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Freedom

AN ANARCHIST FORTNIGHTLY

"Why not arm myself with vigilance and energy, instead of locking up every man whom my imagination may bid me fear, that I may spend my days in undisturbed inactivity."
 —William GODWIN.

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Twopence

"DIRECTION" = FASCISM

IT is becoming impossible to escape the conclusion that the government—not simply the Labour government, for the same compulsions would apply equally to any other administration—are in the grip of larger world-wide forces. Step by remorseless step, this country is being driven down a path which those who have observed the already established totalitarian States recognize only too well. Cripps Plan represents State capitalism and its development brings in its train features which have already been demonstrated in State capitalist regimes elsewhere; in Russia after 1917, Italy after 1922, and Germany after 1933. Government has always meant the political control of a population by a favoured class; as State capitalism has developed it has meant that the privileged class also takes into its hands the economic administration of the raw materials and the labour units as well. "Labour units" is a way of saying workers.

In the last issue of *Freedom*, the Cripps Plan was shown to represent the definite taking over of economic planning by the government—the privileged class. And it was pointed out that economic planning inevitably meant that the lives of workers would also be planned, not by themselves but by the government. When this has happened in other lands it has been called totalitarianism, dictatorship, fascism, or some other more or less opprobrious title. When it happens here it is veiled under such catch phrases as "the temporary necessities forced upon us by the Crisis", "a distasteful but patriotic duty", and so on.

Labour Direction

Obviously, such a trend towards totalitarianism is of desperate importance for workers, and it is therefore proposed to examine one aspect of it—the compulsory direction of labour—more closely. Having done so, more general reflexions may be permitted.

A planned economy directed towards realizing a particular production plan (in this case, an export drive) inevitably requires that the producers should also be subjected to State direction. Industries which produce exportable goods (what the State calls "essential" industries) must have a reliable pool of labour, and workers must be directed

to such industries and away from non-export ("inessential") industries. Hence compulsory direction of workers becomes a logical necessity.

The press has praised the "moderation" of Isaacs' plan for labour direction. But this is more apparent than real. At present the only people who can be directed are those who fall out of employment and hence have to apply to the labour exchange for a job. They will be "offered" a choice of jobs; a phrase which may well mean no more than a number of equally unpalatable alternatives. If a worker refuses he will be directed, and if he refuses to comply is liable to a fine of £100 or 3 months imprisonment.

An Alternative to Unemployment

The *Manchester Guardian* points out that "The 'essential' industries will not get much out of the Government's measures for controlling labour unless the Government can quickly create a large volume of unemployment." Obviously, if the export plans are successful there will be a drain from "inessential" to "essential" industries via direction from the labour exchanges.

For since the government controls raw materials and fuel it can gradually strangle the "inessential" industries which will therefore have to cut down staff and so create "redundant" workers—to use another contemporary euphemism. The government itself seeks to cover up the logical consequences of its planned economy but that does not alter the facts. To quote the *Manchester Guardian* once more: "The Government does not, of course, deny that in the long run its measures will lead to unemployment in the non-essential industries but it is not planning for it. It prefers creeping paralysis to the electric shock of drastic measures to cut down our luxuries."

This raises immediately the vexed question of incentives, which Labour Ministers describe as bunk, but which is a crucial issue to workers and their families. Under capitalism the incentive to labour is always fear. In the past it was fear of unemployment. Lacking massive unemployment at the present time, the government has created another kind of fear. Since loss of one's job means direction, workers will tend to cling to the jobs they have and not jeopardize them by "untimely" agitation for higher wages, better conditions, etc. Employers may well say to such rebels, "You watch your step, my lad, or you'll find yourself directed!" That direction is recognized as a threat is shown by Isaacs' remark that "anyone who wishes to escape direction can volunteer for the mines".

The Soft Soap

Needless to say the order is surrounded with all kinds of soft soap to gloss the consciences of the liberals. The Government will offer men a choice of jobs in their own employment—as far as possible. Men will not be sent far away from their homes—if it can be avoided, and so on and so on. The basic fact is that if State capitalism is to work then labour must be directed. If workers take it quietly then compulsion is not necessary. If they object then the government will be "forced" to adopt "stronger measures". The pattern is familiar enough.

The Essential Works Order made us familiar with another kind of soft soap—employers must submit to restrictions "as much as" the workers. A directed worker must not be sacked—except, of course, for "serious misconduct".

Even if it were intended to see that restrictions were fairly distributed through the social classes, the very nature of capitalism ensures that the workers pay. This is shown by the Ministry of Labour's exemption of professional and managerial employees from the Control of Engagement Order. The list of exempted classes includes mainly the higher paid and salaried workers; those subject to the Order include the lower paid sections—in fact, the mass of the workers.

In the Grip of a World Trend

Enough has been said to make it clear that the workers should fight Direction of Labour with all means in their power. But if one looks at the question from a wider historical viewpoint, as indicated in our opening comments, opposition becomes even more of a necessity.

At the Labour Party Conference in May at Margate, Arthur Denkin, the Transport and General Workers Union boss, declared "as far as direction of Labour is concerned, the TUC will reject it and will continue to reject any such interference with the liberty of the individual in industry". Now, direction of labour has become part of official TUC policy. No doubt this indicates the hypocrisy and hollowness of the Trade Union leaders; but they do not voluntarily seek to make obvious somersaults. That they do so is an indication that they are in the grip of forces which they cannot control. In discussing the measures available to the Minister of Labour to deal with people who "do not choose to work" the *Manchester Guardian* makes a very significant comment: "Short of the general industrial and military con-

Civil Servants to Choose Your Books

THE announcement by the Board of Trade that from September 12th the Open General Licence granted for the importation of all books (other than fiction in English and children's books) was revoked, had very little public attention directed to it—unlike Hollywood films and the banning of petrol for joy-riding. Yet, as the *Time Literary Supplement* (20/9/47) put it, the effect of the ban is "to place the British reading public behind an iron curtain quite as effective, in its chosen field, as any political embargo imposed by a totalitarian State. Already we could not enlarge our sympathies by travel. Now we cannot acquire knowledge of other minds by the only alternative means: that of looking into their books."

What this restriction means to the specialist, the scientist, the writer, the learned professions generally, is serious enough. But the loss to general humane amenity, so partially and painfully restored after six years of war-time isolation, is far more to be deplored. Unless we can follow the thought of other countries we are

bound in our turn to enter that provincial territory from which it is our expressed hope to see the totalitarian countries extricate themselves. We shall become, for so long as the restriction is in force, intellectual nationalists. Unfortunately, however, even if the period be a short one, this inevitable provincialism must leave lasting scars. Already there are warning signs. To take a single instance, the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra is at present receiving from the Musicians' Union a manner of welcome which would evoke strong protest were it extended to British musicians visiting Austria. And it is the logical consequence of this attitude not only to accept, but finally to acclaim, the substitution of the local for the universal, of Butterworth for Hugo Wolf and of Parry for Fauré.

In future books will only be imported on individual licences which will only be considered in the cases of firms who imported books before the war.

Importers will have to submit the titles of the books they wish to import, and it will be left to the Board of Trade to take the final decision as to whether a licence can or cannot be granted. In other words the decision as to what we may or may not read so far as foreign works are concerned will be decided for us by some gentlemen at the Board of Trade!

Heil, democracy!

GERMANY STARVES WHILE ECONOMISTS HAGGLE 900 Factories To Be Dismantled

AS we go to Press the British Government has still not published its list of German plant and factories scheduled to be dismantled in the British zone. It is believed that the delay has been caused by disagreement between the British economists associated with the Commission as to how many factories should go (the figure quoted is 900).

Three classes of factories and installations will be listed: those to be dismantled as disarmament measure, those to be dismantled for reparations, and those which are considered "surplus" but the eventual disposal of which has not been decided.

Presumably there is no difficulty in determining which factories must be dismantled "as a disarmament measure", but there is something sinister about the second case, of factories to be "dismantled for reparations" because it leaves the economists with powers to virtually liquidate Germany so far as world markets are concerned, as also of course does the third category of "surplus" factories.

If Germany is to keep herself, then clearly these are matters which must be decided by the Germans themselves and not by British economists whose whole outlook must be prejudiced by considerations which are detrimental to German recovery.

If Germany's economy is to be determined by the Big Four then the responsibility for conditions in that country fall on the Big Four, and ultimately on the people of this country. And are we prepared to stand by and watch millions of people starve in our name?

Behind the Slogans

Workers of the World Unite—New Version

INTERNATIONALISM is always one of the first victims of war. And it is understandable, since without the propaganda of hate and blame it would be almost impossible to fight wars. Since the end of the war a wave of nationalism has swept over Europe, and in these periods of economic crisis this nationalism can be used by politicians, for they naturally shift the blame for their own incompetence on to the wickedness of the defeated enemy.

Already ugly nationalist incidents have been reported from those countries concerned with frontier changes, Poland, Jugoslavia, Italy, etc., but the latest incident of blind nationalism of the meanest kind comes from France where hundreds of miners in the town of Boulogny are on strike to protest against the shipment of foodstuffs to the French zone of Germany. Many hundreds of them, according to a *News Chronicle* report, poured into Verdun on Monday last to reinforce the barricades and prevent 400 tons of sugar being moved to the French zone of Germany.

During the past two days the sugar has been loaded into 142 Army lorries by the troops who on Saturday seized the barges in which it came. They were expected to move during the night.

The people of Verdun have thrown up street barricades around the port area and have blocked all roads leading out of the town to prevent the lorries from leaving.

