that it should be self-acquired and self-supported". In this last phrase we have the foundations upon which the Peckham Health Centre has been built.

The First Experiment

The challenge was taken up just ten years ago last April when a house was acquired in Peckham and was known as the Pioneer Health Centre. And these, briefly, were the questions to which Dr. Williamson and his colleagues set out to find the answers. Is it true that the working adult population is suffering from disease, and the youth of the nation is largely of a C standard of fitness? If it is true, then how have disease and devitalization occurred? Can these be cured or prevented? At what point in the life of the individual can they be prevented and what should be the nature of the preventive measures? Can the individual be induced to take his part in prevention if the opportunity is available? And finally, Is there any untapped source of power in man which could be used in the cause of health?

By the end of three years some 400 people representing 112 families had joined, and it had been quite clearly shown that there were families who would welcome a Health Service as distinct from any sickness service. But what had also become abundantly clear was that although sickness could be detected early through the Centre, and the individuals concerned showed willingness to remove the disorders, it was in many cases useless to eradicate the disorder only to return the individual to the conditions which had induced it. The answer was to provide a larger Centre which would combine both the facilities for a periodic health overhaul and the circumstances and material likely to promote the health of the families examined.

The Second Experiment

The new building with equipment was built in 1934-35 at a cost of £38,000. It is designed to accommodate the leisure activities of 2,000 families. There were more than 700 member-families at the outbreak of war when the Centre was taken over by the Government and converted into a factory. It has only been open again as a Health Centre for about eight months and still bears many scars from the uncongenial use to which it has been

Peckham Health Experiment

"How did it begin? Very informally, very modestly. A small group of lay people, all under 30, had what might be called a 'hunch' that health was the factor of primary importance for human living . . . They sought the advice and guidance of a scientific staff . . . A line of procedure was determined upon. It was decided to offer to families a health service constituted on the pattern of a Family Club, with periodic health overhaul for all its members and with various ancillary services for infants, children and parents alike . . ."

put during the long war years. Much work still remains to be carried out before the Centre regains its old appearance. But nevertheless there is life at the Centre!

Conditions of Membership

Besides residential qualifications for membership, there are two conditions which have to be accepted. The first is that membership is open to families only and not to individual members of a family. The second condition is that on joining the member-family has a health overhaul, and undertakes to submit to a

surgeries, where you wait your turn for hours on end. They were not there because they were feeling sick, but in order to have their periodic overhaul and thereby detect any symptoms of disorder before it affected their health. And in that bright atmosphere, and with such a friendly staff, no one could feel miserable or nervous.

The Overhaul

The overhaul starts in the laboratory where a collection of specimens is taken and other laboratory tests are made by a bio-chemist. On a subsequent day the

of their worries and problems, and the biologists in their turn deal with what can be most simply called the "art of living"; social relationships, the implications and responsibilities of parenthood and so on.

So much is being made of the relationship between patient and doctors by the diehards of the B.M.A. that a word on this subject is not out of place here, be-

*The Peckham Experiment, by Dr. Innes Pearce and Dr. Lucy Crocker. (Allen & Unwin). 5/6 post free from Freedom Press.

one feels that a world of frustration and chaos has been left behind. One is amongst people who are understanding the benefits of responsibility, initiative, self-respect and are fast learning the art of living. Amidst the bustle of activity in which all join, here is a serene calm and poise, which we would describe in Dr. Williamson's words as "order in anarchy".

For anarchists the Peckham Centre is the most important social experiment that has been carried out in this country, and though Dr. Scott Williamson rightly does not accept political labels for himself, the fact remains that if the premises on which the Peckham Centre are founded prove (when all the data so far collected has been sifted and analysed) to be correct then not only will they be a vindication of Dr. Scott Williamson's theories but also of the sound biological basis of the whole Anarchist philosophy.

V. R.



(Left) Dr. Scott Williamson and Dr. Innes Pearce, co-founders of the Centre are obviously very interested in what their colleague Dr. Bak has to say. (Centre) Members have a meal in the cafeteria and at the same time can watch the swimming. (Right) Blood tests are among the many tests included in each member's "overhaul".

periodic overhaul, for which each member of the family makes an appointment with the man or woman biologist to suit the member's convenience. How different from one's everyday experience where, besides having to pay, one has to suit the doctor's convenience!

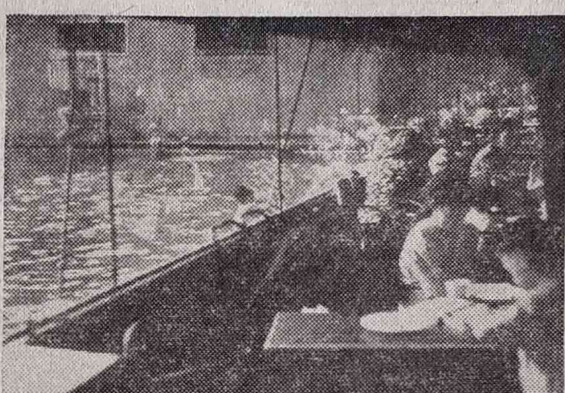
The Centre is not a charitable institution. It is violently opposed to the idea of charity; the aim is that the Centre should be self-supporting. Member-families paid 1/- per week before the war. Now, the contribution is 2/6d. per week per family.

Impressions of the Centre

I paid my first visit to the Centre one Saturday evening, which is the busiest evening of the week. Before the war as many as 1,200 were gathered there at a time, and there was plenty of room for more people.

No Organised Enjoyment at Peckham

The Centre is no local Butlin holiday camp. There is no one there to instruct you how to enjoy yourself. There are no fanfares of trumpets to summon you to eat or to join in a whist drive. You just literally enjoy yourself if you want to. You help yourself to the games and pastimes in the same way as you help yourself to the food in the cafeteria. The equipment is available as is the food; but there is no one to serve you. The initiative is left entirely in your hands. This is all very bewildering to the newcomer, but only for a very short time. You can't be a spectator for very long at the Health Centre! When the Architects were given instructions to prepare the designs for the new Centre, they were told to provide a building so planned that the sight of action would be an incentive to action. And this has been achieved to a remarkable degree by the use of glass where normally there would be thick walls. As I walked through the cafeteria I saw, within the space of a few minutes, young people busily engaged at playing table games, others painting (one little girl, with a cheeky smile was begging her friends not to disturb her as she had just had an "inspiration for a beautiful painting"!); others gathered in little groups at the tables eating and talking. Then through the glass partition that runs from one end of the cafeteria to the other, I had a perfect view of the swimming bath which provided enjoyment for members of all ages. And beyond, through the glass partition running the length of the other side of the bath, couples were



ANARCHISM Interpretations

"No man can recognise his own worth, nor in consequence realise his full development, if he does not recognise the worth of his fellow-men, and in co-operation with them realize his own development through them. No man can emancipate himself unless at the same time he emancipates those around him. My freedom is the freedom of all, for I am not really free—free not only in thought, but in deed—if my freedom and my right do not find their confirmation and sanction in the liberty and right of all men my equals.

"It matters much to me what all other men are, for however independent I may seem, or may believe myself to be, by virtue of my social position, whether as Pope, Tsar, Emperor, or Prime Minister, I am all the while the product of those who are the least among men. If these be ignorant, miserable, or enslaved, my existence is limited by their ignorance, misery, or slavery. I, though an intelligent and enlightened man, am made stupid by their stupidity; though brave, am enslaved by their slavery; though rich, tremble before their poverty; though privileged, grow pale at the thought of possible justice for them. I, who wish to be free, cannot be so, because around me are men who do not yet desire freedom, and, not desiring it, become, as opposed to me, the instruments of my oppression." (Michael Bakunin)

An Unpublished Letter of one of the Chicago Martyrs

Dear Comrades,
During the past week, the officers of Typographia Union No. 9 of this City, which is being dissolved, turned over to me a letter written by Adolph Fischer, one of the Haymarket Martyrs, three days before his execution.

This letter has never been published and I feel that you may be interested in publishing same. I am, therefore, enclosing herewith a copy of the original letter written in German and also an English translation which you may be interested in publishing.

Very truly yours,
IRVING S. ABRAMS,
Secretary.

★
Cook County Jail,
November 8, 1887.

To the President and the Members of Typographia No. 9:

DEAR COLLEAGUES,

In view of the fact that the day on which, according to all human computation, I must ascend to the gallows is drawing close, I consider it advisable to inform you, as your colleague, of my last wishes. I would like that you, in conjunction with my family, arrange my funeral. I understand that the authorities will deliver my corpse to my family. I am indifferent as to the place of burial of my corpse, but I would request that all religious humbug be kept away from my funeral. I only mention this, because I suspect that certain persons may endeavour to bring pressure in this regard, upon my wife. If a number of us will be hanged, then it would be best that we be buried together, in the bosom of Mother Earth. I have a further wish that you place in my grave our beloved red emblem, the Symbol of Equality, Freedom and Brotherhood, for which I lived, and

now must die. Do not sing any sentimental songs, but, when I am lowered into my grave, sing the words of hope and freedom, such as the Marseillaise, etc.

Colleagues, perhaps many of you will criticize my conduct, in refusing to ask for "Mercy". Perhaps it will be said: "He should have taken this step on account of his family". Very well, I love my family, as much as a husband and father is capable of loving his family, but such an application for "Mercy" would be contrary to my sense of human dignity. No scintilla of proof of any wrong-doing on my part has been forthcoming and having done no wrong, I cannot sign an appeal for Mercy. So let them proceed to murder me! However, those people who are guilty of my impending murder, will some day bitterly regret their actions, and future generations will mention their names only with loathing and scorn.

