

Freedom

AN ANARCHIST FORTNIGHTLY

"Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends—Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness—it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it."
 THOMAS JEFFERSON.

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Twopence

L.P. FOR CONSCRIPTION

Decision is Milestone in Socialist Decay

The Labour Conference at Margate opened with a debate on Conscription. Victor Yates (Ladywood Labour Party) moved a resolution stating that "This conference expresses its strongest disapproval of military conscription and urges the Government to abandon this policy as soon as practicable." The conference, however, supported the Government, and defeated the resolution by 2,332,000 votes to 571,000—more than a three-quarters majority.

This decision may be taken as a milestone in the progressive decay of the socialist movement—a decay which was initiated when the English Marxists definitely embraced parliamentary methods and set out to build a mass political party in competition with the Tory and Liberal Parties. Hence it is not altogether surprising that the degeneration of socialist principles to which this policy committed them more than fifty years ago should become flagrantly apparent at a time when the goal of political power has been fully reached.

In an eve-of-conference article in *Reynolds News*, Herbert Morrison writes: "We might well think to-day of the great Socialist pioneers of the 1880's and the 1890's. What would they have thought about it all?" Whatever they may have thought about some of the achievements of the Labour Government, there can be no reasonable doubt that they would have been thoroughly shaken by this conscription vote.

Prior to the war of 1914, anarchists and socialists (with the exception of the Fabian Society, who supported the "civilizing mission" of the Boer War—just as the Fabian Bernard Shaw supports Mussolini's civilizing mission in Abyssinia in 1935—anarchists and socialists were united in their opposition to war, and regarded conscription as simply a part of war preparations. To talk of the "brotherhood of man", the "common interests of the working class the world over", to sing the

Internationale" at their rallies, and then to support preparations for workers to fight each other in the cause of class interests not their own—that would have seemed, and rightly seemed, the grossest hypocrisy to the fathers of the Labour movement.

INEFFECTIVE OPPOSITION

The supporters of the anti-conscription resolution had all the arguments on their side. The present Labour leaders denounced peacetime conscription when Chamberlain introduced it in April, 1939: they did not include conscription in their election programme, and so had

no popular mandate for it: and when the issue came before the House of Commons it received the largest opposition vote from within the Labour Party of any measure proposed by the party leaders. Rhys Davies declared that the Tories or the Liberals would never have been able to bring in peacetime conscription. "Conscription to me," he said, "is just legalized slavery. Conscription is a foul thing."

Laski, replying for the Government, was apologetic, declaring that "it was a hard thing to ask a movement in which pacifism was so deeply rooted to vote against a resolution opposing conscription"—a recognition of the old anti-militarist tradition of the socialist movement. "But," Laski continued, "the Socialists have got to recognize that the Government of Britain must be in a position to defend it." The old socialist position was that the workers should be free and therefore themselves in a position to defend a social order in which they had a stake.

At the moment of writing, the conscription issue is the only one which has faced the conference. But the
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In Franco's Spain

Bilbao Strike Reprisals

THE strike of 50,000 workers at Bilbao, reported in the last issue of *Freedom*, is an indication that despite formidable repression the Franco regime in Spain faces considerable opposition. Franco's spokesmen promised that there would be no reprisals for the strike, but since the men have gone back there have been hundreds of arrests in Bilbao.

The Spanish government has been carrying out a renewed campaign of terror for many months now. It is not possible to draw precise conclusions from the Bilbao strike, but it is not impossible that the workers came out because they knew what sort of reprisals would be taken against the 14,000 workers who had absented themselves from work on May Day—they were dismissed and ordered to re-apply individually for jobs. This may be taken to mean that they were to be ruthlessly screened.

The anarchist press in all countries has been reporting death sentences on members of the CNT and the FAI (The Anarchist Syndicalist and Anarchist organizations now carrying on an underground existence in Spain). Recently, much agitation has been carried on to get repealed the death sentences passed on two CNT militants,

Amador Franco and Antonio Lopez, who crossed the Pyrenees and were captured after a struggle with frontier guards. Many more legal murders have been carried out on members of the underground movement, usually after the application of tortures in the police headquarters. These underground militants are charged with being members of an illegal organization; with fomenting rebellion; with being "bandits"; or simply with having "responsibility for the deaths of a number of people during the Civil War".

Police Raid Illegal Press

In Barcelona, the police discovered and raided the press of a clandestine paper, *Ruta*, of the Libertarian Youth. All the comrades connected with the paper have been arrested. It is reported that as a reprisal, a number of anarchists conducted a raid on the Falangist headquarters in Barcelona. Arriving in lorries, they loaded office equipment, arms, ammunition and typewriters into the lorries and disappeared. This raid is said to have made a great impression in Barcelona. It may have provided the reason why Franco cancelled a public visit he was to have made there.

Even the Spanish press reports frequent clashes between police and "guerilla bands".

These instances show that the Bilbao strike was no mere isolated occurrence: opposition, at least from militant groups of workers and peasants, is evidently widespread. But it would be idle to pretend that the situation of these determined fighters against the regime is anything but desperate—the repeated arrests and death sentences show that only too clearly. A manifesto of the CNT (the illegal anarchist syndicalist National Confederation of Labour) dated April 1st and reported by the International Working Men's Association (IWMA) Press Service, details these arrests over the three months December 1946 to March 1947, and sums them up as follows: "In the course of three months, more than 1,200 militants of the CNT have been arrested, imprisoned, and tortured. Their only crime was that they were resolutely opposed to the fascist terror in our country."

In *Freedom* we have drawn attention to the complacent attitude towards Franco's regime which has been adopted by the Labour Government—at least as far as action goes, for we are not impressed by mere words. In particular, we
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CRITICAL MONTHS IN GERMANY

THE three months before the harvest is got in are critical months for the German people. This time, last year, nutritionists issued warnings about the effect of the food shortage which were fully confirmed by the autumn. Now the same shortage threatens. Collections from the farms have fallen short of estimates by 200,000 tons, while stocks estimated at 500,000 tons are now feared to be only 400,000 (Stuart Gelder in *News Chronicle*, 21/5/47).

In addition, "food imports have fallen short even of the requirements worked out nine months ago," and "there has been a falling off in efficiency of distribution and control in general" (H. D. Walston, recently Director of Agriculture, British Zone, in *Observer*, 18/5/47).

In reply to a question by Dr. S. Jeger regarding tuberculosis in Berlin, Ernest Bevin replied that the average monthly number of cases of all forms of tuberculosis reported in the first quarter of 1947 was 1,696. Deaths from tuberculosis in this period averaged 606 a month. In the U.S. zone it appears that there are 118,000 patients with tuberculosis.

The Combined Nutrition Committee (consisting of representatives from Britain, France and the United States) points out

that though the food situation has been worsened by the failure of the farmers to deliver stocks—they hold them back in order to secure consumer goods such as clothing and household goods which are in short supply—yet this failure is not the main factor. The Committee states that even if all local supplies were collected and distributed, they would only contribute a very small part of the food necessary to honour the normal consumer ration.

The *British Medical Journal* (17/5/47) reports that "since the Committee rendered its report (i.e., since April 26th) the bread ration has been halved and the normal consumer ration has in consequence fallen from the official 1,550 to around 1,000—1,100 calories. This reduction, however, is only an official recognition of the fact that the normal consumer ration has not been fully honoured in large areas of the three zones for some months. Lack of grain shipments has been largely the cause of this deficiency, but supplies of other rationed foodstuff have been reduced also. Imports are necessary but difficult to secure. The problem of supplying Germany is not a Zonal responsibility but one involving the world-wide allocation of food supplies." (Italics ours.)

American Imports Rushed Over

250,000 tons of American wheat, corn and flour are being rushed across the Atlantic at top speed to German ports. "President Truman has given personal orders that top priority must be given to shipments to relieve the German food crisis and that space in railway wagons for grain must be given precedence over all other cargoes" (*News Chronicle*, 15/5/47). This is doubtless gratifying news. But are we to suppose that the Allies didn't know about the impending food crisis? What is one to think of administrators who are continually having to make "crisis" deliveries to get themselves out of messes which they ought to have foreseen and provided for long ago?

Here is the former Director of Agriculture in the British Zone, H. D. Walston, again: "Present conditions will grow even worse during the next 15 months unless the administrative channels in Berlin, London and Washington are drastically simplified; unless the internal administration of food and agriculture is strengthened and centralized; and unless the farmer is given material incentive to encourage him to send his produce to the towns. Even with an emergency diversion of food to Germany to end the present crisis, the cause of the trouble will still exist. Appalling effects, both economic and moral, on people who can remain alive only by breaking the law, because their legal ration is insufficient to support life, will increase steadily, until the few

remnants of decency and order that remain in Germany will disappear."

Official Irresponsibility

On 19th May, it was announced that stocks of grain and imports due in the next few weeks "Will not permit full distribution of the bread ration." On the very next day the Allied Chiefs, Sir Sholto Douglas and General Lucius Clay, issued a proclamation in which they told the German people to "stop grumbling and start working." With daily deaths from starvation, and a mounting tuberculosis and infant mortality rate; with men unable to work for lack of food—it is hard to imagine a more brutally cynical declaration.

It is all the more cynical because purely commercial factors are allowed to affect the food problem. When people are in desperate straits the only considerations which should be given weight are their needs. But H. D. Walston remarks: "A further intrinsic difficulty in bi-zonal purchasing is whether food should be bought in the sterling or the dollar area. There is an understandable tendency on our part to buy in the sterling area, even though the cost per calory may be greater than if dollar purchases were made. This problem is accentuated when a commodity is offered of which we have a surplus at home—for instance, fish. The Americans on the other hand prefer to buy maize and potatoes; these products not only yield the greatest number of calories for every dollar spent but might embarrass the American Government if they could not be disposed of." (our italics). Thus the British Government seeks to use Germany as an aid to their own financial policy; and if the American Government happens to give most value for calories that is due to the accidents of their surplus foods.

But the proclamation went on to try and place responsibility on the German people—"it was useless and childish to place the blame for current privations on Allied shoulders."

The Allies are administering Germany. They control imports and exports. They decide which industries shall continue, which shall get supplies, which shall be destroyed as war potential. The movement of Germans is controlled by Allied security personnel. In short there is no aspect of life in Germany to-day which is not controlled by the Allies; and correspondingly there is no aspect of their lives in which the German people are permitted any initiative whatever. It is utterly ridiculous for the Allied Chiefs to represent the Germans as responsible. If you administer a territory, you are responsible for what goes on in that territory, and the closer your hold on the life of the community the more absolute is your responsibility.

AN OFFICIAL STRIKE!

An official strike, now in its fourth week, is in progress at the rubber works of Long and Hambly's, High Wycombe. It began following anti-trade union activity by the boss and the sacking of six workers as redundant. At least, that is the excuse he used, but in fact all six are Branch Officials of the Transport and General.

The actions of the General Manager seem to be prompted by strong political opinion. He has consistently refused to recognise the trade unions within his factory, and after being approached by the Branch Officials several times, called works meetings where he apparently abused the union movement and the Labour Government. Not, however, from the same point of view as ourselves, as he asserted that he was a Tory and urged all his workers to back up the Tory party. In the words of the District Organiser—"This naturally caused great resentment among the members." He had also asked workers individually to tear up their union cards.

The following day, the six men were given instant dismissal on the grounds of redundancy, and the manager at first refused to meet the union, and then, at a meeting arranged through the M. of L. Conciliation Department, stated that he was the Arbiter in his works and he would decide who should be sacked and when. An official strike was launched by the

High Wycombe branch of the Transport and General, and since then demonstrations have been held in London and in High Wycombe, where, it was reported, the women strikers lay down in the road outside the factory. In London, the demonstration was led by a figure in a top hat labelled "Boss" dragging six workers by ropes round their necks.

Police Discrimination

The police refused permission for the Strike Committee to hold an open-air meeting in the town centre, using public address equipment. A deputation of strikers met the local inspector at the police station, who alleged a breach of confidence at a previous meeting and withheld permission for another.

The next morning, however, they changed their tune, saying they couldn't withhold their consent, but it was advisable for the strikers to inform the Town Hall and the Police of their meeting in time for any objection to be made! The strikers had already pointed out that Winston Churchill had been allowed to hold a meeting on the pitch indicated, but the police had replied that that was an auspicious occasion!

The union are paying out strike pay, but an appeal for funds has been launched on behalf of the women strikers.

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THE GAS INDUSTRY

...it became evident to many people that the gas industry has still a certain role to play in modern society. During the last decades, with the continual spread of the use of electric power, gas has tended to become an industry which was losing ground to its more modern competitor. But the fact remains that for certain purposes gas is even more efficient than electricity, and that, while coal remains the basis of our fuel system, gas-making, with its many by-products, and its final residue of coke or other smokeless fuel, is by far the most economical way of using coal. These facts have been emphasised in a recent issue of the *Architectural Review* (April, 1947), which was devoted entirely to the gas industry, and which included a series of eleven articles on such varied aspects of the subject as atmospheric pollution and coal conservation, and the design of gasworks and the history of the gas industry. It is a document which puts forward very convincingly the case for an increased use of gas and its by-products until such time as other forms of energy and other sources of chemical raw materials have superseded coal.

The first advantage of gas is that it is the most economical way of using coal. This is a particularly important consideration at the present day, because, not only are our readily accessible stocks of coal dwindling very rapidly, but also it is desirable from every point of view that the necessity for mining coal should be decreased as quickly as possible. A rational society would use every means to remove from workers the necessity to perform such unpleasant work, and a reduction of the demand for coal is a constructive beginning towards this supercession of the mining industry. Even apart from that consideration, however, it is evident that during the next few years the difficulties in the coal industry will in fact be such that consumption of coal should be cut to an absolute minimum.

Elimination Of Smoke

The most wasteful form of heating is the use of the domestic coal fire. It uses only a minute proportion of the heat content of the raw coal, and sends all its by-products into the air in the form of soot and smoke, which not only pollute the atmosphere, but also prevent the health-giving ultra-violet rays from penetrating to the towns afflicted by heavy smoke pall. Of course, the domestic fire is not the only offender in this respect. Factories and electric power stations give

off vast quantities of smoke, and the result is that an industrial town like Middlesborough has working class dwelling quarters where more than 450 tons of soot and dirt fall every year on each square mile. Apart from the effect on health, there is the vast expense of time in cleaning which is brought about by such smoke and the damage to buildings caused by the acids contained in the fumes.