A meeting of 3,500 people was held at

the barricades and was addressed by the Communist Deputy, M. André Savard, who demanded of the Sub-Prefect of the Meuse that the sugar should be unloaded. M. Savard added:

"If necessary we shall lie down before the lorries to keep them from passing. If this sugar is American, America is giving proof of its desire to rebuild Germany before France."

"America has her eyes on France. The Verdun incident, already national, has now become international. Verdun shall remain the historic city in which 'They shall not pass'."

Such are the depths to which the Communists, whose slogan was once "Workers of the World Unite", have descended.

There may be subtle "tactical reasons" for the present Communist action (for instance, the municipal elections next month), but for Anarchists there can be no justification on any grounds for "tactics" when millions of lives are at stake. The present action of the French Communists is yet another proof that the "brotherhood of man" is an empty slogan to be bandied about when it can serve their political ends.

STOP PRESS

The 142 lorries have left for Germany, and we understand that M. Savard was not killed by the lorries running over his prostrate, protesting body.

WHAT IS THIS

BECAUSE they are opposed to all that fascist ideology stands for, Anarchists must raise their voices on the subject of "the fascist menace in Britain" and the measures to be taken to crush it, a subject which during the past few weeks has once more come to the fore in protest meetings, T.U.C. conferences and in the press.

But let us make ourselves quite clear. We are more concerned with the menace of those who seek legislation for the suppression of fascism in this country than at that allegedly fascist organization "The League of Ex-Service Men".

The circumstances which have led to a focussing of public attention on the League are briefly as follows: open air meetings have been held by that organization in Ridley Road, Dalston, which as a result of the publicity given mainly by the Communists has turned small meetings into monster demonstrations with an audience of sometimes more than 2,000 people. The police have been prominent at these meetings and a number of arrests made both of fascists and Communists (or sympathisers) who in many cases travelled several miles (as in the case of a young girl who was arrested and who lived in St. John's Wood) in an organised attempt to break up the meetings.

The outcome of these meetings at the time of writing is that Mr. J. Hamm, formerly a member of the Colonial Service (an interesting detail) and who served for three years in the Royal Tank Regiment and who describes himself as "director of policy" for the League was arrested by Det.-Inspector Whitehead of the Special Branch and charged under the Public Order Act with using insulting words at a public meeting whereby a breach of the peace was likely to be occasioned. The second development is that the Home Secretary is to shortly receive an "important deputation representing all sections of the Labour and trade union movement" (*News Chronicle*, 24/9/47). Presumably the proposals to be put to Mr. Ede will be along the lines of the resolution passed at last year's Annual General Meeting of the Stalinist controlled National Council of Civil Liberties (*Freedom*, 6/4/46) which called on the Government to introduce legislation immediately to make "the propagation of Fascist doctrines and of racial hatred illegal."

Fascists and Communists

Before dealing with the question of principle involved in any future legislation, it will be useful first to examine the policies and positions of the main

ANARCHISM —Interpretations

LAW never made men a whit more just; and, by means of their respect for it, even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice. A common and natural result of an undue respect for law is that you may see a file of soldiers, colonel, captain, corporal, privates, powder-monkeys, and all, marching in admirable order over the hill and dale to the wars, against their wills, aye, against their common sense and consciences, which makes it very steep marching indeed, and produces a palpitation of the heart. They have no doubt it is a damnable business in which they are concerned; they are all peaceably inclined. Now, what are they? Men at all? or small movable forts and magazines, at the service of some unscrupulous man in power?

The mass of men serve the State thus, not as men mainly, but as machines, with their bodies. They are the standing army, and the militia, gaolers, constables, posse comitatus, etc. In most cases there is no free exercise whatever of the judgment or of the moral sense; but they put themselves on a level with wood and earth and stones; and wooden men can perhaps be manufactured that will serve the purpose as well. Such command no more respect than men of straw or a lump of dirt. They have the same sort of worth only as horses and dogs. Yet such as these even are commonly esteemed good citizens.

OTHERS—as most legislators, politicians, lawyers, ministers, and office-holders—serve the State chiefly with their heads; and as they rarely make any moral distinctions, they are as likely to serve the devil, without intending it, as God.

How does it become a man to behave toward this American government to-day? I answer, that he cannot without disgrace, be associated with it. I cannot for an instant recognize that political organization as MY government which is the SLAVE'S government also.

—HENRY DAVID THOREAU.

contestants in this battle for the freedom of speech.

The League of Ex-Service Men is undoubtedly the successor to the disbanded British Union of Fascists. The B.U.F., it should be noted, was broken up by Government action in 1940, and they lost their black shirts some years earlier. Yet has that resulted in the destruction of Fascism? The League is at present an insignificant quantity. The Press has successfully given it the free publicity it required (as the same Press did during the war in attributing to the almost non-existent Trotskyists the numerous coal strikes in Yorkshire). That they may eventually become a large movement is another question. The fact is that at present their main activity is fascist propaganda. Their aim is Power. They do not believe in freedom for the individual, since they do not believe in the individual, and they only believe in freedom of speech and of the Press whilst they remain in opposition and in a minority. So far as can be ascertained they have not yet used violence as part of their propaganda.

The Communists have been at the back of this "anti-fascist" movement. They first gave the necessary publicity to the League, then organised the opposition to it and now pose as the champions of freedom of speech and of the Press, except for those whom they call "fascists". For the Communists "fascist" is a term with a very wide interpretation. A definition would be that it covers all those individuals and organisations whether on the Left or Right who dare to criticise the Stalinist regime. Mr. D. N. Pritt, K.C., whom we are sure will not be offended at being included in the Communist bag, stated in a radio debate on the subject of "Can We Outlaw Fascism" that not only should fascist organisations be declared illegal but that there should be "legislation against anti-Soviet propaganda", implying thereby that all anti-Soviet propaganda is fascist propaganda!

Communists in opposition do not believe in the Freedom of the Press and of speech as they have often demonstrated, except of course when their freedom is threatened. As to what would happen if they got power can be gauged by reference to the Russian Press with its single voice or to those European countries "enjoying" the fruits of Stalinism whether they like it or not.

It needs only average intelligence to understand then that both the Communists and Fascists have an equal contempt for Freedom of Speech and of the Press for others, but defend it heartily where they themselves are concerned. From this emerges our first point, that if we concede that those who do not believe in the freedom of others have no right to demand freedom for themselves, then not only are the fascists to be legislated against, but also the Communists. And had we discussed other organizations the list would be much

longer! The position then of Freedom only for those who believe in it is untenable because the only people competent to judge are those who believe in freedom for others! And they obviously would be opposed to any legislation hampering those with whom they are not in agreement. So to Mr. Gibbon of the *Daily Worker* who wrote:

"In Warsaw, Polish Socialists, glancing at the ruins of their city would say 'We admire your traditions of free speech, but for a Labour Government to make freedom of speech synonymous with license for Fascists is something that passes our comprehension.'"

We would say: "Your friends do not understand what freedom implies."

Practical Aspect of Legislation

But if now we turn to the practical aspects of legislation against fascist

'FASCIST MENACE'

organizations the danger which it presents is so enormous that the good that is claimed for it becomes insignificant (and were it not for the fact that we believe the Communists feel that as a result of the powerful Russian backing they are no longer a minority force in this country and cannot be the victims of the boomerang effects of the kind of political legislation they propose for the fascists, their proposals, if accepted, could prove fatal to their very existence if and when this or another Government chose to use it against them as well).

This boomerang effect of political legislation is unwittingly but most successfully demonstrated by the champion of liberty, Mr. Pritt, in his article "The Police and the Fascists" (*New Statesman*, 23/8/47).

He refers in his article to Section 6 of the Public Order Act, 1936, which he describes as "an Act passed largely to deal with Fascists" and which introduced a new sub-section into Section 1 of the Public Meetings Act, 1908. The effect of the two Acts taken together is, shortly, to punish persons "acting in a disorderly manner at a lawful public meeting for the purpose of preventing the transaction of the business for which the meeting was called"; and to provide that, if any constable reasonably suspects any person of being guilty of such an offence, he may, if requested so to do by the chairman of the meeting, take the name and address of that person.

In Mr. Pritt's opinion "that is reasonable enough", but here's the rub: "the way in which the police are administering it is quite astounding, and extremely helpful to the Fascists."

In other words, Mr. Pritt is all in

favour of the Act so long as it appears to protect Communist meetings from Fascist disturbances, but he is very annoyed that at Ridley Street the Chairman at the fascists' meeting should ask for the Communist interrupter's name to be taken and handed to the Chairman. And Mr. Pritt, the lawyer, accuses Mr. Ede, the Home Secretary of supporting this undemocratic practice, adding "it is no sort of reply for Mr. Ede to say that this practice is uniform for all meetings, since it is in Fascist meetings, not ordinary meetings that the Chairman is likely to use this technique. The result of this practice is clearly to favour the Fascists in a very dangerous way. Yet Mr. Ede defends this practice. And this from the Home Secretary of a Labour Government which came into power largely because we had learnt political consciousness in a war against Fascism!"

And in his reply (September 6th) all that ex-schoolmaster Ede has to do is to point out to lawyer Pritt that that is the law! In fact, before the passing of the 1936 Act (which Pritt gratuitously informed us "was passed largely to deal with Fascists"! Mr. Ede points out that "there was no power to require any person, who at a lawful public meeting

think it was very important to the legislation to define fascism (quoted from radio debate already referred to). We wonder whether when he was the leading light in the anti-war People's Convention he would have been as magnanimous?

And these two gentlemen are members of Parliament. It is difficult to foresee what might happen to their powers of reasoning in a real crisis if this is the way they react to Mr. Hamm and his "ex-servicemen"!