In view of the great and noble cause, in which behalf I am to die, my trek to the gallows becomes easy. In my mind's vision I already see, in the far horizon, the dawn of a better day for Humanity. The day of the Brotherhood of Man is no longer distant. In that hope and in the hope that you retain a friendly remembrance of me, I embrace you as colleagues and friends, press your hands and call to you a hearty farewell. I remain true, even unto the grave.

Yours,
ADOLPH FISCHER.

P.S.—The certainty that the workers will provide for the existence of my family and the rearing of my children, gives me endless comfort and cheer.

Around the beginning of the century, there used to be a lot of enthusiastic talk about the "labour movement". In the period of the great union upsurge of 1897-1903, socialists and liberals and unionists thought of the AF of L as the great equalizer that would make the workers equal in power with the bosses and enable the workers to live decently under capitalism till the day of final liberation. Then, when the AF of L began to go nowhere, the IWW, with its promise of building the new society within the shell of the old, became the enthusiasm of radicals of all kinds. And finally, after the long era of pure and simple business unionism that followed the failure of the IWW, the CIO became the new ideal.

What Labour Movement?

But these idealisms are things of the past. Who now is so foolish as to talk

POINT OF PRODUCTION

Notes on Anarcho-Syndicalism and American Unionism

about a "labour movement"? Who is there so blind as not to see that the CIO is another AF of L, different only in its unquestionable subservience to the government; that the IWW is dead; and that the AF of L never was any good—who is so blind? Who does not see the bleak outlook, opening onto state unionism in the Russian pattern, that faces the American workers?

Disgusted and bewildered, many radicals have thrown up their hands. They shrug their shoulders, refuse to interest themselves in the great economic struggles which, even today, militant workers force their unions to

fight. They look with indifference at the prospect of a smashed labour movement; they ask what difference does it make.

But they do this without seriously examining the causes of the failure of the labour movement. They see only cold facts: the unions' class collaboration with the government in the war; the strongly entrenched dictatorial leaders like Lewis and Murray and the Communists. They see how often the workers are forced to fight their own "leaders" as well as the bosses. And they see the apathy of many workers. But they don't look beyond these facts

to the underlying causes of the bureaucratization, institutionalization, regimentation, of the American "labour movement". A real analysis of these underlying causes would take many pages and close study, and perhaps a great deal more research than has ever been done on the labour movement. But there are some fundamentals we can bring out, and it is especially necessary to do so now—because through them we can point up the importance of economic organization and revolutionary action, and the relevance of the anarcho-syndicalist idea (though not in the form in which it is usually conceived).

Put most simply, this is what happened to the unions: They were the victims of the social and economic forces that have centralized and ruined all social institutions and organizations in this society. The unions, even the best of them (with the exception of a short period in the IWW's history), have accepted the existing centralized, capitalist society and have attempted to fit themselves into the existing structure. Hence the dynamics of the society have transformed the unions from organizations of workers to dues-paying organizations led by officials who help the bosses and the government keep the workers docile in wage-slavery. Control of unions has moved from the point of production to an international headquarters.

Lewisism: A Sample History

The United Mine Workers, the oldest of the big industrial unions, the private property of John L. Lewis—but at the same time the union of the most militant workers in the country—illustrates very well the process by which the "labour movement" slipped out of the workers' control. In different forms and at different times, nearly all unions

have duplicated the process. In the last big stronghold of militant unionism, the United Auto Workers, the extinction of worker control seems to be in full progress at this time.

The United Mine Workers was never a revolutionary union, never a completely democratic union. But, of all unions in the official labour movement, it was, at one time, the most democratic and the most militant. (I refer only to the soft-coal; there never was any real unionism in the Morgan-controlled anthracite.) From its formation in 1890 until around 1912, the UMW was, to a degree now amazing, democratic and decentralized. The miners controlled wage negotiations and strikes; district, sub-district and local branches had autonomy that was a real check on the international union.

By the twenties the union had been transformed. John Lewis was in power. By the end of the twenties, the union was Lewis' personal instrument, under iron-clad control, and has been ever since. The workers at the coal face, at the point of production, were expropriated from their very union.

The Forces That Made Lewis

The original structure and character of the UMW grew out of the old, decentralized structure of the industry itself in the nineteenth century. Then as now, coal was produced in small, scattered units employing at most a few hundred workers. But then, as not now, ownership was local and production was for local markets. This condition ended in the latter part of the nineteenth century, with the spread of the railroads into all coal fields: coal went into national markets, travelled half-way across the country. The railroads and other big industrial consumers

(Continued on page 5)

UNION BOSS ATTACKS 'GO SLOW'

The policy of class collaboration advocated by the hierarchy at the recent Trade Union Congress is being sedulously followed by its advocates. At a recent meeting in the North of England, Charles Dukes, vice-chairman of the T.U.C., made a speech in which he elaborated this policy and what he said is interesting as an example of the extent to which these people are willing to commit themselves to reactionary policies.

He began by characterising the union-employer collaboration during the war as a "revolutionary (sic) method of production", and then went on to maintain that the continuance of a *go slow* policy would be fatal to the aim of full employment. He went on to assert that:

"Management and men should understand that it was only by co-operation from the workshop level to the highest reaches of administration that the nation would receive the benefits of public ownership. Socialism must descend from Parliament to the workshop. Men and women must cease to think in the terms of masters and men, as we are now both men and masters of our own economic destiny."

Exactly what is meant by the last phrase is somewhat obscure. Admittedly all masters are men, and trade union leaders have also become masters, but to claim that the workers will ever be masters when they are merely finding themselves under government managers instead of capitalist managers is ridiculous. All that is happening is that the slavery is being better co-ordinated. The sooner workers insist on facing the concrete realities of industrial relations instead of being led away by the clever and wholly fallacious abstractions invented by their 'leaders', the better for them.

WIDESPREAD STRIKES IN AUSTRALIA

Australia, which has been under a Labour government for some years longer than England, is undergoing a struggle between the workers and the political Labour leaders which has reached the scale of a major conflict. A recent strike of railwaymen and tramwaymen in Victoria, involving over 30,000 men, involved the greatest transport hold-up in Australian history. A strike of between 60,000 and 70,000 metal workers in Melbourne has been on for a lengthy period, and the same trade in other parts of Australia shows similar signs of discontent. A nationwide strike of gasworkers is also threatened. Undoubtedly there are many among the Australian union officials, particularly the Communist elements, who are using these strikes to increase their own power in the Labour movement, like Lewis in America. But the rank-and-file are solidly militant, and it seems unlikely that the government's attempts to strike a bargain with the union bureaucrats on a basis of modifying the wage-pegging regulations will in fact result in any lengthy period of industrial peace. The Australian workers are showing great solidarity and stubbornness in their attitude of industrial resistance. The only regrettable fact is that the Communists have still a considerable prestige as militants, in spite of a number of despicable betrayals. But experience will teach the Australian workers, as it has taught the British workers, to know the true nature of the Communist as a strike-breaker and industrial nark.

G. V.

LOGIC OF THE STRIKE

SEEING how many lies the authorities tell about strikers—their own countrymen—how can we trust or believe them when they speak about their enemies in wartime? One enemy we have in all countries—the profiteer on the back of the producer.

The struggle has resolved itself into which, the union or the men, shall manage the workshops? Tired of misleadings, the men are learning they can do without leaders, but the leaders cannot do without workmen. That settles who are the more necessary and important and likely to have first-hand knowledge of conditions in the industry. It is the best ideas that must lead, not personalities or antique unions. The *News Chronicle* reports (20/8/46), "as a London gasworks man said to me a day or two ago, 'We workers now begin to think of the State as the master and our trade union officials as its managers. So we don't take all they say for gospel.'"

Loyalty to fellow-workers in other lands was refused by the Transport and General Workers Union. It was the unofficial strikers who set the example of brotherly love, for, according to the *New Leader* (28/1/38), "Middlesboro" men refuse to load war material for Japan. London men will do the same. . . . They refused even though the official of the Transport and General Workers' Union asked them to do the loading." In the light of to-day's happenings everyone will admit (too late) how much wiser than the union were these heroes in refusing to do the boss's bidding. And it was the same in January, 1941, when the *Word* quoted Bernard Harris, City Editor of the *Sunday Express* for 22nd December, 1940, as reporting that the workers in one of Britain's largest engineering firms said regarding arms for Japan that "they were not going to work for any member of the Axis." Thus it always falls to the worker to protest. And it will be the same to-day with Franco Spain, if anything effective is to be done.

If a coal strike goes on for long, automatically all industry is affected or ceases; that proves to the hilt the value of labour. When Parliament is up, industry continues—"business as usual"; not one crumb for a bird does the government make. Mr. George Terril, President of the National Union of Manufacturers, said "The total loss of Russian trade for a year will not amount to the loss caused by a 3-days General Strike" (*Brisbane Daily Mail*, 27/5/27). If this is so, why should workers be forced to strike for better pay and conditions? Why are they not paid better? They suffer most when they are forced to this remedy; and why do short-sighted blacklegs betray these brave men?

Strikers moreover show remarkable self-discipline—the only discipline worth its salt—when things are dislocated. In Italy in 1920 metal workers were locked out. In reply they locked out the employers, and occupied the factories. According to George Seldes, "Not a safe was cracked, not a skull. It is true that day by day more and more factories were being occupied by the workers. Soon 500,000 strikers were at work, forging tools, manufacturing a thousand useful things, but there was not a shop or factory owner to boss them or to dictate letters in the vacant offices. Peace reigned."

Listen also to another farseeing journalist, John Gunter, writing of the French stay-in strikes of 1936: "The strikers were a marvellous tribute to the good sense of the average Frenchman. In an industrial stoppage as comprehensive and drastic as anything seen in Europe since the war, not a tool was injured, not a machine damaged, not a person hurt, not a single drop of blood spilt." Edgar Ansell Mowrer cabled his newspaper that during the tensest days he would not have hesitated to lead a girls' school through the slums of Paris. In the great department stores men and women slept on the floors instead of the beds. Though underpaid and often hungry, they never stole a cheese or opened a box of beans.