Certain means of filtering can be used to prevent smoke reaching the atmosphere, but these are very costly, and are only practicable in large installations like power stations. They can in no way cure the smoke-production of houses and smaller factories, for which the only really efficient means of elimination are by electricity, gas or district heating, and the use of smokeless fuel—which however usually contain certain acidic fumes.

Efficient Utilisation Of Coal

Of the various means of converting coal into power, gas is by far the most efficient, since only a very small part of the heat content of the coal is lost, and the by-products are more efficiently conserved than by any other means. Electricity, as made in modern coal-burning power stations, is very wasteful, with only approximately 25% overall efficiency, the remaining heat-content being lost in smoke, condensers, etc. When other forms of utilising sources of natural power are tapped, electricity may be a very economical form of providing energy, but under the present coal-burning system an effort should clearly be made to use methods more economical, and gas, with its 85% efficiency, is of much greater value, and can be used, not only for domestic heating, but also as the basic heat supply for a district heating system by hot water.

Much has been done recently to evolve a fumeless gas fire. Aesthetically, a gas fire is probably not as pleasant as an open fire, and the radiators of a district heating system deprive a room of the focal point which customary British architecture has always found in the fireplace. But a change in the habit of sitting round the fire might have its social value in breaking down the rigid structure of the family life by providing more chance of privacy by the provision of heating in all rooms in the house.

Decentralisation

An interesting chapter in this symposium deals with the making and distribution of gas. It demonstrates the inefficiency and wastefulness of the small gasworks, and advocates the formation of a gas grid. Significantly, however, it shows that the production of gas on a large scale ceases to be economical after a certain size has been reached, and that the desirable maximum for the population served by one gas producing unit is about 125,000 people. This is a vindication of the anarchist contentions about the decentralisation of industry, and indicates that industrial experts are themselves beginning to doubt the wisdom of the tendencies during recent years to centralise production in large units and mammoth factories.

One of the most important facts concerning the present-day English gas industry that was not brought out sufficiently in this volume was its tendency to become centralised in large combines like the Gas Light & Coke Company. These mammoth concerns have an almost monopolistic control over the industry in very large and thickly populated areas of the country, and they make very large profits out of their sale of gas and of gas appliances. At present gas heating is dear, very largely through the profiteering of these great companies. It is proposed in the comparatively near future to nationalise the gas industry, which would mean even greater centralisation. Undoubtedly, the larger units would be almost untouched, and it is likely that their executives will merely pass over into the new public corporations and still govern the industry.

The gas industry is one in which centralisation is actually least practicable and desirable. It is a matter which concerns each town and district particularly, and insofar as they demanded local administration of the gas industry, the Fabians were right. Where they were wrong was in suggesting the kind of miniature nationalisation involved in ownership by a borough council with an authoritarian executive.

Workers' Control

In an anarchist society, the administration of the gas industry would be de-

centralised, and each gas works, with its local distribution service would be administered by its workers' syndicates. There would, of course, be a close connection with the consumers, represented by the local communes, who would transmit to the workers' syndicate the needs of the local population. In order to ensure proper coal supplies to the various works, some kind of regional and national bureaux would be necessary, merely to co-ordinate the various demands of the local works and make the arrangements with the syndicates of the coal industry for the distribution of the necessary raw fuel. A similar liaison would be necessary with the chemical industry to ensure the proper use of the gas by-products. But, since all goods and services would be supplied freely and according to need, and financial

transactions would not enter into the matter, such bureaux could be very small, and would exercise no power over the industry.

In this way, the gas industry might play a much more valuable part in industry and social life. But it must not be forgotten that the need for gas, like that for coal, will decrease as alternative forms of making electrical power are discovered and new sources of raw materials are exploited. The eventual elimination of the need for such an irksome occupation as coal mining should always be envisaged, and for this purpose the utilisation of gas should only be regarded as a temporary expedient until science has better organised the use of atomic and other forms of power.

GEORGE WOODCOCK.

THE RIGHT TO BE A TRAMP

"Oh, why don't you work like other folk do?"
How the hell can I work
When there's no work to do?
Hallelujah! I'm a bum!
Hallelujah, bum again!
Hallelujah, give us a hand-out
To revive us again!

Whenever anarchists gather together for a convivial evening, and the inhibitions are loosened sufficiently for the singing to start, it is not long before the above words are roared out, together with all the other verses of this favourite from the I.W.W. song-book—"Hallelujah, I'm a bum!" And in our mind's eye as we sing, we see the ragged figure of the tramp answering the petulant questions of the housewife, who has heard his "hard-luck" story before.

Ragged he may be, dirty and homeless certainly, but this cheerful hobo who knows all the answers, knows also a happiness and contentment denied to the housewife, tied to her daily round, her "position", her property, her duty. For he has broken these chains. Rejecting

a stone around his neck; rejecting the humdrum existence of a "safe" job; he has left social security to those who desire freedom from want, but don't want freedom.

But in the British Socialist State this sort of rugged individualism is sadly out of place. If the desire for personal freedom, even at the price of discomfort and broken boots, conflicts with the full employment policy of a government determined to make you secure (I am being ambiguous on purpose!) then obviously these vagrants who have strayed from the narrow path of the wage slave must be made to realise that efficiency and not happiness is the goal for 20th century man.

The first step in this direction is already being taken in sunny Devon, over the lovely hills and dales of which the tramps have for long wended their easy-going way. Strict discipline is to be applied at all institutions there in an effort to discourage them from lingering too long within the county boundaries.

During the war, it seems, Devon's tramping population increased by 500 per cent, and now totals 400. During the war, also, we cannot help remembering, many government offices and services training centres and H.Q.'s were evacuated to the safe town of Torquay, so we can hardly blame the tramp for deserting the bomb-scarred eastern and home counties for the safe west, along with the civil servants.

But Devon County Council is taking their invasion seriously, and according to Mr. Martin Sykes, their public assistance officer, "Devon Vagrancy Committee are putting two lorries at our disposal and

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WHERE IS YOUR BLUEPRINT COMRADE?

ON coming into contact with Anarchism for the first time, many people are apt to think of it as an ingenious system of ideas which has been worked out intellectually, in order to provide an alternative to the evils of the governmental society we know. Such people are apt to regard Anarchism as a blueprint, and to scan it anxiously in the fear (or hope) of discovering some technical flaw that its designers have overlooked; such alleged flaw discovered, it may then be announced that "Anarchy won't work because . . ."

No investigation of anarchist ideas is scientific if conducted in this manner, since the principles of Anarchism are not a synthetic system of ideas invented to solve the social problem, but the result of a natural tendency observable within human society. Deductions may be made from this, but no sort of rigid blueprint may be drawn for society on this basis. Here we see the contrast between Anarchism and such synthetic systems as Social Credit, Fascism and Socialism.

The tragedy of social blueprints is that whenever a party with a blueprint gains power, the manifold errors in the blueprint are not easily scrapped, but sheer power is used to force society into the prepared framework, at whatever cost to the human material involved. Their ideas is that the blueprint must be made to work by sheer force, in defiance of the laws of economics and human nature, and it is only when the power of the government is actually imperilled by the unworkability of schemes, that the plans are altered. A terrible example of this is the Bolshevik regime in Russia. It is a history of faulty blueprints badly misapplied, and scrapped too late: never before has so much human life been sacrificed to bureaucratic pigheadedness as in this alleged paradise of social engineers.

The Mainspring Of Revolution

Some people ask, "Will the workers make the social revolution unless they have an actual blueprint on which to remodel society, worked out for them?" Here is the whole crux of Anarchism. The workers will only make the revolution in the light of their own needs, their own experience and their practical vision; and we Anarchists maintain that this is the only sound basis on which society can be remodelled.

Man has always been able to adjust himself satisfactorily to his environment when he has been able to form co-operative social units based on the mutual needs of the individuals comprising them. Social forms based on any other principle are manifestly unstable, and have to be propped up by armed force. Nor can this coercive propping lead to increasing natural stability (as the Socialists fondly imagine) for that which is artificially maintained cannot develop in accordance with natural social tendencies. Coercive force always breeds an opposing reaction.

The condition of anarchy, therefore, is an essentially stable social form. Once achieved there is no natural force which will upset it from within. The fact that

of conditions imposed on them from without, and not to any internal instability in their social organization.

Now we are faced with a world which is becoming rapidly unified as far as communications and international intercourse are concerned, quite apart from the extreme political dis-unity of the nation states. Anarchists do not envisage, therefore, stable anarchical communities quietly persisting cheek by jowl with the governmental nation-states. We are essentially internationalist in outlook.

Certain countries naturally develop towards social revolution more quickly than others; and indeed the forces of progress may make and consolidate substantial gains in this direction locally, in spite of the hostility of the ruling class in all other parts of the world, if circumstances make outright intervention impractical. But it is unrealistic to expect any stable condition of anarchy to be achieved except on an international basis.

Does Complexity Defeat The Revolution?

Those who crave a blueprint for future society to allay their fears of the fundamental ineptitude of *Homo Sapiens*, triumphantly point to the extreme complexity of the modern industrial country, and proclaim that Anarchists could not cope with such a state of affairs. Anarchy, they imply, is all very well for simple agricultural communities, but not for those which are technically developed.

Certain near-Anarchists like William Morris and Wilfred Wellock, have met this objection by attacking the whole concept of industrial life, implying that a sane society would have no use for industrialism. But the objection to Anarchism based on the assumption that Anarchists would try to master the complexities of 20th century industrialized society—and fail, is so naive, that we must answer it in a more analytic manner.

What exactly is the cause of the extreme complexity of modern life? Let each of us look to his own job and he will discover the answer. For whatever job he performs, whether it be that of postman, bus-driver, commercial clerk, gas-fitter or hospital nurse, it is a job held under the all-embracing system of capitalism. It makes no difference whether the industry concerned is "nationalized" or "privately owned", whether it is "profit making" or a "public utility", it operates according to the general laws of capitalist economy.

Let each of us examine the complexities, the extremely complicated organization in his own industry, and he will see that it all exists to preserve the wage system, the roundabout means by which the majority shall be compelled to work while the main product of their labour is not available for their general use and enjoyment.

Taking a specific example, London Passenger Transport, we see that the essential, or productively employed workers are engaged in driving buses, trams, tubes, etc., operating lifts, signals, etc., cleaning and maintaining the vehicle and premises, and performing necessary liaison work. On top of this, however, there is a huge superstructure of non-productive workers, which is necessitated by the immense complexity of the economic system. This great horde of non-productive workers, which far outnumber the productive, are concerned with the selling

of tickets, collecting tickets, supervising the ticket-sellers, and supervising the supervisors, paying wages to staff, checking stock to the last ha'penny (to prevent staff from supplementing their wages!), advertising the Company to the public, finding jobs for friends, paying pensions and avoiding paying them, and all the myriad of book-keeping, clerking, typing, secretarial and directing jobs of every manner and description which is concerned with the complicated handling of the millions of money that pass through the Company's hands.

But this is not all. We assume that the drivers, etc., are actually performing useful work in operating the transport vehicles. However, much of their work is socially useless since it consists of toting around the great mass of unproductive workers which exists in the same proportion in all other industries.

So we see that although the workers spend their lives in monotonous toil, very little of the work done has any use at all from a social point of view. The greater part of the work done is part and parcel of the intricate organization for scarcity in the midst of plenty, the prop of the wages system. The "nationalization" of industry, with the creation of a further army of State bureaucrats to administer the administrators, takes us even further from the goal of production for use.

Taking Over Industry

The workers have no need to worry about taking over the organization of private and State-owned industry. The greater part of such organization simply needs scrapping: it has no reason for existing other than the preservation of economic inequality. All the workers have to operate is the sheerly productive processes, and to organize on the basis of social necessity.

This is the end of all anarcho-syndicalist struggle within the present framework of society. If a worker's industrial organization has other ends, or if it loses sight of the revolutionary end in the day to day struggle of wage bargaining, it will itself give rise to a bureaucratic superstructure similar to that of the capitalists.

We see, therefore, that the problem of attaining a free society is not one of mastering the intricacies of the old society, but of abandoning the need for them. The workers must cut through the red tape of capitalist economy, like Alexander cut through the unpickable Gordian Knot.

All who come along with bigger and better blueprints for rescuing the workers from the morass of capitalism by means of more laws, more restrictions, more red tape (incomprehensible to all save the high priests of high finance) are plainly charlatans, consciously or self-deceiving. At this present time the workers are beginning to have an excellent practical demonstration of what it all means in plain fact. Again we Anarchist reiterate the simple maxim that liberation from poverty, uncertainty and chaos can only come by resort to direct organization and direct action on the part of the workers themselves, in pursuit of objective which they can plainly understand. If we permit the existence of persons in authority over us, with a mandate to act as they see fit in matters which we do not understand, we cannot be surprised if the blueprints they draw up take no recognition of us other than as units of labour-power to be experimented with at their pleasure.

G.

ANARCHISM - Interpretations

"The State is, for us, a society of mutual insurance between the landlord, the military commander, the judge, the priest, and later on the capitalist, in order to support each other's authority over the people, and for exploiting the poverty of the masses and getting rich themselves.

Such was the origin of the State; such was its history; and such is its present essence.

Consequently, to imagine that Capitalism may be abolished while the State is maintained, and with the aid of the State—while the latter was founded for forwarding the development of Capitalism and was always growing in power and solidarity in proportion as the power of Capitalism grew up—to cherish such an illusion is as unreasonable, in our opinion, as it was to expect the emancipation of Labour from the Church, or from Caesarism or Imperialism. Certainly, in the first half of the nineteenth century, there have been many Socialists who had such dreams; but to live in the same dreamland now that we enter in the twentieth century, is really too childish.

A new form of economic organization will necessarily require a new form of political structure. And, whether the change be accomplished suddenly, by a revolution, or slowly, by the way of a gradual evolution, the two changes political and economic, must go on abreast, hand in hand.

Each step towards economic freedom, each victory won over Capitalism will be at the same time a step towards political liberty—towards liberation from the yoke of the State by means of free agreement, territorial, professional, and functional. And each step made towards taking from the State any one of its powers and attributes will be helping the masses to win a victory over Capitalism."