The Anarchist Position

It is obvious to any reasoning individual that Anarchists deplore the fact that after the experience of the past twenty-five years there should still be individuals who pin their hopes in life on fascist teachings. For that matter we feel the same in regard to those people who will not or cannot learn the lessons of the Russian experiment which has proved as disastrous to humanity as the Fascist experiments.

We also deplore the growth of anti-Semitism in this country—a growth which it would be foolish and irresponsible to blame on to fascist propaganda. Indeed, to do so would be as

acts in a disorderly manner for the purpose of preventing the transaction of the business for which the meeting was called together, to give his name and address, and the result was that the Public Meeting Act, 1908, had become practically a dead letter. Section 6 of the Public Order Act, 1936, conferred powers on the police for the purpose."

Which brings us to our second point: that there is no guarantee that legislation originally framed for a specific purpose cannot at a later date when deemed convenient by those in power at the time, be used in a wider sense even against those whom it originally sought to protect.

Behind The Hysteria

The hysteria of certain individuals on the Left over the "fascist menace" in this country must be referred to in passing. Mr. George Jeger, a Labour M.P., in a letter to the *New Statesman* (13/9/47) declares: "To me the issue is simple—either the police have the authority to prevent Fascist propaganda or they have not. If they have, why do they not use it? If they have not, or if there is any doubt in the Home Secretary's mind, why does he not seek whatever powers he requires?"

"The opposition to such action would be negligible. Surely one does not have to argue about whether the war was fought to make Britain safe for Fascist activity."

"I would suggest that our Fascists, on conviction, be sentenced to deportation to Germany for a period, where they will see and live under the results of the regime they demand."

Mr. Pritt is quite prepared to "give the Home Secretary power to schedule fascist organizations"—and he didn't

fantastic as the Nazi propaganda in blaming the Jews for all Germany's misfortunes.

A law may succeed in banning fascist or anti-Semitic propaganda from street corner platforms, but it will not eradicate certain ideas from some people's minds. And it will only drive the propaganda underground, to carry on its work in a far more insidious manner.

We must beware lest this sudden "Anti-Fascist" awareness is not just a distracting tactic by the Trade Union bosses and their friends to hide the real fascism which is being introduced in the name of National Recovery in order to eventually control every action in our daily lives. That is the real fascist menace to-day, and not Mr. Hamm, of Dalston, for behind this menace is the full force of the State, represented by the alliance of the Union Bosses and the managerial and industrial ruling class.

V.R.

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On Being Monotonously Right

WE all hate the fellow who says "I told you so!" when we cop out through our own stupidity. He has warned us; we foolishly disregard his warning, run our heads against something unpleasant, and there he is saying "I told you so!" We hate him for it, and try and fix the blame for our misfortune on him.

That is why we anarchists have to be so very careful. Socialists and Tories alike are apt to get hot under the collar and denounce us as the mischief-makers if we refer to events in the recent past, and remind them of our warnings at the time.

It is a thankless task to be monotonously right. Looking through old copies of *War Commentary* and *Freedom*, I have been struck with the great accuracy of the commentaries on current affairs—in the light of subsequent events. I do not suggest that the contributors to this paper have been gifted with any special prophetic faculty; the point is that the anarchist viewpoint is notably clear in contrast to the astounding balderdash and wishful thinking which clutters up the minds of most political thinkers (and followers) to-day.

Anarchists naturally court unpopularity if they press this—the justification of the anarchist point of view by recent history—too strongly, when entering amical discussions in public about current affairs. If one outlines (too baldly) what has happened in the Labour Party in recent years, when talking to a Labour enthusiast, it is tantamount to calling him a bloody fool, and he may take it unkindly. The fact is that, at bottom, he knows that his support is based on irrational emotional grounds, which defy his own reasoning faculty, and if you scoff at his unhappy predicament he will feel like kicking you, and look round for

mud to throw at anarchism.

I do not suggest that one should scrupulously avoid treading on the ideological corns of one's fellows. I merely point out that hostility and anger are not uncommonly called up by referring to simple truths about current affairs which people prefer not to recognize. We are living in a new age of faith, the faith of political mysticism which is taking the place of religious faith, and the politically devout are not less irrational, bigoted and cruel in matters concerning their faith. Research scientists of the last century were not uncommonly devout Roman Catholics, although many of their findings made nonsense of their faith. It is not surprising, therefore, that many modern scientists can embrace political faiths as bigoted and irrational as Roman Catholicism with equal devoutness. It seems that the human mind can be so upset by emotional disturbances as to limit severely the range of the faculty of reason.

Disillusion Is Not Enough

How then should we approach the thorny problem of propaganda, of speaking the whole truth to those whom it will bitterly offend?

Eddie Shaw of Glasgow, one of the greatest anarchist propagandists of our time, intimates that disillusion is not enough in the creation of a real revolutionary will. From what I know of his work, however, I would say that his genius lies in discovering the real way in which to strip the duped of their illusions by encouraging the positive force of the ego within them.

The duped tend to cling to their illusions because they need them. Armed with illusions, with religious or political faith, they can overcome their feelings of

insufficiency and face the world boldly. They can become loud-mouthed bullies by inflating themselves with the myth of the Communist Party, or they can let themselves rip as full-blooded hooligans supported by the fascist creed, or they can achieve power and pelf by betraying their ex-workmates, robbing and dragooning them to the greater glory of Trade Unionism and The Socialist State. Indeed, the more cowardly elements of Glasgow have not the guts to bash one another up for the fun of it unless they can boost themselves up as Orangemen and Catholics.

To my mind Eddie Shaw is so successful because he manages to combine a withering attack on and mockery of the masses, with real encouragement to them to think well of themselves as individual men and women.

The whole tendency of modern life is to depress the individual from infancy upwards, particularly in the case of the working class who have not the consolations of money and leisure. It is impressed on the working lad that he, Willie Smith, is a pretty poor sort of creature in himself, only valuable as a unit of labour-power, a vote in the elections, a card-bearer in the Union, a number in the Army. Willie Smith will therefore need to bolster up his personality with some sort of faith, and he is anybody's stooge, unless he can be brought to appreciate his own real worth, to realize that he, Willie Smith, is the most important being in the Universe—to himself. A man who has a genuine appreciation of his own value as a human personality, does not need to cling to illusions. You can point to his mistakes in the past and he will not feel a need to defend them. He will not want to go on being had for a mug. He will have the strength to become an anarchist, and

revolt against the system which seeks to squeeze him.

The Revolutionary Value of Individualism.

Disillusion is not enough, therefore, because genuine disillusionment is not possible without the building up of a strong and self-reliant personality. What often passes for disillusionment is mere morose apathy, the type of depressed spirit which seems to have no positive beliefs or desires, but which tamely obeys the bluff of anyone with a show of authority.

Where does all this lead to? Long ago someone said "The emancipation of the working class must be the task of the workers themselves." This phrase has received lip-service from many brands of Socialists, but it is left to the Anarchists to preserve it from empty banality and give it life and meaning.

We can expose all the rackets of Capitalism, Church and State, and still the mugs will fall for them; we can cry truth in a world of myth and hypocrisy and year by year events will confirm our judgment, but that alone cannot shake the faith of the political lotus-eaters. Only by our success in helping to build up the positive self-respect of the individual and relating this to the mass, can our revolutionary propaganda be effective. This is essentially different from telling the workers that they are jolly fine fellows because they are members of the glorious proletariat (the old-time Marxist line); the worker knows damned well that there is no intrinsic merit in being one of the exploited and underprivileged—he is generally ashamed of the fact in his secret heart. No, the way to a successful conclusion of the class-struggle is for the workers to believe in themselves not because of their class or party label, but because they esteem themselves as individuals and can unite with the clarity of purpose and the will to assert their natural rights as men and women.

G.

POLLITT LOOKS AHEAD

Through Soviet Spectacles

ONCE more the oracle has spoken—and given us the mixture as before. Every few years Harry Pollitt gives Britain an interpretation of events and a policy which fulfils the dual purpose of furthering the interests of the Soviet foreign office and, where they don't obviously clash with these interests, giving voice to the popular aspirations and catchwords of the day.

SAME OLD TALK

In 1939, we had the ill-fated *How to Win the War*—which was followed by abject recantations when new orders arrived from the policy-makers; in 1914 he gave us *How to Win the Peace*, which is now followed by Pollitt's latest pronouncement *Looking Ahead*, of which it is reported that 75,000 copies have been printed.

This year's prescription has no startling ingredients. Pollitt's pills are composed of no new elements and his clarion call to the British people is merely an appeal for more and speedier nationalisation, an "all-out effort", higher wages, tighter price control, "drastic restrictions" on non-essential work, Joint Production Committees and a "great political campaign for increased production", a "strengthening of the Government" (i.e., the inclusion of Communist or quasi-Communist elements), and a foreign policy that "transfers us from the American orbit to that of Moscow and its satellites."

MY MASTERS RIGHT OR WRONG

With an unexpected flair for understatement, Harry confesses:

"The Communist Party is sometimes charged with paying too much attention to the Soviet Union", and goes on to tell us of his re-actions to the Russian revolution in a masterpiece of scientific socialism:

"All I was concerned about was that power was in the hands of lads like me, and whatever conception of politics had made that possible was the correct one for me. Don't you see, that still has to remain the conviction and guiding line in our attitude towards the Soviet Union and its people, for it is only the Soviet Union and its people who can say that the whole of the whole of the means of production, distribution and exchange are in their hands" [his italics].

He asks us not to drop dead with fright.

"when I also say that for me these same people could never do, nor ever can do any wrong against the working class" [p. 42].