Not like a military army disciplined for destruction. Down with all that and up with the striker against it!

Many people are ignorant of human nature at its best because they only tap the worst, and so are unable to get far without promises of reward and bribes. They cry that the striker holds up the community and ignore the fact that the

employing class daily penalize the whole working class by making conditions so hard and pay so poor that men and women cannot continue the work and live on the insufficient food, nor afford fuel, fares, doctors' bills and a hundred other amenities the rich consider necessities for themselves. And it is more than their labour that they steal from the workers, as is shown by their shortened or crippled lives. The worker fills a goody hive with honey, but often goes hungry himself. Old before he is young, worn out, too dead beat to enjoy the declining years of old age. Robbed of his birthright, the land, cursed with an inferiority complex from centuries of subjection to feudal and fascist bosses, his neck still suffers from the iron collar he was loaded with.

But a few manly ideas of brotherly kinship are seeping through, and showing him that it will repay him to solve his problem in the only way it can be solved. The bosses stand by one another everywhere when profits are endangered. The striker (misnamed) is really a passive resister towards the men who would batten and feed on his effort, but he strikes at the system that allows one man to be rich without working and another poor even though he does work. He rightly resists bad conditions and being unable to choose work suited to his capacity. The rich never resist because they never work; they never need to down tools because they never take them up.

The men who hold up the community are the men who profit from every labourer's task, thereby making it doubly essential that the worker should rebel.

While the worker strikes, the rich lack nothing, for their large larders and coal cellars are full. The worker has an empty cupboard, one week's pay in hand, and knows at the back of his mind that he has all the money power against him, with tear gas, guns—which he himself has made—and enemies on his doorstep. For men like Bevin and Citrine with his title won't back him up. Out of thousands let us take this example: the newspaper heading "Union asks Roosevelt to break Strike". Roosevelt had sized these men up and apprised them at their true value. If you fondly hope that one day there will be no hungry children in so-called democratic countries, let me assure you it is an impossibility—because the present system functions through hungry children.

Before the war, starvation while the shops were overflowing with comforts and luxuries; the workers who never had them being tempted and taunted with only a sheet of glass between them and these things. But for strikers their lot would have been more abject still. One day the world will sit back and say, "Did they really stoke up trains with grain, when people were hungry; did they really burn cotton, when children were sewn into their clothes because they had no change? And was fish really thrown back into the sea sooner than profit be lost?" And what about hunger of the soul? The multitude does not find that inside a church. The thirst for beauty and leisure, unsatisfied to-day, will return, and as of old, *people's* dances and music, lovely clothes and joy will be reborn and money will be neither valuable nor necessary. CLARA COLE.

Land Notes

Closed Shop for Farm Workers

The closed shop campaign, it seems, is about to be extended to the N.U.A.W. According to *The Daily Herald* (11/11/46) "Farm workers meeting at North Walsham, Norfolk, unanimously approved a suggestion that henceforth there should be a 100 per cent. union membership on farms." The usual arguments in support are trotted out. "A union which has the responsibility of maintaining and still further increasing rates of wages and improving general conditions has the right to determine whether or not it is wise or safe to tolerate non-unionists." The aims of trade unionism, as there stated, are worth noting; namely that they are strictly reformist and do not desire any fundamental change in the society in which their members live and work. At best, and even in theory, the union exists only to minimise and mitigate the more flagrant injustices from which the workers suffer. As these "general conditions" are a necessary concomitant to the present economic order and as the improvements that are effected are almost always short-lived, the union is soon more or less compelled to perform, from the State's point of view, the very important task of conditioning the workers to accept these very conditions. As most of the workers have been already so conditioned from childhood that the majority of them don't appear really to desire anything more than an occasional plum anyway (even though it be sour before properly swallowed), this task seems to be accomplished without very much trouble.

The New Farming Bill

L. F. Easterbrook, in the *News Chronicle* (20/12/46), tells us that "the outline of an agricultural policy that may endure, and farming measures that may last through generations, are embodied in the Government's Agricultural Bill, introduced into Parliament yesterday by Mr. Tom Williams, Minister of Agriculture. It is the largest single Bill for agriculture ever attempted, with 110 clauses and 105 pages."

It is odd how impressed people are by sizes. But bigger is not necessarily better and quality is frequently more important than quantity.

Though I cannot join in Mr. Easterbrook's eulogies on this Bill, it is, I think, correct to say that it does differ quite

considerably from most previous agricultural Bills of recent years, in that this Bill appears to be the first serious attempt to incorporate agriculture into the new managerial society which the Government is developing and which is usually referred to as socialism. It is also true that agriculture at least stands a chance of being slightly better off under a planned state regulated economy than it did under a free-for-all capitalist economy if only because in farming, more than any other industry, it is essential to plan ahead. A remark of Mr. Tom Williams may be significant of a change of governmental attitude towards agriculture. "He admitted that we are still far from growing the total value of food this country could produce" (*News Chronicle*, 20/12/46). It would have been almost inconceivable some years ago that a prominent member of the government of the day should have made such a floater as to state this obvious truth in public. It seems therefore probable that though production will not perceptibly be increased, the present level will be maintained for a while longer, against orthodox capitalist economics though it is to do so.

The general approach of the government to farmers in this Bill is, as one would expect, the by now usual "If I demand the right to work I cannot demand the right to strike" theme. If farmers will accept Direction orders and such like, then in return they will be given assured prices—for an 18-month period for crops and a two to four-year period for livestock. (As it takes, for example, 3 years to produce a milk cow, this will be seen to be important). It is the usual, largely fallacious argument of freedom of action versus economic security. If you want one you must forego the other. And, things being as they are, this is quite true, but it need not be so.

In actual fact the securities offered as compensation for having to farm as the State may direct seem rather shaky and to offer in most cases loopholes for the State to escape from its commitments. This is, of course, not surprising, since no State ever honours its commitments unless it is in its own interests to do so, or unless it may be temporarily obliged to do so by popular agitation. As regards security of tenure, perhaps the most single important item for the farmer, the *Daily Herald*

reports that, "In general, the Minister's consent for notices to quit will only be given when such a notice is likely to result in more efficient use of the land". First, then, the two words "in general" imply that this is not necessarily so. Secondly, if the person seeking occupation of a farm had more available capital than the present occupier, who might be undercapitalised, then in the interest of "more efficient use of the land" the notice to quit to the present occupier would be consented to. This line of action has already been taken in some cases in the past by the W.A.C. There are to be Agricultural Land Tribunals whose main object will be the hearing of appeals against dispossession by the W.A.C. and notices to quit by private landlords, but their personnel will consist of a legal chairman, a landowner and farmer, and it is easy to see that the representative of the law (*i.e.*, property) will always tend to side with the actual owner of property against the farmer representative whose sympathies will also naturally incline towards his fellow tenant-farmers; which in practice will, to say the least, tend to result in notices to quit being confirmed. On the question of dispossession on the grounds of "not farming according to the rules of good husbandry," there is not, nor can there be, any universal agreement as to what constitutes "good husbandry". Indeed much "high farming", resulting as it does in temporary spectacular results, is demonstrably bad husbandry but has so far had the blessing of the W.A.C. (*i.e.*, the State). In theory, the War Acs. "will be responsible for seeing that landowners as well as farmers conform to defined standards of good estate management and good husbandry." As, however, landowners are very powerfully represented on the Committees there has been a strong tendency to turn blind eyes to their activities, or lack of activities, and it seems unlikely that they will be unduly interfered with in the near future.

The provisions for an expansion of small holdings, the details of which space now prevents my referring to, come somewhat as a contradiction to the other main measures referred to, and one can only conclude that political motives, namely the desire of nearly every farm-worker to have a little place of his own, were not entirely absent when his proposal was drafted.

G. V.

Letter from France

The Manpower Problem

THOUGH France's productive capacity has reached only 80% of what it was in 1939, unemployment is non-existent. It is therefore evident that the manpower problem presents itself with great urgency. It presents itself even in maintaining the present number of workers. In fact, agriculture, mining, engineering and other branches of national economy are utilising, at the moment, 650,000 German prisoners of war who will be set free in 1947 and who will be faced with the problem of either returning to Germany or living in France as free workers.

The French Ministry of Labour estimates at two millions the number of workers necessary to maintain the present rhythm of French production and for the reconstruction of the country. Two million workers who represent a family population of five million demand a new legislation besides a considerable effort of adaptation and assimilation. Furthermore, this is a minimum figure depending on the satisfactory development of the plans for rational use of manpower, of technical training and the orientation of women towards manual work.

It would be a mistake to believe that it is only a question of a momentary crisis due to the period of general tidying up and of reconstruction. Since the end of the 18th century France has been progressively "ageing". In fact, whereas in 1790 out of six adults there was one old person, in 1946 the proportion is one old person to every three adults.

In studying demographic statistics one notices that France, bled by numerous wars, is going through a period of slow decay. Though she has at present a population of a little more than 42 million inhabitants, it is estimated that in 1955 the figure will have been reduced to forty million while in 1970 the population will be only 36,400,000.

The only solution therefore is to launch an appeal for foreign labour. The immi-

grant workers of East Europe, Czechs, who came to populate the North of France at the end of the last war, no longer have the possibility of working in France. Political difficulties, local demand for labour, conspire to dry up this source of population. Furthermore a strong current of opinion to rejoin the country of origin is noticeable amongst the ethnic groups in the mining regions. The nearby countries are all that is left, Spain and Italy or North Africa.