Peter KROPOTKIN.

STRIKES MUST BE UNOFFICIAL!

WHEN a Member of Parliament is elected and takes his seat in the House of Commons, he has to take an oath of allegiance to the King and Constitution. That a person of alleged "Socialist" opinions should be prepared to do this has proved surprising to some in the past, but not to us cynical old anarchists! After all, if a man has aspired to a certain privileged position for months and years and suddenly finds himself (more because of the gullibility of others than by his own talents) about to take up that position, he can hardly be expected to let an apparent contradiction—which is definitely more apparent than real—stand in his way, can he?

LESSON OF 1926

In 1926, during the General Strike, the Labour Party and Trade Union leaders made it perfectly clear once and for all where they stood with regard to the constitution (and to the King). J. R. Clynes, union leader of the time, wrote in his "Memoirs":—

"J. H. Thomas, representing the railwaymen, found, early in the Strike, that his duties took him to Buckingham Palace. King George asked him a number of questions, and expressed his sympathy for the miners. At the end of the talk, His Majesty, who was gravely disturbed, remarked, it is said: 'Well, Thomas, if the worst happens, I suppose all this—' (with a gesture indicating his surroundings) '—will vanish?'

Fortunately for Britain and the world, it did not come to the worst. The Trades Unions saw to that."

Yes, the Trades Unions saw to that, alright. The union leaders called the General Strike of 1926 having no faith or belief either in its purpose or its success. And they called it for one reason only. With the extension of the miners' lockout, and worsening of the workers' conditions in general, a widespread stoppage was in any case inevitable. Unrest throughout the workers' movement was becoming more and more threatening. By anticipating the workers' initiative; by calling for a general strike in order to lead it, the unions were able to control the strike and lead the workers' energies into safe, constitutional channels.

Even then, it was touch and go. As they had led the workers into the strike to suit their own purposes, the union leaders had to be very smart about leading them out again before it was too late. Charles Dukes, now as Lord Dukes of the House of Lords, suitably rewarded for his part in the betrayal, said in 1927:

"Every day that the strike proceeded the control and the authority of that dispute was passing out of the hands of responsible Executives into the hands of men who had no authority, no control, and was wrecking the movement."

One after the other, the Labour leaders of 1926 (Bevin, Clynes, J. H. Thomas, Ramsay MacDonald, Dukes), stressed their dislike of the general strike and their love for the constitution. Wherein do the interests of the workers coincide with the interests of men such as these? How can it be in the interest of the workers to respect the constitution?

LESSONS FOR 1947

Twenty-one years after, the Labour leaders of to-day, secure in the saddle of government, are the direct ideological descendants of the betrayers of 1926, when out of their love for legality they returned the workers to worsened conditions, black depression, and a second world war.

To-day, when the workers are rightly using advantageous circumstances to wring concessions out of the employers, there are no more venomous attacks, no more hysterical outpourings against them than those from the trade union leaders and Socialist M.P.'s. And even more clearly now that the Labour Party has complete parliamentary power is to be seen the real function of the trade unions in a nationalised society. It is to discipline the workers, and if the present constitution is not sufficiently stringent to do the job properly, it can very soon be altered so that it is!

LAW AGAINST STRIKES?

Union officials are no longer asking "What can we do for the strikers," but "What can we do with the strikers," and they readily answer themselves—"Out-law them." "Legislate against them," "Ban strikes," and so on. And they do not choose to remember that it is precisely through strike action in the past that workers organisations have grown to be the power they are; do not remember that it is over the backs of men

like the strikers of to-day that men like fat Bevin have clambered to power.

But the hysteria of the union leaders over the wave of unofficial strikes is understandable. They know they are being rumbled. They know that the impatience of the rank and file may well be a prelude to the creation of rank and file organisations independent of, and finally leaving unsupported, the official unions. The identity of the T.U.C. with the Government is now so clear that it can no longer pretend to support the workers. Any action the working class now takes against the employing or managerial classes must bring it into conflict with the official unions, whose constitutional function is to control the workers for the employers and managers.

So from now on it is obvious that strikes must be unofficial. And will continue whether they become illegal or not. From now on the struggle of the workers is sharply and clearly defined as being against the employers, the State and the State's Labour Front—the official unions. The means of struggle, by the way, will become, sooner or later, revolutionary syndicates aiming at workers' control—but more of that some other time.

For the meantime—to hell with the Constitution!

P. S.

STRIKES BANNED IN U.S. ZONE

The directors of Military Government for the three states in the American Zone of Germany have warned the German government officials and trade union leaders against permitting strikes and demonstrations protesting against the steady deterioration in the food situation.

In fact, the food situation in the American Zone has been consistently

CIVIL SERVANTS WAKE UP

One is so accustomed to think of Civil Servants as mere servile appendages of the State, that it comes as rather a shock when they threaten militant action against their employers—the Government.

At Prestatyn, representatives of 123,000 Government clerks and typists, organised in the Civil Service Clerical Association, voted by an overwhelming majority for the adoption of a strike policy and creation of a strike fund. Since the repeal of the Trades Disputes Act the Civil Servants have had the same rights as any other recognised workers' organisation, including the right to strike (what a democratic triumph!), and the Association's general secretary, L. C. White, declares that "it would be quite wrong for the Government to assume there is no prospect of strike action in isolated parts of the Civil Service."

It is the old story of interminable delays in reaching a settlement of wage negotiations, and although one member said that the Association had not the "guts" to do things normally done by trade unions (*sic*), and the secretary did not envisage a national stoppage, nevertheless it is a heartening move.

better than in the British, but a reduction is now likely, cutting the basic ration from 1,550 calories daily to 1,130. (3,000 calories are regarded as necessary for full health.) The effect of this on an already restless people can be imagined, but the American leaders have made clear that they will deal ruthlessly with the Germans should they dare to protest. James Newman, director of M.G. for Greater Hesse, had prepared a speech for German civilians to be delivered over Radio Frankfurt, in which he had gone so far as to threaten martial law if the food situation got out of hand. At the last minute this was cut from the speech, but even so it was bad enough, fixing the blame, in advance, for any demonstration on agitators, [who] regardless of their position, will be summarily dealt with.

General Muller, director of Bavaria, telling German T.U. leaders to "weed out agitators who cause these strikes . . . for their own selfish reasons", went on to say "Strikes and demonstrations would only make the American taxpayer say: 'Why should we feed the Germans who bite the hand that feeds them?'"

Surely the point is that the German demonstrators would, if at all, be biting the hand that did not feed them? But underneath all this continual stressing of the "agitator scapegoat, probably lies just the echo of the anti-Red drive in America. For it is pretty obvious that when people are

being steadily starved, they don't need to be told so by trouble-makers.

Neither does sanctimonious talk about the "generosity of your conquerors" disguise for one moment the disgusting fact that, as we have pointed out many times in *Freedom*, food is a political weapon.

IN THE BRITISH ZONE

Meanwhile, in the British Zone, prior to the opening of the Ruhr "Parliament" at Duesseldorf, the trade unions had managed to keep the workers quiet by putting forward a programme including such points as these:

Removal of dualism in economic control ("interference" by Military Government conflicted with German responsibility); Provision of a whaling and high seas fishing fleet, built and manned by Germans, to ensure food supplies; Sanction for increased production in Germany of petrol, rubber and machine tools; A halt in dismantling of all works "not" purely for armaments"; Manufacture of fertilisers; Greater powers of supervision to ensure that food supplies are equitably shared, the trade unions to have the deciding voice on control committees and "economic courts".

Two years after the war, the statement said, not even the foundations of an organised economic life have been laid.

Agriculture and the Social Revolution—4

Two Different Lessons: America & Spain

IF the attempt to solve the problem of agriculture by the political methods of the Bolsheviks was a disastrous failure, the application in America of purely capitalist methods to the exploitation of the soil has produced similarly catastrophic results. In America, the method of large-scale extensive cultivation has been widely employed for many years. A similar method characterized the Five Year Plans for agriculture in Russia, but the Americans have been practising it for far longer, and the end results are much clearer there.

In America and Canada, huge tracts of virgin land were ploughed up, sown, and reaped by mechanical methods which allowed of a maximum reduction of labour content. One man with a tractor could cover enormous areas of land. Thus wages, as a part of the agriculturists' costs, were reduced to a minimum. At the same time rents, by comparison with land rents in England were purely nominal.

By this extensive method enormous total crops were achieved, though the yield per acre was far less than is usual in the mixed farming practised here. (Extensive farming is thus the reverse of the intensive method suited to land where rents per acre are high, and which aims to get the maximum yield per acre.) Costs being so low, these huge crops could be marketed at very low prices, and American grain successfully undercut the market for European farmers, with the results for British farming which were discussed in the second article in this series.

Soil Erosion

But in the not-so-long run it was to have a disastrous effect on American farming also. For after growing several crops, the land became exhausted and the yields fell to uneconomic levels. When this happened the capitalist combines simply moved to new virgin territory and repeated the process all over again.

In this way, large tracts of once-fertile land in North America have become exhausted. Not only will they not grow crops; the worn-out soil will not even support any vigorous plant life of any kind. With the death of the surface vegetation, the surface soil is exposed to the winds and becomes more and more broken up. Finally, it breaks down into dust and is blown away by the winds, creating a dust bowl. In addition, the soil no longer absorbs water, which runs off the surface and causes widespread floods, ruining crops elsewhere. It is this exhaustion of soil for profit (and the des-

truction of much European farming) without anything being put back into it, which is the root cause of the dust bowls and the destruction and loss of life from recurrent floods which have been such a feature of middle western American life in the past 20 years. Whole populations have been compelled to migrate because their home country has been transformed into desert. John Steinbeck's film *The Grapes of Wrath* provides an eloquent picture of the misery caused by this extensive mode of cultivation. While the dam systems of the Tennessee Valley Authority scheme exhibit the vast repairs which the government has been compelled to undertake in the attempt to try and stem the destruction.

Soil erosion is not a problem confined to America; it also faces Africa and Russia. And its importance is such that many soil scientists consider that man-made deserts provide a greater threat to mankind than even war itself. Vast areas in America, Africa, and Russia are losing their capacity for food production on account of the one-sided treatment of the soil necessitated by a market economy. Fortunately, the nature of the terrain in England makes it unlikely that similar extensive cultivation would be possible here.

SOCIAL REVOLUTION IN AGRICULTURE — SPAIN

Hitherto we have discussed the ruin of agriculture: in Britain from undercutting by food imports; in Russia by political attempts to coerce the peasants; and in America, by extensive cultivation and soil erosion. It is a relief to turn to the Spain of the 1936 revolution, for here we have the one example of a successful and expanding agriculture.

Spain is an agricultural country in the sense that the majority of the people work on the land and food imports are not heavy. But the agriculture of Spain was a very poor affair compared with countries like Denmark, Holland, Belgium or Switzerland. Ever since the expulsion of the Moors, irrigation had been neglected so that drought hampered the growth of all crops. Moreover, the implements used by the peasants were incredibly primitive, for wooden ploughs were still used in many districts just as in Roman times. It was not that the peasants were too "backward", and lacked the initiative to get better implements: they were so crippled by poverty in an economy centred round buying and selling that they were

unable to pay for improvements. Transport, too, was of the most rudimentary kind, for all roads and railways (built, no doubt, to facilitate the collection of taxes) led to Madrid, communication between outlying provinces being very poor indeed. The degenerate nature of Spanish agriculture resulted in a very poor standard of life, while crop yields were among the lowest in Europe.

Peasants Take Over The Land

The chief factors maintaining this backward agriculture were the system of land ownership by large absentee landlords, and the impoverishment of the peasant by taxation. In July of 1936, when the workers and peasants seized the initiative in order to frustrate the military coup of General Franco, all that was swept away. The peasants took over the land, and began to work it collectively. In every village and region they elected committees from among themselves to organize the work of farming the land of the village. These collectivizations were of an entirely voluntary character, and had nothing in common with the forced collectivizations of the Russian Five Year Plans. In the first place, no peasant was required to join the collective against his will: if he preferred to continue as a small individual proprietor no constraint was put upon him. On the contrary, the collective farms made available to such peasants the facilities in the way of farm machinery, seeds, etc., which they had been able to organize. In addition, the uncollectivized peasant reaped the benefit of irrigation schemes which the collective farms established. At the outset, 75 per cent. of the peasants joined the collective farms, and they were quite willing to let the example of the collectives provide the sole incentive to change the individualist attitude of the remaining 25 per cent., whose good will they never alienated by any kind of coercion. The result was that most of the remaining peasants gradually joined in the collective farms.

Increased Production

The collectivizations extended over a large part of Spain, embracing Aragon and Catalonia, Levant and "loyalist" Andalusia, and parts of Castille. Their immediate organization had been made possible by the continuous educative propaganda which the anarchist syndicalists of the CNT and the FAI (The National Confederation of Labour and the Iberian Anarchist Federation) had been carrying on for years among the peasants. As a result of this propaganda many of the peasants had deeply studied the economic

causes of agrarian distress, and so were enabled to take fundamental economic steps to set agriculture on a rational footing when the revolutionary opportunity came. They were not content to look to the illusory promises of politicians and party men, but took their affairs into their own hands.

Theoretically, the social revolution should release the forces of production from the hampering limitations of capitalist property relations. But Spain provides the only revolutionary example of recent times in which this release has been realized. The peasants received more up-to-date machinery from the industrial collectives (though not nearly as much as they required), they organized stock breeding, and arranged the distribution of better quality seed. As a result the corn crops in Aragon increased by an average of 30 per cent., with similar increases for potatoes, sugar beet, lucerne, etc. Meanwhile, the numbers of cattle and pigs were immensely increased, and modern farm buildings erected to house them. In this, the voluntary collectives of Spain were in striking contrast to the fall in agricultural production which distinguished "War Communism" and the Five Year Plans in Russia.

Workers' Control

The collectives were controlled by their members, and were organized in federations so that they could carry on close contact with each other and with industry. But their independence constituted a continuous threat to the government. Hence, with the victory of the counter-revolution in the May Days of 1937, the latter began a steady offensive against them. In the end, those which had not been destroyed by economic measures designed to that end, were physically destroyed by Communist-controlled International Brigades under General Enrique Lister. By 1939 Spain has been reduced to starvation once more.

