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Freedom

A N A R C H I S T F O R T N I G H T L Y

OPPOSE CONSCRIPTION!

The Individual's Right to Resist

THAT the Labour government is having some difficulty from an opposition within the party in introducing conscription is an encouraging sign, though too much should not be built on it. The number of Labour M.P.s who voted against the second reading of the Bill (72) was higher than any other "rebel" vote, and it appeared to secure some effect, for the Cabinet announced its intention of reducing the period of service from 18 months to 12.

Such a reduction, of course, makes nonsense of the Government's claim that they had examined the question very carefully and had come to the conclusion that every able bodied man must serve a year and a half. To make such a substantial reduction shows that there never was such a necessity, and no doubt much ridicule could be heaped on the Government's head on that account. Unfortunately, there are indications that to adopt the course of mere ridicule would be to miss recognizing that the government has been pretty astute in this matter of reducing the training period. For it seems likely that they not only foresaw the opposition from their own back-benchers, but also gauged its quality correctly.

SOCIALIST TRADITION QUICKLY SHED

Opposition to conscription has been traditional in this country right up to the recent war. Chamberlain, as late as April, 1939, declared that he would never bring in conscription in peace time. When he did bring it in—one month later—the Labour Party were loud in their denunciations. It is really disturbing to see the readiness with which the traditional attitude is shed. Rhys Davies, opposing the Bill, said that he was surprised to see George Isaacs, the Minister of Labour supporting it, "for he has denounced it much more bitterly in the past than I have." Nor do the socialists appear to have forgotten their anti-conscription past, they merely seem to think that "times are changed"! The *New Statesman*, in its leading article (12/4/47) which contains no criticism of the measure, blandly remarks that "Considering Labour's tradition of opposition to conscription, it was surprising that only 72 out of a party of close on 400 opposed the Bill."

The *Tribune* (4/4/47) feels the need of justifying this revisionism, with somewhat lame excuses: "On the conscription issue, the Pacifist and Liberal opponents had really no case

other than their conscience (sic). Every Socialist country to-day practices Conscription, and refusal by Britain would again have been regarded as a contracting out of international obligations."

Thus, those who make the decisions as to whether the workers shall or shall not be conscripted are quite unruffled by any adherence to principle—whether socialist or simply liberal opposition to compulsion. There can be little doubt that the *New Statesman* is correct when it says, "Long before the debate on conscription the Prime Minister knew that those who objected on principle to National Service were a relatively small minority."

Knowing this, what more simple than to pitch their demand high—at 18 months—and then make a 'concession' by knocking off 6 months, and so satisfying these socialists who are so lightly encumbered by principles?

No doubt there are a few M.P.s who really are concerned with the principle of the thing: but such idealists do not flourish in the House of Commons.

WHAT IS THE USE OF CONSCRIPTION?

An interesting reflection is that there has been no one to question whether conscription is a necessary measure. The official enquiry into the National Service Acts after the 1914 war (of which Sir Ian Hamilton was the chairman) expressed the view that conscription had been a failure, and that the maintenance of voluntary recruiting would have satisfied the needs of the Services more quickly and more satisfactorily. Hence conscription must serve some other need than its apparent one, and it is doubtless the assistance it gives a government in controlling its subjects that makes it such a desired measure.

It is also worth reflecting on the view expressed in *Freedom* some months back—that if the government tries "the voluntary method" first, and does not receive much response, it has in effect received a positive mandate from the country against the measure proposed. The need to impose conscription itself indicates that the population (who are supposed to be "represented" by their government in a democracy) don't want it. But these are academic considerations, and a socialist government dismisses them with contempt.

INDIVIDUAL RESISTANCE

If the Bill becomes law, as seems likely, the opposition in parliament will have done what it could and failed. But the

matter does not rest there. For it is still open to the intended conscripts to refuse to be conscripted, to express individual resistance. (We are always hearing that this is what the Germans should have done against Hitler.) It has been held that no law is binding which violates the conscience of the individual, and to refuse military service at the close of a bloody war which seems only to have made a bloodier world is not only in line with conscience, it is also common sense.

43% BELOW £4 A WEEK

IN 1945 the government sent investigators for three months to collect information about the material conditions of the people of this country. They questioned 11,000 families, and the results are now available. They indicate something of the poverty in which a large proportion of the people in this country live.

In 2,567,000 households, or 21 per cent. of the 12,226,000 in England and Wales, the chief wage earner earned £3 or less per week. The following table shows how many families (households) fall into the other income groups:

	Households
Up to £3	2,567,600
£3 to £4	3,056,600
£4 to £5/10/0	4,157,000
£5/10/0 to £10	1,437,880
Over £10	518,420
Unclassified	489,100

Thus 9,781,200, or 75 per cent. of households live on less than £5/10/0 per week, while no less than 43 per cent. (5,624,200 households) live on less than £4 a week. It is claimed that wages have risen since 1945 by 11 per cent., but the cost of commodities have almost certainly risen more, even though the official cost of living has risen by only a few points.

FRANCO and the King

FRANCO has made a new move in the political manoeuvres regarding his regime. By declaring that when he dies, or retires, a king will follow him, and that in the meantime he will govern with the aid of a Council of the Kingdom, while a Regency Council will take over after him, he has presented the monarchists with a headaching problem.

In 1936, the Monarchists, including Don Juan (then a member of the Falange) supported Franco. Many of them still do, while others have gone into opposition behind Don Juan, the Pretender to the throne. The motive of the latter group is obviously to avoid inheriting some of the odium which Franco's regime will leave behind it. These opposition monarchists have been making overtures to other opposition groups, including the Republicans, the Socialists, but not the Anarchists (reports that the Anarchists have agreed to cooperate with the monarchists and republicans in order to overthrow Franco's regime are denied by the Monarchists). But the new move will force them to reconsider the position.

The monarchists have now two courses open to them: they can adopt a legitimist, evolutionary policy, and wait for Franco's death or retirement to take over by constitutional means; or they can join forces with political opponents for the purpose of overthrowing the Franco regime by unconstitutional means. The first course has the disadvantage of giving the monarchists the odium of being official successors to the existing regime, and also will put them in the queer if a successful overthrow of Franco is achieved by other political groups. (Hence if they adopt it, they will have a stake in the stability of the regime.) The second has all the uncertainty of political alliances or "fronts" as they are now called.

Don Juan has categorically rejected Franco's "offer". But if his supporters come to consider it more advantageous, he will no doubt forget his anti-Franco manifesto of March 19th, 1945, and fall in behind the Regency Council. It is impossible to say which will happen.

Spanner In The Works

The fact that such a problem is facing the monarchists makes them even more unreliable as "allies" for republicans, socialists and workers, and these groups will be as much worried by Franco's new manoeuvre as the monarchists themselves. In fact, the whole move illustrates the dangers and pitfalls of this kind of political alliance, and so illustrates also the opposition which anarchists advance against such "popular" fronts.

Different political groups only seek to

"Nobody can rule guiltlessly."—Saint Just.

"Any ordinary city, however small, is in fact two cities; one the city of the poor, the other of the rich, at war with one another."—Plato ("Republic").

combine for an immediate object which they think cannot be secured except by some kind of sinking of differences. But as soon as the situation changes, new line-ups are adopted and old alliances speedily forgotten. The groups which make the greatest sacrifices of principle—the workers' groups—are thus left with no advantages, but having made all the concessions. A wily regime like Franco's knows all about that sort of thing, and is always ready to throw a spanner in the political works.

In the long run, it will be the workers who overthrow Franco, and they will only be throwing away the fruits of victory in advance if they make concessions to would-be rulers of the monarchist, socialist or republican brand. Let them rely on their own strength instead of lending it to groups of political tricksters of whatever shade.

FRANCO AND THE UNITED NATIONS

Meanwhile, the "diplomatic embargo" against Franco which the United Nations imposed on December 13th last, has become a ridiculous dead letter.

The Labour Government has concluded an Anglo-Spanish Financial agreement. This extends the economic relations with Franco which the British government have ever abandoned. Last year Britain exported to Spain £9 millions worth of goods, and received from Spain imports to about £15 millions. In 1947, the new agreement envisages that British exports to Spain will reach £25 million while Spanish exports will be about £15 millions. Oscar Hobson, the Financial Editor of the *News Chronicle* (5/4/47) puts the figure even higher, for he expects British exports to exceed Spanish imports to this country by £20 to £25 millions this year.

Nor is the American government far behind. Truman has despatched Paul T. Culbertson, the Chief of the West European Department of the U.S. State Department, to Madrid to negotiate an American loan to Spain in return for American Air bases along the Mediterranean coasts of the country. Obviously, all this makes nonsense of the diplomatic sanctions "against" Franco.

34 nations voted for this decision of the United Nations last December, and withdrew their ambassadors from Madrid. (Continued on page 5)

Prisoners of Peron

One of the most brutal examples of class injustice in this hemisphere, since the Sacco and Vanzetti case, is unknown to most Americans; it is the case of five tile-makers from San Martin, Argentina, who were imprisoned for life in 1933 because of their militancy in a local strike. Framed for a crime they never committed, tortured until they confessed, they are still in prison—and Dictator Peron intends to keep them there.

The case resembles in many ways our own Haymarket affair of 1886, which grew out of the fight for the eight hour day and ended in the deaths of five anarchists and imprisonment for three others.

The Argentine tile-makers—Adelino Dominguez, Domingo Perroti, Sebastian Zolly, Celio Conti and Mario Montiglio—are members of the Federation Obrera Regional Argentina (FORA), the anarcho-syndicalist union

in that country. Some time before they were condemned, the dictatorship then in power had suspended all popular rights. The FORA had been smashed, its locals closed, and certain militants jailed, deported, some assassinated.

The employers wasted no time in lowering salaries, lengthening the work day and wiping out all the previous gains of the workers. The bosses in the tile industry made a special gift to the police of 30,000 pesos for the purchase of ammunition to be used against the workers.

But the tile-makers of San Martin stood their ground. They went out on strike for the eight hour day and an increase in wages. The strike lasted three months, and during that time police terrorism resulted in mass arrests. Finally, however, the employers gave in, but during negotiations a delegation of workers was

attacked and one of them, Jorge Pichio, was killed. Mass arrests followed, including the five militant tile-makers of San Martin.

Though illegal, hounded by the police of several dictatorships, the FORA has kept up the fight to free the San Martin prisoners. Recently, dock workers in Argentina closed all ports with a 24 hour solidarity strike.

The regime which keeps the San Martin workers in jail is the same regime with which the Russian dictatorship recently concluded an economic pact, with which American business still continues to do business. American workers can show their solidarity with the class prisoners of Argentina by refusing to carry out any economic agreements with Peron. We urge our seamen readers to demonstrate solidarity with the San Martin prisoners by not working on cargoes for Argentina. (from "Why", Feb. 1947).

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THE VATICAN AND



From Don Basilio. Drawing by Majorana.