For the moment Spain cannot supply immigrants as her frontiers are practically sealed. On the other hand, the colonies of political refugees located in France are rapidly adapting themselves and the new generations are absorbed by the indigenous population. The manpower from North Africa is seasonal; only with difficulty does it take root in the metropolitan territory by reason, in the main, of the individual nature of the emigration. The North African worker comes to France without his family and returns to his country to marry, and again leaves his country to work in France to provide for his family back in Africa.

On the other hand Italy, overpopulated and the prey to a dangerous unemployment crisis, deprived of its traditional outlet to America and more recently to the colonies, is in a position to supply considerable manpower for French economy. Negotiations have taken place between French and Italian representatives to organise the entry to France of 20 to 30,000 Italian workers a month. Numerous difficulties, notably that of currency, since the foreign workers need to send their savings to their families in Italy, put a brake on the mass entry of Italian workers. But France's need being a real one and the need manifesting itself in a practical way in Italy, clandestine emigration organised itself spontaneously. One saw dozens, then some hundreds of immigrants arriving in the towns of S.E.

France, crossing the mountains, under very often difficult and sometimes perilous conditions. At the same time agents and intermediaries took advantage of this situation to get advanced commissions from people wanting to cross the frontier and were paid a commission for obtaining work contracts, acting as recruiting agents for contractors seeking cheap labour.

The absence of lodgings in the industrial regions results in the overpopulation of working-class districts and the creation of slums. At the same time French workers besides their tendency to consider themselves superior to the "macaroni", complain of this dangerous competition in the labour market which threatens to lower wages.

Meanwhile there is no reason to suppose that after the initial period of adaptation the influx of manpower from the other side of the Alps will constitute a factor favourable to the employer. For, on the one hand, the workers' organizations are sufficiently powerful to impose respect for the collective agreements, whilst on the other there exist ad hoc committees for immigrant workers which were created in order to insure a proper co-ordination to encourage understanding and agreement.

It is not our task to estimate the effects that this massive entry of foreign workers will have on France's economic recovery, but it is of interest to note that the way things have developed fully confirms the internationalist watchword which has been consistently supported by libertarian militants. Far from being mere manifestations of the mind it is reality itself, the needs of production, which obliges the conquerors and the vanquished of the capitalist war of yesterday to collaborate in the same work of reconstruction. The internationalism of fact is timely in reminding one of the necessity of internationalism in ideas and in workers' organisations.

S. PARANE.

GERMAN INFLATION

The German workers in the British zone of Germany are faced with a steadily widening gap between their cost of living and their earning powers. Since the end of the war wages have been falling, even in money value, for those who happen to be employed, and this process is accentuated by the competition in the unskilled labour market caused by the presence of large numbers of bureaucrats, clerical and professional workers who are unemployed and have no skilled qualifications. At the same time the cost of living is rising steadily. Any man who wishes to remain at work has to supplement his rations, obtained at comparatively low prices, with goods bought on the black market in the towns or from peasants in the country. The prices of such supplementary goods may vary between ten and a hundred times the controlled price of similar goods when sold officially. The result of this double pressure on the worker, of falling wages and rising costs, is that he is more and more faced with a situation where wages just do not meet the bare cost of keeping sufficiently healthy to work. A recent correspondent in the *Manchester Guardian* estimated the average outgoings of a German family at 306 marks. The average income from wages he estimated at 207 marks. In other words, most families have either to starve or to supplement their wages by about 50%, more or less according to particular cases. Some do it by themselves indulging in one of the numerous ramifications of racketeering and black market activity, some live on the savings they had put aside for security in old age, some just fail to find any supplementary income, and sink deeper into the lethargy of the underfed until they become social delinquents. For all of them, the means of bridging this gap between income and expenditure is at best unsure, and likely to end at some fairly near date. And meanwhile, the gap continues to grow wider, as unemployment increases through the shutting down of factories, and the onset of another winter sends the price of almost everything rocketing once again.

The German worker, in whatever zone

he is, seems faced with a continual and hopeless struggle, merely to survive, and there is little wonder that in such an atmosphere a bitterness is breeding which listens once again to the re-awakening voice of Nazism. If the German people once again fall for a crack-brained nationalism, nobody will be so much to blame as the allied authorities who have assiduously manured and prepared the ground with their criminal policy of starving the Germans even of the means to feed and support themselves.

Repression in Turkey

Already, only a few months after "political freedom" had been granted in Turkey, the dictatorship is beginning to reassert itself openly and to suppress movements that show any great disagreement with its policy. In Istanbul and Turkey in Europe, martial law has been declared, and the commander of the area has now announced the suppression of two political parties, the Socialist party of Workers and Peasants of Turkey and the Socialist Party of Turkey. Six newspapers and periodicals expressing the views of these parties have been suppressed, two further periodicals have been suspended for four months, and the printing of "Communist" literature within the area has been forbidden. It is further reported that a number of members of these organisations have been arrested.

The authorities contend that these parties were acting under Communist influence, but, even if this is true—which is by no means certain, it gives no justification for a country which has just made a great show of embracing political freedom to begin once again the suppressions of the Kemalist regime. It does, however, show quite clearly that the "democratisation" of Turkish politics was merely a hoax to deceive Western liberals, and that the authorities at Ankara are ready to suppress ruthlessly, any movement of any kind, that challenges their rule.

Passive Resistance to Taxation

On Oct. 1st last Raymond Hansen, a member of a bee-keeping community in New Zealand, was arrested for refusing to make income tax returns or pay fines which had been imposed. Hansen informed the authorities that as a member of a community, he had no individual income, and that in any case he considered that the true interests of society could only be served by voluntary contributions to the "states", not from any compulsory contributions.

The circumstances of the arrest are interesting. The police held the warrant for some time before they actually put it into effect, because they recognized that with regard to a member of a community, it was impossible to determine property as belonging to any one member.

Nevertheless, the local police presented the warrant on Oct. 1st, and asked Hansen, who was barefooted at the time, if he would like to change his clothes before he came along with them. Hansen replied that he was not taking any active steps in the matter—that that was entirely their affair. The police indicated that they did not like doing it, but it was their duty. Hansen said that he did not consider orders to be a sufficient reason for the Police or anyone else doing a thing if they thought it wrong; that everyone had an option in such matters if they were prepared to take the consequences, as he himself had exercised his option in refusing to pay the money fines, because he felt it to be wrong to do so.

No member of the family either assisted or obstructed the police in carrying out the arrest, except one of the children, Martin, who cried when one of the policemen picked him up in order to prevent him from holding on to his father. They had to carry an entirely limp Hansen into the police car, and suffered considerable embarrassment in doing so. The local man, who was well-known to the community, protested that orders were orders, and that to refuse to carry them out would be more than his job was worth. To which the community rejoined to his great surprise that he need never be out of a job as there was plenty of room for a hard-working man on the community—"There's no social insecurity in community, you know."

The arrest was still further delayed by finding one of the police car's tyres flat, but one of the community soon mended it. Dan Hansen, who informs us of all this, remarks, "We all felt sorry for the policemen."

Hansen had already done 100 days on bread and water in Mt. Eden prison for previous resistance to State interference. On this occasion he got 3 months. Dan Hansen philosophically comments: "The full sentence will take him to the middle of the honey-harvesting season. The necessary attention to the four hundred odd hives usually in his care presents its problems, but the absence of one man cannot 'crack' the Community."

Foreign Commentary

Anti-Clericalism in Italy

MUCH more attention is paid to the religious question by political organisations in the Latin countries than is noticeable here. In Italy, for instance, prior to Mussolini's "conversion" to the Catholic Church there was always an anti-clerical paper to denounce and ridicule the clergy. It had as its title *L'Asino* (The Donkey), and was very widely read. To-day, with Fascist censorship gone, sure enough another anti-clerical paper has made its appearance in Italy. This time the title is *Don Basilio*. (For interested readers, it is published weekly from Via Mario de Fiore 104, Rome). *Don Basilio* is strong meat; some of its drawings are first-rate (one was reproduced recently in *Freedom*), others seem too crude and vulgar to be really effective. Though only 16 issues have so far appeared, *Don Basilio* has roused very strong feelings both in Italy and abroad. The Swiss paper *Der Bund* recently devoted an article to *Don Basilio* and made the interesting remark that it had "reached a very high circulation, which surpassed that of all the Italian humorous papers", and tries to explain this fact on the grounds not of the quality of the contents of the paper, but on its tendency "to carry on the most irresponsible anti-clerical propaganda, gathering the scum of all the scandal-mongering gossip of the Vatican". (*Der Bund* is a Catholic paper.)

The Vatican Acts

Obviously the Vatican has not ignored the matter. After only eleven issues of *Don Basilio* had appeared, a Decree was issued by the Holy See which deserves to be translated in full:

"Seeing that the weekly paper 'Don Basilio', published in Rome, has dared, and dares with shameless impudence, to cast doubt on the truth of the Faith, and to expose to public disparagement the ecclesiastical hierarchy; violently attacks the clergy and the faithful and besmirches it with vulgar calumnies, their Eminences the Cardinals, guardians of the Faith and Customs, in the Plenary Assembly of the Sacred Supreme Congregation of the Holy See of the 14th Feria, 20th November, 1946 have noted that the above mentioned weekly, in accordance with the Canons 1399 numbers 3 and 9 and 1384 para. 2 of the Code of Canon Law, is prohibited ipse jure, declared that it is not permissible to sell or read it without committing grave sin.

"Further, they have threatened the Editor, administrators and collaborators of the same paper with the punishment of excommunication reserved to the Holy See, to be incurred 'ipse jure' and without declaration, if they do not desist from the task undertaken.