Leaving aside the fact that most of the "lads and lasses" who seized power in the Russian Revolution have long since been "liquidated" or executed, what an idealistic and childlike confession of faith! Pollitt, far from being a stern and unsentimental Marxist is at heart like the singers of the Sunday School hymn who

"By faith, and faith alone embrace, Believing where we cannot prove."

CAN WE BELIEVE IT?

This is an important point because the shifts and somersaults, deceptions and betrayals, of communist policy throughout the world become comprehensible only if two assumptions are made. Firstly, that the Soviet Union really is the Workers' Paradise, that, in Pollitt's words, "There no man can make profit out of the labour of others. The exploita-

COMMUNIST ECONOMICS . . .

In our age of shortages it is interesting to read that in the U.S.S.R. lectures are being given on the "peaceful transition from Socialism to Communism".

Having lived in the U.S.S.R. I can visualise this process on the basis of personal experience.

Imagine planned production steadily increasing year by year as a result of continuous hard work and the improvement of productive technique. Prices are reduced and earnings rise according to plan.

A time will come—indeed it must come—when incomes are so high in relation to prices that lack of money no longer prevents anyone from getting anything he or she needs.

In that age of plenty, each will naturally receive according to his or her needs.

This is a feature of the Communist Society of the future towards which the U.S.S.R. will assuredly develop if peace is preserved and towards which we too will advance, once we have established Socialism.

Pat Sloan in *Daily Worker*, 20/9/47.

Do you visualise it, comrade. It sounds almost like inflation to us!

tion of man by man has been completely abolished. The ownership by the people, of the land, the raw materials and minerals, the factories, the workshops and the banks is complete" [page 94].

And secondly that, this being so, all the activities of the workers in less fortunate countries should be devoted to protecting the interests and extending the limits of this paradise, using all and every means for doing so.

If we are unable to accept these assumptions (and how many thoughtful people can?) then Pollitt's programme becomes merely demagogic and one-sided word-spinning. He exposes the imperialism and economic expansion of the U.S.A., but not that of the U.S.S.R. He shows how Labour's policy is only one of State Capitalism, but he demands more nationalisation and not direct Workers' Control of industry. He illustrates the essentially reactionary and reformist nature of the Labour Party, but he pleads for "the unity of our Labour Movement".

At times Pollitt's eloquence lapses into incoherence. His chapter on "Britain's Crisis and the Way Out" ends with this paragraph:

"The people are ready for anything. They have finished with the past, they want a Government and leaders in the same frame of mind. They want a Government whose leaders hate the rich more than they do their own people still fighting the battle of the poor."

The people may be ready for anything, but after losing their illusions about the Tories and the so-called Socialist, they are hardly likely to fall for the phoney solution offered by the self-appointed Messiahs of the "scientifically-based working-class party" of Pollitt & Co.

The hard logic of events is teaching us that the "liberation of the working-class" will only be achieved by uncompromising resistance to the State, and by industrial direct action for the seizure of the means of production by the workers themselves.

The Miners Next Step

THE Labour leaders tend to rationalize the continual compromises and betrayals that they have to make in order to "get on", by assuming that their one-time comrades in the rank-and-file of the workers have gone through the same process of emasculation and watering-down; enforcing the dictates of prudence and political realism. When, in some outburst of militancy, some wave of strikes, they find themselves quite out touch with the workers, they get bewildered and aggrieved and talk of irresponsibility and stabs in the back, and they can't believe that they themselves are the betrayers and the irresponsibles.

Politicians are notorious for their inability to see the wood because of the trees, and it often happens that an outsider can get a clearer picture of events and tendencies than people more closely connected with them. Victor Echevarri, a prospective Tory parliamentary candidate has been taking the quite revolutionary step of "going to the pits", and trying to get a true impression of the lives and aspirations of the constituents who, he hopes, will eventually start him on his political career.

Mr. Echevarri has given us, in a

letter to the *Daily Telegraph*, his impressions of the miners (unfortunately, the miners have not so far thought it worth their while to record their impressions of him) and he has at least, discovered one profound truth that has escaped the Lawthers and the Horners. After telling the *Daily Telegraph's* readers that "it is well to remember that he [the miner] is more politically conscious than most sections of the community"—something which event should have told them already—he goes on to say:

"One has only to talk to the miner to discover that, coupled with the distrust of the bureaucracy of the Coal Board (the Grimethorpe strike was a strike against this as much as anything) is a genuine disappointment on the part of the miners who had imagined that the nationalisation of the mining industry meant mines for the miners. In other words, for years the miner has been led to believe in Syndicalism rather than Socialism."

This confirmation of our views is valuable since it obviously doesn't help to grind Mr. Echevarri's political axe. Where the so-called Socialists have been unable to seduce the miners from their syndicalist ideology, the Tories don't stand much chance.

Experience is a hard teacher, but an unanswerable one. The miners have experienced private exploitation and are now tasting State exploitation. The passage of time can only strengthen their belief in "The Mines for the Miners" and their determination to achieve it. Workers' Control is an uncomprising doctrine that admits of no half-measures. Talk of decentralising the National Coal Board is mere window-dressing. The miners must be prepared for a stern and unrelenting battle with the State, of which Grimethorpe was one of the first skirmishes.

Determination, solidarity, direct action have won the first round, and they are the weapons that will win the miners their final victory.

C.W.

helpful to the satyagrahis, workers of the local unit expressed their sympathy and encouraged the movement. The State Congress is reported to have threatened those workers who extended help to the satyagrahis with disciplinary action. But this action only provoked contempt of the local workers who have been backing the movement.

Indian Peasants Use Direct Action

A Reader has sent us a copy of *Janata*, a newspaper published in New Delhi, which contains an article showing how some peasants are reacting to the illegal levy of taxes by the local jagirdars.

NEARLY four thousand inhabitants of Bilaua Jagir in Gwalior State have started a movement against the levy of various arbitrary and unjust taxes from them by the local jagirdars. It has been a custom scrupulously maintained by the jagirdars to levy a certain amount as tax on all commodities brought in from outside the jagir. The collection of such taxes is supposed to be the exclusive privilege of the jagirdars and it is said that sometimes even amounts equal to the cost price of commodities brought in are taken from the people as tax. Much suffering has been caused due to this. Many times, the people acquainted the Government with the injustice of this system and pleaded for a check on these medieval practices. Their appeals however were

not heeded. The jagirdars wield tremendous influence over the administration. Therefore they could always have their privileges safeguarded.

Last week the people of Bilaua, finding that no governmental aid was forthcoming for ending their ills, decided to take direct action. In batches, they started bringing goods into the Jagir from outside. They refused to pay the usual levy and asserted their right to get goods from outside without having to pay the jagirdars. Jananayak Vijaya Govind Dwivedi, leader of the local peasants directed the movement. The jagirdars could not have their way. The people were fully organised. A batch of armed police however arrived. The organisers of the movement were not frightened by the presence of the police. They are continuing their fight. People all over the State have extended their support to the move-

ment. The struggle would continue until the authorities intervene and legally abolish the tax.

PROTEST JATHA

A protest *jatha* was also organised. More than 400 people marched to Gwalior demanding action against the jagirdars from the Government. But restrictions were imposed on the *jatha* soon on its entry into the city. Processionists were harassed and nearly forty persons went on hunger-strike for getting restrictions lifted. About 400 baskets of betel valued at Rs. 4,008 which the satyagrahis carried were confiscated in order to discourage the hungerstrike. But the strike continued until Jananayak Vijaya Govind Dwivedi arrived at the spot and advised the strikers to give up the fast. Prominent public workers approached the jagardir and tried to evolve a settlement but their efforts proved to be of no avail as the jagardirs remained adamant.

Even though the High Command of the State Congress was not very

POLLITT ON GERMANY

"There have been no strikes, no mass protests and demonstrations in the Soviet Zone. Isn't that fact something to think about? —Looking Ahead, p. 58
Yes, Harry, it is!

... AND "PLANNED PRODUCTION" ?

Between the Communist promise of plenty and its fulfilment, Russians always had a time of trouble. Last week *Moskovsky Bolshevik* reported on one:

"Kratovo village received a supply of canvas shoes . . . When they were displayed in the stores, they stopped traffic. People only had to look at them, and their hands would instinctively go into their pockets for money to buy. By evening many people were wearing the season's novelty—these light, elegant shoes,

"But on the following day, going along the street, you'd first see the heels all by themselves—and then the owners wearing different shoes. Two days later the street scenery changed somewhat: the streets were now spangled with soles. It would be too much to say the customers were delighted.

"Two purchasers—laboratory workers—prepared a Manual of Instructions for Owners of Canvas Shoes. (1) keep shoes in hermetically sealed place, preferably under glass; (2) do not wear at temperatures higher than—12° Centigrade [10° Fahrenheit]; (3) best of all, don't wear them at all, as it is bad for them."

The shoes had been made in *Zarya Svobody* (Dawn of Freedom) factory.

Time, 1/9/47.
What about it, Mr. Sloan?

Land Notes

Paper Fields and Paper Farmers

I SHALL never forget the episode in the novel "Bread and Wine", when the revolutionary returning illegally to his country looks out of the train windows at the hills and fields, the peasants and haystacks, and realizes with a sudden shock that his agricultural plans and theories bore no relation to the reality around him.

"He took his notebook from his bag and started reading the notes he had started in exile. He read them through, and was astonished and dismayed at their abstract character. All these quotations from masters and disciples on the agrarian question, all these plans and schemes were the paper scenery in which he had hitherto lived. The country which was the subject of these notes of his was a paper country with paper mountains, paper hills, fields, gardens and meadows."