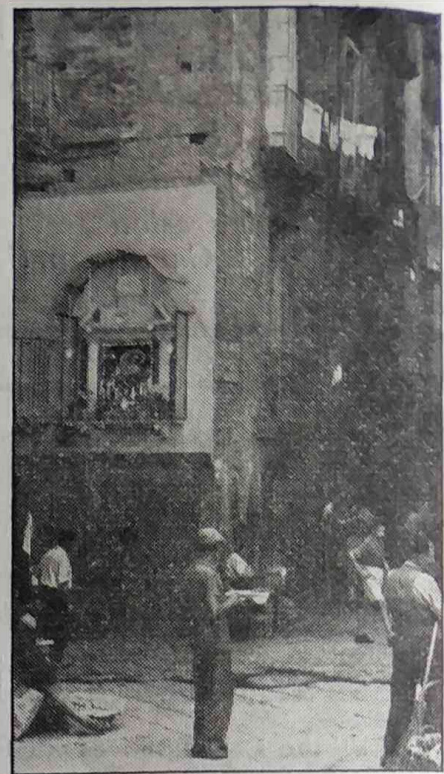
—But what has happened to your red flag?
—For Christ's sake don't talk to me about it! It is made from the cassock a cardinal insisted on presenting to us when he heard that the Communist deputies had accepted Article 7 of the Constitution.

a "marriage of convenience" between Mussolini's Dictatorship and that of Pope Pius XI. It was certainly not an indication that the Fascist leaders had suddenly been converted. Both the Pope and Mussolini hoped to get something out of it. As a result of the Treaty, the Holy See was recognized as a Sovereign Power with full possession of the City. The Government undertook to pay over 1,750 million lire (£19 millions) in cash or Government stock, which of course came out of the poor taxpayers' pockets, whether they were Jews or Protestants or Atheists! The Concordat which forms an important part of the Treaty recognises the Catholic faith as the sole religion of the State. No meetings or demonstrations can be held in Rome which may be deemed offensive to the Papacy. Religious corporations acquire a legal status and may therefore acquire property. The State resigns any voice in the appointment of bishops. The Church may call on the arm of the state to support it in the coercion of recalcitrant priests. Religious marriage becomes the legal marriage for Catholics; certain matrimonial cases come before the ecclesiastical courts. The Catholic University is relieved from interference by the civil authority, and compulsory Catholic education is extended to Secondary schools. On the other hand the Vatican recognises the Italian kingdom with Rome as its capital, the bishops swear neither to take themselves nor allow their clergy to take any action which may prejudice the state or public order, and no ecclesiastic may join a political party.

In this last sentence it becomes clear what Mussolini hoped to gain from the Treaty. There was nothing of course to prevent the higher clergy from supporting Mussolini's dictatorship as indeed they did, particularly during such critical periods as the war in Abyssinia and the Spanish adventure. But the Vatican gained much more. More important than the guaranteeing of its economic status—important though it was—was, from the long term view, its new influence on education and family life. As Bolton King rightly pointed out, the Lateran Treaty "restored to the Papacy its old strangle-

reasons was cast in favour of the Lateran Pact! Those who have followed the twists and turns of the C.P.s throughout the world will not be surprised by this new development. The ostensible reason for this volte face is given headlines in the Communist organ *UNITA* of March 26th, which read: **IN THE INTEREST OF WORKERS' UNITY AND RELIGIOUS PEACE THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY SUPPORTS AND VOTES IN FAVOUR OF ARTICLE 7.** Such shameless opportunism will undoubtedly have its effect on those elements in the Communist rank and file who have been actively campaigning in the anti-clerical movement which is fast gaining support in Italy, but of course, the fanatical, unthinking section will just swallow this about-turn as it has so many others. We think it worth-while to put on record some of the choice remarks of the C.P. leader Togliatti in justifying the Party's attitude:

"Since the Centre of the Church is situated in our country and since a conflict with it would upset the conscience of many citizens we must adjust our position *vis a vis* the Catholic Church and the religious problem with care. Our position in regard to this problem is therefore democratic. We vindicate and demand that in the Italian Constitution there should be freedom of conscience, of faith, of cult, of religious propaganda and of religious organization. We consider these freedoms as the fundamental democratic freedoms which must be established and defended against every attempt from wherever it may come . . . For us the solution reached on the Roman Question is something definite which has closed and settled the problem for all time . . . Our position, clear and definite, removes any possibility of misunderstanding arising and poisoning relations between the most advanced democratic elements and the Catholic Church." It should be noted that Togliatti was quoting from (and reaffirming) the speech he delivered to the Vth Congress of the Party at the beginning of 1946, and he adds "As you will see these are a few fundamental principles; we have a duty to be consistent



FREEDOM photo.

In a back street of Naples, where people live in conditions not fit for beasts, the shrine to the Virgin Mary is kept spotlessly clean, never without flowers and lighted day and night. The Church promises all the good things for the doubtful hereafter and succeeds in maintaining poverty of the mind and body in the present.

there is no clash between a socialist regime and the religious conscience of a people; there is not even a clash between a socialist regime and the religious freedom of the Catholic Church" . . . and so on for nearly two pages of *l'Unita*! We need hardly say that few people inside the Assembly or outside were taken in by Togliatti's protestations and when at the end he said that whether the vote were public or secret it would make no difference to the way the communist vote was cast since "there does not exist for us any electoral preoccupations" there was

THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC

A WELL-KNOWN and respected student of Italian affairs commenting back in 1931 on the Lateran Treaty signed by Mussolini and Pope Pius XI two years earlier, wrote that the Concordat between the Vatican and the Italian State rested on unstable foundations and that "an anti-fascist reaction would be bound to denounce it, and with it the Temporal Power may disappear again". The writer of these words, Bolton King, did not live to witness "anti-Fascist reaction", in 1947, when this very important question of Church and State was debated by the Italian Constituent Assembly and resulted in a new victory for Fascism and Clerical obscurantism.

With the exception of one or two paragraphs in the more serious English newspapers, nothing has appeared in the Press in this country on the subject which is one of profound interest in that it once more indicates the power of the Vatican in politics as well as the opportunism of politicians. But before dealing with the debate, it will be useful, we think, to explain what the Lateran Treaty is about, so that the enormity of the decision taken by the Constituent Assembly may be better judged.

The Lateran Treaty was, as it were,



FREEDOM photo.

This is more than just a sleeping man using a stone column as a pillow. He is one of Italy's millions of unemployed and the massive columns which dominate the picture are the columns of St. Peter's, Rome, headquarters of clerical obscurantism. During the last two weeks the infamous Lateran Treaty signed by Mussolini and Pope Pius XI in 1929 has been included in the New Constitution of Italy, thanks largely to the Communists casting their votes with those of the democratic Christians, the neo-fascist Common Man party and the conservatives. The Treaty restored to the Papacy its old stranglehold on the life of the Italian nation, and the new Constitution ratifies this decision.

hold on the life of the Nation."

and I think we have been so far."

ANARCHISM — Interpretations

"Man becomes man, and his humanity becomes conscious and real, only in society and by the joint activity of society. He frees himself from the yoke of external nature only by joint—that is, social—labour: it alone is capable of making the surface of the earth fit for the evolution of mankind; but without such external liberation neither intellectual nor moral liberation is possible. Furthermore, man gets free from the yoke of his own nature only by education and instruction: they alone make it possible for him to subordinate the impulses and motions of his body to the guidance of his more and more developed mind; but education

and instruction are of an exclusively social nature. Outside society man would have remained forever a wild beast, or, what comes to about the same thing, a saint. Finally, in his isolation man cannot have the consciousness of liberty. What liberty means for man is that he is recognized as free, and treated as free, by those who surround him; liberty is not a matter of isolation, therefore, but of mutuality—not of separateness, but of combination; for every man it is only the mirroring of his humanity (that is, of his human rights) in the consciousness of his brothers."

BAKUNIN.

Article 7.

To-day, nearly 20 years after, the "anti-Fascist reaction" (which so loudly condemned Mussolini's pact at the time), has sanctioned the continued stranglehold of the Church on the Italian people by accepting Article 7 of the new constitution which includes acceptance of the Lateran Treaty. This article reads: "The State and the Catholic Church are in their respective domains, independent and sovereign. Their relations are governed by the Lateran Pact. Any modifications to the pact which are bilaterally agreed to do not require constitutional revisionary procedure. Other religious denominations have the right to organize according to their own statutes so long as these do not clash with Italian jurisdiction", and after a debate lasting into the early hours of March 25th, was agreed to by 350 votes against 149.

The Political Opportunists

The large majority in favour of Article 7 is far from representing the Italian people's attitude to the Church and the Clergy. It was brought about by the large Communist vote which for opportunistic

Communists Champion Catholic Cause!

Later in his speech Togliatti asked "Between whom is the debate? Between the Democratic-Christians and ourselves? I do not think so. The demo-christian colleagues speak sometimes as if they are the only defenders of the freedom of catholic conscience. I do not think that any part of the Left wishes to leave them this exclusivity. In our party there are also catholics and we consider ourselves, and indeed are, defenders of the freedom of their consciences. Such freedom we defend as a party which is democratic, modern, progressive and if you like, communist; we do not however concede to the democristians the exclusive right to defend it." Togliatti, like all faithful communist stooges ended his speech by pointing to religious tolerance in Russia where during the war, for instance "we have not only seen religious institutions functioning regularly and freely but we have also seen the religious sentiment act as a stimulant in the struggle by the great mass of people in all parts of Russia for the defence of the Socialist fatherland whose existence was threatened by the invading German and fascist hordes . . .

loud laughter. The American magazine *Time*, April 7th, devotes more than a page to the debate, and their correspondent in Rome gives some indication of the motives behind this jesuitical move by the Communists.

"What were Togliatti's motives, and what did he achieve? The paramount fact was that the Communists' support of the Vatican coincided, with jewelled precision, with the new Italian Communist strategy of shifting attention and activities from the industrial north, traditionally anti-clerical, to the agrarian south. In recent weeks the Communists' best agents and organizers have been moved down from Milan and Turin (where, said a Communist editor in conversation last week, "our work is already finished"), to concentrate on the peasants. Togliatti's tactic had undercut the Christian Democrat Party's appeal to the peasants that the real choice lay between Christian democracy and Red atheism.

"But Togliatti had a second motive. This had been a supreme opportunity to display himself as arbiter of Assembly decisions. The Kremlin's legate had proved to De Gasperi and the Christian Democrats that—alone—they could not carry off one of their most cherished objectives. Socialist Pietro Nenni, after a year of playing footie with the Communists, now knew that Togliatti could give him a splintering kick in the shins at will. If Nenni and his Socialists were ever to walk again, they might have to make peace with the disaffected Socialists of Giuseppe Saragat in a last, desperate effort to save the Italian moderate left from total annihilation."