I have dealt more briefly with the Spanish lessons than their great importance merits. But that is because the achievements of the voluntary collectives are described in a penny pamphlet published by Freedom Press (*Collectivizations in Spain* by Gaston Leval). What is important to stress here is the voluntary character of these collectives—the total absence of coercion. It is this reliance on the creative endeavour of the peasants themselves which made Spain of the revolution such a striking—indeed, unique—example of revolutionary success. This lesson of voluntary organization will be kept in mind when we come to sum up the foregoing articles in the next and last article in this series.

J. H.

Letter from **Germany****"Democracy is Hunger"**

Wuppertal, May, 10th, 1947.

Dear Comrades,

The Anarchists of this country thank you very much for your newspaper *Freedom*. It is, in fact, the first and only connection we have with the outside world. *Freedom* is the only Anarchist paper which circulates in this part of the country, and goes from group to group, from town to town and is translated into German by comrades versed in the English language for the benefit of their comrades who cannot read English.

We have not yet had an opportunity to publish a newspaper since the fall of Hitler as the Government places too many obstacles in our way. In Hamburg we have a permit to organize our Union and publish a newspaper, but the Government does not supply us with the necessary paper. It is the Government which controls the paper mills and the distribution of paper, and it depends on its fancy whether a newspaper gets paper or not. It would appear that we are not in their good books for though we cannot get the paper, the most reactionary newspaper published in this country gets all it wants!

But in Hamburg our comrades are much better off than we are, since they have a permit to form a Union and are allowed to meet—both of which are denied to us. Last year we handed

In Franco's Spain

(Continued from page 1)

have urged workers to demonstrate their hostility towards Franco by boycotting Spanish ships, and by industrial action at every point where Franco's administration impinges on this country. If our influence in industry were considerable, instead of being slight or non-existent, we should urge industrial action on our comrades. As things are, our only weapon is propaganda, within the limits of our literature reaches. Our comrades, and all sympathizers who read *Freedom*, can do something to bring the Spanish terror to an end by making sure that they never lose an opportunity to expose its shameless cruelty. Such work is not very spectacular, but it is necessary in a country like Britain where libertarian teachings have only a small influence. For those readers who may not yet feel interested, or do not consider they have a moral responsibility for joining the struggle to end oppression and terror in whatever part of the globe it reveals itself, we reproduce the final appeal of the Spanish underground comrades' manifesto:

"In this bitter struggle which we are waging, in this Homeric war against the terror that oppresses us, we are in need of help and solidarity. We are ready to sacrifice and we shall know how to do our duty; and if the hour strikes we shall know how to fall with courage and dignity, since we prefer death to slavery. But our efforts would be much more effective if we were able to receive the fullest aid possible.

"It may be that many people living in an atmosphere of freedom think it is sufficient merely to sympathize with us, giving us a few words of encouragement, a moral support. But we know that that is not enough. To put an end to this terror, this crime, this barbarous savagery, we need more effective arguments, more energetic resolutions.

"We work and struggle without materials, practically unarmed by comparison with the gigantic apparatus of the police state. We can scarcely give aid to our comrades in prison or to those on the run. We are unable to procure the most necessary material, and to make it requires the greatest sacrifices on our part, which only those who have lived under a regime like the Spanish one can even imagine. We are grateful for all the expressions of sympathy and encouragement, although we are by no means lacking in courage to continue to struggle. But we are in need of other things, and we believe we have the right to demand them from everyone.

"The National Committee of the National Confederation of Labour (CNT) appeals to all sections of the International Working Men's Association (I.W.M.A.), and to all anti-fascists all over the world, to free men in all countries, above all to anarchists and trade unionists, to come to our aid wholeheartedly and without winking. The life of many of our comrades depends upon them. Let all do their duty lest the day come when they will be stricken with remorse, realising that on account of their cowardice, egotism or sectarianism, they were directly to blame that the execution squads increased the numbers of anti-fascists who fell on the tormented soil of Spain."

in an application for a permit, and waited in vain for an answer. At last, after many months had passed, the Government commenced investigations and put a few silly questions to us, and then, silence! We made a further application with the Governor of the Province of Dusseldorf, and a few days ago we received the answer, and it was NO! We are not permitted to form our Union. If we met now, the police is authorized to arrest us, and we will be punished. But that threat does not prevent us from meeting just the same.

DEMOCRACY IS HUNGER

The Governors of the different cities and districts rule according to the customs of the middle-ages. Their word is Law, and there is no authority, whose complaints can be made against them if they do wrong. Which proves that Democracy in this country is being administered as the oppression was handled in England before the time of Magna Carta. "Democracy is Hunger" say the people here, and add "This Government and the Nazis are very similar. The Nazis killed us quickly, this Government kills us slowly."

During the war there were very many Germans who honestly believed that the war was fought for ideological reasons between Democracy and Nazism, and they considered the Allies their liberators and not their enemies, and were ready to help them in any way when the war had ended, to build up a truly democratic Germany. The majority of these democrats were middle workers, with a sprinkling of the middle class. The rich and well-to-do were Nazis or sympathized with them.

When the Allies occupied the country, these democrats got the surprise of their lives, because the Allies behaved as conquerors, and treated democrats and Nazis alike. Before the war had ended, and even during the war, the Allies had stated hundreds of times over the B.B.C. that they were waging a war against the Nazis and not against the democrats in Germany, and that the purpose of the war was to free the German people from the Nazi yoke. Yet, when the war was ended, the Allies appointed reactionary people to help them govern the country, and many Nazis have important posts in the Military Government. As an example I can mention that the food dictator of the British Zone is a Herr von Schlange-Schönigen who in his time made public utterances in support of Hitler.

The Government control every detail of the economic and political life of the country, and it is therefore utter non-

sense for it to refuse the responsibility for everything that happens in the country. This hunger and starvation period could have been avoided if the war had not been fought for imperialist reasons.

COMPETING FOR WORLD MARKETS

The density of population in Germany as a whole is at present 550 inhabitants per square mile. In this province it is nearly 900. And to make matters worse much good arable land was taken over by Hitler for military training purposes, for airfields, etc. This land is being retained by the Military Government for the training of British troops.

If this country is to obtain sufficient bread then it must sell goods in the world markets in order to have the currency with which to buy the grain it requires over and above what it produces. The country is not self-supporting in wheat and the Allies knew this before they set foot in the country. So, if they really did not want the country to starve they should have kept the factories and workshops working and export their products, and buy more raw material and food with the proceeds. But instead of that, factories were closed down, or in some cases, blown up with dynamite.

That is one way of preventing competition from German goods in world markets. One can understand the Government's wish to throttle German competition in the world's markets, but why did they also stop the production of artificial fertilizers which are not exported and which are so badly needed by the farmers? Last year we had a poor harvest, and this year the outlook is not much better, because of a lack of fertilizers. Why the Government stops the production of fertilizers is hard to tell: some people think it is sheer incompetence, others that it is sheer wickedness.

Not everybody starves in this country. Only the workers and people with a small income starve. Farmers, capitalists, businessmen and shop keepers live fairly well; either they keep their produce for themselves or exchange it for food. Our outlook for the future is bleak.

It is the will of the Powers-that-be that the German worker shall starve; that the English worker pay taxes; and that the British Tommy shall police this country. (By the way, the German workers have no grudge against the English Tommy. He is O.K. with only a few exceptions.)

With fraternal greetings,
WILLY F.

Appeal from Bulgaria

The following appeal is issued by the Bulgarian Federation of Anarchist Communists, and published in their paper *Appeal for Justice*. Though not all the names and incidents will be known to anarchists in this country, it gives some idea of the struggle which Bulgarian anarchists are carrying on, and the kind of oppression they face.

Friends of freedom!

The anarchist movement carried on for 23 years the struggle for freedom and justice, paying with the life of many a friend for it.

The anarchists died singing and with unprecedented courage. Who does not know of the epic events of "Dorodiot!" Street in the centre of Sofia, where our comrades perished in the flames, fighting against the Fascist bandits? Who does not remember March 26th, 1923, when our friends in Jambol took the lead in the struggle against the rising Fascism? Who hasn't heard of the Bulgarian Giordano Bruno, the excellent man and Anarchist Dr. Besheff? Is there an honest man who does not pronounce his name with respect? And is there a man who does not pronounce the name of his murderers with contempt and abhorrence? Is there a peasant or worker in Trojan and Lovetch, who does not know the names of Vassil Geroya (Gero means hero—trans.) and Tinko Simoff? Who does not know that, when the hords of Zankoff, Georgieff, Filoff and Dotcho Christoff (Bulgarian ministers and prime-ministers—trans.) were knocking at the doors by night, fetching out people for summary executions, those of the anarchists were not bye-passed? Who does not know that the anarchists are the most disinterested friends of the people? Who does not know that anarchists do not fight for privileges and power? Is there a man who would deny the eminently moral character of the struggle for social equality, carried on by anarchists? And yet, instead of receiving a place of honour among the anti-fascists after the 9th of September (1944) the anarchists are again sent into concentration camps and their paper "Rabotnitscheska Misaal" was suspended. The adepts of Musauloff, Georgieff, and Kasasoff enjoy freedom all right now and deal with the freedom of the press in a manner worthy of the Fascists of the past, whereas, the anarchists are put to death. How long will you, people of the government, continue with this shameful treatment, ignominious for you and your victims (the persecutors of to-day, i.e., communists, agrarians and to a certain extent socialists, were persecuted by the former regime themselves—trans.). Who could distinguish in the grave between the bones of anarchists and communists, who gave their lives for a common cause? The struggle for freedom will continue together with that for equality, for freedom and equality are as fundamental for life as bread. Put Dimo Kasasoff the present minister of information in the dock! Give freedom to the press! Long live the proletarian revolution.

The Editors, "Appeal for Justice".
(Translated by T. M.)

Gas and Electricity Workers' Stand Scares Ramadier Government

THE strikes and demonstrations that have been taking place in many parts of France during the past weeks show no signs of ending. As some strikes and so others begin, and "Combat" (26/5/47) while reporting a settlement of two strikes at Thionville and Tourcoing adds four new strikes to the already lengthy list; at Concarneau where building and shipyard workers have come out; transport workers at Caen, metal workers at Laigleville, printing workers at Marseilles, Furbermanns a 24-hour strike is threatened by Health & Public Services workers, while the National Committee of the Builders Federation after three days deliberations has decided on a nation-wide 24-hour protest strike to take place early in June.

But the strike of the Gas and Electricity workers due to take place as we go to press, is the most important threat so far to the Ramadier Government's authority, and in signing a decree "requisitioning"—that is, mobilising—workers in these industries under the War emergency law of 1938, the French Premier has indicated that he has not underestimated the gravity of the situation should the Gas and Electricity workers come out on strike. But he has underestimated the determination of the workers, and only 12 hours before zero hour for the strike, they had reaffirmed their determination to go through with their struggle in spite of the serious penalties such action entails (up to five years' imprisonment).

In its statement, issued on May 24th, the National Committee of the Gas and Electricity workers expresses its surprise at the hostility of the Government in view of the fact that output is 50% higher than in 1938 in spite of the very unsatisfactory working conditions. The Committee reminds the Government that the conflict has nothing to do with the present problem of wages, but has been created as a result of the delay in putting into operation the benefits sanctioned "by legal documents" and which were granted to the workers "many long months ago" (that is, the 15% increase of July, 1946). The Committee regrets that the Government has deliberately decided to be responsible for a conflict which can only be harmful to the nation as a whole. In view of the Government's attitude the workers now demands a 23% increase in wages.

Foreign Commentary**Police Brutality**

MR. X had just seen off some friends at the station, and was slowly making his way home when he was stopped by two policemen, one of whom turned on his torch full in Mr. X's face. Mr. X, a man of 67, didn't like this kind of behaviour, and with a quick movement of his hand, pushed away the offending torch from his face, and it fell to the ground. This gesture was too much for the guardians of the law, and they proceeded to beat up Mr. X. Nearly three weeks later Mr. X died in hospital as a result of his treatment.

Mr. Y was only 32 years old, and by trade an electrician and was a man of good character. One evening, however, whilst enjoying a drink, the premises were raided by armed police who proceeded to bundle all the people present into their van, and take them to the police station where they were asked to produce their identity cards. Unfortunately, Mr. Y was feeling indignant and therefore not too co-operative, and in the inspector's opinion went about the producing of his identity papers a little too slowly. To jog him out of his lethargy, he struck him a violent blow on the face. Mr. Y, obviously lacking experience so far as the police are concerned, retaliated. That was the end of Mr. Y. The other "suspects" were released the same evening.

Mr. Y was in too bad a way to be released and was held by the police policemen were French policemen (or not seen by the neighbours. He could hardly eat, as a result of a broken jaw and was confined to his bed. Eleven days after his arrest, his mother returned home and found him dead.

"What else can you expect from the Nazis" someone may say, "After all the two cases recounted above are just two of thousands of such cases for which the Nazis have been found guilty, and one of the reasons for which we went to war was to get rid of this kind of thing." But, dear reader, the two cases referred to above occurred much nearer home! Mr. X was Monsieur Paul Paumier, a good citizen of Versailles, that delightful little town near Paris where Peace Treaties are signed, and the two for three days. For ten days he was "flics". Mr. Y was really Monsieur André Dodinot of Paris, and he was having his drink in a Paris Bar called "Chez Charles" and the inspectors were Frenchmen, and their chief was a Commissaire named Verdaveine. "So this happened in Democratic France". Yes, not only these two cases but thousands of others have happened in France, before Hitler was even thought of. Indeed, "Le Passage à Tabac" is a French police institution. It's a method used for

"persuading" people to confess to crimes which they may not even have committed. It's quite a simple business, consisting of beating up your victim with truncheons or with ones' bare fist, and the more policemen present to beat up one man the less time it takes to extract the "confession".

In the case of Mr. X the two policemen have been arrested and in court it was revealed that these two policemen dragged the unfortunate man through the streets and ill-treated him in spite of the protests of many passers-by. Many came forward as witnesses to disprove the indignant protests of police witnesses who declared "But, M. le Président, you know very well that 'le passage à tabac' no longer exists in France". Result: Policeman No. 1 was acquitted, Policeman No. 2 got five years.