PAPER FARMING

We all run this risk in our pre-occupation with theories and statistics, of losing touch with concrete realities, and in farming—an occupation which by its very nature presents constantly different and changing problems, this detachment is most fatal. Plans and policies abound, but the person most concerned, the farm worker, is the consulted. Yet without his knowledge

and co-operation, the most enlightened and scientific of agricultural programmes will inevitably fail.

The contrasting lessons of Russia and Spain make this abundantly clear (see "Agriculture and Social Revolution", *Freedom*, 17th May and 31st May). In Russia, the agricultural plan, enforced from above resulted in famines of unprecedented proportions and immeasurable human suffering. In Spain, on the other hand, the revolutionary peasants seized the land, formed their own local committees for collectively organising the work (while not preventing those who wished, from continuing on their own if they preferred to), and succeeded in a very short time in increasing their crops to a striking extent.

THE DIFFERENCE

The difference is the difference between servility and responsibility, between authority and anarchy.

When an agricultural policy is imposed from above, and the people who are expected to do the work of carrying it out are, to use Eric Gill's phrase, reduced to a subhuman condition of intellectual irresponsibility, it is foredoomed to failure. When it is devised and controlled by those who (except in times of emergency) are stigmatised by society as

"brothers to the ox", it can be expected to succeed.

WE PLOUGH THE FIELDS AND SCATTER

The tragi-comedy of paper-farming as practised by our bureaucrats has been seen very clearly in the last few weeks. The ministerial ink was hardly dry on the Government's new plough-up programme before it was discovered that there is a shortage of ploughs—that the basic agricultural instrument is unobtainable. Meanwhile, our factories are turning out luxury cars for Argentina and refrigerators for the expanding capitalists of Indian industry.

A Suffolk farmer grew a crop of buck-wheat. The War Agricultural Executive Committee avenged itself by destroying nine acres of it. As the farmer surveyed his ploughed-in crop he received a letter telling him:

"It is the intention of the Ministry of Agriculture to take proceedings against you under the Buckwheat, Millet and Canary Seed (Control of Cultivation) Order, 1947.

TO EACH ACCORDING

To end on a note of sanity: "Pears were displayed in Stafford market yesterday, with a notice: 'Pick what you like, pay what you like.' Most people paid 2d. for a bagful!"—*Reynold's News*, 21/9/47.

NAZI INDIA?

Mr. Gandhi will go to Lahore and to other places in Pakistan "without protection", as soon as his mission here is over, he told his prayer meeting last night.

"I am in God's protection," he said. He would face death with a happy smile.—*Evening Standard*.

GANDHI is placing himself as a voluntary hostage in the hands of the Moslems, by moving from his Hindustan quarters to Moslem territory in order that revenge should be taken on himself should any Moslem be harmed in Hindu territory. While there is general rejoicing over the realization of the 'new' India, Gandhi is leaving. While the masses are still celebrating the departure of the British Raj, while the public speakers are painting a glowing picture of the future of India, Gandhi has retired to pray that what has been achieved may not be lost through self-guilt.

Millions of the oppressed who have tasted the bitterness of slavery and humiliation, had longed deeply for a glorious new India and now, from the outset, what they find, is marked with the stigmata of the old evils. The new State shows all the inevitable attributes of intolerance, racial hatred, opportunism and corruption. By accepting the principle of the State, one cannot escape its inherent evils.

Gandhi's Rebuke

The Mahatma prays—prays for an independent, non-violent and free India. The young Indian politicians consider this belittling to their achievement, reducing their prestige, and throwing doubt on their intentions and capabilities. They have urged him "to give up his useless attitude of self-sacrifice". The pupils are now correcting their 'spiritual rector'. Gandhi has given a noteworthy answer which politely but firmly rebukes the new statesmen who are already entangled in the strings of that net called 'realistic policy' in which we have so often seen entrapped the corpses of idealism, caught and strangled in the web of tactics and 'practical necessities'. Gandhi wrote:

"I am being accused of devoting myself to and sacrificing myself uselessly for a lost cause. I am told that I ought to spend the winter of my life either propagating more popular things or to withdraw altogether from public life. I admit that my efforts are devoted to a lost or a nearly lost cause, but I deny that this means I am wasting time. Popular tastes and aims need no special support—on the contrary, they call, like superstitions, for assistance. The wave of violence and insanity which sweeps our country must be stopped in spite of its being popular. A just cause is never finally a lost cause."

Shadows of Defeat

The ugly face of nationalism which is arising in India has with this statement, received a well-deserved moral blow. But the force of violent nationalistic impulses is not sensitive to moral blows and it is here that the effectiveness of Gandhi's influence as the great spiritual leader is waning. It is now proving dangerous to rely on the sympathy and sentiment of the masses for their revered and beloved hero; and Gandhi may now experience the fallacy of leadership. More than once the masses have turned from their worshipped idol when he opposed and condemned their elementary impulses. They have stoned and derided the formerly idolized man who tried to check their atavistic outbursts. Worse is now happening to the Mahatma of yesterday—he is being ignored. No doubt the thought of canonization will not compensate him for isolation now. At the close of his life the shadows of defeat are gathering around a lonely old man whom we cannot refuse to respect for his sincerity, courage and determination, but whom we have often in the past criticised for his errors. Events are justifying these criticisms.

Nehru has taken great pains to differentiate his brand of nationalism from fascism:

"We shall remain true Indians and Asiatics and become at the same time good Internationalists and world citizens."

But have we not heard this said time and again, in Irish, Italian, German and English? The only Indian who has condemned nationalism outright and uncompromisingly is Tagore, and his *Nationalism* should be spread throughout India and Pakistan. He takes the anarchist standpoint—for Tagore, as for us, no form of nationalism is acceptable, for every form embodies the germ of intolerance and, given the proper conditions, leads to racial conceit, hatred and war.

Industrialization

The Indians failed in the recent war to extend their resistance to a degree fitting the conception of universal brotherhood. Their resistance was accentuated on their own national liberation. There was no wholesale boycotting of war industry on humanitarian grounds. India bargained for its independence with its share of the war effort. The development of war industry, technique and science were welcomed with a view to their becoming future Indian state possessions—thus principles were sacrificed on the altar of economic expediency. Con-

gress was always in favour of large-scale industrialisation of India. The leaders visualised planned industry and science operating under state control. The attitude is the same as that of any past ruling class; though we have been assured by Nehru and many other Indian intellectuals that they feel quite capable of avoiding the errors of the Bolsheviks and Fascists, already we witness the well-known symptoms of corruption. The flag of Congress bore Gandhi's spinning wheel; the flag of the new Hindu State bears the wheel of modern industry. This is not accidental. Only in compromise to Gandhi did Congress emphasise that parallel with the development of industry would be the development of cottage handicrafts. Gandhi's own attitude has undergone gradual changes:

"What I object to is the *craze* for machinery, not machinery as such."

"If we could have electricity in every village home, I should not mind the villagers plying electric tools."

He came to accept the necessity of many industries and large-scale key industries and public utilities provided that they were state-owned and did not interfere with some kind of cottage industry.

Only One Way Out

India cannot accept modern industrialisation without also accepting its inherent evils. It can only avoid the catastrophic experiences of our own

first and present industrial revolutions if it turns its national revolution into a social revolution and realises the latent aspirations of the Indian masses which are fundamentally the same as those of the Western peasantry and proletariat. Then, and then only, can it achieve what its leaders proclaim as their aims—the preservation of what is good in India's cultural tradition, and the abolition of what has proved disastrous—exploitation, the caste, and the profit system.

What is at present happening in India is a mere repetition of history. Reaction begins with the conquest of power.

Indian leaders can no longer launch demands, campaigns, demonstrations and strikes against the foreign oppressor. As soon as its policy cannot attack an object generally acknowledged as responsible for existing poverty, hunger, misery and injustice, and wants to free itself from responsibility, suitable excuses and scapegoats must be found. We have seen early Bolshevik Russia blaming Mensheviks, social-revolutionaries and anarchists; Trotsky killing off the "saboteurs" and "social fascists" and finally becoming a victim himself together with the "old guard"—all being sacrificed to save the face of the ruling party. In Nazi Germany we have seen the liquidation of social-revolutionaries, communists and anarchist, followed by the Jews and the old guard of the party—Rohm's followers and the national

revolutionaries. Already I have been warned by well-meaning future administrators and pillars of the new state, that the Indian propagandists of anarchism had better stop their agitation if they do not want to be regarded as obstructive. I am certain that our Indian comrades have anticipated nothing else, and will gain a new impetus from this information. The Indian masses who follow their leaders into the brave new world will suffer the same disillusionment as have the peoples of Russia and Europe who gave power to their "sincere and disinterested" leaders. For our comrades in India remains the task of explaining to the Indian peasants and town workers the trap into which they are running, and to proclaim the alternative offered by anarchism.

J.O.

Tagore on Nationalism

THE idea of the Nation is one of the most effective forms of intoxication that man has ever discovered. Under its poisonous influence an entire nation can carry out a programme of the greatest selfishness without realising the moral corruption involved, even becoming dangerously annoyed when it is pointed out. But can this perversion of moral feeling go on for ever? Will it not at some time revenge itself? Will not the gigantic machinery of world organisation one day come up against a barrier which will stop its race to self-destruction? Do you believe we can control evil with greater evils, or, by means of clever counsel, keep the devil in the temporary cage of mutual agreements?

This war of European nations is a war of revenge. Man, as such, must with all his powers resist the putting of dead things in the place of living hearts and of the living relationship of man to man. The time has come when we must realise, for the sake of all humanity that Europe's suffering is merely the result of the terrible contradiction that lies behind the idea of nationalism, that the Nation flourishes only at the cost of a mutilated mankind.