It is difficult to say what the reaction of the Italian people will be in the long run to this continued imposition on their lives by the Church. Two things are certain however: firstly, that the anti-clerical movement in Italy will gain in strength and determination. It is to be hoped that it will develop as a movement based on the broad concepts of the right of the individual to determine for himself the kind of life he will live rather than as a movement which devotes time and energy to hunting up all the scandal surrounding individual priests. This activity has no real bearing on the problem of freeing the Italian people from the clutches, both moral and physical, of the Church. Secondly, it is to be hoped that the Communists have once and for all demonstrated to the people that not only do they not represent the people but that their sole aim is to use the masses in their attempts to seize power and to establish a dictatorship more dangerous and destructive of all human values than the one inflicted on them by Mussolini.

V. R.

THE FIGHTING CLYDE

It is impossible to draw from the agonised past the complete picture of the horrors and sufferings that have gone to make the history of the people of Glasgow. Time has drawn a veil over the vivid colours of a living hell and struggle that was the life of these people gathered round the Clyde.

An excess of exploited men and women and children, forced by a demand for existence into miserable dwellings and little hovels, too overcrowded to bear even a resemblance to homes, packed close to the high bleak walls of the industrial dungeons and compelled into selling their bodies and brains for a bare pittance.

Half starved, consumptive wage slaves who saw their children chewed up in hundreds by the unprotected machines; slaves who worked in misery from dawn to dark and dragged out their lives in poverty, hunger and filth, resulting inevitably in prostitution, suicide, murder and savage sadism.

The Glasgow of to-day is abundant in evidence of this horrible past. The grim districts of Bridgeton, Anderston, Gorbals and Govan, with their dismal alleys and jumbled slums, are known throughout the world and are evidenced as evils of a system of exploitation.

There is that element in humanity of decency, and an inborn instinctive demand for liberty and equality, that impelled these people to fight their way out from beneath the gruesome burdens of oppression and slavery. Finding strength in banding together in trades unions, there followed a slow and tortuous struggle towards self-respect, equality and justice for the workers here on the Clydeside.

Fight For Emancipation

It is in the people themselves that we find the irrefutable facts of the nightmare that has gone before. Their struggle has been human to the point of brutality. Their slow upward surge has not been won without heavy cost. The toll has been in broken bodies, death and martyrdom.

To repress the fight for emancipation all the exploiter's weapons have been used, beginning in 1851, when the Glasgow dockers struck for 6d. an hour for their casual labour. Blacklegs, protected by a large force of police, were used. They only succeeded in uniting the dockers into a workers' organization.

Since then the dockers' movement has stood firm against all attempts to smash the men back into subservience. In turn the police, prison, the Army and the Navy have been used. All the forces of propaganda and law court

trickery have not prevented the emergence of one of the finest working men's organizations in the world.

The Break-Away

The Glasgow dockers are justly proud of their trade union; it is for them a personal organization. Building by a process of trial and error, they have forged a workers' movement that has superseded the mere collective bargaining machine which depends for existence on a capitalist society. The fundamental character of this union is a challenge to the profit-maker and the profit-taker; implicit in the character of the dockers' union is the silent insistence on the annihilation of the privileged and parasitic elements in present-day society.

Demonstrated in the present struggle are the solidarity, empiricism and intelligence which are the characteristics of the union. They are handling the strike intelligently, shrewdly and determinedly. Their strength is given by every docker on the Clyde.

The foundation on which this trade union is laid is as simple as it is sensible. Breaking away from the Transport and General Workers' Union, the Clyde dockers regrouped themselves in the Scottish Transport and General Workers' Union in January, 1932.

The secession was brought about largely through procrastination and delays, sometimes deliberate, in handling the dockers' problems on the Clyde.

Remote control from London led to a sense of frustration and discontent. The massive, centralised union of Transport House, with its ponderous and fantastic machinery of negotiation, was not geared to the militant Clydeside

with its long record of progressive struggle.

The Free Union

The dockers preserved, and have clung firm, to the basic ideals of trade unionism, and in breaking away have made an inestimable contribution to the forward march of the workers throughout the world.

The Scottish T. & G.W.U. are to-day a free and independent trade union, owing allegiance to no political body and paying a levy to no party. It is, from top to bottom, a workers' organization controlled by themselves and fighting for the workers.

Every member of their trade union is a dock worker, grouped into nine branches, with the dockers as No. 1 branch and the others formed from such port trades as Storemen, Riggers, Sealers, Watchmen and General Labourers.

Each of these branches appoints from its own members its own administrative committee with a part-time secretary. The nine committees are co-ordinated through an executive committee with a full-time secretary.

All committee men and secretaries hold office for one year only. They can be re-elected or removed at any time if necessary, by the members who meet weekly, and they receive a wage commensurate with the industry. After their period of service they revert to ordinary dock work.

The real democratic control found here excludes the possibility of the top heavy bureaucracy and incentives to careerism and subsequent betrayal by a leadership divorced from the membership.

(Continued on page 8)

World Trade Union Leaders Snobbish

200,000 Japanese workers gathered in front of the Imperial Palace in Tokio on April 4th to welcome the delegates of the World Federation of Trade Unions. The guests however failed to turn up, and their leader Louis Saillant, declared that "they did not wish to make public appearances".

Trade Union leaders have got something better to do than hob-nob with mere workers these days, it seems.

Lanark Girls Strike

On March 21st, 12 girls employed at the Lanark food factory of Marshall's Food Products Ltd., received a week's notice through "redundancy". On March 28th, Shop Steward Mary Neal interviewed the manager, Woods, regarding the manner in which the girls had been dismissed. Five were placed in other work and seven were definitely being sacked. During the interview Woods was called to the telephone and, while waiting, Mary Neal lit a cigarette. Woods then childishly insinuated that she had insulted him by smoking in his office without his permission and had added insult to injury by using his matches! It is small wonder that the girls were in a mood to strike when they were subjected to this kind of petty tyranny.

The girls wanted to strike work on Friday, after this interview, but Mary Neal restrained them with the advice that it would be better to go through the union procedure—though events subsequently prevented this course of action.

On Monday, March 31st, at starting time, Mary Neal was refused admittance and informed that Mr. Woods wanted to see her. Woods accused her of being a rebel, and that she had been rebellious for three weeks. He told her she would get a week's wages in lieu of notice, which she was not really entitled to. And she was to get off the premises as quickly as possible. Mary Neal said that she would determine how she would leave, and left without wages. She immediately got in touch with the union branch secretary.

Manager Wood, meanwhile, typed out a notice and put it up on the notice board, informing the workers that a girl had been dismissed for inciting to strike, and adding that anyone doing likewise would be instantly discharged. At the same time, married women arrived at the factory

from the labour exchange with green cards to start work in place of the "redundant" girls. At dinnertime workers called a meeting and unanimously decided to strike. The management did their best to prevent workers from leaving the works at dinnertime, and succeeded in intimidating some into staying in. But on Tuesday morning the girls were solid and only 17 blacklegs went into the factory. But since there is a charge-hand or overseer for every eight girls or so it is easy to account for the scabs.

By noon, Woods was ready to climb down and put through a hurried call to London to the directors. In half-an-hour he announced that all the girls were reinstated and were to start work next morning.

This is another example of direct action and solidarity on the part of fellow workers preventing victimization.

D. T.

THE TWO GEORGES

A *News Review* reporter listened carefully. When the King lately said to George: "So you're a Director of the Bank of England, you must know a lot about money," he replied: "I know a lot about not having a lot of money." But on finance and economics George Gibson (61) undoubtedly knows what he is talking about.

George's other strong point is that he never pulls his punches. He said so as he gazed through his odd, hypnotic eyes into the comforting fire and chewed at his ever-present cigar.

"Anybody who loves and admires the workers of Britain, as I do," he said, "knows that it's bloody silly to let them expect that manna will fall from heaven. There's only one answer to cries for better living, and that's more production. And that can't be done without honest work."

News Review, 6/2/47.

We bet George didn't tell the other George that bit about manna which does not fall from heaven and honest work. His namesake knows better.

MINERS SEE THROUGH "BRIBES"

"Miners at North Seaton colliery, which has one of the best production records in the country, have sent back the three 'big match' tickets allotted to them by the Coal Board with the message: 'We don't need to be bribed to get coal.'" This report from the capitalist press goes on to imply that the miners at North Seaton could "pull their weight" without such inducements, but the true significance of their rejection lies elsewhere.

Miners, nor any other workers for that matter, don't work for the "good of the community" or because the "crisis demands every effort in production", etc.; they work for wages. And intelligent workers know well enough that these catchwords do very well for owners who want to get more production for the same wages, for that means more profit. "The urgent needs of the community", "the necessity to raise the standard of living by increased production", may be translated as the needs of the owners for profits and the desire of the stockholders for increased dividends. It is a cheap method to try and encourage competition between pits or factories for production records by offering rewards like tickets for cup ties. Such things are familiar enough in Russia under the term "socialist emulation".

In rejecting the Coal Board's bribe, the miners at North Seaton show their contempt for such devices. They might have added that since they work for wages, the way to get more production out of them is to pay them higher wages. The "needs of the nation" are not served by putting more profit in the owners' pockets, but by seeing that the workers get a larger cut out of those profits for themselves and their families. If workers keep their eyes firmly on their own interests, and turn a deaf ear to appeals on behalf of the employers camouflaged as "national needs", they will be on the way to extending their demands from a larger share in profits to the demand that they take over production altogether.

J. H.

AGRICULTURE & SOCIAL REVOLUTION

(The following article is the first of a short series, which will replace G.V.'s usual "Land Notes" for the next few issues of "Freedom".)

KROPOTKIN, with that practical sense which characterizes his writings, once remarked that in the final report the success or failure of a revolution depends on its success or failure to provide the revolutionary workers and peasants with food. Significantly, he called his book on the social revolution *The Conquest of Bread*. On the face of it, this might appear merely to state the obvious. But it is not so obvious, apparently, for the question of revolutionary agriculture has been neglected by theoreticians of the social revolution to a quite startling extent. The result has been utterly disastrous, and has cost millions of lives.

Kropotkin doubtless was thinking of the Paris Commune. Food certainly reached the beleaguered city, for the reactionary government of Versailles never succeeded in completely investing it. But the Commune made no serious attempt to link up its own revolution with the social revolt of the French peasants, and so provide indefinitely for the feeding of Paris. But since 1871, Kropotkin's remark has received added point and confirmation from three revolutions.

Revolutions Of The Past

In Russia the food shortage of the period of "War Communism" culminated in the great famine of 1921, in which five million people died of starvation. The situation was only relieved by the economic retreat known as the NEP (New Economic Policy). The German Revolution of 1918 occurred in the midst of general starvation brought on by the war, and it had no time to relieve this situation before it was overwhelmed by the

machine guns of the Social Democrat, Gustav Noske. Most interesting of all, the Spanish Revolution in 1936 alone succeeded in increasing the output of food, at least for a time. But it remains only a partial exception, for with the triumph of the counter-revolution in the setting up of the Socialist-Stalinist government of Dr. Neorin, the food situation deteriorated to starvation point during the winter of 1938-39. It was a prime cause of the ultimate defeat at the hands of Franco. But we shall return to the examples of Russia and Spain in later articles.