The case of Mr. Y is still in the preliminary stages, and but for his mother, who declared that in spite of her limited means she would fight the case to the bitter end, probably nothing more would have been heard about Mr. Y. She declared that when her son was released by the police, his face was a mass of bruises, his jaw broken and the whole of his body was black and blue.

He told her about his 'passage à tabac' and added "If something happens to me, 'they' are responsible. Here are the names of seven people who can witness to this effect." The inspector who struck André Dodinot declared that all he did was to return the blow struck at him by Dodinot. But witnesses have already given details of what happened: "When Dodinot attempted to protect his face from the blows rained on him, the attack was only intensified until an inspector, seeing that the unfortunate man was unconscious, said 'He's had his share.'"

WHO SAID "UTOPIAN"?

At Preet Nagar, a colony near Lahore, India, which gets its income from a dairy, farm products and a flour mill, a remarkable experiment is being carried out, both in education and community sharing. Everyone is on a basis of equality, and the simplest farm worker has the same privileges and responsibilities as members of the managing committee. Everyone takes turns at cooking, serving, and other necessary labour. Boys and girls, who reside in the colony and attend its activity school, carry on independent learning by doing, but eat every day with parents and teachers. (WP)

LABOUR SPLITS IN INDIA

(This article is sent to us by our Bombay comrade, M. P. T. Acharya. For reasons of space, we have had to condense it slightly.)

THERE are already several kinds of trade unions in India. There are the older non-political unions; the Communist controlled trade unions; and the Royist trade unions called the "Indian Federation of Labour", started during the war with the aid of a government subsidy to act as an adjunct to the war machine. (There is also the oldest "National Railwaymen's Union" which is composed of white and semi-white engine drivers.) Recently, the Muslim League tried to start purely Mussulman unions.

These unions are all acting against one another, although they pretend to help labour "unite". Sometimes the first three unite, or only two, while the others remain "neutral". Fortunately, the All-India Trade Union Congress to which the first two belong at present is a loosely affiliated body, though the Communists try to get the upper hand in it. Formerly, the Trade Union movement went hand in hand with the Indian National Congress, but during the war, the Communists went against the Congress on account of its non-collaborationist attitude when Russia was attacked by Hitler. (Till then, they were "against the Imperialist War"—like the National Congress.)

Since the National Congress assumed ministries in the various provinces first, and later in the capital of Delhi, the Communists and Nationalists have grown more bitter against each other. The Nationalist Government, with the ex-

Socialist Jawaharlal Nehru at its head, is playing a capitalist role, which exactly suits the Stalinists. V. Patel, Nehru's Home Minister, is an avowed tool of the capitalists—the mill owners of Ahmedabad presented him with half-a-million rupees for "his services to his country"!

Since the end of the war, owing to the rapid increase of living costs, there has been an epidemic of strikes. When labour is in trouble it is a good field for the Stalinists, who are not really the friends of labour—for they also want to keep workers as wage slaves. But their politics in favour of Stalin (called "Communism") is furthered by fishing in troubled waters. Communists are in favour of every strike—provided it furthers their party. Thus, the workers are tossed between Communists and capitalists in every country. Both talk of giving better wages to the workers!

Solidarity Without Class Consciousness

Between these two extreme mill stones, the workers are also ground up by other political parties. There are the Congress Socialist and the Royists. The Muslim Leaguers are trying to form separate unions like the Catholic unions in Germany. But the workers who are in trouble are not so organized—i.e., disciplined—as in Europe. They go on strike when it suits them, and return to work when they cannot hold out any longer. That is one of the advantages of being illiterate and leaderless! They have no politics. Since they are continually in trouble, they must go on strike. Often enough they go on strike for the

dismissal of one of their colleagues. They simply demand higher wages and walk out or sit down. Or they refuse to work because one of them has been insulted by a "higher-up".

All this shows a certain sense of solidarity, without class consciousness, which is a very rare thing to find even in "well organized and disciplined" literate members of European and American trade unions.

It is, indeed, very difficult to "discipline", i.e., muzzle Indian workers—that is the complaint of both the labour leaders and the capitalists! The labour leaders only pretend to go with the workers, and then try to sabotage the strikes. That is what they are doing! But again the workers come out. They do not know the niceties of negotiating roguery on the part of their leaders and the capitalists. They are straight out! Immediate in action! When the workers learn to read and are fed with misleading print, their minds will be unhinged as in pre-Nazi Germany and now in Europe. In fact, both capitalists and labour leaders want the workers to be literate in their common interest of keeping them down—doped with their literature. Hope is that both won't be able to educate them. The most unscrupulous class of workers are those who are able to read and want to be leaders. They are not only muddled by reading, but also become traitors in order to climb higher in the hierarchy of leadership—any leadership!

Measures Against Strikes

Since the Governments could not prevent strikes, they introduced compulsory arbitration by law—declaring any works to be a "public utility". But since even this did not prevent strikes, the labour leaders—who are in favour of compulsory arbitration even while they are protesting that "it was only Fascist arbitration"—could not prevent strikes either, they had to go along with the workers. So the Nationalists in the Government had to find other ways of meeting the situation.

The only remaining way was to found a rival organization of workers against all these, an organization which will accept compulsory arbitration. To machine gun the workers would only strengthen the Communists in the unions, and all other so-called socialists who are in opposition to the Nationalists. The Government are therefore themselves starting a so-called "Indian National Trade Union Congress".

Meanwhile, they are trying to organize Fascist, company and blackleg unions, and also perhaps bribery to some, for some workers will assuredly be paid to become stool pigeons in factories, or to create trouble among workers by trying to disrupt other unions. We have no sympathy for any of these unions, for they are all made to keep workers down by making them fight among themselves, and they are all in favour of the wage system which makes this possible.

V. Patel said that this is no rival union, but only to unite workers "in their own interests". His argument was that the Communists were trying to create trouble and make production impossible; this makes the workers' lot more difficult than it already is, because the strikes which they foment make for lessened production.

But it is quite false that increased production makes for improved conditions. We had tremendous production before the war in all countries, at least for a time but that did not produce any improvement in any country, but only unemployment in all countries. Yet they are talking of improvement in the lot of the workers under the wage system through increased production. Either history never teaches anything, or they are blind to history! The stock argument in all countries against wage increases is that unless there is more production industry cannot bear increased wages. But even with increased production there was unemployment growing in all countries. Now they want—even labour leaders want—to increase production as if that would solve any problem, even the sales problem. Either ignorance or roguery seems to be the strength not only of the capitalists but also of the labour leaders. The latter are surely more than ignorant—if they are not rogues they are idiots. Neither

capitalism nor Bolshevism can solve the consumption problem within the wage system; neither can sell the goods produced, however few or great they may be. So long as the workers hang on the promises of labour leaders and Governments (however red they may be) that there is a solution within the wages system, even for maintaining the wage system, they will all go unemployed or will eat still less, if anything.

The only new kind of union that is worth having is one for running industry without prices or wages—after expropriation. Unless that is the object of the unions, the minds of workers will not be prepared to take possession of all things in order to run industry in their own interests. Trade Unions for maintaining the wage system are useless; they cannot improve trade upon which wages are based.

Anarchist Literature

But for the first time in Indian history, anarchist literature is being printed. Of course, more are imported than printed. Till now, *God and the State* by Bukunin has appeared and also one pamphlet by R. Rucker: *Socialism and the State*. But *Anarcho-syndicalism* by Rucker is to appear soon. These publications are put on the market not by any trade union or anarchist organization—no such organization exists, but by private enterprise. Whether labour leaders will learn any-

thing from these books is very doubtful, for their leadership will be gone without the wage-system. Most likely, they will be against the spread of anarchist ideas and will join with capitalists against such publications, for fear their jobs will be lost. The labour leaders will try to ridicule such publications as crazy and impracticable, although in their heart of hearts they may rejoice if such publications will be prohibited by the nationalist-Fascists. But without an anarchist movement, this country will go Fascist and go to the dogs—in spite of the labour leaders trying to adapt themselves to capitalist-Fascism, which is the wage system. The labour leaders in India and elsewhere (along with their fellow travellers the capitalists and Fascists) will only invite the wrath of workers for having led them into a blind alley by trying to smother anarchist thought which shows them the way out. Either society or state will arise out of the present chaos all over the world, and the state also requires society to prey upon. Most likely that mankind will be decimated by the state before it goes down. In that case, there will be no government possible in India after this nationalist government which seeks British brutish protection. The labour leaders will have themselves to thank when the workmen get wild in their tortures and remove them instead of following them. This country is in a wilder state than any other and any bloodshed might take place here.

Middle East Notes

OIL AND COCA-COLA

Britain's policy in the Middle East has been to encourage Arab nationalism in order that the independent Arab States should fall under British economic influence. Apart from Palestine, where there were other complications, the policy worked well—Arab nationalist influence stimulated by 'Lawrence of Arabia' helped to undermine Turkey and more recently helped to push France out of the Levant. Hence the actual evacuation of Egypt is not greatly out of line with trends in the Middle East but a continuation of British policy. Politically-minded Egyptians who are now acutely nationalist have been perturbed by the fact that British troops should still stay in Egypt, when such smaller states as Transjordan and Iraq, etc., have achieved complete political independence.

Of course this political independence is not economic independence. While Stalin's intrigues for the political conquest of Near Asia have led him so far as to at least tolerate—if not organise—the pogroms violent and silent, in Russian-controlled territory in order to dislocate the Palestine scene by mass Jewish immigration, the biggest competitor for economic domination remains America, and American influence is to be seen everywhere, from the smart central boulevards of Cairo and Alexandria full of the latest streamlined American cars, to the most remote village of mainly mud walls and straw roofs, where somebody will be selling Coca-Cola. It may be incidentally remarked that this soft drink—a favourite with American 'bobbysoxers'—is now, according to a leading Arabic paper,

'known to every Egyptian, whereas no Egyptians know of our case to U.N.O.' and asks ironically 'why doesn't the Government hand over our case to the Coca-Cola Company? Actually, any American capitalist concern would do!

ROYALTY & ROYALTIES

In Saudi Arabia, King Ibn Saudi and his heirs—with the harem he keeps there is no lack of them—will receive something like five thousand million dollars in royalties from American oil companies, according to Senator Owen Brewster, Chairman of the American Senate War Investigating Committee, basing his disclosure on testimony and documents before the Committee.

These show there were twenty thousand million barrels of oil in Saudi Arabian fields, and the King would receive about 23 cents a barrel under contracts with American companies that run until 1999.

Watch Saudi Arabia. There will be trouble there before 1999. American colonisation is going over in a big way. Already the King is relaxing the feudal restrictions—as regards women, for instance—that stand in the way of capitalism. But capitalism contains the seeds of its own decay in that it will introduce new ideas as regards the right of the King to own everything and to wax rich at the expense of the poverty-stricken fellaheen. There have been many indications of discontent, and there are many Powers who will be interested in fanning it if one Power becomes too economically strong there.

A. M.

Lynch Law in S. Carolina

CONSIDERABLE feeling has been stirred up in certain parts of America following the acquittal of 31 men who were arrested in South Carolina in connection with the lynching of a 24-year old negro, Willie Earle, who had been arrested on suspicion of being responsible for the stabbing and robbing of a white taxi driver. He was awaiting trial when a party of men, several members of which were taxi drivers, broke into the gaol, kidnapped Earle and took him outside the town where he was mutilated and shot to death.

The New York correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian" makes the very important point, which has been the unanimous agreement of "careful students of American racial relations" that "contrary to the popular myth, the disputes which end in lynchings rarely involve the sex problem but are interracial disputes over some pitifully small amount of money. The Negroes are exploited economically throughout the United States. They almost invariably get less money for equal work than the whites, are the first to be dismissed, and the last to be rehired."

U.S. Government Intervention

A few days after the acquittal, another negro awaiting trial on an assault charge, in which a white woman was involved, was kidnapped by five armed men. By a stroke of good fortune, this intended victim of the "unwritten law" (as lynching is referred to in America) managed to escape from the clutches of the mob and hid in woods for 48 hours without food until he gave himself up to G-men who guaranteed that he "would not be harmed", and locked him up in a State prison.

On the same day, two other negroes in Carolina were rushed away from possible lynchings. One, Willie Porrer (20), charged with rape, was driven away after a throng of white people had gathered outside the gaol.

The U.S. Government is promising to take action against these lynching parties, but according to Stanley Burch, "News Chronicle" correspondent in New York: "Champions of negroes' rights put small faith in this endeavour, however. Conviction for violation of civil rights carries a maximum sentence of only one year's imprison-

ment and/or £250 fine. Main hopes are concentrated to make lynching a Federal criminal offence."

We need hardly say that as anarchists we do not seek a solution of the problem of lynching by increasing the penalties. So long as the idea that the white is 'superior' to the black man is encouraged there will be no solution. And the fact that there is in America an ever-growing body of opinion opposing this 'superiority' idea is the only sign that some day the barbarous "unwritten law" will become a thing of the past.

In support of our contention we need only quote two facts. The first is from the "News Chronicle" correspondent who says that: "No white man has been convicted for the killing of a negro in the South for 99 years."

The second is from the "Manchester Guardian" correspondent who points out that:

"A generation ago there were several hundred lynchings each year. The number has been going down steadily recently and only a few lynchings have been officially recorded each year in the recent past."

How can this decrease be accounted for other than by the fact that there is a growing recognition of the equality of the coloured man?

ELECTIONS IN THE FRENCH ZONE

Germans in the French zone of Germany have recently gone to the polls to elect their members to the three State Parliaments. *Combat* (20th May) refers without offering any explanation, to the interesting fact that 40% of the electorate did not vote.

The Social Christians polled nearly a million votes and gained 115 seats in the three Parliaments, the Social Democrats were second with 572,000 votes and 59 seats, the Liberals 240,000 votes and 31 seats, and the Communists 25 seats with a poll of 159,000 votes. And the 40% who didn't vote?