Men—the perfect creation of God—emerge from the nation-factories as legions of war-making and money-producing puppets, absurdly vain of the miserable perfection of their mechanism. Human society has become a Punch-and-Judy show in which politicians,

soldiers, factory-owners and bureaucrats are operated and kept in motion by means of a complex and grandiose system of wires, but hatred and greed, fear and hypocrisy, suspicion and tyranny—this whole breed of selfishness cannot predominate forever. They may develop to gigantic proportions, but monstrosity lacks balance. A nation's body, which is not of flesh and blood, but of steel, steam, and official buildings will swell to such fantastic proportions until its deformed shape is unable to hold together any longer. It will first crack, then burst, and in the midst of poisonous fumes and belching fire, amid the thunder of guns we shall hear the rattle of its decayed bones.

The death struggle of the Nation has begun in this war. The whole mechanism is performing a mad Dance of Death. Civilization crumbles to dust.

Those who still believe in mankind can only hope that the tyranny of the Nation will never recover its former shape, with its teeth and claws, its far-reaching iron arms and its colossal inner emptiness, where all is belly and none is heart. Those who believe must hope that man may break through the mist of abstractions that surrounds him, and be reborn in freedom.

War has lifted the veil and the West sees face to face its own creation for which it sacrifices itself. May it know what kind of creation this is!

Foreign Commentary

Partition to Continue in Ireland

THE Irish Anti-Partition League has issued a statement which among other things draws attention to the continued existence of the Special Powers Act, the system of resident permits, the deprivation of franchise rights, and the censorship of mails, matters, which the Home Secretary has refused to discuss with a deputation from the Parliamentary representatives of the Nationalist minority in N. Ireland.

The statement also refers to the Labour Government's opposition to the ending of partition in the following terms:

"After two years' experience it is now abundantly clear to us that the present Labour Cabinet, or the majority of its Ministers, are quite definitely opposed to the introduction of any measure to end partition. In fact, the enactment of the Northern Ireland Bill, extending the powers of the Northern Ireland Government, is almost conclusive evidence that the policy of the Labour Government is to perpetuate the division of this country, which, when it was established over twenty-five years ago, was described even by leading Tory statesmen to be purely a temporary expedient . . ."

Many of the recently enacted penal laws aimed at the destruction of civil liberty in Northern Ireland, derived their supposed sanction from legislation enacted in Westminster, for which the Labour Government is directly responsible. In those cases where that Government is not directly responsible for this repressive legislation, its attitude is either one of acquiescence and encouragement of the Government of Northern Ireland in its enforcement of these laws, or of contemptuous indifference to the gross and manifest injustices resulting therefrom.

We wish particularly to remind the Irish people of Britain who, unlike the minority in Northern Ireland, enjoy full franchise rights and to whose efforts the Labour Government owes so much, that they have in their own hands the means of effectively showing their resentment at this policy on the part of certain leaders of the Labour party and also the means of effectively ending it."

CANADA'S D.P.s

Every day new cases of human misery brought on by the war come to one's notice. The least expected of places was Canada with its 12,000 Japanese who at the time of Pearl Harbour were herded into "relocation camps". What has

happened to them since the end of the war? According to *Time* (1/9/47) "Ottawa has pressured nearly 4,000 of them into moving back to Japan, has discreetly resettled most of the others." Apart from 600 sick and indigent who are on the Government's hands, 59 remain in a camp south of Moose Jaw, Sask., and these 59 (most of them Canadian citizens) refuse to move unless their demands are met. They want to return to their pre-war homes in British Columbia. But that was impossible. Early in the war, the Dominion Government confiscated and sold their homes and property, paid them only a small percentage of what the holdings were worth. Then B.C.'s provincial government got Ottawa to issue an order in council barring Japanese from a 100-mile-wide area on the West Coast. Ottawa acted in haste. It was beginning to repent.

"Fortnight ago, when the 59 declared they 'would rather die' than leave the camp and take the jobs Ottawa had dug up for them, the Government cut off the camp's food supply. This move did not budge the Japanese; they simply took their earnings (from camp work) and bought their meals in Moose Jaw. The next logical step seemed to be to close the camp and set the holdouts adrift. The trouble was that Canada was getting an uneasy conscience and a close-out might set off a political ruckus.

"Already Moose Jaw's ambitious and wealthy young M.P., Ross Thatcher, was capitalizing noisily on the manifest violation of civil rights. He had protested to Prime Minister Mackenzie King against the attempt to 'starve the Japs out of the camps', and had followed with a ringing speech: 'Let these Canadians be treated as Canadians by Canadians. Let the Government have the courage to admit a wrong and right it . . .'

Most of the summer-becalmed press joined in the protest. As the unseemly spot persisted, Saskatchewan's Government announced that the internees' fate was and would be in federal hands. That put the next move up to the Dominion."

PARENTS TAUGHT A LESSON

We reported in the last issue (*Freedom*, 20/9/47) a school strike in Gary, Indiana, when 35 negro children were admitted to the school. The strike was instigated by some of the parents of the

white children.

Now, *Time* (22/9/47) reports that the children have given up "their parent instigated strike to keep Negro children out of their school". The children have shown themselves to be more civilised and sensible than their parents!

Another example of the lengths to which some Americans will go to segregate white students from coloured ones is that of the new State University of Texas. As *Time* (22/9/47) put it "to avoid sitting next to a Negro in a classroom, Texans are willing to spend \$3½ million (or nearly £1 million). That fact was proved and priced last week, when Texas opened the doors of a new state university on the outskirts of Houston. The Texas State University for Negroes occupies a block-long modernistic limestone building still under construction. More than 2,000 students are enrolled."

Conditions in Finland

The *Industrial Worker* (Organ of the American I.W.W.) publishes an interesting letter by a member of Marine Transport Workers Industrial Union who spent a recent shore leave in Helsingfors. He writes that the Finns are having a hard time paying for their folly of attacking their big neighbour, Russia. "The cost of living is sky-high with wages low. The longshoremen are about the best paid workers here and they are working long hours at contract rates. Almost all workers work piece work.

Finland's manufactured goods are sent to Russia; of the product according to type from 30 to 100 per cent. goes there. They are manufacturing weapons, which product of course goes 100 per cent. to Russia.

The state and city police are communists who tell their tales to their Russian masters. There seems to be no free press or radio here. All papers are censored and approved before they are printed. There is a Control Commission consisting of 25,000 Russians here in Helsingfors alone. They are the eyes and ears of Joe Stalin. It makes sure that the Russians get the last ounce out of the Finns.

This city is overcrowded with people from Viborg, the second city in Finland, or that was. Since Viborg was taken

RECOGNITION OF WAR RESISTERS

Worldover Press reports that in Switzerland "a measure has been introduced which would grant C.O.s much the same status they have had in England and the United States. Supporters of the Bill hope for its adoption within the next six months."

In Italy, a proposal that conscientious objection be legalised and a clause providing for alternative service was approved by the moderate Socialist leader Saragat and his party in the national legislature. But, according to *Worldover Press* Rome correspondent, Communists and Conservatives united against the Bill which was ignored by the Press of all the parties with the exception of that of the Saragat Socialists.

over by the Russians most of the Finns that lived there have moved to Helsingfors.

There are three political parties: Communist, Socialist and a party referred to by the workers as Capitalist. The Socialist and Capitalist parties often have a united front against the Communist Party. The socialists control most of the labour unions. There is no syndicalist or anarchist organization as far as I have been able to find out.

The class struggle has become nationalist in character, with all the blame for the workers' misery being put on the Russians.

That there is still a leisure class in Finland (and they are not all Russians either) is apparent to anyone walking the street. Stores are selling fur coats at a price it would take a year for any worker to make. Brand new American-made automobiles in the high price class are not uncommon.

There are not nearly as many males now as females. At least one male out of every thirty was killed in the war, and about a quarter of the men living to-day have one or more wounds from the war.

The outlook for the Finnish worker certainly does not look good. After paying their debt to the Russians and supporting their own parasite class at the same time, not much is left for themselves."

Germany—

THE extent to which de-nazification in Germany has been successful can be imagined from the fact that the American Zone has issued an amnesty for all young members of the Nazi Party, and that 25,000 members of the SS amongst German PoW's inside Germany were released: "because the rebuilding of Germany depended on the co-operation of youth".

Taking into account that the German

of his lack of obedience for authority! In July, 1946, the Americans discovered the existence of a Secret Nazi organisation, and investigations have gone on for over a year. The Nazi organisation which was called the *Liberty and Peace Movement* (!) was financed (just as in France) by leading black-marketeers. Attempts were made to recapture the assets of the old Nazi party and the arrested leaders operated under false names and had a store of forged identity papers, official stamps, and forms of the French and British occupation authorities.

enforced. Leave is granted twice a year to the soldiers of these companies. Over-staying leave is, of course, punished, and anyone guilty of visiting the Soviet zone is imprisoned and then transferred back to a PoW camp.

The ostensible purposes of these units are:

Transport of members of the Control Commission, army commanders, journalists, etc.

Transport of coal, food, troops and military equipment in lorries.

Laying of cables, repair of telephone

SEEDS OF CHAOS—2

Nazis in British and American camps have met with greater consideration and tolerance than the anti-fascists, it should not surprise us to learn of such cases as the "conspiracy of Fresnes". Nazis imprisoned in France, including ex-Gestapo men, members of Hitler's Security Police, and the elite of the German counter-espionage service, organised a comprehensive and expert forgery centre in prison. These Nazis had tobacco, sugar, coffee, wine, meat, etc., and other articles extremely difficult to obtain in France. From the South of Germany come reports of prison officials having champagne parties with their men and women prisoners, and we receive many other reports stating that imprisoned Nazis are enjoying every comfort while behind bars and can go on leave if they give their word of honour not to escape. We are inclined to believe these reports. (I myself have been an inmate of nine German, one French, and two British prisons, and have no doubt as to the extent of corruption in all of them).