Thus, with one partial exception, the revolutions of the past have failed to guarantee the material subsistence of their populations and so have inevitably failed in their object. For the abolition of economic misery and the raising of man's activity beyond the continual search and labour for the bare necessities of life is clearly an essential prerequisite for the building of a life and a society of freedom. The question of agriculture is therefore one of the very first problems which must engage the attention of practical people who seek to prevent the social revolution in this country from stumbling into the totalitarian counter-revolution which has been its fate elsewhere.

Menace Of Blockade

In England this problem is especially acute for two reasons which are mutually interlocking. First, this country is, of all countries of the world, the most dependent at present on outside sources of food imports. (Whether this position is an inevitable and changeless one will be considered at some length later.) Secondly, revolutions of any magnitude, have always been the object either of an armed intervention on

the part of a coalition of capitalist powers, or of an economic blockade, or both together. Our island geography makes us particularly vulnerable in this respect. Hence the social revolution in this country will have to surmount this formidable obstacle right from the start, and the food problem, the conquest of bread, will bulk larger here even than it has done in the great revolutions of the past.

This prospect of blockade is so grave that many people are unwilling to face it squarely, and allow themselves to doubt the reality of its menace. A glance at history will make the question clear. Pitt's government led a coalition of reactionary powers in an attempt to destroy the French Revolution. They even went to the length of seeking to disorganize the finances of the revolution by printing French currency in England with a view to flooding France with it. This device was denounced in Parliament by the playwright Sheridan in 1794 (*Kropotkin, The Great French Revolution*, p. 444). In 1871, Thiers joined with his enemies of yesterday, the Prussians, to blockade and subsequently massacre the Commune of Paris. In 1918 and 1919 the rulers of Britain and Germany, Japan and America joined hands in refusing to allow the passage of any material, even medical supplies (including anaesthetics), to the revolutionary workers and peasants of Russia. In addition they engaged in active armed intervention against them. Non-intervention in Spain was a polite word for economic blockade. Many readers will remember that popular blockade runners like 'Potato' Jones were refused insurance on their ships and cargo, at a time when the Spanish

workers were appealing for food and for the evacuation of refugees in the north. The Italian workers who overthrew Mussolini in 1943 were immediately subjected to the terror raids of the R.A.F. on the cities of N. Italy.

The lesson of past history is therefore inescapable; if the workers of this country succeed in overturning existing property relations and the institutional means whereby they are maintained, they must be prepared for intervention from without. The only small ray of consolation discernible is that since the British ruling class have been the main interventionists of the past, the British revolution will only have their accomplices to deal with! But America's increasing interference in foreign affairs indicates that considerable intervention is likely to come from them.

It follows therefore that (confining our attention to the food aspect of the blockade problem) there are two alternatives: either the British workers will have to wait on the world revolution which will prevent the possibility of intervention; or they will have to seek a solution which will provide the bread for the revolution while at the same time facing the problems of blockade from without, and therefore no food imports from without. The first alternative is too pusillanimous, too reliant on an unlikely good fortune, so in these articles only the second problem will be considered. We shall begin by considering some general points of capitalist economy in food, together with the factors which have made British agriculture what it is to-day. Then proceed to consider some of the revolutionary experiments in order to learn from the past.

STRIKE IN HOLLYWOOD

(Our Los Angeles comrade, Jules Scarcieriaux, sends us the following account of the labour struggle in the Hollywood Studios.)

On September the 26th, 1946, 7,000 motion picture workers, organized in the "Conference of Studio Unions" were locked out. Then 2,000 Film Technicians refused to cross the picket lines, ignoring the order to stay at work, by their national officers of the "International Association of Theatrical and Stage Employees".

Here, it must be said that a similar strike took place and lasted seven months in 1945.

The whole conflict is due to the fact that the "I.A.T.S.E." which controls most of the 40,000 movie workers (the whole industry, A.F. of L. is running under closed shop conditions), is acting just like a company Union and the producers believe—rightfully—that if they could crush the "Conference of Studio Unions" organization, the "International Association" would, with its coercive discipline and its well-known corruption (Bown and Biofi, former Heads of the organization were sent to prison for ten years) provide them with reliable and obedient slaves.

Now, very little is known about the strike. It is not surprising. The producers have the wealth, control of commercial press and the radio; their influence upon their faithful servants in State positions, and the puppets of the labour movement, give them powerful forces, forces which enable them to silence the whole means of true information.

Yet, however, nowhere, in any labour conflict, have anarchist views been so clearly demonstrated as in the Hollywood lock-out.

Indeed, the conflict has caused the largest trials in the history of the States. For ten dollars, a matter of camouflaging legality, the producers obtained injunctions against mass-picketing, had 1,200 workers of both sexes, arrested—there was question of building concentration camps, for there was not enough room in jail for them all, though the so-called "criminals" had been let out.

Then the producers' valets intended to have one jury trial for them all. Were they not guilty? Then why the trial? Sure they were guilty since anyone who pleaded as such and was willing to go back to work, was immediately liberated.

However, through legal protests the so-called 'men of justice' came down to judging 14 strikers at one time.

The leaders, including a Radio Commentator, came on trial for conspiracy. Read the farce: They had conspired to steal the workers' wages in not allowing them to cross the picket lines.

Nevertheless, while these fourteen conspirators were on trial, the civic corruption, the real conspiracy was partially revealed. A policeman who was fired after arresting a driver who ran down a picket, has sworn a statement which reads as follows:

"That in connection with the labour dispute which resulted in picket lines beginning September 26th, 1946, the

entire Culver City police force, including the police administration staff in the Culver City Hall, were placed on the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studio payroll."

That's not all.

Unable to corrupt Hebert K. Sorrell (an unpolished worker who I can swear is the symbol of integrity), head of the "Conference of Studio Unions" the gangster methods which were tried before to get rid of him were started again. This time, Sorrell was arrested by three gangsters, one bearing the uniform of the Los Angeles police department, handcuffed, thrown into an automobile, beaten to unconsciousness with the butt of a gun, hand and feet tied together on his back, dragged in the into the Mojave desert, 150 miles from

Yos Angeles, fired at, and left there for death—or so thought the gangsters. But Sorrell, who refuses to give in, also refused to die. When he regained consciousness, he rolled himself till he fell in a ditch along the road, called for help and in time was taken to a hospital.

The next day, the charges against the fourteen conspirators, labour leaders, and commentator, were dropped.

Again, these men are in the front line. Their brains, as well as the brains of the 9,000 strikers, are very well sharpened. Will they have learned that economic and political masters form one single clique and that to be free men we shall have to get rid of them all?

JULES SCARCERIAUX.

Lewis Seeks Come-Back

John L. Lewis, the president of the American Mineworkers' Union, having failed last December in his frontal attack on the Federal Government when he climbed down in the face of a fine, has now resorted to guerilla tactics to build again his prestige with the miners.

His opportunity came with the mine disaster at the Centralia pit, Illinois, where 110 miners were killed in an explosion. It was disclosed that the regulation of conditions as laid down in the Federal Mine Safety Code was not being complied with there, and it led to inspection of all the soft-coal mines in the country—over 2,500 of them—when it was found that only two mines were complying fully with the safety code.

The Secretary of the Interior, Mr. Krug, himself disclosed that 518 of the mines were considered unsafe and that he had ordered them to close down until they complied with the safety code and were passed as O.K. by inspectors. But this was not good enough for John L., who saw a heaven-sent opportunity to get some of his "own back". First, he called his men out for a week's "mourning strike" of sympathy for the victims of the Centralia disaster, and then—while they were still out—ordered them all to stay out, with the exception of those working at the two mines which were complying fully with the code. At the same time, he was attacking Mr. Krug for "criminal negli-

gence" in not enforcing the code at Centralia, and appealing to him to close down the mines until they were re-inspected. This appeal Krug rejected, saying that the Krug-Lewis agreement provides the means by which the union may guard against working in unsafe mines.

On the face of it, it would seem that Lewis is in a good position, but the government are now stepping in again with their lawyers. Last December a fine of £875,000 was levied against the United Mine Workers for their strike, but was reduced by £700,000 when Lewis sent them back to work. Now the government lawyers are accusing him of "bad faith" and "subterfuge" and are seeking to have the full amount of the fine restored. If we know John L., however, he will send his men back to work rather than risk what matters most to all big unions—the money-bags.

Already, some of the men are drifting back to work on their own account, ignoring their leader and his opportunism. What we fail to understand is why the miners themselves have allowed the safety code to be ignored in so many mines. Surely they don't have to be so dependent upon their leader that they will work in dangerous conditions unnecessarily until a disaster gives him the opportunity to show off? Let the miners—in this country as well as U.S.A.—create their own

organisations on the job where militancy can be part of their attitude to their work, where they create their own conditions and are themselves responsible for them, and where their misfortunes cannot be used by demagogues or politicians in their climb to power.

Negligence Behind U.S. Mine Disaster

110 American miners were killed in a pit explosion in a mine at Centralia, Illinois, recently. John L. Lewis denounced the Secretary of the Interior, Mr. Krug, for not enforcing the Federal Mine Safety Code there, and the publicity which the disaster has received has forced the State to take action which is an admission that mining is unnecessarily unsafe. Krug has shut down no less than 518 of the total 2,531 soft coal mines on the ground that they are unsafe. They will not be re-opened until they have been certified safe. These mines

had been producing 616,000 tons a day—26 per cent. of the total output. A Federal mines inspector has stated, furthermore, that only two of U.S. coal mines were fully complying with the safety code.

These facts do not prevent the U.S. government from imposing fines on immense numbers of miners when they go on strike against their conditions of work.

In this country, nearly 1,000 miners are killed in the mines every year—almost three a day. And when such disasters occur, the men's representatives have repeatedly given evidence at the inquests on the dead that the cause of the explosion was a removable one, such as faulty electrical installations. But the Coroner usually remarks that it is not within his power to make recommendations to the owners. And so mines continue to be unsafe and cause unnecessary deaths.

CIVILIZATION

The New York subway wants to hire a moustache eraser for posters defaced by passers.

The Statue of Liberty has been reopened to visitors, her cavern-like interior protectively painted with lipstick-proof enamel.

In Tarran, County Texas, a woman preacher with strict views conducts marriage ceremonies for dogs.

Favourite song gag about New York's vanished recluse is "Where is my Melancollyer baby?"

Atomic burials vaults with two-inch thick concrete walls interlined with lead will be on sale next month.

Gargantua, an 850lb. gorilla at Madison Square Garden, shows an increasing contempt for characters dressed like human beings. Too many strange faces and he roars with rage until attendants drop a tarpaulin over his air-conditioned cage.