WAR DIPLOMACY

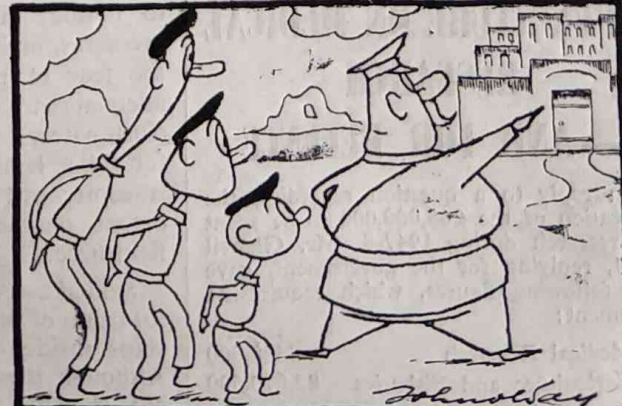
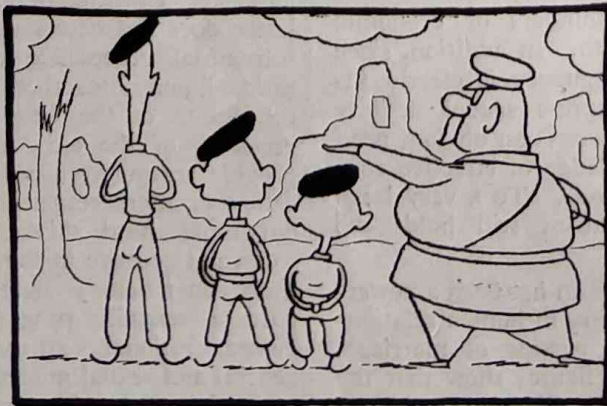
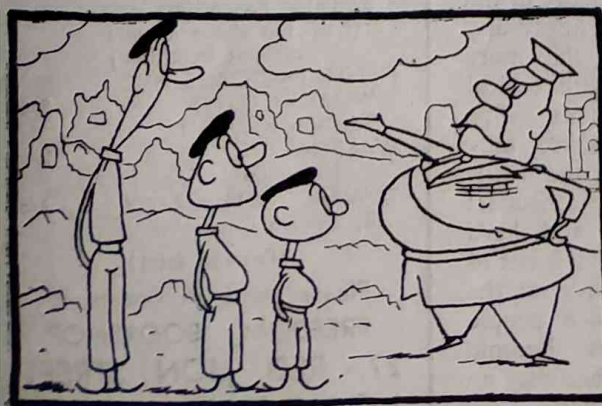
In a book entitled "d'Hendaye à Gibraltar", which has just been published in France, the author, M. Serrano Suner (who is Franco's brother-in-law), makes some curious revelations regarding war diplomacy. According to M. Suner, when Hitler appeared to be interested in Gibraltar, three important Englishmen promised to bring pressure to bear on France to cede a North African possession to Spain if that country prevented Hitler from reaching Gibraltar. According to M. Suner, one of these three Englishmen was Lord Templewood (formerly Sir Samuel Hoare) who was British Ambassador in Madrid during the war years.

So much dirty linen is washed in left-wing movements, that it is interesting when the high-ups in disgrace 'spill the beans' for a change.

THE THREE MUSKETEERS—8.

IN GERMANY—SIGHT SEEING

By JOHN OLDAY



Though we had to destroy a lot . . . We took care not to damage buildings of cultural value, such as . . . prisons

THE COMMON PEOPLE, 1746-1946,
by G. D. H. Cole and Raymond
Postgate (revised edition). Methuen,
10/-.

There have been few books giving so compendious a survey of the physical conditions of the British working man, and of his struggles to free himself from poverty and oppression, as Cole and Postgate's *The Common People*. As a handy reference book for the student of English social history it is still the best of its kind; there are omissions, as is inevitable, but the book is written in a concise style which has enabled its authors to bring into the space at their disposal far more information than is usually contained in books of a comparable length.

The variety of information is enormous—both practical facts regarding wages rates and standards of living in many industries over two centuries, and brief but illuminating notes on practically all the working class movements of the period. For instance, there is a fairly just short summary of the ideas of Godwin, and an interesting note on syndicalist influence in England.

Generally speaking, considering the partisan opinions of the authors, the 1938 edition was written with balance and a relative lack of prejudice. Robert Owen, for instance, who has too often been the target for the wit of authoritarian socialists, is treated adequately and sympathetically.

It is therefore gratifying to see this useful book re-issued at a price which is still reasonable in view of rising publishing costs—10/- for nearly 700 closely printed pages. The only unfortunate thing about this reprint is the Epilogue, which deals with the 1939-45 war, and which departs from the spirit of the rest of the book by merely giving a sketch of events—backed by no objective information—from an official Labour Party viewpoint. Anti-war movements are misrepresented, conscription and wartime restrictions are justified and the book ends with a song of praise hailing the Labour Government as the dawn of a new era for the workers.

It is unfortunate so good a book should be spoilt by this irrelevant and misleading addition, but if you can ignore the last chapter, the book as a whole remains a very useful source book for social study which is well worth any ten shillings you have to spare.

G. W.

Book Reviews

Kropotkin and Rucker

Centennial Expressions on Peter Kropotkin 1842—1942. pp. 44.
Testimonial to Rudolph Rucker 1873—1943. pp. 48. Each 1/-*

THESE two pamphlets each consist of short appreciations by widely differing people of Kropotkin and Rucker, and will be of interest to those who seek anecdotal biographical material about them. Such material is particularly welcome in Kropotkin's case, for it is all too difficult to come by. Kropotkin's own *Memoirs of a Revolutionist* published before the end of the nineteenth century, gave an account of his life up to about 1885. But Kropotkin's extraordinary modesty and reticence made him speak much more about the times and events that he lived through than about himself. A full biography is very much overdue, and the publication of Kropotkin's letters would be a very great service to social history and to literature in general. It should be undertaken before those who knew him also die lest the letters which so many of them have preserved get dispersed.

This small pamphlet provides some sidelights on Kropotkin's life and character which are very welcome. But it is marred by a number of contributions which jar by their patronizing note. Too many are evidently anxious to justify their own support of the 1914 war by acclaiming Kropotkin's own pro-war position. It must be admitted also that many of the contributors appear merely opinionated.

But these are compensated by the few really illuminating contributions, Rudolf Rucker's account of Kropotkin's interest in the Jewish labour movement in England, for example. And the pamphlet is worth possessing simply for the charming anecdote told by the great Danish literary critic, Georg Brandes.

The *Testimonial to Rudolph Rucker* on his 70th birthday also partakes of the eulogistic note which is rather too monotonous in these panegyric collections. Nevertheless, there is biographical matter of some interest to be drawn from some contributions. Much of the space is taken up with discussion and opinions on Rucker's important book *Nationalism and Culture*, first published in 1937. This was analytically reviewed in *Spain and the World* at the time, and a review by Herbert Read in the *Criterion* is included in this collection. The *Freedom Press* hope to issue *Nationalism and Culture* over in this country soon, and many of the opinions collected here will be of interest on that account.

J. H.

(*These pamphlets may be obtained from *Freedom Bookshop*, 27, Red Lion Street, London, W.C.1.)

of a widespread improvement in the conception of human relations between the sexes. The ideas of "free love" which have for many years been associated with anarchism involve a much higher conception of sexual association than current marital morality. Unfortunately, decay of the latter does not necessarily imply any substantial acceptance of the more rational and altogether more ethical conception of the free union. The break-up of the old "morality" may provide an opportunity for the inculcation of more responsible attitudes; but much hard thinking and hard work and courage in the living out of their convictions is necessary on the part of sexually progressive people before rational attitudes become general and sexual misery becomes no more than an unclean memory.

J. H.

A Forerunner-

Orthodox historical analysis usually tries to explain away the English Civil War as the crisis of the struggle between parliamentarianism and monarchy, between the new commercial middle class and the King, in which the working class felt itself little concerned, and played no creative part. Moreover, in the popular mind, this civil war is often associated with all the infinitely futile and half-forgotten campaigns and palace revolutions. It is the aim of this brief article to show that the working class did play a part, and an important one, in the formative years of the Civil War and its outcome, the so-called Puritan Revolution, and that "history" in this case reads like something we know uncommonly well—the report in yesterday's newspaper?

Gerrard Winstanley

Although the Parliamentary party, which forced on the war, and executed the King, and of which Cromwell was the accredited representative and instrument, consisted mainly of landowners and capitalists, it would be a gross oversimplification to look upon its members as all animated by the same idea: that of grabbing as much as they could of the royal power and possessions, and using them for the greater glory of the bourgeoisie. The total effect of the Civil War was certainly to bring about the dominance of the commercial classes, yet the aims of some of the groups nominally aligned with the Cromwellian party were far different. The most radical of these groups, the Levellers, was to be found in the Army, and it became so powerful, and so insistent on its demands (driven home by active propaganda and, finally, mutinies), for manhood suffrage, for an adequate medical service—all this plumb in the middle of the absolutist 17th century!—that Cromwell, in the end, was compelled to crush it in a civil war within a civil war, mention of which you may look for in vain in the school-books.

Typical of the Levellers was William Alwyn, no writer, but a man who spoke his mind in words like these: "To the objection that community of property would upset all and every government, he answered, 'There would then be less need of government, for then there would be no thieves, no covetous persons, no deceiving of one another.'" This might well be compared with Kropotkin's "Two-thirds of all breaches of the law being so-called 'crimes against property', these

cases will disappear, or be limited to a quite trifling amount, when property which is now the privilege of the few shall return to its real source, the community." The civilian offshoot of the Levellers, the Diggers, had for leader Gerrard Winstanley.

Winstanley, born in 1609, had served his apprenticeship as a tailor, and had worked, so far as we can tell, peaceably enough at his trade until "beaten out of it by the badness of the times", when he became a pamphleteer, and one of the very few genuine working class writers of our literature. It is not clear what turned him to writing, but the spontaneity of his fresh sappy prose seems to suggest that it came to him as the natural expression of his sense of the common man's wrongs, and of the opportunity which the breaking of the royal power held out of righting them. He saw clearly the issues of the time, and wrote: "That which is waiting on your part to be done is this:

To see the oppressor's power to be cast out with his person, and to see that the free possession of the land and liberties be put into the hands of the oppressed commoners of England."

Nor was he merely content to pen exhortations, even though they were exhortations as splendid as this one: "Come, those that are free within, turn your swords into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks, and take plough and spade, and break up the common land, build your houses, sow corn, and take possession of your own land." In the spring of 1649, the spring following the execution of Charles I, when, as Winstanley himself wrote: "The old world is running up like parchment in the fire", and everything seemed possible, he attempted nothing less than the transformation of the Puritan bourgeois "revolution" into a real revolution, based on anarchist principles, and powered by the energies of the working class. In that April, he organised the digging-up and planting of waste land near St. George's Hill, Cobham, which lies on the road between Esher and Guildford, in Surrey. He hoped, by the success of this colony, to inspire workers, and later the landlords themselves, all over England, to follow his example, and form free, and freely associating, agricultural communities. The Digger doctrine was spread abroad by Winstanley's own pamphlets, and by agents, despatched to proselytise, and raise money for the parent movement, and in

this way active groups were formed in Northamptonshire, Buckingham, Kent and Gloucestershire. While all this was happening, the authorities stood aloof, apparently confident that they could leave the whole affair to the "good sense" and "soundness" of the Surrey landowners, who immediately launched against the Diggers a campaign of abuse, misrepresentation, and finally persecution. The laws of trespass were invoked, boycott was applied, cattle were seized, seeds dug up, and after nearly a year of struggling life, in Easter 1650, the new social organism was suffocated by the inevitable upsurge of stupidity and malevolence.

It was almost time for Gerrard Winstanley to pass out of history. In 1651, he published his last pamphlet, "The Law of Freedom", an appeal to Cromwell to lead the people beyond the state which the bourgeoisie had created in its own image, into the true Commonwealth of free men, which Winstanley's

every pamphlet shadows forth, and towards which he strained with all his force. Thereafter, we know nothing of him, except that he wrote no more and, with perhaps the fight gone out of him, went back to his trading. We do not even know when or where he died.

A failure? In one way, yes. He had no endurance: having registered his protest, he passed on. Yet he was a voice, and one which we might recognise if it came from our midst to-day. Which one among us, for instance, having given and suffered much in the late war, and now brought face to face with the full horror of State brutality and betrayal would not echo these words, which Winstanley used of his war, and his State-machine: "For is this not a common speech among the people: We have parted with our estates, we have lost our friends in the wars, which we willingly gave up because freedom was promised us, and now in the end we have new taskmasters, and our old burden increased?"

Yes, there is still much in these hastily knocked-together pamphlets and manifestoes that comes home as poignantly to us now as it did to those of Gerrard Winstanley's comrades who sweated beside him in the April weather, on a Surrey hillside, nearly three hundred years ago.

(See "Selections from the Works of Gerrard Winstanley", ed. Hamilton—Cresset Press, 1944.)

Decay of Sexual "Morality"

The recently published *Statistical Review for the years 1938 and 1939*, issued by the Registrar General (H.M. Stationery Office, 1947, pp. 237, 4/6) contains some interesting information on the changing sexual conventions, particularly regarding sexual relations outside marriage.

It appears that in 1938 and 1939, one in every seven children born was conceived outside marriage, while nearly 30 per cent. of mothers conceive their first-born out of wedlock. Presumably, in the large majority of such cases marriage with the father follows on such a pregnancy; if so, a very high proportion of marriages take place "because they had to" as the popular saying has it. A somewhat casual impetus to what is often a life-long association held together by economic considerations rather than mutual attachment.

Of married women under 20 years old, between 40 and 50 per cent. were pregnant before marriage. These figures indicate a number of things. Whatever the official morality of convention, it is evident that sexual re-

lations must be very widespread before the age of 20. And this was before the war, so that presumably they have been even more widespread during the war, since wartime is well-known to relax sexual restraints.

Secondly, although contraceptive methods are theoretically available, they cannot be very effectively used (for it seems unlikely that any high proportions of these pregnancies was deliberate).

Thirdly, it has to be remembered that these figures refer to extra-marital births; the abortion rate is not accurately known because of the legal issues involved, but if those authorities are correct who estimate it at about the same level as the live birth rate, then the Registrar-General's figures must represent a considerable understatement of the disregard of sexual conventions.