"And in the following Feria V, 21st November, His Holiness the Pope Pius XII, at the audience granted to His Most Excellent Mons. Assessor of the Holy See, approved the decision of the Most Eminent Fathers."

hal, Victor Hugo and Zola, and comments that the editors feel "supremely honoured" to have been placed in such distinguished company. Obviously the editors don't care two raps about being excommunicated; the sinister part of the document is that included in the "ipse jure" excommunication are those who sell the paper, which includes the small newsgas as well as the large wholesalers. Since the fall of Mussolini, in an attempt to ensure the impartial distribution of papers of different tendencies, an agreement was reached between publishers and the Syndicate of Distributors whereby any newsgas applying his own censorship (by refusing to sell certain papers) has his supply of all papers suspended. As a result of this safeguard, *Don Basilio* feels confident that, unless the Vatican offers to keep those newsgas who will be driven out of business if they apply the ban on their paper, the hard realities of earning their crust of bread will outweigh the threats of hell fire and perdition! But the struggle is only in its first stages. In the Dec. 8th issue one learns that Mons. Borgognini Duca, apostolic Nunziato to the Italian republic has called on the Foreign Secretary with regard to the alarming increase in *Don Basilio's* circulation! We shall keep our readers informed of developments in this struggle between the forces of darkness and the cheeky *Don Basilio*!

FRANCE'S P.O.W.

LE LIBERTAIRE (the French Anarchist weekly which has a circulation of 80,000 copies per week) in its issue of December 13th deals with a strike among German prisoners of war in France. It is a ghastly document and only reasons of space prevent us from reproducing it in full. The facts are as follows: On Dec. 5th the 900 Prisoners of War in the camp at Thiers-la-Grange who work as miners in the district refused to start work after having been escorted by Senegalese troops to the pits. Their demands were for more food and more soap. "Is that a big demand—asks the *Libertaire*—for workers who receive no wages and who are responsible for a third of France's output of coal?" A delegation consisting of 45 men was refused a hearing by the management. Instead they were arrested, and sent to a reprisals camp at Cambrai (described by the *Libertaire* as "an extermination camp") and the strikers were left down in the pit for two days without food "as a disciplinary measure". But their determination remained unbroken. Eventually North African troops were sent down the mine and the massacre started. The scene was described by the *Franc Tireur* (a daily paper with no sympathies for the P.O.W.s. as we shall show) in these terms:

"Man-hunts were organized in the headings where many strikers had taken refuge. The struggle was bitter, but the army won the day... 'For better food and an allocation of soap we will strike until we obtain satisfaction' declared one of the strikers."

They were later escorted back to their camp still without food. One prisoner, having "infringed camp discipline", was "shot down by a guard". "The French press, writes *Le Libertaire*, from *l'Humanite* to the *Monde*, form a united front against the strikers." *Franc Tireur*, allegedly an independent Left-wing paper wrote "It is not the first time that the P.O.W. take part in such demonstrations on our soil, and one is justified in feeling disturbed by them... The P.O.W. have dared to formulate demands..."

The conclusions to be drawn from this incident are too many to be set down here. All one can say is that remembering the treatment meted out by the authorities to the Spanish anti-fascists who sought refuge in France, one shudders to think of the ultimate fate of the 700,000 German prisoners of war now being used as slave labour in France. Will French public opinion rise above the narrow confines of nationalism and petty revenge before it is too late or is the Nazi spirit (which we have always maintained is not an exclusively German product) to be the ultimate victor of the "war against Nazism"?

FRANCE CANNOT

FORGET AGINCOURT!

THE kind of mentality, which makes wars possible is reflected in the ban in France of the film "Henry the Fifth". The following comment appears in the weekly paper *Figaro Littéraire* of December 23rd:

After paying tribute to the film's technical qualities, the writer added: "Admitting all this, the film is not lovable. I know that history is history, Shakespeare is Shakespeare, and Agincourt is a French defeat. But there is a time and place for everything. I feel I was indiscreet while in England to visit this film, which has been banned from France—if not from Germany since we learn that it is being shown in Berlin—and it is my own fault if I was hurt. Nevertheless, I suggest that you make less fuss of Mr. Laurence Olivier next time he visits us."

If they still feel bitter in France about Agincourt, then how many years will pass before they forget the defeat of May, 1940?

LIBERTARIAN.

Squatters in France

35 workers' families recently moved into a large house in Marseilles formerly belonging to the mayor. Six families occupy the largest bedroom in which Goering spent a night during the German occupation, and Roosevelt after the Yalta conference. The French workers' action followed on the derequisition of the house by the American army authorities.

This was not the first squatting move at Marseilles. Six families occupied a 22-roomed villa despite the owners' protests. Another 11 families occupied the whole second floor of a Catholic Seminary, the Brothers Christian School. The squatters' action has forced the government to requisition the villa, while the priest in charge of the school has offered the squatters a three-year lease.

Other families took over the officers' mess at the empty Beaulieu barracks at Limoges, and also the barracks' hospital. When Limoges army officers complained that the barracks were needed by the Army for 1946 class conscripts, the squatters replied: "The war is over and we are here to stay." They stayed.

Democracy in U.S.A.

In Taylor County, Georgia, four white men called Macie Snipes, coloured, out of his house and shot him to death. It was the day after the state primaries, in which Macie Snipes had been the only Negro in the district to vote. The coroners' verdict: self-defense... In Holmes County, Mississippi, five white farmers flogged to death Leon McAtee, a coloured farmhand suspected of having stolen a saddle. It turned out later that some one else had stolen the saddle... (About the same time as Leon McAtee was being whipped to death for the theft of a saddle he didn't steal, in another Mississippi county another coloured man, Buddy Wolf, father of ten, was killed in a lynchroom by a white deputy sheriff who "thought he heard someone make a derogatory remark." This killing is not counted as a lynching, however, since it was an attack by a single white man on a Negro. If such killings by white individuals were included in the lynching statistics, the totals would be horrifying even in relatively "good" periods.) In Walton County, Georgia, some twenty white men stopped a car on a back road, dragged out of it two young Negro couples, the Malcolms and the Dorseys, and shot them down by the roadside. They were "looking for" only one of the four: Roger Malcolm, a 27-year-old farmhand who had wounded his white employer in a fight. The other three, including the two young wives, were killed to prevent them identifying the mob later. No arrests have been made.

Politics (October), U.S.A.

WAR, it has often been said by left-wing theoreticians, are fought for the defence or extension of markets. And, while this economic theory is no doubt a simplification that leaves out many important political and psychological motives in wars, it does remain an important element. The last war was, at least to a great extent, fought by the German and Japanese ruling classes in order to extend their economic, as well as political rule over the rest of the world. It was fought by the Russian, American and British ruling classes in the first place to defend their existing economic spheres from this

America to Britain and the Continent amount to about 70 million dollars, or roughly 40% of the total, the credit balance over imports in relation to Europe amounts to over 300 million dollars, or 60% of America's total favourable trade balance. In other words, Europe, while it may appear to be gradually shedding the open political domination of the U.S.A. in the form of occupation troops, etc., is actually becoming financially dependent on American credits to the tune of about £75,000,000 a month, or, if this rate is maintained, £900,000,000 a year. The economic ties between the U.S.A.

by the facile method of printing more notes. It is simple to measure the true value of Chinese currency for there is an abundance of U.S. dollar bills circulating in China. Given the considerable U.S. personnel in that country, all paid in U.S. currency, the supply of this stable money is considerable. In effect, it has become the sole means of exchange over a large segment of the Chinese urban economy. Many hotels and shops in the large towns refuse to accept any money other than U.S. dollars."

American Imperialism Today

menace, but also with the ulterior, though vigorously denied, motive of increasing their own systems of markets and economic influence.

Of course, it is impossible to isolate completely the imperialist motives in a war. They are largely interdependent with other political motives; the economic stresses of capitalism produce politically acute situations which can only be temporarily resolved in an economic way, by the creation in war of new means of consumption to make up for lack of markets, by the use of war to impose an increased discipline over the depressed classes, and by taking over the economic spheres of the defeated nations. For the ruling classes of the victorious countries the war has fulfilled all these ends. It has given capitalism the necessary breathing space from economic stress to enable it to be reorganised for a further period of dominant activity. Everywhere, in the devastation caused by war, in the needs of dependent and defeated countries, in the markets seized under the pretence of liberation from Fascism, the surviving imperialisms have found new scope to exercise their economic influence and gain a further respite, until the next economic crises drive them to seek refuge in a further war.

American Trade Statistics

Of the Big Three, the U.S.A. has undoubtedly come out in the most favourable way, as has been illustrated by the recent American trade statistics. These demonstrate that, compared with the period 1936-8, United States exports, in terms of cash, are more than 3½ times as high, and imports about twice as high. Exports for June, 1946, amounted to 878 million dollars, as against the monthly average of 247 million dollars in 1936-8. Imports amounted to 385 million dollars in June, 1946, as against the 1936-8 monthly average of 207 million dollars. Thus the favourable cash balance has increased from 40 million in 1936-8, to nearly 500 million dollars in June, 1946. In other words, America is gaining financial influence over the outside world at the rate of about £120,000,000 a month! Those countries which cannot pay in cash are becoming debtors and thus falling more and more into the orbit of American financial domination.

To an extent this great increase in exports is offset by the decreased value of money in relation to goods. Nevertheless, in actual quantities of products, it represents an increase of 100% in exports, as against an increase of only 15% in imports.

The spread of American imperialism can be divided into two spheres—economic and political. And it is significant that in South America, where the political domination of the U.S.A. was assured during the war, the favourable balance of trade is not so considerable as it is in relation to the European countries where, except in Germany and Italy, the Americans have no direct political rule. For instance, while the exports from

and South American republics are arranged on a more reciprocal basis, in that the U.S.A. has become increasingly the dominant market for goods from these republics, while the rise in American exports to these countries has been equally marked.