JOHN DRUMMOND in

Daily Graphic, 8/4/47.

Sometimes only a certain shyness, which makes us dislike drawing attention to ourselves in public, prevents us from expressing our feelings about humanity in the same manner as the unfortunate gorilla with whom we feel a strong sense of solidarity.

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LIBERTARIAN.

Foreign Commentary

Political Issues in France

THE three topics of major political interest in the French Press during the past fortnight can be listed under the following headings: De Gaulle, Scandals, War and general unrest in the Colonies.

De Gaulle's Strasbourg speech has already received wide publicity in this country, and in these columns therefore we will attempt to give readers the reactions of French public opinion as expressed in the different Press organs. There is no doubt that the General's speech has had very profound repercussions, and the political parties have lost no time in making known their reactions to the speech. The Socialist Party has officially condemned the speech in a communique issued by the Executive Committee. It states that the negation of the conception of parties, and the creation of the single party, can only end in personal power. "Democracy cannot survive without parties; their suppression or alteration would be the indication and the medium for dictatorship." Reference is then made to the fact that though De Gaulle was at the helm for two years—and abandoned power by his own wish—he did not solve any of the anquishing problems with which the French nation was faced. And again to-day he does not offer any concrete solution. The "Rassemblement" of the French people without any programme can only mean—says the communique—a rassemblement around one man. This can only create new internal divisions and create a false impression of France abroad. Not "noisy agitation tendency towards the revision of the Constitution" but "a determined effort by the French people and constructive solutions for the economic and social problems" will help overcome the present difficulties. The communique ends significantly with expressing confidence in its members to "watch over the safeguarding of the republican institutions and democratic liberties."

The Communist paper *l'Humanité* devotes less than three inches of its space to report the speech but comments at length. Their views can be summed up as believing that De Gaulle declares himself Leader of the Reaction and puts forward as his programme ideas dear to the enemies of the Republic. The Anarchist weekly *Le Libertaire* (10/4/47) points out that De Gaulle's programme will remain in the "realm of dreams" so long as the masses are not conquered.

The reaction to any De Gaulle "pranks" will be of assistance to the Stalinists who, with the pretext of achieving a democratic front will put themselves at the head of a rival fascism and the country would pass, by civil war or compromise which Moscow will decide—to an unchecked and limitless totalitarianism. Socialists, radicals, democrats, christians, gaullists and anti-gaullists, would be devoured or absorbed step by step.

SCANDALS AT A HIGH LEVEL

The De Gaulle speech merely interrupted for a day or two the absorbing, non-stop scandalmongering that has been filling the columns of the French Press these past months. Max Inrator who has given a "break" to the English Press is small fry for the French who have at least a half-dozen scandals running at the same time. These are a few sample headlines chosen at random during the past fortnight:

"A LIBERIAN DIPLOMAT, A PARISIAN INDUSTRIALIST AND A POLICE OFFICER INVOLVED IN A QUESTION OF GOLD TRAFFIC AND SMUGGLING."

"ANDRE CRESTOIS, FORMER TREASURER MOVEMENT NATIONAL LIBERATION ARRESTED."

"THE ADMINISTRATORS OF THE NEWSPAPER CITE-SOIR INVOLVED IN THE CASE OF THE FALSE SUEZ SHARES AND THE SHARES STOLEN FROM THE BANK OF INDO-CHINA. AN INSPECTOR OF THE SURETE IS ARRESTED."

"UNEXPECTED DEVELOPMENTS IN THE WINE SCANDAL. M. DEFFERRE STRIKES M. BASTID."

"TWO MORE INSPECTORS SUSPENDED AT THE PREFECTURE."

To these should be added the case of Joanovici (the rag-millionaire who pops up in London one day and in Cairo the next) and all its ramifications; the Hardy case, plus a sprinkling of murders and

robberies with violence.

All these scandals, apart from their scandal-value as such do reveal a widespread corruption at all levels in the country.

COLONIAL CAMPAIGNS

Meanwhile, the war in Indo-China continues and there is now open rebellion in Madagascar. *Combat* (April 9th) devotes an article to the problem and points out that there has been a very marked political development in Madagascar during the past two years, which the writer considers quite a natural development which has been brought about in part by the war and the victory of the allies. This desire for self-government is also the result of the natives' feeling of "unity as a nation". Will it be drowned in the blood of the natives and of French conscripts as in Indo-China? This is the question which the Anarchist *le Libertaire* asks in a front page article in its April 10th issue.

MORE UNREST IN ITALY

Reports of demonstrations by the unemployed in Italy continue to be received daily. The latest, at Turin, industrial centre of Italy, has assumed large proportions, and according to *Combat's* correspondent (11th April) the demonstrators had almost succeeded in making themselves masters of the city, which was in fact under their complete control for more than nine hours. Armoured cars were called out to "restore order". A similar situation arose at Spinazzola, near Bari.

Considerable discontent also exists amongst school teachers owing to the starvation wages they receive, and the Teachers Syndicate has stated that a strike would take place throughout Italy on April 14th. This in spite of opposition by Di Vittorio, Communist Secretary of the Italian T.U.C. "A strike," he said, "might do more harm than good to the workers' cause."

Observers do not hide the fact—writes *Combat*—that many aspects of the situation of present-day Italy are analogous to the situation in 1920 (i.e., when the

RUSSIA'S CONCENTRATION CAMPS

Continued from previous Issue

Concentration Camp Business Becomes Better and Better

By 1946 the chief Bolshevik apparatus of coercion had again changed its name and initials. With the Fourth Five Year Plan, the NKVD was split into two distinct ministries. One is the Ministry of State Security, initialled in Russian MGB. It does police work for the Political Bureau of the Russian Communist Party—the handful of wise persons bossing Soviet Eurasia and acting as god-fathers to the various Communist parties on the globe—in its relations with the outside world. The second new institution is the MVD, a refurbished Ministry of Internal Affairs, whose job it is to enforce the will of the Politbureau within the borders of the USSR itself.

In connection with its broad programme of coercion and repression, the MVD continues the economic tasks of the NKVD. The MVD runs ten huge national construction organizations, in which it uses so-called free workers as well as the millions of convicts under its care. Through its "Central Administration of Concentration Camps" (the GULAG), the MVD also farms out convict labour to enterprises that are not undertaken and managed by the Soviet police, say the Ministry for the Construction and Development of Heavy Industry, the Ministry for the Construction and Development of Military and Naval Plant, the Ministry of Eastern Coal Production, etc.

The rulers of Soviet Russia continue to feel that for safety's sake they must perfect themselves an industrial-military core in Siberia. They came to power as a result of a foreign war. A war may turn them out. But not if they can help it. They feel they know better than any other set of politicians how to handle internal opposition. That is the purpose of a Ministry of Internal Affairs. A self-sufficient, economically fortified inner Siberia can forestall a debacle due to foreign aggression. The Nazis almost did it, but the Soviet State could pull back.

It is the MVD that is in charge of the job of hastening the construction and outfitting of fortress Soviet Inner Asia. It is in charge of the job of hastening the military-industrial development of Siberia.

It has now at its disposal 3,000,000 German, Italian, Finnish, Hungarian and Japanese war prisoners. The latter are co-operating with the millions of civilian wards of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to build railways, highways, strategic airfields in the great stretches of Siberia. Referring to the foreign little helpers, the *Irkutsk Pravda* recently wrote that the new Siberian railroad will be the largest transport construction job in the current Five Year Plan.

The population of Siberia was about 11 million before the first Five Year Plan. It now exceeds 40 million. More than half of this number are convict employees of the MVD, which through its GULAG labour-farming centre supplies manpower to all industrial enterprises active in the

Soviet East. It also uses such labour in coal, copper, platinum, iron and nickel mines, in the operation of metallurgical plants and electrical power stations and in all State concerns now busy in the development of the industrial-military potential of Soviet Asia.

Invidious Comparisons

Certain sentimentalists will probably want to compare the MVD's own industrial enterprises and its subsidiary GULAG, supplying convict labour wherever advancing Soviet Socialism requires labour, with the activity of the Nazi TODT Organization, which on a smaller scale supplied European slave labour to various Nazi war enterprises and was also responsible for such construction jobs as the Atlantic Wall.

The Nazis did not use lawbreakers but levied on the general population of the countries occupied by them. The Nazi method of using forced labour was based (at least on the surface) on their beliefs regarding racial differences. Germans were the "leaders" of labour. Non-Germans were graded, with the worst jobs reserved for Slavs and Jews. Workers from the Slavic countries wore an "Ost" badge on the right breast of their clothing. Jewish labour was worked to exhaustion in special compounds and factories. All Jewish workers were fated to finish up in the gas chamber or the oven. (Concerning the Jews, the Nazis were embittered idealists who set aside their usually practical considerations. In Warsaw, for example, forty thousand Jewish workers—all that was left of the large Jewish population of Warsaw and its suburbs—were kept busy manufacturing uniforms for German soldiers. This labour was very useful to the masters of Europe. However, on the Jewish question, the Nazis were great idealists spurning practical considerations. Their ideals called for the extermination even of the Jewish men and women who did that useful work for them. Some idealists are funny people.)

Of course, there is perfect racial equality in the Soviet use of forced labour. The total number of foreign slaves working in Germany towards the end of the war was close to seven million. That is only a fraction of the convict labour used by the MVD in Russia in post-war reconstruction. But the Nazis, too, had grand plans for after victory. They were not planning to discontinue the use of foreign labour at the end of the war. In a speech at Klagenfurt, quoted by the D.N.B. (German News Agency) on April 25th, 1942, Wilfrid Funk, the Reich Minister of Economic Affairs, said:

"After the victorious conclusion of the war, the problem of war indebtedness could be solved in a relatively short time, since we can count on cheap labour and raw materials for the German economic system on a large scale. The price of

goods manufactured in this way will be considerably lower than the general German price level. The difference thus resulting will serve to redeem our war debts and thus also to conserve the value of our currency. In this way the high standard of living of the German people will be assured."

You can't tell. Nazi victory, putting at Hitler's disposal the technical skill of Western Europe and the huge labour power of Russian Eurasia, might have faced America with a New Order based on slave industrial armies dwarfing the labour contingents of the Russian MVD.

It may be comforting to play around with the following idea. While the Soviet con-camp regimen is rigorous, and millions never return to civilian life, the general outlook and the set of intentions of the Bolshevik masters of Russia are, in line with their 19th century Marxist fundamentals, quite humanitarian. Remember the MVD does all that it does not in order to glorify the Russians but, in the long run, for the human race. Their ideal is an international, equalitarian society.

Apparently neither the Nazi or Bolshevik economies could easily function without the coercion of the individual. Concentration-camp labour is an unavoidable by-product of such a social situation.

Alleged Other Reasons Why Con-Camps In U.S.S.R.