In the present chaotic situation in Germany the general corruption and collapse of moral standards, is to foreigners, imaginable. The prisons are overcrowded with black-market offenders, thieves and robbers. A whole nation has become "outside the law" and the words honesty and morality are meaningless. Farmers hide their cattle and crops, slaughter animals secretly and sell their goods in the black market in exchange for jewellery, scarce and luxury articles. The black market openly offers rare commodities for barter for food. Firms sell their products only for food. Rations of food and tobacco are stolen before they can be put on the market. Gangs operate in secret collaboration with corrupt officials. Bribed inspectors overlook stocks of crops and cattle. Starving townspeople flood the villages offering their last valuables in exchange for bacon, cheese, eggs, etc.; only to have them confiscated by the police. The confiscated goods then "disappear" and are sold again in the black market.

Theft, robbery and blackmail are not confined to the German gangsters and officials. We know of countless cases committed by members of the Allied occupation forces as well. That is the reason why former soldiers of the B.A.O.R. are returning to Germany as stowaways and why there is a waiting list for service with the American army of occupation.

The German people can hardly be expected to take "justice" seriously when they know that while they themselves are suffering from the want of shelter, clothes and food, men like Rudolf Hess are being carefully looked after by a special staff of doctors, or that Schacht is being liberated by the Americans to be employed as a financial adviser.

A few years ago German soldiers were asked over the B.B.C. to desert and to resist Hitler with all their might, but to-day German courts are still sentencing men for their active resistance to the Nazis. An example is the Garbe case—a soldier in 1943 deserted, by assaulting a guard and escaping to Switzerland. The British Military Government has given permission for the case against him to proceed. Another example is that of a man in Bavaria who applied for a government job and was rejected because of a penal servitude sentence which he served under the Nazi regime for refusing to obey a Gestapo order which instructed him to place a bomb on board a ship transporting Jews to Rumania. The Bavarian Ministry of Justice now classifies him as a political victim of Hitler, but refuses him the job because

The smashing of this organisation was reported in the press in order to show how the Americans rapidly deal with any attempt at a Nazi resurrection, but there is in existence a new German *Schwarze-Wehrmacht* of which our press mentions little.

The disarmed units of the former *Wehrmacht* were combed-out in 1945 in England, France, Norway and Germany. From various PoW camps drivers, mechanics, cooks, interpreters, N.C.O.s and officers were collected and formed into companies of 450 men each. The officers and N.C.O.s had to sign a declaration that they would carry out any work and for any length of time. The English officers told them that they would be moved to Germany where they could move about freely and would get new uniforms, good accommodation and rations. Each company has 6 platoons of 60 men each, a workshop section of 56 men and a staff of 34; they have a major, captain, lieutenants, sergeant-major and N.C.O.s, like any British company. About 98% of the officers are natives of the Russian zone to which they do not wish to return. They have good pay, are billeted in comfortable villas, with one or more batmen. They have a room each, while the men live 50—150 to one barrack-room. Saluting and the usual Prussian heel-clicking are rigidly

wires, telegraph and radio equipment, etc.

Construction of bridges, airfields, etc. Attachment to technical units of the R.A.F. and Navy, minesweeping, etc.

Military police duties, attached to the British Corps of Military Police.

Since 1946 these units have been receiving 2—3 times the normal civilian food rations, and the textile factories of Hamburg and Hanover are engaged in making new uniforms for them.

Men who desert have been sentenced by court-martial to 3 years' imprisonment. Desertions are, nevertheless, frequent.

The title of these units has now been changed from "Company" to "Labour Group", and the rank-titles are being adopted from those of the Nazi *Arbeitsdienst* (Labour service).

I hardly need to draw attention to the close historical parallel between these ex-PoW units and the Labour Units of the Nationalists during the Weimar republic, which laid the foundations of the military and economic structure of the Nazi reich. The same elements compose them, the same undisguised militarism dominates them. Who can doubt that they are destined to fulfil a similar function?

The seeds of neo-Nazism are being sown by the victorious allies.

JOHN OLDAY.

(To be continued.)



While people are short of potatoes in Germany, they are being bought up in large quantities in the black market and used, with Russian approval, for the production of alcohol.—News item.

Revolt in Solomons

WHAT IS THE TRUTH?

WE used to be horrified at the way the people of Nazi Germany were kept in ignorance of events in the outside world. To-day we are rapidly moving towards the same position. Many factors conspire to keep the truth from us. The newspapers are so small that even if they wanted to they could not keep their readers abreast with the news. The recent cuts in their size was attributed to the newsprint shortage; and a few months ago the weekly papers were bluffed into suspension by the fuel crisis. The excuse of the dollar shortage is made for banning the import of printed matter, except under licence and under cover of searching for smuggled money, the

ensorship of letters leaving these islands is re-introduced. And one of the biggest factors in the maintenance of public ignorance is the unreliability of the news we do get.

An example of this was the recent uprising in the Solomons. Most of the papers treated it as a comic item and we can learn nothing about it from them. But there are such discrepancies in the "serious" press, that we simply don't know what to believe.

The *Manchester Guardian* generally the most reliable of the daily papers gives the following report:

"Officers of the British submarine *Amphion* which arrived here to-day said the Solomon Islands in the Pacific were

Dollars or Death

While Germany Starves Dutch Vegetables Rot

The Dutch province of Limburg has a large surplus of vegetables. Netherland sources state that 200,000 tons of vegetables will be available for export between the beginning of July and February of next year. A substantial amount of this produce is ready for immediate shipment and will spoil soon if it isn't disposed of soon.

Dutch Limburg borders on Germany; transportation between the land where the vegetables are in danger of rotting and the land of scurvy and vitamin deficiency could be easily arranged—freight trains could cover the distance to the cities of the Ruhr in a few hours. Between the wasteland and the land of plenty there are no high mountains, no natural obstacles whatsoever—but there is one huge obstruction the Great Wall of Bureaucracy.

Holland wants payment in German industrial products but Anglo-American occupation authorities in Germany want all German trade to be transacted in dollars. The Dutch must pay in dollars if they want to get German industrial products; and the Germans also must pay in dollars—which they don't have or which the occupation authorities do not allow them to spend. So the hungry cannot get to the food and the food cannot get to the hungry: between them stands the whim of a few experts and the sign of the dollar—a sign dominating men, a sign condemning men to die, a symbol that has become an all powerful thing, a thing that kills men, a Thing let loose.

On the left bank of the Rhine the vegetables are rotting and on its right bank men are rotting. A few hundred thousand tons of vegetables and the lives of a few million people are involved: but what is epitomized here is the state of our world. Only a sign, a regulation, a decree stands between the men and the source that could still their thirst. Is one really to believe that regulations, decrees and bureaucracy will forever keep people from taking what their bodies required?

—Quoted in *Resistance* (New York).

being patrolled by the British destroyer *Contest* and that it was believed that the ringleaders of a planned uprising against British rule had been captured.

"The officers said the arrival of their submarine at Santa, in the Solomon group, probably prevented bloodshed. According to Henry Cuper, a naturalised British plantation owner who has lived in the Solomons for 36 years, an uprising and the overthrow of British rule had been planned for September 1. When the *Amphion* arrived two days later officers who went ashore found inhabitants standing around a mast, from which was flying a yellow flag with black stripes, which they said was 'marn lo'—the flag of freedom.

The *Amphion* fired star shells and the natives fled. Mr. Cuper said the leaders of the uprising were from another Solomon island, Malaita, which was the "revolutionary headquarters" of all Solomon islanders. He said the trouble was due mainly to propaganda circulated by soldiers during the war. The Colonial Office has confirmed that the aircraft-carrier *Theseus* and the destroyer *Cockade* had been ordered to Gaudalcanar Island to 'show the flag'."

The *Daily Telegraph*, of course, scents a Communist plot, and the mysterious flag of 'marn lo' becomes 'Marxian Law', while the uprising becomes the result of "Communist propaganda after the American occupation".

What is the truth? What has become of the alleged 'ringleaders', have they been brought to trial, and what are they charged with?

Is this apparent outburst of native revolutionary feeling to become another of the dark secrets of British imperialism?

Reminiscences

AN ADMIRAL MEETS AN ANARCHIST!

IN *Sun of Memory*, a recently published book of naval reminiscences, Read-Admiral Noel Wright describes his one-and-only encounter with an anarchist, which occurred at Barcelona, during the Spanish War:

In this last connection I had an interesting and lengthy conversation with one of the leaders of the Anarchist Party (who came on board the London for some purpose during the early part of our stay). I had never before met an anarchist, so asked him to explain the advantages he professed to see in such a political belief.

"Anarchy," he explained to me, "is only a logical extension of the provincialism which is so strongly established in Spain. For you, an inhabitant of a small though admittedly celebrated island, pride of country doubtless comes first; you say 'I am an Englishman.' But for me, what do I say? Not that I am a Spaniard, but a Catalan, and my friend over there, who was born in Cartagena, would reply, if you asked him, 'I am a Murcian!' For Spain is not a single entity; it is a conglomeration of provinces, most of them isolated from one another by great mountain chains; and the inhabitants of those provinces possess individual and widely-differing characteristics of which they are deeply proud. With us, the province comes first; there is no wish to be—how do you put it?—ah, all tarred with the same brush, and no true-bred provençal likes this new-fangled system under which some noisy sans-culottes from Asturias can arise in the Cortes and lay down the law for Catalonia. It is mortifying to the pride that such a state of affairs can be permitted.