American Interests in British Empire

Generally speaking, the American imperialist trend seems to have respected the British interests within the British Empire, except at two points, which may be regarded as of almost strategic importance.

One is South Africa, whose trade with America has increased markedly since the war. Equally significant in the African sector is the increase in American domination over the West African negro republic of Liberia, whose trade is now almost completely under the control of the American rubber interests (particularly the Firestone Company), and which is otherwise so bound by the terms of a U.S.A. loan that the whole financial affairs of the country are administered by an American Financial Controller, who undoubtedly has a considerable say in all the political and social affairs of this strategic point in the Atlantic coast.

The second point in the British Empire where American influence is increasing is Hong Kong, where the trade figures show that, while imports from Britain have sunk to about 50% of their 1939 level, imports from the U.S.A. have risen to about 350% above pre-war totals.

This is significant of the general consolidation of American influence in the Far East and the virtual withdrawal of British pretensions in any area east of Malaya. The Pacific has become an American lake. From a military point of view, American power is virtually unchallenged in that area. The American navy has no rival at all, and American bases of military consolidation stretch from the heavily fortified Aleutians and Alaska in the North, through Japan, Korea and the occupied islands scattered all over the Pacific to enclose the whole of that ocean in their orbit. Over Japan and southern Korea the domination of America is directly political and military in the most absolute manner. The elimination of Japan as a trading nation has thrown open the whole of the Asiatic hinterland to American trade, while the financial subservience of China to America is illustrated by the following note from *The Economist*, 12th October last:

"The currency position in China is becoming increasingly chaotic. The Chinese national dollar, which was devalued on August 20th last from 2,010 to 3,350 to the U.S. dollar, has since then depreciated in the free market to 4,250 to the U.S. dollar. The reason for this further depreciation so soon after a drastic and, in the light of then prevailing conditions, adequate devaluation, is the continued inflation of the currency. The Chinese government has heavy military expenditure to meet and is making few efforts to cover it except

American Power in China

This passage shows the financial power which America wields in China. This financial power is, of course, linked with American military strength there. This is nominally small; the American authorities claim that their forces are in China simply to assist in the establishment of peacetime conditions. But, for all their comparatively small numbers, the American troops represent the best armed and trained military formation in China. Moreover, their officers exercise a heavy influence in Chinese affairs, and their effect on Chinese economy has already been shown.

The only challenge to American imperialism in the Far East at present lies in the desire of the people to be rid of foreign masters, and undoubtedly this is acting as a ferment among the people of the Far East. Undoubtedly, at present the sincerely discontented among the people tend to come under the influence of movements which are being used by the Russian authorities as fifth columns for their own imperialist intents. For this reason, they are almost powerless to gain a true revolutionary initiative, and for the present American imperialism stands virtually unchallenged as the political, military and economic master of the Pacific and the Far East.

GEORGE WOODCOCK.

FILIPINO FARMERS SEIZE LAND

The Philippines are at present at the mercy of American capital loans in order to re-establish capitalist economy there, and the U.S. government uses this as a bargaining card to obtain substantial control over this former colony. Meanwhile, Philippine economy suffers.

As a result some of the distressed farmers, most of them former guerillas, have seized the former Japanese hemp lands near Davao. The Roxas government will lose much face if it attempts to displace them.

STALIN'S BULGARIAN VICEROY

MANY MORE important things have happened during the last 13 years than the mere burning of the German Parliament. It is worth recalling the subsequent "Reichstag Trial", because last week George Dimitrov—who has never ceased to cash in on it—reached the peak of power. He is to form the new Communist government in Bulgaria.

Dimitrov forsook Bulgaria many years ago. He joined the German Communist Party and until the rise of Hitler was one of the leaders of that Party, which collaborated with the Nazis against the Social-Democrats when it suited its purpose, and always opposed the libertarian and revolutionary movements. After the "Reichstag Trial" lifted him into prominence as a world figure—practically the most well-known living Communist next to Stalin—he became Secretary of the Communist International (Comintern) and since for his departure from Germany he had adopted Russian nationality, he was even spoken of as a successor to Stalin himself. Even the hint of such a thing meant one thing—liquidation or removal to a safer post. When Russia conquered—the term used being "liberated"—Bulgaria, it was safer to recall Dimitrov's Bulgarian nationality, and he was sent to be Stalin's Viceroy. The Communists were not known for a heroic struggle against the Stambouliisky dictatorship or against fascism in Bulgaria. But Dimitrov—the "hero" of the Reichstag Trials—was known.

It is difficult to see dispassionately what "heroism" Dimitrov showed. He and the German Communists on trial were arrested as scapegoats. Hitler wanted an excuse to suppress the Communists, who wanted to be dictators instead. When Goering blustered in the court, Dimitrov was able to deflate the Marshal by his gift of repartee, but when it came to heroism, the "Communist" accused united in attacking Van der Lubbe as the real culprit and as a stool pigeon of the Nazis.

Van de Lubbe, who, had attacked the Reichstag in consequence of his anti-Nazi convictions and disbelief in Parliament, appeared in the dock half-dead with torture, which Dimitrov and his colleagues construed as proof of Van der Lubbe's "half-wittedness" which made him an agent provocateur of the Nazis.

Not having been subjected to the choice of sacrificing another man's life to save my own, I cannot throw the first stone at the German Communists who elected to make Van der Lubbe the scapegoat of the scapegoats, to try to avoid responsibility for the attack on the Reichstag by putting it all on Van der Lubbe, unable to speak for himself.

But Dimitrov was saved from the Nazi executioner by the intervention of Russian nationality being granted him, when Stalin saw how useful his name would be in luring unwary anti-Nazis to be fellow-travellers of the Communist Party. Dimitrov, safe in Russia, could have saved Van der Lubbe from execration after his head had been severed from his body. He did not do so. He joined in the pack of hounds howling after Van der Lubbe's good name. The lie was perpetrated for the greater glory of the "Communist" defendants.

Truly, Dimitrov is well-fitted to lead a Communist Government.

A. M.

RUSSIAN DRIVE FOR GERMAN YOUTH

In the various zones in Germany, the Allied governments all recognize the importance of getting hold of the youth. Their methods reflect the political colours. The British, American, and French keep an eye on the youth clubs, but permit all but political youth clubs. The Russians however sought to set up a single youth movement, totalitarian in structure, and Communist controlled. Zhukov originally ordered all anti-fascist youth committees formed in the Russian zone to work under the direction of the Central Youth Committee in the Russian Berlin headquarters. 20 district committees were formed before the other Powers arrived in Berlin. They were under the leadership of Heinz Kessler, a Moscow-trained Communist, and 18 of the 20 district leaders were Communists. Yet in spite of the support of the Communist-controlled city administration, with all its money and press and buildings, it is now admitted, that this attempt has failed. Harold Fenton, reporting for *Worldover Press*, writes, "Dictatorial control, a steady diet of Communist propaganda, has steadily cut the attendance at the youth centres, which never attracted more than a small per cent. of Berlin youth."

Although the monolithic CP organization "Free German Youth" is the only youth organization allowed in the Russian zone itself, in Berlin, the Allied Commandatura will not agree to a single organization having a monopoly, so the FGY does not exist there. In return the Russians refuse to consider applications from any other youth groups. Hence the Berlin youth are enviably free from these youth organizations.

Point of Production

(Continued from page 3)

(steel and utilities, principally) began to dictate prices and the cost of production—that is, wages. In turn, the industrial consumers were controlled by the big New York Banks. Many still talk about the decentralisation of the soft-coal industry, but it is a myth: in its economics, coal had become a national industry.

Just as centralization of economic control (first in the big industrialists and later in the bankers) created the behemoth state that threatens to swallow up the whole economy, so did the centralization of the coal industry drive the union toward centralization. The union and the miners were bent on fitting into the existing society, on making an efficient collective-bargaining agency. To meet the massed capital of the operators, wage negotiations and strikes had to be on a national scale; control had to be concentrated at the top, to be wielded first by a handful of leaders and ultimately by that giant among union leaders, John Lewis.

The miners, especially the more or less class-conscious socialists—of whom there were more than a few—put up a powerful resistance. But they accepted the premises on which Lewisism was based; so the result was the triumph of Lewisism.

Reuther, Murray & Co.

In a later period, we have seen the same concentration of complete centralized control in all the big CIO unions except the auto workers and the rubber workers. If coal is centralized in control, the mass-production industries are highly centralized and integrated in their production-organization. Even the militant struggle of the workers of Akron, Flint and Detroit—the most advanced in America—cannot indefinitely stave off the triumph of centralism and dictatorship in their unions. Not so long as these workers still accept most of the principles of capitalist unionism. At this time, Walter Reuther appears as the almost certain John Lewis of the auto workers—and Reuther is almost as dangerous and able

as a leader as Lewis.

But the rotten condition of most of the labor movement does not, in the writer's view, point to rejection of unionism. It points rather to the necessity for a drastic change in the character and outlook of the unions and their members—to anarcho-syndicalism, with emphasis on the anarchist. For where anarcho-syndicalism has failed—and in France it certainly degenerated into reformism, and in Spain it exhibited some of the same tendencies after 1936—it has been precisely because it was not anarcho-syndicalist enough. The temptation has always been to water down the program to appeal to more workers; but the watered-down union then becomes only another trade union.

This means that the workers must think and act in terms of anarcho-syndicalist principles—in terms of thoroughly decentralized economic organization for the sole purpose of constant class struggle and overthrow of the whole system. And without thought for creating efficient collective-bargaining organizations. Only so can we keep control of the union at the point of production—and only so can the unions be real workers' organizations.