It is suggested—on the basis of the wealth of "self-criticism" that has been recently appearing in the Russian press—that Soviet economy is quite uneconomical. That is, its costs are high. It is very wasteful. That is supposed to be due to two causes. One is the low labour efficiency of the Russian worker; his habitual slow-down. The second cause is the supposed corruption of the managements of the Soviet economic enterprises. They are said (in the Soviet newspapers) to falsify accounts to prove to those placed above them in the political-economic pyramid of Soviet hierarchy that quotas are being exceeded and production records hung up, when the very opposite is true.

Trud, the organ of the Soviet Trade Union, as reported in a Moscow dispatch to the *New York Times* of November 12th, 1946, declares that: "The ideological struggle against 'capitalist hangovers' in the minds of the people" must be pressed with increased energy. These 'hangovers' are taking the form of political aloofness, lack of principle, efforts to place personal welfare above that of the State, violations of labour discipline and the tendency to take as much as possible from the State while returning as little as possible. . . . The people were urged to rid themselves of the idea that the present economy regime was to be short-lived or that mismanagement and high production costs could be tolerated."

(On October 16th, 1946, Finance Minister Arseny G. Zverev, in his budget

speech, spoke of a "production crisis" in Russia. He attributed it to incapacity, corruption and wilful falsification of accounts and statistics of production. He said that unless moral deterioration was checked, the Soviet financial system threatened to become unmanageable. He said that not only was Russian production as a whole behind the schedule of the Five Year Plan but the output of many items was decreasing. Two-thirds of all Soviet revenues come from the turnover tax. Comrade Zverev complained about costly "social benefits" to workers.)

Waste of resources, low labour efficiency, a vague accounting of costs and returns. These habits are becoming progressively worse in post-war Russia. So much of the hierarchy is concerned in the "socialist" mendaciousness of the Soviet management that the old remedy of producing managerial efficiency by shooting is no longer tried. Now the threat of extreme coercion should be more effective in the case of the workers. "The next fellow who stays away from work, or steals a monkey wrench, will be thrown to the MVD!" However, when workers continue to err after many object lessons, the remedy becomes ineffective.

The guides of Soviet economy have started to mobilize boys and girls of 14 in a sort of "labour reserve". The children wear gray and black uniforms and are given special training that is expected to turn them into smart, willing workers. This is a little more ambitious than Hitler's youth labour camps. However, the waste and labour inefficiency remain.

In that case, from the viewpoint of the top managers of the economic process in the USSR, the forced labour of millions of concentration-camp inmates is economically wise. The free workers in Soviet Russia are not much more efficient (as a whole) than the forced labourers. The upkeep of the forced labourers is less costly. They live on little. In their case, there are no costly "social benefits" to deplete State revenues. They can be forced to work to exhaustion, that is, to death, and then replaced with fresh working bodies.

The hurried development of Siberia is unthinkable, under the Bolshevik set-up, with the exclusive use of "free workers". Some people say that the Russian East could become another "America", another American Far West, if it were opened up by the Russian government to unhampered settlement by the Russian peasants, with the right to own the land they worked. But that is not in the Communist scheme of things. Furthermore, in case of Siberia, they are interested first of all in building their Inner Fortress Soviet Asia. They are doing quite well, reports claim. So the masters of Russia may yet have the occasion to point with pride at an industrialized, fortified Siberia and say to the world: "See. We have accomplished this fine labour in our own socialist way."

Franco and the King

(Continued from page 1)

Almost all of them have continued or extended their economic agreements with Franco. This was exactly what we anticipated in *Freedom* at the time.

NORWEGIAN WORKERS AND FRANCO Anti-Franco Action Baulked by T.U. Leaders

Franco recently threatened the Norwegian government with a boycott to prevent Norwegian ships using Spanish ports. The Norwegian government accordingly fell into line, announcing that it could not afford to be without an economic agreement with Spain.

Behind this move lies a whole story of treachery and feebleness on the part of trade unions.

Norwegian workers have always been outspokenly anti-Franco, and have urged through meetings and demonstrations that their government break both diplomatic and commercial relations with Spain. Although the trade union leaders have been averse to working class action, Norwegian dockers have refused to handle Spanish goods, and sought by their direct action to initiate a general move on the part of the working class of the world against Franco's regime.

Faced with this direct action, the trade union leaders used every persuasion to prevent them continuing, and succeeded in doing so by promising to send a delegate to the World Trade Union Federation in Paris, "to discuss the possibility of international working class action against Spain". The World Trade Union Federation, however, was against such action, and the delegate also reported that the British trade union movement was also against it, on the grounds that it was the "workers' government" which determined foreign policy, the trade unions limiting themselves to addressing recommendations to their government.

The Norwegian workers then applied to the International Transport Federation, but they also turned down any such suggestion. The British delegate expressing himself also in agreement with the Labour Government.

The next move came from Franco—his threat of a boycott of Norwegian ships. This time the Norwegian trade union leaders became very active to try and prevent Franco from breaking commercial relations with Norway. Once again a delegate was sent to Britain to the I.T.F. and to Paris to the World T.U. Federation.

Pettifogging Caution

Both these "workers' organizations" held that it was impossible to overturn the Franco regime by working class action (and their view was shared by the Spanish "government in exile"). "This problem can only be resolved by the United Nations when the time is ripe." The I.T.F. and the T.U.C. were anxious however to help Norway to maintain commercial relations with Spain, though World T.U. Federation, located in Paris, was unwilling to do so because France had broken off such relations and wanted other countries to do the same. Thus, the Trade Union leaders in all countries ranged themselves behind their governments, and set their faces against independent working class action.

Such action, the only kind that is likely to overthrow the Franco regime from without, can therefore only come when workers have emancipated themselves from their T.U. bosses.

Guidance by Reformers

(Continued from page 7)

state of opinion didn't harmonize so well with what they propose.

Anyway, most of the current "psychology" of sex appeals especially to those whose attitude is sickly. Youth Leaders seem to love it. (And if you haven't had a look at some of these leaders, you've missed a treat. They'd keep anybody sexually pure.) They can't take to Rabelais, but they love the psychology of sex. And this attitude has gone through all our talk and literature. It is all earnest and anxious.

There is nothing spontaneous about sex now. It has neither song nor gusto. It is something about which you are frank. ("Because we must discuss these problems.")

It is all pale faced and pimpled. And it is choking with emotion that we discuss the methods for getting the most pleasure out of coitus. Oh, Jesus! What has become of the Kermesse?

Sex may be revolutionary. But most of our emancipated talk about it isn't. It's just plain decadent. And this is the trend that the proposed reforms will foster.

Massacre in Formosa

Formosa, the large island off the coasts of China, formerly administered by Japan, was handed over to the Chinese government at the end of the war. Chiang Kai-Shek installed a government under Chen Yo.

On 28th February, government troops fired on the people while enforcing government regulations—presumably in the face of popular opposition. Riots immediately followed the shootings, and the government had to barricade itself in the administration's buildings, and Chen Yo on March 1st accepted the demand of the People's Committee which had been set up to end martial law. He also promised, in a speech over the radio, compensation for the families of those killed by the police, and free treatment for the wounded. Then began the familiar story of governmental treachery.

On March 8th, Maj.-General Chang Yo-Tao asked the People's

Committee to reconsider the demand that government troops be withdrawn from Formosa, and guaranteed no disturbance if the people did not try to disarm them. He also promised that Chiang Kai-Shek's government would send no more troops. What bloody preparations lay behind these lying promises!

The same afternoon Kuomintang regular troops began to arrive, and reinforced Maj.-General Chang's police. Almost immediately, in the words of an American observer, John Powell, "the bloodbath was on. The Islanders were shot on sight. Homes were entered and inhabitants killed."

The next morning Chen Yo reimposed martial law, telling the people in a broadcast that it would protect them, while at the very same time his troops were killing and arresting people in Taipai by hundreds. According to John Powell, at least 5,000 Formosans were killed. Meanwhile,

Chen Yo dissolved the People's Committee and imprisoned most of its members.

Once again it is the same hideous story. Faced with an indignant population, intent on getting justice, a government will offer any promises in order to gain time and maintain its armed forces. Then, when it has lulled the people by such promises, it strikes more brutally than ever, without paying the slightest attention to its pledges of a few hours before. How many times has this sequence occurred in history! Is it surprising that, by such treachery, the people sometimes (but none the less rarely) commit excesses? But it does not help to repay a government in its own coin of massacre. What is needed is to extinguish the institution of government, and the whole institutional means whereby some men can hold the rest in subjection.

Old People In The Russian Zone

The recent increase in rations for old people in the Russian zone has underlined the terrible conditions under which such people live in that part of Germany. We have always been told by pro-Russian propagandists that the rations in the Russian zone were much better than elsewhere. So they may be—if you are in the top ration grade—but rations have been distributed in this zone according to six different grades. Up till now the elder people who were not working have received ration 6. This entitles them to approximately 800 calories a day—when they get their full ration, which does not always happen. The new ration scale involves the abolition of the two lower ration groups, so that old people now get ration 4. But this means only about another 100 calories a day; they still have to live, or exist, on about 900 calories a day, about half the minimum for a healthy life.

THE THREE MUSKETEERS—6

"NO MORE SICK PARADES"

By JOHN OLDAY



—but still plenty of castor oil!

Capitalism Can't Work!

Reprinted from the "Kaiser-i-Hind" of 9th March, 1947.

"The present time, soon after the popular Government has taken power, is most inopportune for monkeying about with deficit budgets," said India's Finance Member, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, replying to budget Debate in the Central Assembly. In the following, "Darkos" shows how economists have been monkeying with the impossible for years together.

Here are the fundamentals of capitalist and communist economics. There are things common to both. As such both can be reduced to a common denominator. Both work on the same old basis of civilisation, viz., that X plus Y equals X plus Y plus Z, X being materials or capital, Y being labour and Z being profits and expenses of management. Whether private profits or "only" expenses of State management and control, they must be paid in some form or other. This formula which is common to all exchange systems known or proposed makes a greater sum and a lesser sum equal. In every exchange scheme, one must make the greater side equal the lesser, otherwise it cannot function. The problem, therefore, is itself non-sense, whether attempted to be solved bolshevically or capitalistically.

STATE OWNERSHIP IN ANTIQUE CHINA

In China of antique days, Emperor Wang Chang Nei tried State ownership and management and failed to maintain it. In Rome, Emperor Diocletian tried State regulation of prices and wages. Soon the prices soared up and wages dwindled down by leaps and bounds and he went to cultivate cabbages. Still all systems attempted or maintained to keep the same unworkable fundamentals, somewhere between the two extremes. Can the formula be worked at all and how?

The Z whether as profits or as State management expenses has to be taken. Who has to pay it? Surely, those who earn wages or have to earn by transactions will have to pay and therefore amount in order to pay these additional sums upon the cost price. Somebody must bear these even to pay interest upon the money of issue banks, which are at the source.