Clearly it is no cause for lament that the obscurantism which shrouds sexual activity is being broken through. But that young girls should feel bound to marry the fathers of what must be regarded as casual pregnancies is a most regrettable reflexion on either conventional attitudes to unmarried mothers or economic pressures, or both. In addition, since the fear of pregnancy is clearly inadequate to repress sexual activity (fortunately, there is an obvious need for fuller knowledge of effective contraceptive methods. To a very large extent obscurantism still holds the field here.

Sexual asceticism has been a powerful cause of misery in human relationships inside or outside of marriage. Although these figures show that the old chastity "ideal" has very little force to-day, yet there is no indication

EXPENDITURE ON MEDICAL RESEARCH — AND FOR DEFENCE

In reply to a question regarding the allocation of the £68,000,000 to be spent on research during 1947-8, Mr. Glenvil Hall, replying for the government, gave the following figures, which require no comment:

Medical Research	£698,000
Agriculture and Fisheries	£2,070,000
Industrial Research	£14,780,000
Defence Research	£49,731,000

Freedom Press

George Woodcock:	
ANARCHY OR CHAOS 2/6, Cloth	4/6
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The Right to be a Tramp

(Continued from page 2)

every night outlying public assistance institutions will telephone the number of tramps who have "dropped in". Then the lorries will go out and transport them and their baggage to institutions where there are separate wards.

"On arrival the men will be bathed and searched. On the day following admission, they will have to do eight hours' work, and part of any money found on them will be taken towards maintenance. A tramp who visits an institution as often as six times in a month will be required to give eight days' notice when he wishes to leave."

And at a new hostel, to have hot and cold showers, dining and day rooms, and private cubicles "we shall try," says Mr. Sykes, "to win tramps back to normal life. Simple trades will be taught to make the men fit to go back to the working world."

This attitude is bad enough, but the knife is really twisted when one learns that officialdom has already got its fifth column at work among the tramps. Fred G. Husband, discharged unfit from the Army in 1940, and on the tramp ever since, now calls himself the "Minister for Tramps" and has a plan for rehabilitating Britain's vagrants, which he calls the "Tramps' Charter."

Already under consideration by the Ministry of Health, this plan would replace institutions by hostels and centres where—and here's the nerve of the thing—psychiatric treatment would be available. Fred, you see, is one of those do-gooders who wants to see these poor fellows doing something useful for their country. "I try to intercept the young casual not let him in vagrant life," he says, "and persuade him to leave the road and go into a training hostel. The elder men I encourage to live permanently in an institution."

This "Minister for Tramps" (he gives himself Cabinet rank, you notice) carries

around with him a suitcase containing his "office files"—consisting of letters exchanged with the authorities, official memoranda, and a complete record of all institutions in the country used by tramps. And his attitude is precisely the same as that of the authorities—that tramps are queer, deranged people who must be rehabilitated so that they are shepherded back into the fold of wage-slaving sheep working hard for the boss's profits and the greater glory of the efficient State.

The impudence of this attitude is pretty staggering, but only too widespread. Any individual who refuses to accept the principles (or lack of them) of governmental society, be he half-wit or genius, anarchist, atheist or tramp, is just as liable to be regarded as a "case". The revolutionary attitude is one of scorn for all unthinking conformity, for all blind acceptance of pre-conceived ideas, and of assertion of the rights of the individual to freedom of thought which is useless unless followed by freedom of action.

P.S.—Since the above was written, news comes of a report to be sent to local authorities by the London County Council which will reveal that "anarchy" has troubled in the past year. It will also reveal a tragic aftermath of the war.

Many of the post-war tramps are ex-service men, who are finding themselves mentally and physically unfit for what are called the "normal" occupations. These people are perhaps in a different category from those who go on the road from free choice. Neurotic and restless, they are finding it impossible to adjust themselves to civilian life after years in the stultifying atmosphere of military existence, where months of routine inactivity in barracks alternated with periods of too much activity in action.

These men are just as much casualties of war as those physically maimed, and without in any way accepting the authorities' conception of "normal occupations", they seem to us to present problems inseparable from war and competitive society.

Letters to the Editors

We are still receiving letters from readers on the question of making "FREEDOM" self-supporting. The selection published below refer to the letter from A.B. ("Freedom", May 3rd) in which the viewpoint put forward was that one could not "assess" the value of "Freedom", as some correspondents had done, in terms of money, and that the real solution was to retain the price of the paper and readers for their part should help to increase the circulation and send contributions to the Press Fund. We welcome further contributions to this discussion.—Editors.

Dear Comrades,
I very much agree with what A.B. writes concerning the paper's merits and price, and feel that any increase in the price would not be justified unless the present circulation drive failed. My view therefore is that we should wait until the end of 1947 at least and then consider "Freedom's" financial status in the light of what the circulation is then.

I disagree with the correspondent who described the Press Fund as "degrading", and he is, I believe striking a blow without knowing it, against what is perhaps the only way by which "Freedom" can get the necessary money in addition to subscriptions. All readers should strive in the coming months to introduce the paper to more people, especially to youth.

If this could be done, "Freedom" would very soon be on a sound financial footing and then perhaps real plans could go forward for it to be turned into a weekly.

Comrades, it is vital in this age of industrial slavery and totalitarianism that these things should be done, but they cannot be done without our co-operation, and the best way we can do it is by sending regular contributions to the Press Fund.

Yours fraternally,
J.S.

Sidmouth, Devon.
(Degrading or not, without the Press Fund, "Freedom" could not come out in its present format!—Eds.)

Dear Comrades,
Regarding the price of "Freedom", surely the obvious thing is for those of us who feel that it's worth more to us to pay more.

By purchasing 3 copies and lending the spare one we can remove the financial worries of the Editorial group and at the same time introduce the paper to new readers. Groups of supporters could also help by having

regular collections at least for the next year or two.

Expect to be doing more work now, and may resume selling papers over in Southampton during the fine weather.

Sincerely yours,
L.S.

Soton.
(To simplify our office work, we ask those readers who wish to pay more for their "Freedom's" to do so in the form of a contribution to the Press Fund when they renew their subscriptions.—Eds.)

Dear Comrades,

May I add a word or two to the many you have received on the question of increasing the price of "Freedom"? There is much to be said for A.B.'s point of view. I am against an increase in price, one reason being that it will cause more reminders being sent out when subscription time comes. Surely something can be done. We must find a way to both increase the circulation and make "Freedom" a weekly.

My humble mind can't find a way but when I think of you who have done so well in the past, I have great hopes for the future of our paper. Anyway, here's 2/6 to be going on with.

Yours fraternally,
F.O.

Crews.
(Apart from the Editorial blurb—may we suggest that though one reader on his own account cannot solve the problem, 1,000 readers obtaining two new readers, each among their friends and workmates, can!—Eds.)

Dear Comrades,
As a sympathiser of the Anarchist Group, I would like to add my thanks for the numerous copies of "Freedom" which I have

received from you during the past twelve months. "Freedom" has made interesting reading and has had wide circulation amongst my pals. I am enclosing, etc. . . .
Yours fraternally,
A.C. (R.A.S.C.)

C.M.F.

SYNDICALIST ORGANIZATION

DEAR COMRADES,
In order to build the nucleus of a syndicalist organization, I suggest the Anarchist movement should be forming groups of workers at the point of production; and these groups of the various industries in which we are represented, federated in a propaganda league or committee. I am not in favour of the building of "paper" unions—industrial unions in theory but not in practice—but I believe the actual existence of a nucleus in the shape of such a union of syndicalist propaganda groups would give more point to our agitation at the point of production.

The first step would be the formation of the committee—the second the forming of the groups of anarchists in industry which, however small, could (while not claiming to be actual syndicates) act as propaganda centres and the nucleus of what may actually become syndicates.

What do other comrades think?

"INDUSTRIAL UNIONIST"

COMPULSORY INSURANCE SWINDLE

DEAR COMRADES,
I should like to see Freedom devote some space to exposing the swindle of the new National Insurance Bill. I have recently been drawing 10/6 per week National Health Insurance, and this in spite of the fact that workers' contributions have recently been doubled. To double workers' contributions and yet to allow them no more when they are sick is not social security but social robbery of a barefaced and vicious nature. If the insurance companies made a substantial profit out of the National Health Insurance before contributions were doubled, goodness knows what profits are being made now, for they are not paying out any more in benefits. It is obvious that with this government, as with the Tories, the producer is to come last, as usual.

F.J.P.
Derby.

DIVIDED LOYALTIES—I

The U.S. is to rid its army of Communists. Enlisted men found to have "divided loyalty" will be discharged by authority of the Secretary of War "for convenience of the Government".

Sunday Dispatch, 11/5/47.

What are these militant Reds doing in a capitalist state's army, anyway?

DIVIDED LOYALTIES—II

A good part of the French Foreign Legion fighting against the Vietnamese in Indo-China is made up of former members of the Nazis' Afrika Korps. Last week at Hai duong, the French executed two of their German soldiers for desertion. Before death struck, each proclaimed his final faith in a defiant shout. "Vive la France!" cried one. "Heil Hitler!" cried the other.

Time, 5/5/47.

ADVENTURERS, PLEASE NOTE

The thrusting, undirected, adventurous world of free enterprise, in which the individual trusts his own ability, takes risks with his eyes open, and pays dearly for his errors—that is the way to recovery, the only way. Everything else is illusion.

The task of bringing Britain through to recovery should be placed, as soon as possible, where it properly belongs—with the business man.

Daily Express, 12/5/47.

Between 1939 and 1945, about 20,000,000 people also paid dearly for the business man's errors—or were they errors?

QUESTION AND ANSWER

When a band was playing in Hyde Park, London, yesterday, a well-dressed woman mounted the bandstand and tried to make a speech. The band played on. The bandmaster said: "The woman called through the microphone, 'Does anyone want to know the truth?' and a number of the audience answered 'No'."

Daily Mirror, 12/5/47.

We are confronted with the same indifference to truth ourselves—often.

THE LAW

When a woman at Willesden court to-day said her husband had threatened to leave England if she summoned him, the magistrate, Mr. P. Bond, said:

"We don't like people who make threats. Your husband is only a fly to us. We will put our steamroller on him and flatten him out."

Evening Standard, 6/5/47.

A fairly frank admission that the law is based on force, not on justice . . .

BUREAUCRATS BY THE MILLION

The size of the combined national and local government services has increased by about 50 per cent., compared with 1939. Local government now employs 1,028,000 as compared with 846,000 pre-war. The rise in the number employed in national government is much larger—1,016,000 compared with 539,000 in 1939.

Observer, 27/4/47.

SIMPLE

It was the thing the world had been waiting for. If it worked, it would be more potent than atomic fission. And it was free. Modestly and formally, Dr. William Brown, of London, disclosed in The Lancet the magic formula for 1947's cluttering world. The way to get rid of your worries, he wrote, is to hold your breath after breathing out.

News Review, 1/5/47.

PROPERTY

Two-thirds of the village of Sutton-on-Derwent (population 300), eight miles from York, offered for sale by public auction at York, were sold for £66,630.

Put up as one lot, the village was withdrawn at £86,000. It was then offered in 65 lots, 40 of which were sold. The village was owned by Viscount St. Vincent, whose family's property it had been since the days of Nelson.

News Chronicle, 1/5/47.

thing was all right now, but when he asked to be taken back to the place from where they brought him the detectives told him in more forcible language than I can express here to 'get down them stairs'.

Evening Standard, 15/5/47.

ADMISSION OF DEFEAT

The Rev. F. C. Baker, chaplain to the Lord Mayor of London, said at St. Paul's Cathedral yesterday:

It has been said that England is now a pagan country. It is worse. Pagans do believe in a god of some kind. But secularists believe in no god—except, perhaps, the god of politics as the universal provider.

Daily Express, 12/5/47.

It would seem then, that half our battle against God and the State is already won.

VALUES

For stealing 1lb. of coal valued at 3d. from a Wigan "explosion coal dump," Andy Carr, 35, of Back Chapel-lane, Wigan, mother of three children, was fined 10s. at Wigan to-day.

Evening Standard.

AFTER THE WAR WAS OVER . . .

When four German civilians walked into a dance at Beaconsfield last night, Polish soldiers, who were most of the men present, walked out.

There was no dancing for a few minutes and then one of the Germans went to the middle of the floor, and in English, asked the girls if they wanted them to leave as they were quite willing to do.

He was received with shouts of "No", and the dance went on.

The Germans, who were good dancers, had plenty of partners. They came from Wiltam Park, Beaconsfield, a training centre.

Evening Standard, 15/5/47.

ARE CIVIL SERVANTS HUMAN?

A few minutes before the departure to-day of a train carrying 800 Civil Servants back to London from Llandudno, their war-time home, a procession headed by a banner "We demand to return to our homes" marched into the station.

Evening Standard, 3/5/47.

Tears come to our eyes as we realise for the first time that beneath black-coated exteriors beat hearts as affectionate and home-loving as anybody's.

TOMMIES NEVER FORGET

Court witness:—He came towards me with an unpleasant leer, saying: "Now let's see, weren't you a sergeant in Brussels?"

Evening Standard, 16/5/47.

Through the Press

PROGRESS

Civilisation—and bad teeth—are still on the march. Fifty years ago tooth decay was unknown in Greenland; but to-day Europeans have swept away Eskimos' dental backwardness. In European trading posts, 90 per cent. have decayed teeth, in isolated villages, only 20 per cent. The reason: diet changes from meat and fish to white men's carbohydrates.

The logical development still awaits. Greenland has not, to date, become a major importer of false teeth.

News Review, 1/5/47.

THOSE HUNS

German prisoners in a camp here to-day watched as men moved furniture from a nearby house into the road. They were perplexed when, last of all, a woman weeping and clutching a baby was carried out and set down beside her chattels.

They brought food from their rations and made tea for the woman and her children—she also had a boy of three. The woman was Mrs. W. H. Fox. She had just been evicted, so for 12 hours to-day, until Mr. Fox came back from the tobacco factory where he works, his wife and children sat by the road while the Germans tried to console them.

Then this evening, with a five-ton lorry, the prisoners moved the Fox's furniture to a stone-floored Nissen at the back of their camp. There are no lights and few windows.

The Germans hammered boards over the worst of the holes and found an oil lamp.

As I helped to push the baby Susan's pram across the fields to the hut to-night, Mrs. Fox told me, with tears in her eyes: "These Germans have been wonderful. All to-day they have fed us and looked after us. They are gentlemen."