(This implies, also, the unsoundness of the view that the workers need only take over and run the means of production. It implies that the organization of production must be so revolutionized and decentralized that the workers themselves can run it. Otherwise there is only the bureaucracy of "unions" in place of the bureaucracy of corporations.)

From this view there follows a programme, a programme that was understood, in most of its essentials, by the IWW of the militant, revolutionary period (1908-1917) and forgotten since. On the negative side, this programme means rejection of any deals with the bosses or the government—including the NLRB, the check-off, the boss-enforced closed shop, the time-contract (binding the workers to specified conditions for a specific period), political action.

Positively, this programme means taking an outright revolutionary position. It means that control of the union remains at the point of production, where direct action by the workers, not arbitrations, legalism and political horse-trading, is the weapon of struggle. It means a strictly limited series of co-ordinating agencies, composed of working members and not pie-cards, instead of the centralized structures which bear on the membership of the present trade unions. It means development of the workers' natural abilities to the point where every member of the union is a leader. It means decisions made by the members, not by leaders; it means joint action rather than on orders from above.

These ideas were known three decades ago. When the IWW followed them, it was the most powerful revolutionary force this country has ever known.

Building A Movement

At this moment, the building of a big movement on anarcho-syndicalist principles in America is obviously idealistic. It is not going to happen very soon. But the programme is applicable to-day: it is the idea we have to take to the workers. To the degree that these principles are followed by the workers, their unions will not be the oppressive institutions of to-day, but real workers' organizations. By spreading these ideas, by encouraging workers to put them into practice, we can strike at the pillar of society that institutionalized unionism has become, and begin the work of building a real revolutionary movement.

We cannot do these things by standing around and denouncing the existing unions, and imagining that is all there is to be said on the subject. We can do these things only by showing the workers how to use their economic power to break down the slave society in which they live; how to build unions based on direct action at the point of production, on control by the workers at the point of production.

D. T. W.

(Reprinted from 'Why' U.S.A.)

Discontent in Italy

Discontent in Italy is reaching major proportions. Peasants in the South continue to act against landlords and to take over properties, and the Italian government has been forced to accept and legalise much that the peasants have achieved. For instance, it has been agreed that under certain conditions peasant co-operatives can take over uncultivated or insufficiently cultivated land, while a decree has been issued, altering the conditions of share-cropping contracts. But these minor concessions are likely to do little to stem the tide of peasant discontent while a very large proportion of the land—about 36%—is still in the hands of large landowners and farmers.

Meanwhile, in the cities inflation and unemployment play their part in causing steadily rising discontent. Prices rise almost daily, and this fact, combined with actual shortage of food and the failure to gain sufficient employment to meet the mounting cost of living, has produced a spirit of anger and rebellion among the workers, particularly in the South, where conditions are worse than elsewhere. In Naples, last month, there was a general strike which brought an almost complete economic standstill in that area. The strike was called off only after very emphatic promises of drastic steps to improve

the situation in the district. Elsewhere in Southern Italy, unemployed workers have rioted, and there is likely to be a general strike in Bari. Meanwhile, further North, in Florence there have been riots of housewives, who have wrecked food markets as a protest against the prices charged.

A further cause of discontent is the continued presence of the British and American occupation forces in the country. In Padua, where the British headquarters has recently been established, the people have shown their resentment by large scale demonstrations, and attacks on carelessly driven military vehicles.

Undoubtedly a state is arising in Italy where the workers are becoming discontented with all political parties at present in existence. The unfortunate thing is that at present there is a tendency for this discontent to be used by the reborn fascist groups, who combine anti-Allied feeling with attacks on the present parties with a view to re-establishing their own influence. The only thing which can prevent a return to a large-scale fascist movement is the rapid growth of the already large Italian anarchist movement, which will soon remain literally the only workers' organisation which will not have been discredited in the present muddle of the Italian social situation.

When Abortion is Sanctioned

At a recent discussion on Birth Control at the Royal Society of Medicine, a judge of the high court, Sir Travers Humphreys, affirmed the official attitude towards abortion. "Abortion," he declared, "is undoubtedly criminal." That is the law for doctor and layman alike.

We would have felt more interest in a pronouncement from the learned judge on abortions practised on a mass scale, and without the victim's consent moreover, by governments. As no criminal proceedings have been forthcoming, one must assume that such State abortions are legal.

We refer, of course, to the abortions caused to the women of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the atomic bomb. Here is the official account (*Report of the British Mission (sic) to Japan, HMSO, 1946*): "Of the effects already detected, the most striking are those on pregnancies at all stages from two months onwards. At

distances up to 1,000 yards from the centre of damage, pregnant women who survived have had miscarriages. At distances up to 1 1/2 miles from the centre of damage, pregnant women who survived have had either miscarriages or premature infants who died very soon. Even beyond this range, up to nearly 2 miles, only about one-third of pregnant women have given birth to what appear to be normal children. Two months after the explosion miscarriages, abortions, and premature births throughout Hiroshima were nearly five times as frequent as in normal times, and formed more than a quarter of all deliveries."

Of course, it has to be remembered that illegal abortionists are helping women to prevent an unwanted child, which is undoubtedly a criminal act in these days of conscription. By contrast, the unborn children of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were enemy aliens, and the law probably holds them fully responsible for the actions of their governments, so that criminal charges against the Allied governments would be quite out of place.

The Growth Of The Octopus

One of the worst features of life in the approaching corporate state which is becoming the regular form of European countries, is the steady growth of the government bureaucracy like a great octopus, consuming the energy and goods of the people, and strangling freedom in its tentacles. In England the latest information in the official *Digest of Statistics* gives the figure for Government servants—excluding the armed forces and industrial grades—as 1,007,000. Similarly, the local government employees, again excluding industrial grades, total over a million. That is to say, there is one public employee to every three industrial workers! Admittedly, some of these people, such as postmen and street cleaners, fulfil a useful function which would be necessary in any society. But the proportion of usefully employed men and women in these two millions must be very slight, and undoubtedly at least 75% are involved in clerical and bureaucratic work, in filling out forms, administering regulations and collecting cash, work which is wholly parasitical and worthless to the community. The abolition of the state would mean, among other things, the end of all this useless work, and the transformation of so many—often unwilling and unwitting parasites into members of the community who perform useful and satisfying work.

Anarchist Direct Action in Sweden

A Swedish comrade has sent us the following report of an anarchist direct action in that country in an attempt to arouse the Swedish workers against the tyranny in Spain.

"Recently a ship arrived at Gothenburg, carrying a cargo of oranges from Spain. Two young comrades, an artist and journalist from Stockholm, aged 26, and a shipyard worker from Gothenburg, aged 35, managed to get at the cargo and by means of paraffin oil destroyed the greater part of it.

"At the police inquiry the comrades stated that they committed the offence in their capacity as anarchists, as a gesture of sympathy with brother anarchists struggling against Franco in Spain.

"Both said that their object in ruining the oranges was to arouse the Swedish people to a more vigorous opposition to Franco Spain.

"This took place in Gothenburg Harbour, Wednesday, 11th and Thursday, 12th December. The local press now announces that both the comrades have been released on bail.

HARTVIG JOHANSSON."

It is significant that, when this incident was reported in the British national press, no reference was made to the fact that the men in question were anarchists.

London Anarchist Imprisoned

Our comrade, Ron Lander, an active member of the London Anarchist Group, has recently been sentenced to three months' imprisonment for refusing to comply with the condition of his exemption as a conscientious objector. It is a fantastic thing that nearly a year and a half after the end of the war conscientious objectors should still be persecuted for their resistance to Government attempts at coercion under what were supposed to be wartime laws, but cases like those of our comrade merely prove that the state in its present condition cannot afford to do away entirely with its wartime structure, without which it would disintegrate. It must still carry on persecution in order to convince people of its power.

Comrade Lander is at present in Wormwood Scrubbs Prison, and, accounting for the customary remission of sentence, should be released on or about the 25th January.



WHEN WILL HE WAKE UP?

"WHEN AND HOW"

WHEN EVERYTHING from banks to fried fish shops have been nationalized; when that fantastic utopia of the political socialist is realized; when every worker is a member of a State-controlled trade union; when wages are determined not by the workers' needs but by the great question of how much profit can the State draw from the workers' toil; when by the aid of family allowances the supply of Atom fodder can be kept up; when every action of the individual will be determined from his birth to his death, not as now when he is merely required to have a birth certificate to prove he has been born, and a death certificate to prove he is really dead; when full democracy is established by punishing the citizen who does not vote; when poverty is abolished, and hunger is as unknown as it is in prison or the army; when the House of Lords is full of Labour peers, and all M.P.s have £1000 a year; when all has been done and all these wonderful reforms have been achieved—what more can the people need and want?

One thing they will want and need above all else—Liberty.

When will this liberty come, and how will it work? Liberty will come when the worker realizes that nationalization leads of necessity to State servitude and totalitarianism, in which the individual becomes a mere automaton, numbered and bound to the all-pervading State. Liberty will come when he sees that workers' control implies complete negation of State ownership and regulation; when those who make will also take the complete product of their joint labours and distribute it for the benefit of all; when the workers grasp the fact that the State which takes the grand share gives nothing in return but trouble; that it hampers production with its futile laws and prohibitions. When all this is as apparent to the majority, as it is already to the minority to-day, "when" will become "then".

How this first step is to be accomplished is simplicity itself—by the workers taking the administration of things (machines, etc.) into their own hands, and completely ignoring the exploiting State with its thousands of idle and useless officials. The workers are those who work, not those who tell them to work and how they should work. The worker can always get through with his job—it is the boss who is dependant on the worker, never the worker who is dependant on the boss.