It matters not whether agriculture or industry and transport has to pay all these expenses, or whether inland or foreign trade. The sum must be got by any or all of these means. Politics are a quarrel as to who should pay.

To make X plus Y equal to X plus Y plus Z is a physical impossibility, whether

under capitalism, Bolshevism or any other—ism, however sincere, because it is arithmetically unworkable. There is no more solution to it than to make rope out of sand, squaring a circle or mix oil and water into a compact mass, however intelligent the East or the West may be. They are all bound to fail in spite of fraud and force employed to realise them.

Technique and science are useless and will be put away into the lumber rooms as soon as the formula cannot be worked. Unemployment and want of sales are created by this impossible formula. The quarrel between centralised and decentralised production has no meaning when both are to be worked on the same basis. Hand and machine industry also are worked on the same formula basis and they are bound to fail, whether all are employed or only some. The whole com-

plication and confusion comes from this origin, that a part of the goods has to be sold for the whole cost and the rest has to be sold for more money.

Even if no profits are made, in every exchange system, or barter, the two partners of exchange have to get a certain Z inevitably, for the State or private person exchanging must have their self-maintenance cost paid, over and above what they contribute to the cost of production. Printing notes with or without gold or using any unit and measure of exchange cannot avoid this and cannot maintain the system.

ALL SINKING TOGETHER

In any workable economics, whether considered good or bad, the first step must be correct, for otherwise all wrong steps will arise out of the first wrong step. The formula must be: X plus Y must make no more than X plus Y. Such an economics must keep only account of goods required and produced and distri-

bute them on an economic plan. Only then the goods will have use value.

The X plus Y equals X plus Y plus Z theory divides goods from consumers and producers (overproduction), because unless Z is paid, the goods cannot be utilized. Thus the goods lose use value and acquire only commercial and money value. Whatever the quantity or kind of goods, the money realised only counts.

Cheapening of goods by reduced hands or lowering expenses or even increased payment for labour and materials makes selling of products more difficult, especially when people are impoverished. Thus production with help of science and technique (to reduce cost price and increase quantity) becomes useless, wasteful loss. Goods are money in other forms exchange of goods having no meaning unless more money can be taken for less.

To-day, there is neither a capitalist nor a labour question, for all are sinking together in the same ship to maintain the system of "economics" known as X plus Y plus Z. If capitalists and labourers have to save themselves separately or together, they will have to give up this unworkable economics, before the impossibility of the formula will compel them to give it up.

But monkeying with the impossible seems to be the fashion.

"WHY NOT GIVE IT UP?"

THERE is an old but characteristic joke about a shopkeeper complaining about his business and declaring he was losing money on it. "Well, why don't you give it up?" asked his friend. "How can I?" he answered angrily, "It's my living."

In the same way the apologists of the British Empire have for many years been telling us that the colonies were a losing concern and the British Empire a giant philanthropic institution, a sort of Barnardo's Home for Backward Peoples, but when the recipients of our charity have tried to decline it, the apologists have declared Britain couldn't possibly give up the Empire, it was her living.

In spite of the repeated demonstrations of the occupied, colonised, mandated and protected peoples that they wanted us out, the British Government has sent reinforcements in men, money and materials to the dependencies. This major export of human beings for occupation duties, has not been welcomed by the recipients or by the export itself. What is the reason, then? More realistic observers have told us we must guard our trade routes, such as the Suez, but it is hardly

encouraging to those who sacrifice time, money and life for every inch of ground, to know that it is in order to open trade routes, for the advancement of other people's careers or fortunes.

On the 6th March, H. Dalton told the Commons that Britain's total expenditure for the last two years in Greece and Palestine was £87,000,000 and £82,000,000 respectively. Into these two countries, in whose future hardly anyone in Britain is really interested, we have been sending forced levies in the shape of conscript armies, totally unwanted by the overwhelming majority of all sections of opinion in both countries, with neither of whom we happen to be at war.

Had it not been for what is called "foreign policy" not only would at least thirty more groups have been demobilised, many lives saved and many homes reunited, but there would have been enough left over for a fiver all round! And this does not include other countries with whom we are not at war but are occupying against the will both of the people and of the government, such as Egypt. Suppose this had been put to the

British public in the form of a referendum two years ago:

(a) Will you take a bonus of five or ten pounds, have thirty groups demobilised, and evacuate Greece, Palestine, Egypt, the Sudan, India, etc., or

(b) Spend £179,000,000 on maintaining troops in Palestine and Greece—and more elsewhere—which would have to be evacuated in the finish,

who can doubt what the answer would have been?

But Democracy is not freedom. Just as Mussolini did not ask for approval of his African adventures, merely endeavouring to work up support by atrocity tales, so in a democracy the elected government does not need to obtain support for its foreign policy. Once elected it pursues a foreign policy equally foreign to the people at home as that of fascist imperialism. Our suggestion, that it should be left to those most directly concerned to decide whether they want to stay there against the wishes of the population and their own inclination, is not democracy but ANARCHY. A. M.

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I.L.P. on a Socialist Europe

THE UNITED SOCIALIST STATES OF EUROPE, by F. A. RIDLEY. (ILP pamphlet, 12 pp. 1d.)

In this policy pamphlet of the ILP, F. A. Ridley marshals the arguments against separate nation states in Europe, chiefly from the point of view of the threatening Third World War. He points out the evils which would arise from the emergence of the USA as the dominant world power, and the alternative, but not less serious, evils of a world victory for Stalinist Russia. The ILP rightly reject both these "alternatives", and argue for a "Third Camp" in a "United Socialist States of Europe—that is, in a European socialist Federation which will unite Europe politically, economically and culturally, and which will replace the present anarchy of Europe and her existing chaos of 'sovereign, autonomous and independent' states by an unified political regime and a common planned economy." (We will pass over without further mention Ridley's use of the word "anarchy" to mean chaos: he ought to know better.)

In the general sense, the argument of this pamphlet is obviously right: that to take sides in yet another world war would be quite mischievous. The problem of anti-war socialists is to offer an alternative which is practical from the workers' point of view. That is to say, practical in that it can be realized, and also practical in that it represents something which corresponds to the needs of the working class as human beings. As so often in our relations with the ILP, anarchists will sympathize with them for their refusal to be drawn into the capitalist war camps, but will be unable to regard their practical proposals with full favour.

Anglo-Saxon Rivalry

Let us deal with some smaller points first. A certain poverty in the argument is covered by a deal of rhetoric. This does not conceal the vagueness of the concept of a European Socialist Federation however. Then there is an implicit assumption—common in ILP pronouncements—that Britain is now negligible as a world power. This leads to the further assumption that the contestants in the next war will be the USA and the USSR, and that the winner will be undisputed master of the world. But surely war potential is to be gauged from industrial potential, and the fact that Russia was supplied throughout the last war with machines and machinery from Britain and America, should remind us that these two are the major industrial powers of

the world to-day. Furthermore, Russia does not compete with the USA in world trade to anything like the extent which the British Empire does. It seems to the reviewer much more likely that the ultimate struggle for world capitalist ascendancy will lie between the two Anglo-Saxon nations, even if (as the present trends suggest) the USA fights a colonial war against Russia first.

The point is not merely academic. If Britain is relegated to the position of a minor power in the eyes of her revolutionary socialists, they will gravely underestimate the tasks before them. For these



lie not so much in Europe as in Britain itself.

Illusions About Russia

Ridley surprisingly subscribes to those old hair-splitting dogmas of the ILP about the "partially socialist character" of the USSR: "Whilst the Soviet Union undoubtedly possesses an economic foundation that is socialist in character, its political superstructure is that of a totalitarian state." This formula, reiterated to wearisome lengths in ILP literature, seems to us quite meaningless and confusing. It is un-Marxist, for surely Marx held that the political structure reflected the economic character of a regime. It was explicitly contradicted by Bolshevik theoreticians such as Lenin and Bukharin who admitted that the USSR had a capitalist structure—and that at a time before the many retrogressions of Stalinism. And it leaves one wondering what on earth Ridley and the ILP mean by "socialism".

But the most important criticism of this programme is that it is confusing on revolutionary issues—the issues which can only be actual with the active co-operation of the working class, and which therefore demand the utmost clarity.

Revolutionary?

On page 1 Ridley denounces the capitalist prospects and declares: "against these we raise the revolutionary call: The

United SOCIALIST States of Europe". I have italicized the word revolutionary, for it seems to me quite inappropriate to what is essentially a political conception. Ridley himself realizes this for he contradicts it on the last but one page: "The victory of European Socialism is, in no sense, a substitute for the world revolution. On the contrary! It constitutes, in the present stage of the class-struggle, an indispensable stage and half-way house towards it." Half-way house is the word for it. It is a concept of political "advance", conceivable in constitutional terms, whereas revolution, if it means anything at all, means action in which workers not only participate to the full, but take the initiative, and supply the creative energy to the exclusion of all bourgeois and political conceptions.

The ILP seem to consider the USSE a substitute for revolution, despite the above disclaimer, for it is described as a torch which will set the whole world on the road to socialism. Now a revolution in

any of the major capitalist powers would do that, for even in backward countries like Russia and Spain whose economics have little impact on the world economic pattern the revolutions of 1917 and 1936 had profound repercussions. It is difficult to see how the concept of the USSE could be realized without the direct action and initiative of workers in some country or another—and that is another way of saying, without revolutionary action. Such confusions rob the critical arguments of this pamphlet of much of their force.

We should not criticize this policy pamphlet so severely perhaps, if we did not respect the ILP in other fields. For all the woolliness of their theoretical positions, the ILP is a valuable force in this country, because it retains some of the conceptions of ethical socialism which used to be much commoner before the rise of the Bolshevik Leninist-Stalinist-Trotskyist parties on the one hand, and the Mass labour parties on the other. To keep the ethical ideas of socialism alive is the most important function of the ILP.

J. H.

NOW—7

NOW.—Edited by GEORGE WOODCOCK. 2/-.

I know from experience that I am not alone in always looking forward with pleasurable anticipation for "the new NOW" to make its appearance. Owing to the difficulties of bringing out a magazine of this type during the war years, its appearance was not regular and the exact date of the next issue was something that even the editor could only guess at. But with the current issue NOW becomes a bi-monthly (that is, six issues a year). This is definitely what used to be called "a good thing" because NOW is, in my opinion, somewhat in a class by itself. There is no magazine that I know of in existence that could fulfil the function that this one fulfils. To some extent, I suppose, that is true of any good periodical, or, for that matter, of any good piece of writing, but if the contributors to NOW have any one feature in common it is that all their writing and thought springs from an acute social awareness—something, for example, that is not to be found in the dilettanteism of HORIZON. POLEMIC stands nearest perhaps to comparison, but for the most part its contributors seem to lack the deep

honesty and clarity of thought of those who go to make up NOW.