Mr. Fox added quietly: "To-day I am almost ashamed of having fought against the Germans in the war."

The Germans do not know whether they have broken the law.

News Chronicle, 20/5/47.
Lord Vansittart—please note!

CINEMA AS AN ART

Hollywood is not only worried by the superiority of the British production, but is expressing its anxiety in a most convincing way—getting in on British film profits in the States as fast as it can.

News Chronicle, 13/5/47.

TIMBER FROM GERMANY

The first German ship to enter Ramsgate Harbour since before the war has arrived there with a cargo of Black Forest timber for Britain's housing programme.

The vessel, a three-masted schooner, was flying the red, white and blue sea flag of the international code instead of Germany's national flag.

N.Y. Herald Tribune, (European Ed.), 17/5/47.

Everybody knows that the German housing situation is such that they can afford to export timber.

YOUTH FOR ATHEISM!

"I found it easier to talk to London dockers than to go into certain youth clubs. It was rather disappointing to go into a youth club and be told: 'It's no use coming here. We don't believe in God anyway!'"—Canon F. Paton-Williams, Christian Commando.

News Review, 15/5/47.

HOORAY!

DESPERATE MAN
In January, 1946, he had considerable matrimonial troubles, and as a result of this he was driven to desperation and threw himself into his only hobby—that of collecting butterflies. He had amassed a collection of some 40,000.

Evening News, 21/5/47.

ALTERNATIVE TO MONEY

"Holiday credit notes" will be given at Great Yarmouth in exchange for new and second-hand crockery which holiday-makers send to the local Boarding House Association. They will be honoured at boarding houses or on bus tours.

Daily Graphic, 12/5/47.

WAR WITHOUT END

Sir Philip Joubert, chief of R.A.F. informal reunion of Coastal Command Public Relations, gave this warning to an officers in Holborn, London:

"Imagine a submarine driven by atomic energy. The U-boat is the one vessel which can use atomic energy without danger."

All the devices of science and fighting skill, he said, will be necessary to combat such a weapon.

He appealed to those who had been demobbed to emphasise among their friends the danger of the submarine in war.

And he added that those remaining in the Command were a nucleus which would always be prepared to fight the U-boat.

Sunday Dispatch, 11/5/47.

The refusal of the workers to make submarines is the best weapon against them.

COMEDY OF ERRORS

Mr. T. E. Naylor (Soc., Southwark), in the Commons this afternoon wanted to know why Mr. Hurst of Southwark was arrested in the early morning by two detectives, forced into a police car, taken to Bow Street, and then released without an apology.

Mr. G. H. Oliver (Home Office Parliamentary Under-Secretary) said that the man had refused to produce his identity card, but changed his mind while being taken to the police station, and was released from Bow Street after the constable had apologised for the inconvenience.

Mr. Naylor would not accept this explanation.

"You know," he said, "that this man was taken up after he had said he thought this was a free country (loud Opposition cheers), and a reply came from the detectives that this was not going to be a free country any more. (More cheers.)"

"Further, when they did investigate at Bow Street, the detectives came into the office after a few hours and said every-

SOCIOLOGY AND ANARCHISM

A Contribution to the discussion on Herbert Read's Lecture

While agreeing with many of the points raised by Mr. Read in his lecture as printed in *Freedom*, 17th May, 1947, I feel that he over-stresses the social-psychological effects, and neglects the sociological causes, of interference with freedom. Psychological disorder in the individual or the group is the result, not the cause, of social maladjustment. Until there be scientific and consistent examination and application of sociological principles, the psychologist is in the same position as the physicist or any other scientist: he is operating in a social environment which limits both his investigation of mental processes and his use of knowledge so gained.

The very name "anarchist" should presuppose a scientific comprehension of the origins and growth of the political entity with which social disease is intimately linked; but still more important it should imply a realisation that this entity, insofar as it constitutes a diminishing of freedom, springs from the non-observance of social laws which are a part of natural law. Economic society precedes and underlies political society: it is the basic society, and in itself would seem to contain no inherent tendency to generate forces destructive to the freedom on which it mainly depends. Extending division of labour, and consequent interdependence between individuals, anterior to the appearance of government, makes the conception of a progressive non-political society quite acceptable. The point at which government arises is the point at which an unrecognised factor in the

natural environment comes into play: here the normal tendency to mutuality meets a coincident tendency to dissociation, and it is unthinkable scientifically to regard the latter as spontaneously generated.

The Malthusian aristocrat had his scientific solution and his moral sop sweetly compounded; the totalitarian state has usurped both his place and his doctrine, though disguising both with "revolutionary" jargon; the anarchist must reject them but must have a rational social philosophy to account for the apparent paradox that association breeds dissociation. This is not the psychologist's territory. Interference with freedom causes psychological maladaptation, but whence arises the interference? Only the examination of social and economic law can give the answer—and the remedy—and such an examination must commence with the laws governing the relationship between man and the physical universe.

The Self-Perpetuating State

Anarchists recognise that artificial shortage is basically connected with social morality, and logically condemn political action which both causes and is sustained by such shortages; they agree that the state is instrumental in maintaining the *status quo* through the inertia common to social as to individual habit. The state first causes inequality, and then strengthens its power by apparent palliation of the ill-effects from what it causes. As Imperial Rome introduced reforms considered beneficial and necessary, the freedom of the citizen was disappearing; the Socialist and Fascist State is a development from, not a reaction to, the so-called Capitalist State, and in its concentration of political and economic control worsens the condition of the individual. But its political control can operate only through economic control of the natural resources its citizens must use to exist. Convicts were first exported to Australia to provide slave-labour; it was soon found impossible, undesirable, and unnecessary to subordinate them. Both governed and government were conditioned by the free nature of the territory. Kropotkin, who insisted that the state is a "territorial concentration", indicates the inability of the state to interfere with the immense stretches of central and eastern Asia and the consequent freedom of the peasant populations; all history teaches that the progressive society starts with communally-owned territory and the relationship is significant: power-less associations based on mutual aid are not so much experimental as aboriginal. The sociological bases of freedom are ultimate principles; if, as Kropotkin asserts, "society is anterior to man" then man's basic science should be that of society.

Social Relationships Are Basic

The conditions which govern man's approach to the universe in search of physical and mental satisfaction determine social and individual characteristics, and, rejecting all forms of Malthusianism, sciences and arts alike must be exercised on the passive natural factor. It is the social state, "the organisation of a social group in control of the rest" as Oppenheimer defines it, which actively assumes control of this factor and, through it, controls man. Break this link, whether the control be centralised or not, and there will be a free society. If the universe becomes free to men, the state must disappear; it could never arise given *illimitable*, equally desirable, natural resources—with which question Ricardo has dealt; it could avail no more than winds and tides against the destinies of liberated man.

This fundamental sociological fact is inescapable and of great consequence: it is here that the scientific and consistent anarchist must begin and remain until it is understood. Social revolution which is not based on sound sociological premises must fail. From the Gracchi to Bakunin, revolutionism has been superseded by its antithesis; it will continue to be the explosion of suppressed social elements followed by totalitarianism until the lovers of freedom rescue social science from the well into which modern "education" has cast it. Correct sociological principle is the absolute necessity for correct social action; action without it is worse than futile. Goethe says, and originally well-intentioned politicians illustrate the truth, alas, only too well,

"Nothing is so terrible as active ignorance."

C. S. CRAIG.

A MILITANT CREW

The crew of the London collier *Hartington* are on strike for the second time in two months. Last March they refused to sail with coal from the U.S.A. to Singapore because of the coal shortage in England.

From Seattle, Washington, now comes another report that they have declared a strike against their captain, saying that he has "exceeded his authority". They have not only refused to work, but have placed picket signs on board and refused to allow a tug to turn the vessel so that the opposite matches could be loaded.



L.P. Supports Conscription

(Continued from page 1)
relative ease with which the executive of the party manages to persuade the rank and file to drop one of the most fundamental principles on which the labour movement grew up shows that they will not have much difficulty in other directions either.

Indeed, the whole trend of the internal structure of the Labour Party is away from the older control by constituent bodies on some kind of a federal basis. This "democratic" control was never a very real thing, but it is now disappearing altogether. The system of affiliations has been given up—largely because such a system allowed full play to the penetration of Communist Party sections. But the struggle against Stalinist borers-from-within has greatly strengthened the hand of the

party leaders because it has meant increased centralization. The result is that the working class rank and file have less and less control over the direction of the party, which is becoming more of a "mass-party" every year.

There is no need to harbour any illusions that the present-day Labour Party has "betrayed" the principles of "socialism". The reformist labour movement in this country (and elsewhere) has followed the path of gradualist reform through parliamentary methods. This inevitably involved the conversion of the rank and file into yes-men. What we are seeing to-day is simply the culmination of the process, and it would be absurd to shed tears over a theoretical development which has been inevitable for fifty years.

What is important, however, is the fact that the party in which a very large fraction of workers believe, and which they regard as "their" party, has now become a highly flexible political machine capable of using the very faith of the workers as a means to put through anti-socialist measures which more openly reactionary political parties like the Tories would be unable to achieve.

And the control of the Executive over the party has largely been achieved by building up a structure of officials whose livelihood and petty standards of life depend on putting over the decisions from above on the rank and file. The labour movement to-day is one of the most completely bureaucratic structures in the country; and it has all the features of bureaucracy—corrupt and slavish obedience on the part of the officials to the leaders, and complete obliteration of responsibility on the part of the working class members of the party, the voters who provide the electoral power of the party, but receive no benefit themselves—in a word, the suckers. In short the Labour Party to-day illustrates two aspects of the general drift towards totalitarianism: increased centralization of power in the hands of the leaders, and decreased responsibility on the part of the membership.

PRESS FUND:

MAY 9th—24th

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WHERE ARE RUSSIA'S P.O.W.s ?

In the House of Commons on Wednesday, 21st May, Mr. R. R. Stokes (Lab.—Ipswich) asked the Foreign Secretary how many of the German prisoners of war—totalling approximately 2,000,000—would be repatriated from each of the Allied countries by December 31st, 1948, as arranged at Moscow, and what had happened to the balance of approximately 2,500,000, of whom no mention was made in the Moscow report.

Mr. C. P. Mayhew (Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs) replied that no figures were specified in those decisions, but the figures of prisoners held which were tabled at Moscow were: France 631,483; United States 15,003; Soviet Russia 890,532; and United Kingdom 435,295. He was not aware of any well-established set of figures with which to compare those

announced by the four Governments at the Moscow Conference.

Mr. Stokes asked what had happened to the other 2,500,000. Had they died of starvation or enlisted in the Soviet Army?

Mr. Mayhew: I am aware that there was some surprise at the lowness of the figure given by the Russian Government in view of their great victories in the war.

This unsatisfactory position equally applies to Italian P.O.W.s in Russian hands. The *Manchester Guardian's* Rome correspondent reported on May 9th, that the statement made by the Italian War Office that no more Italian prisoners of war could be expected to return from Russia and that for the purposes of pensions, &c., those who had not returned must now be considered missing, caused great distress in Italy.

Mussolini sent an expeditionary force of 100,000 men to Russia. According to *Il Tempo*, 20,000 of the men died during the retreat of 1943. The paper states: "Eighty thousand was the figure published in Russia as the number of Italian prisoners of war there. Nevertheless, officially we presently put the figure at 60,000."

In October, 1945, the Italian Ambassador in Moscow was informed by the Soviet authorities that the total number of Italians to be repatriated was about 19,000. Two months later the Soviet Ambassador in Rome told the Italian War Office that the figure was 21,193 and that 160 had died during detention. To May 1st only

12,514 Italians have returned from Russia to Italy and a list of the 160 who died has not been sent here. It now seems that there are no more to come.

Would it be straining "Anglo-Russian friendship" to ask quite bluntly what has happened to these missing millions? Are they working as slave labour? Have they died of starvation? Have they died as a result of epidemics? Or have they been exterminated *à la Nazi*?

"Anxiety" Diseases On The Increase

Registrar-General's *Statistical Review* contains other information not less interesting, if less publicized, than the decay of conventional sexual morality. Degenerative diseases of the heart many of which are associated with worry) rose dramatically in 1939 compared with the period 1921-30. The death rates from these causes in the age groups 45-50, 50-55, and 55-60 rose by 130, 157, and 137 per cent. respectively for men and rather less for women. Commenting on these figures, the *Lancet* (17/5/47) remarks: "It is perhaps significant that these excessive rates weigh most heavily upon men who were between 25 and 45 years of age during the war of 1914-18."

It seems likely that the increase in the incidence of certain diseases (for example, the above and stomach ulcers) during the past twenty-five years reflects the increasing uncertainty of life, and the consequent anxiety as a continual feature of contemporary living. For with wars and the threat of wars, unemployment and slumps, any degree of stability and mental content is impossible. Once again it is apparent that a tremendous burden of crippling ill-health has its roots in social rather than specifically pathological conditions.

TWO KILLED IN VIENNA

ACCORDING to Vienna's Socialist newspaper to-day, two men were killed on May 1, when Russian soldiers fired on an angry crowd that had beaten a Communist university professor after he had said, in a May Day address, that Austrians who had served in the German army were something like war criminals. The incident happened in a village in the Russian zone of Lower Austria, about thirty miles west of Vienna. The Socialists are using this incident to counteract Communist propaganda about the decision of the Socialist Minister of the Interior to call in Allied military police at recent Communist-inspired demonstrations in Vienna. It is significant that it took ten days for the news of the latest incident to travel the thirty miles to Vienna.

Meetings and Announcements

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

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

JUNE 1st Mat Kavanagh
The Futility of Modern Unions

JUNE 8th Colin Ward
Sidelights on 19th Cent. Anarchists

JUNE 15th Albert Meltzer
"Palestine"

Admission Free. Questions invited

N.E. LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

Next Meeting

at
Flat 3, 43, New Wanstead, E.11
(Nr. Green Man)

on
Tuesday, 3rd June at 7 p.m.

Discussion led by Margaret Nickson

on
The Relevance of Pacifism to
Anarchism

GLASGOW

Anarchist Group

Open Air
MEETINGS

at
MAXWELL STREET

(Argyll St.)

on
SUNDAYS at 7 p.m.

Speakers:

Eddie Shaw Frank Leech
Preston Clements

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