Every day and everywhere there is

ample evidence that the worker appreciates the value of technical progress, especially so where it does not mean his unemployment. Just as in the days of craftsmanship the worker found joy in the creation of beautiful goods, so to-day and in days to come will he find pleasure in scientific methods which lead to increased productiveness. All industrial history shows that the best technician is he who has had a practical training. The boss class is well aware of this and encourages the young to attend technical classes in order that their exploitation value will rise. The argument that there must be a special class of trained men to act as managers is only the old exploiter's argument that there must be governed and governors. Life in the workshop proves that it is not true, for work can only proceed evenly and smoothly when each knows his job and pulls his weight. All labour saving schemes are based on this fact. So to argue that there must be government and that freedom is an abstraction is to ignore all history. It is never the government nor the member of the governing class who initiates technical or social changes. They are of necessity prohibitive and reactionary, whether they function as proprietors or as State managers.

Anarchist Syndicalism, because it is based on the liberty of the individual—who can only find expression for his individuality in free organization with his fellows in voluntary bodies—alone can keep open the door to free initiative, opening up new vistas to man. The "when" and "how" will be solved by the common sense of the people, when they have left behind them the theories of scholars and managers and exercise that native talent inherent in man. Those problems and difficulties in the minds of the half-emanipated are dissolved by the rising sun of Liberty.

MAT KAVANAGH.

Black Market Eggs seized by Workers

Learning that a wholesale dealer had 35,000 eggs stored in a warehouse near Niort, near the west central coast, workers seized the entire stock, and placed it on sale at the Trade Union headquarters at the official price of 60 francs a dozen. In the black market—the only place where eggs can be bought—they are 20 francs apiece. (WP).

EUROPEAN RELIEF

We print below, for the information of our readers who are anxious to send food parcels to Europe on their own account, the directions which are being issued by the Save Europe NOW campaign.

1. Food Parcels may now be sent to particular individuals anywhere in Europe except Albania, Bulgaria, Rumania, the Russian zone of Germany and all sectors of Berlin.

2. Food parcels may also be sent for general relief purposes (i.e., not to particular individuals) in: Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, the British Zone of Germany and Berlin.

3. If you want to send a food parcel to a particular person in any of the countries mentioned in paragraph 1 other than Germany, apply for instructions to the Post Office. If the Post Office replies that they have no instructions, you must wait until they have.

4. If you wish to send a food parcel to a particular person in the British, American or French Zones of Germany, write to this effect to Save Europe Now, 14, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.2, state the zone in which the person lives, enclose a postal order (for 3/-, if the parcel is to weigh less than 5 lb and 4/- if it is to weigh more than 5 lb), and a stamped envelope addressed to yourself. Do nothing else. In reply, you will be told what next to do.

5. If you wish to send a food parcel for general relief purposes to any of the countries mentioned in paragraph 2 above, write to Save Europe Now, 14, Henrietta Street, W.C.2, state the country (if any) for which you want your contribution earmarked, and enclose a postal order for 1/6 and a stamped envelope addressed to yourself. Do nothing else. In reply, you will be told what next to do.

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING.

1. Donors are reminded that parcels must consist only of rationed food, food on points, food on personal points and rationed soap, and must not include more than 2lb of any one article.
2. All food should be packed in its own sealed tin.
3. The food parcel, when packed, must not weigh more than 7lb.
4. If you want to send to particular persons in Germany, we cannot accept more than one parcel a month from any one individual for this purpose. We can accept any number of parcels from any one individual for general relief purposes

in Germany.

5. The following foods are the most suitable to send and they are listed in order of merit: Tinned meat, tinned fish, tinned milk, dried eggs, flour, semolina, barley, oatmeal, macaroni, tinned beans and peas, chocolate and sweets, dried milk, dried fruit, tinned syrup, jam, honey, and treacle, sugar, tea. Also soap, soap flakes and rationed soap powders.

6. Processed cheese, margarine, cooking fat and suet must not be sent except in a tightly sealed tin.

7. The following foods will not keep and must not be sent: Fresh meat, butter, shell eggs, liquid milk, bread, oranges and bananas, bacon.

8. The following foods are unrationed and are not allowed: Coffee, cocoa, Horlicks, Ovaltine, tinned vegetables and soup.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

WITH this issue, we are launching our circulation drive which was outlined in a recent issue of *Freedom*. 1,000 new postal subscribers and 1,000 new readers through our present individual and group distributors as well as through the newsagents. We hope that *Freedom's* new format and the increased reading matter will meet with the general approval of our readers, many of whom have already written to us, since the announcement was made, offering their encouragement and assistance in this new *Freedom* Press venture.

Many of our subscribers who are in sympathy with *Freedom* must have friends who would be interested to be put in touch with a paper such as *Freedom*. There are a number of ways this can be done. Why not, for instance, take out a subscription for two copies instead of one (special rates are shown at foot of column 1 on this page), and sell the additional copy to your friend, and when he or she has become sufficiently interested to become a subscriber, use the extra copy on another friend!



Are you, for instance, friendly with your local newsagent? If you are, why not show him your copy of *Freedom* and ask him to order a few copies and give it a trial, and at the same time tell your friends that *Freedom* can be obtained

from him. And did you know that *Freedom* could be obtained through your local W. H. Smith bookstall? Most managers have probably never heard of *Freedom*, though W. H. Smith's Head Office order a supply of each issue for distribution to their stalls.

These are just two suggestions. Even if you can personally increase the circulation by one copy only it is worthwhile. It is by these small individual efforts that we shall increase the circulation of the paper and its influence among thinking people.



There is an advantage in having readers who are slow in renewing their subscriptions, because when they eventually do, they write such appreciative and encouraging letters! But our new commitments make it impossible for us to wait a long time for settlement and we must be prepared to forego even the real pleasure of receiving those appreciative letters!

If you received a card some time ago telling you that your subscription was due for renewal and have not yet answered, please do so now. In any case, we shall be sending out another reminder this month, and then if we do not hear from you, we shall be obliged to remove your name from the subscribers' lists, and for once we shall keep our word in this respect!

PRESS FUND

- NOVEMBER
- London: C.W. 1/2; Bowden: V.T.E. 1/6; Bredbury: V.W. 4/-; Earnley: G.B.A. 4/-; L.F. 5/-; Newmarket: D.E. 9/-; Mansfield: J.L. 4/-; Ullapool: J.B.P. 2/-; Brighton: A.S. 4/-; Glasgow: J.T. 4/-; Edinburgh: G.W.L. 2/3; New Eastwick: H.A.A. 2/6; A.M. 2/-; Ashington: N.G. 4/-; Barnsley: L.E. 1/-; Botley: M.E.H. 4/-; Hastings: R.J.T. 1/3; London: B.T. 2/-; E.R. 10/-; Liverpool: G.L. 4/-; Adlestone: C.S. 2/-; Llanelly: E.G.R. 4/-; London: R.R. 11/-; Bradford: D.R. 1/-; Todmorden: D.W. 4/-; London: W.E.D. 3/-; P.H.S. 10/-; D. 1/-; E.W.P. 11/-; Chicago: T.B. 5/-; D.M. £1; Mundesley: S.V.P. 10/-; Bournemouth: F.D. 5/-; London: H.A.M. 10/-; C.W. 14/-; Olympia, Wash.: E.W. 9/11; London: E.H. 4/6; H.B. 11/-; Glasgow: A.McD. 2/9; Bradford: D.R. 1/6

- DECEMBER
- London: P.W. 6d.; C.F. £1 4s. 8d.; Greenock: S.M. 4/-; Blackpool: R.B.B. £2; Bristol: J.S.R. 11/-; Notts. & Derby Group: £1; London: S.E. 2/-; G.S. £1 2s. 0d.; P.S. 10/-; C.W. 10/-; Southend: G.L. 4/-; London: A.F. 14/-; San Francisco: D.A. 9/-; Swansea: R.R. 9/2; London: C.W. 2/-; Leeds: C.W.L. 10/-; Dalkeith: A.C.F. 8/6; Kirby-le-Soken: C.C. 10/-

TOTAL	£ 21 1 8
Brought forward	£183 11 6
Total to December 23rd	£204 12 2

MEETINGS - ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP
SOCIALIST PARTY OF GT. BRITAIN

DEBATE

will be held on the motion:

"SHOULD THE WORKING CLASS CHOOSE SOCIALISM OR ANARCHISM?"

Monday, 20th January, 1947,

in the
LARGE CONWAY HALL
at 7 p.m.

S.P.G.B.: CLIFF GROVES

L.A.G.: TONY GIBSON

Chairman: J. ALLEN SKINNER

Admission Free

NORTH-EAST LONDON
ANARCHIST GROUP

A GROUP MEETING

will be held on

Tuesday, January 7th, at 7 p.m.
at LEYTON BOROUGH LIBRARY,
Leytonstone High Street.

ARTISTS' COOPERATIVE

A federation of artists, individually or in groups, has been formed under the above title. Fuller details will be given in our next issue. Meanwhile, all enquiries to: Daphne Henke, 85a, Beaconsfield Road, London, S.E.3.

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

Discussion Lectures are held every Sunday, when Anarchists speak on subjects relating Anarchism to topical events, to industrial problems, to religion, to philosophy and all matters of revolutionary interest. Visiting speakers, not necessarily anarchist, offer information on the many activities in which research and development leads to anarchist conclusions.

Every Sunday at 7.30 p.m.
at 8 Endsleigh Gardens, W.C.1

JANUARY 5th J. Hewetson
Anarchism and Agriculture

JANUARY 12th "Brains Trust"
What is Anarchism?

JANUARY 19th F. A. Ridley
Is Britain Moving Towards Socialism
Admission Free. Questions invited

A comrade in the North of France, working as a sheet metal worker and having some knowledge of English would like to get in touch with a comrade in this country to exchange information regarding the working class movement, the syndicalist struggle, etc. Anybody wishing to get in touch with him please write to *Freedom* Press.

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