As usual, the standard of this issue of NOW is more or less uniformly high though if I had to make special mention of any particular contributions, I think they would be Alex Comfort on "Literary Sadism and the Origins of Miss Blandish" and, to a lesser extent, Julian Symons' "Freedom and Reality" which makes an effort to clarify exactly what is meant, or implied, by the word "freedom" when used by people who actually mean very different things. Then it is almost impossible to avoid mentioning the poem by Louis Adeane which is a little masterpiece: the short story by him is also excellent.

But in this short notice there is not time to go in for any detailed criticisms. Instead, and perhaps really more valuable, one might conclude by pointing out that the continued existence of a magazine like this depends primarily on a list of regular subscribers; that is, a guaranteed, even if not very large, circulation. So you can be of considerable help to NOW merely by becoming a regular subscriber, and of course, suggesting to interested friends that they should do likewise.

G. V.

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NOW—7

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THE ROYAL TOUR

FREEDOM

According to the newspapers these days, the most important thing in our lives seems to be the royal visit to Africa.

Every national Daily seems to think we must be interested only in what the Princesses wear, how they look, and how much fruit they can stow away for breakfast.

The royal train is mentioned and we learn how we could travel in luxury, if instead of common red blood in our veins, we had the delicate blue shade.

As a worker, who probably will never manage to get out of the British Isles for even a fortnight, all this drivel leaves me cold.

I recall the depression of 1931 when most of us were trying to exist on the dole (exist is the word).

Twenty-five shillings was the magnificent sum paid to a husband with wife and child, so with 12/- to pay for rent, not including coal, gas, etc.,

we had, of course, ample money to fritter away.

During this period I lived in Springburn, a working class district in the north of Glasgow, and I remember one morning as I went out on my daily excursion in search of food suitable to our income, seeing a larger crowd than usual at one. Inquiring what it was all about, I was told that an engine built in Cowlairs (the biggest engine in the world) was being taken to the Docks to be shipped to India.

Just as my informant had finished enlightening me, the engine came slowly up the street on low bogies and I was able to gaze at it.

Truly it was a wonderful sight, and on one side of it for all to see was a plate telling the world it was made in Glasgow.

I pictured the workers in India looking at the plate and saying: "Glasgow must be a wonderful place when they can build such marvellous engines" or perhaps there, like the workers the world over, they knew that men who toil and put their life-blood into machines and luxury liners never get the chance to use them.

No, the workers are discarded and thrown on the scrap-heap until such times as a War comes along and then they are used up as cannon fodder.

Some day we will awaken to this fact and want to know why we cannot sail in our own ships, and run our own engines, and visit places abroad which are only names to us at present.

When that day comes we won't have Royal Visitors, as we will be our own Ambassadors and as such will

meet workers of other countries and live in fraternity.

After all we have the proudest heritage "WE THE WORKERS".

JESSIE WILSON.

STOP PRESS

LONDON DOCKERS STAY AT WORK

Dock-gate Decision Reverses Strike Vote

(See article below, cont. from p. 3)

After stormy and confused meetings at the dock gates, London's dockers on Monday, 14th April, decided not to strike in sympathy with Glasgow. The decision may have been swayed by the police, who broke up the meeting, but only 200 men stayed out, and sent a deputation to Dockers' and Stevedores' Union H.Q. to ask implementation of "One out, all out" pledge.

These men were replaced by men transferred from other docks, and in view of lack of general support, returned to work themselves on Tuesday.

While admitting that the dockers know their own business best, this seems to show a shameful lack of solidarity with their fellow workers which no doubt has its roots in union rivalry, but which can only act against the interests of workers generally. Obviously, what is necessary here is a development of the form of organisation the Glasgow dockers have, but on a nation wide scale so that "One out, all out" can mean what it says.



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The Fighting Clyde

(Continued from page 3)

It follows that the members' control their own funds, which are used for hardship, death or accident benefits. All dockers must hold a union badge and card which is renewed every three months, thus maintaining a continual interest of the dockers in their union. Every man who holds a docker's badge is a comrade and becomes part of a workers' movement which is practically foolproof against the possibility of blacklegging and victimisation.

The dockers claim with justifiable pride that there has been no single case of successful victimisation since the inception of the trade union 15 years ago.

These workers are conscious that it has been their and their fathers' skill, technical knowledge and strength which has made Glasgow a great trading port. Because they are human beings who have won for themselves certain rights in industry they command respect whenever they talk or take action, and it is a great tribute to them that they refuse to give up their hard-won concessions. Standing firm throughout the war, their independence and freedom was kept alive. No Essential Works Orders or Industrial Conscription was fastened upon the Glasgow dockers.

The Present Strike

It was with considerable interest that I attended a mass meeting of these dockers. There were no ravings or clap trap from the platform; the secretary and committee members spoke quietly and intelligently about the strike in which all of them were involved. It was emphasised from the platform that the committee were there to serve the men and carry out their wishes.

The issue clearly explained was that 500 of their comrades were to be sacked, the labour strength of the docks was to be reduced by one-seventh, 'redundant' according to the Government department. This decision of 'redundancy' was arrived at by a so-called 'fact finding' committee on which the dockers were not represented.

Michael Byrne, the union secretary, pointed out that the dockers were the people who knew the facts better than anyone else, and they disputed the findings and decisions of this committee. The dockers from their working knowledge of the port, and from Ministry of Labour statistics, had compiled their own facts and figures, which proved that there was no justification for throwing 500 men on the scrap heap.

The dockers' facts and figures had been placed before every authority connected with the port; none of them had been able to dispute or challenge the dockers' submission.

This is not the case of victimisation of one, or two, but of 500 men, on the

flimsiest of excuses which the dockers refute. The Ministry's case is so weak that an attempt was made to bolster it up by diverting goods such as machinery by road. Goods which would normally have passed through the Clyde were diverted to England. Even the employers in Glasgow objected to this nonsense.

Because of this diversion the fantastic position has arisen where 500 men were declared redundant in Glasgow, while the Port Authority in Liverpool complains of a labour shortage.

Divide and Conquer

The Government is offering an inducement to end the casual labour of the dockers. The dockers want to see the end of the old intermittent employment of the past, but the price demanded—the sacrifice of half a thousand of their comrades and the probable break-up of their trade union, is too high for these self-respecting men to pay willingly.

The press, radio and authorities are attempting to whip up resentment against the Clyde dockers. By misrepresentation and food scaremongering, public opinion, it is hoped, will be against the strike. The people of the Clyde are conversant with this very old tactic, as they are with the Minister of Labour's, and Mr. Deakin's attempt to divide the English dockers against the Scottish.

The Glasgow dockers are fighting not only to prevent industrial Scotland from again becoming a depressed area, but for the whole of dock workers. They are anxious to see an all-round levelling up, not a levelling down.

The Port Workers' Committee of London have responded to their comrades' struggle on the Clyde with this statement:

"Having heard the case of the Glasgow men, we consider that their case is one and the same as we are likely to face in the near future. We consider that under no circumstances should there be any redundancy. The fight of the Glasgow men is our fight too."

This is a definite reply to those in high places who are attempting to divide the dockers, then conquer them.

In nearly 4,000 docker's homes along the Clydebank the real struggle is taking place. Should any man doubt for one moment the justice of the dockers' case, or question the high principles for which to-day he is fighting as strongly as ever, then let him come to the Clydebank for himself and see the evidence slashed so starkly there on fellow humans and their dwelling places. Glasgow epitomises the workers' upward struggle, and the Glasgow docker is the touchstone of the workers' hope.

PRESTON CLEMENTS.

L.A.G. Sunday Meetings

Tito's Fascism

There is very little space left for a full account of Bill Mansbridge's account of affairs in Venezia Giulia, the area on the northern Adriatic seaboard which has been the scene of endless national bargains and conflicts for centuries. Of particular interest were details of the methods used by Tito's administration to subdue the population. Control by secret police, concentration camps, mass shootings—all the familiar trappings of a ruthless dictatorship are present in Jugo-Slavia to-day. It was a pity that such a relatively small audience listened to Bill Mansbridge's admirably clear talk. Far too few people realize that the Jugo-Slav worker and peasant are plunged into an even more brutal regime than their pre-war or occupation status. No doubt there is an unwillingness to face the realities of the world to-day, for we have sup'd too full of horrors already. Yet the new fascist regimes must be recognised or the martyrdom of the peoples will continue unabated.

The Freedom Defence Committee

On 23rd March, Laurie Hislam spoke on the work of the F.D.C. He explained how the Committee had arisen out of the work that was done in connection with the defence of the four anarchists who were prosecuted on a seditious charge in 1945. He gave a resumé of the sort of work that was being done, and stressed the fact that the Committee did not carry on such work as the expression of any ideological

theory, but because there proved to be a great practical need for a defence and a struggle for elementary civil liberties.

A questioner in the audience asked whether the work of the Committee was not invalid as being "reformist". Laurie Hislam pointed out, however, that the F.D.C. did not represent an anarchist body or indeed any partisan influence, but it existed sheerly for the value of its work for civil liberty. In reply to a question as to whether the National Council for Civil Liberty did not already cover the work, the speaker said that the F.D.C. would not have needed to have been formed if the N.C.C.L. had not ceased to do its job, and he pointed out the moral of the crippling affect of partisan influence within that body.

The Drama as a Social Force

Speaking on this subject on March 30th, Geoffrey Pittcock Buss explained that his object was mainly to introduce and stimulate discussion. He dealt with modern forms of dramatic expression and propaganda, the cinema, radio, press and stage, and discussed their social significance. He outlined the work that was being done by various drama groups, and he tried to show how a too conscious partisan propaganda effort was apt to cause a degeneration in the general quality of performance, citing the Unity Theatre as an example of this.

The greater part of the meeting was taken up by a general discussion, many members of the audience having a great deal to contribute to the subject.

YOUR PLACE IN THE SUN!

NOW that the snow and ice and the dark evenings have been left behind, outdoor propaganda once more will form part of the Anarchist's programme of work. Our Glasgow comrades start their outdoor meetings this Sunday (see Announcements on col. 1), and it is to be hoped that London and other provincial centres will be soon following their lead. During the coming months we must take advantage of the more clement weather to make new readers to FREEDOM by outdoor selling. Many of our comrades hesitate to take the plunge, but we can assure them that there is nothing very formidable about street selling, and the more sellers there are the easier it becomes. We appeal to comrades to come forward with offers to assist us in this work. We need sellers every Sunday at Hyde Park (where we have sold as many as 600 copies of the paper in an afternoon) and we are anxious to start up new "pitches" in other parts of London. Glasgow readers should get in touch with our comrades in Maxwell Street, and we can put comrades in Birmingham, Liverpool,

Manchester, Bristol, etc., in touch with others willing to undertake this work in those towns. No time must be wasted if we are to get our 2,000 new readers before the snow and ice once more overwhelm our outdoor work.

P.S.—Some of our readers have taken our appeal for new subscribers to heart, but the new subscriptions are still coming in too slowly! Have you passed on your copy to a potential reader?

Press Fund

March 29th — April 10th

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