"We anarchists go further, for we are logical folk. Just as it is right that no province should allow another province to have a say in matters that do not concern it, so it must be right that a village over that side of a hill shall not be allowed to have any say in the affairs of one in this valley. Carry the illustration further and you will see that logically no man shall presume to dictate to another. We anarchists abhor your so-called majority system of government which permits 51 people out of 100 to dictate to the other 49."

"But is not that going to lead to a somewhat confused state of affairs?"

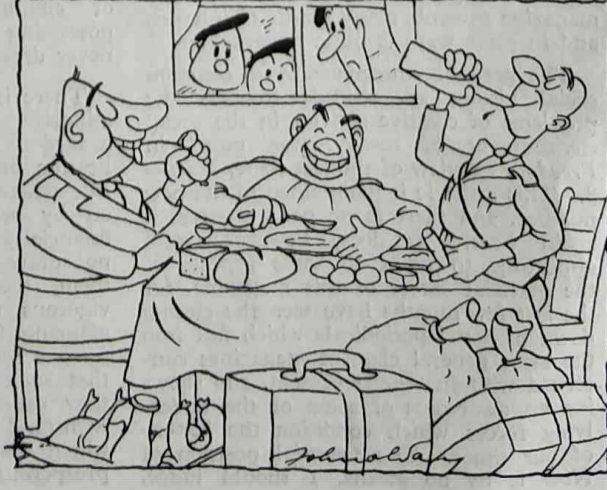
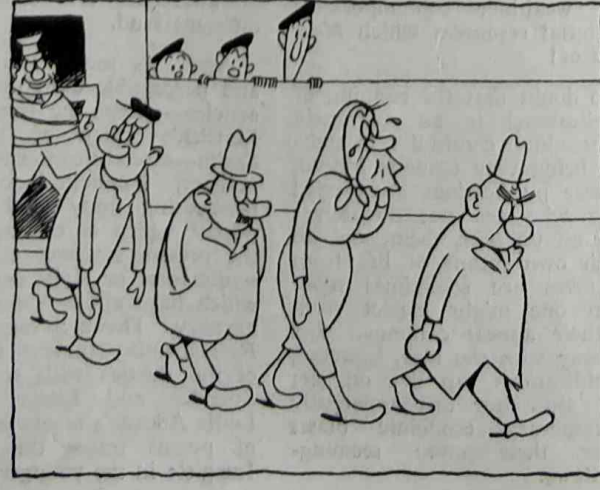
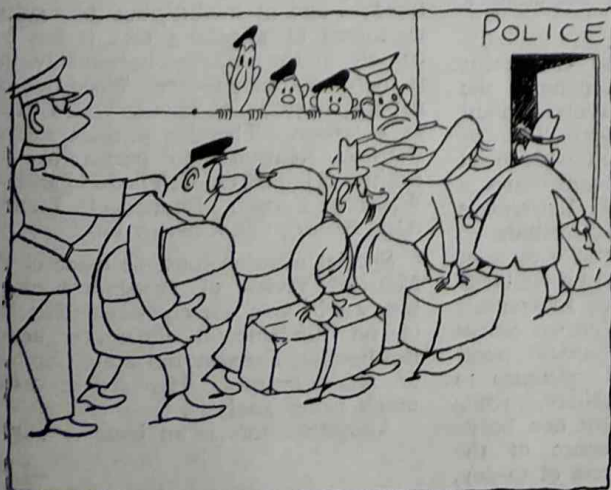
"And the trains," I suggested, "the passengers would like to start their journey at eight o'clock, but the engine-driver says 'No—not till nine o'clock.' Whose will is to prevail—that of the majority or a single individual?"

Another smile. "The question would not arise, señor, for if he were an anarchist, the engine-driver would be a reasonable man and he would not dream of going against the clearly-expressed wish of his fellows. But regard for a moment the other side of the picture: suppose the members of the Cortes in their wisdom decided that the times of departures of all trains should be postponed one hour, irrespective of whether that is convenient to the passengers or not, then, —ah, then the engine-driver would show his contempt for the Cortes by starting the train at the correct hour—the correct hour by local sentiment."

The admiral finds this "an interesting viewpoint", though he admits that he "cannot quite follow the reasoning"!

It seems simple enough to us.

THE THREE MUSKETEERS—14



By JOHN OLDAY

THE REFORM OF THE SCHOOL

THERE are two ways open to those who seek to reform the education of children. They may seek to transform the school by studying the child and proving scientifically that the actual scheme of instruction is defective, and must be modified; or they may found new schools in which principles may be directly applied in the service of that ideal which is formed by all who reject the conventions, the cruelty, the trickery, and the untruth which enter into the bases of modern society.

The first method offers great advantages, and is in harmony with the evolutionary conception which men of science regard as the only effective way of attaining the end. They are right in theory, as we fully admit. It is evident that the progress of psychology and physiology must lead to important changes in educational methods; that the teachers now being in a better position to understand the child, will make their teaching more in conformity with natural laws. I further grant that this evolution will proceed in the direction of greater liberty, as I am convinced that violence is the method of ignorance, and that the educator who is really worthy of the name will gain everything by spontaneity; he will know the child's needs, and will be able to promote its development by giving it the greatest possible satisfaction.

In point of fact, however, I do not think that those who are working for the regeneration of humanity have much to hope from this side. Rulers have always taken care to control the education of the people; they know better than any that their power is based entirely on the school, and they therefore insist on retaining their monopoly of it. The time has gone by when rulers could oppose the spread of instruction and put limits to the education of the masses. Such a policy was possible formerly because economic life was consistent with general ignorance, and this ignorance facilitated despotism. The circumstances have changed, however. The progress of science and our repeated discoveries have revolutionised the conditions of labour and production. It is no longer possible for the people to remain ignorant; education is absolutely necessary for a nation to maintain itself and make headway against its economic competitors.

FRANCISCO FERRER, anarchist and educational pioneer was born near Barcelona in 1859 and died, facing a firing-squad in a trench outside Montjuich prison in October, 1909.

In his early life he was active in the radical republican movement in Spain, and in 1885 had to flee to Paris to evade arrest. His revolutionary ideas matured into anarchism and through his work as a language teacher he developed an interest in educational methods and in the changes in educational theory necessitated by the scientific discoveries of the 19th century.

On his return to Spain in 1901, he opened at Barcelona, the *Escuela Moderna*, the "Modern School", in order to put into practice his libertarian and rationalist theory of education. Since there existed no text-books suitable for use in such a school, Ferrer started a publishing house which issued new and translated literature to fill the gap. Despite the opposition of the State and the bitter hatred of the Catholic Church, after a few years there were over fifty schools in Spain run on Ferrer's revolutionary lines.

But in 1906, after the attempted assassination of the Spanish king by Matteo Moral, Ferrer was arrested and the *Escuela Moderna* was closed.

After being held without trial for a year he was acquitted of complicity in the attempt. On his release he devoted himself to the task of re-establishing his school and his publishing business, but after the riots and general strike in Barcelona which resulted from the Imperialist war in Morocco, Ferrer was again arrested and charged with being the instigator of the revolt and leader of the revolutionary workers.

Despite the horrified protests from many parts of the world, he was tried by a "rigged" court-martial and shot. Despotism and Catholic fanaticism had taken their revenge on a man who had dared to strike at the heart of their power—the organisation of ignorance, superstition and servility which masqueraded as education.

Loking back over forty years, and from a country not dominated by the church, it is easy to smile at some aspects of Ferrer's attitude—his faith in scientific materialism and his indoctrination of a "libertarian orthodoxy" as opposed to the authoritarian orthodoxy of the church and State schools; but its pioneering value and its fundamental validity can be seen from this extract from his book on "The Origin and Ideals of the Modern School".

Recognising this, the rulers have sought to give a more and more complete organisation to the school, not because they look to education to regenerate society, but because they need more competent workers to sustain industrial enterprises and enrich their cities. Even the most reactionary rulers have learned this lesson; they clearly understand that the old policy was dangerous to the economic life of nations, and that it was necessary to adapt popular education to the new conditions.

It would be a serious mistake to think that the ruling classes have not foreseen the danger to themselves of the intellectual development of the people, and have not understood that it was necessary to change their methods. In fact, their methods have been adapted to the new conditions of life, they have sought to gain control of the ideas which are in course of evolution. They have endeavoured to preserve the beliefs on which social discipline had been grounded, and to give to the results of scientific research and the ideas involved in them a meaning which will not be to the disadvantage of existing institutions; and it is this that has induced them to assume control of the school. In every country the governing classes, which formerly left the education of the people to the clergy, as these were quite willing to educate in a sense of obedience to authority, have now themselves undertaken the direction of the schools.

The danger of them consists in the stimulation of the human mind by the new spectacle of life and the possible rise of thoughts of emancipation in the depths of their hearts. It would have been folly to struggle against the evolving forces; the effect would be only to inflame them, and, instead of adhering to earlier methods of government, they would adopt new and more effective methods. It did not

require any extraordinary genius to discover the solution. The course of events itself suggested to those who were in power the way in which they were to meet the difficulties which threatened; they built schools, they sought generously to extend the sphere of education, and if there were at one point a few who resisted this impulse—as certain tendencies favoured one or other of the political parties—all soon understood that it was better to yield, and that the best policy was to find some new way of defending their interests and principles. There were then sharp struggles for the control of the schools, and these struggles continue to-day in every civilised country; sometimes the republican middle-class triumphs, sometimes the clergy. All parties appreciate the importance of the issue, and they shrink from no sacrifice to win the victory. "The school" is the cry of every party. The public good must be recognised in this zeal. Everybody seeks to raise himself and improve his condition by education. In former times it might have been said: "Those people want to keep thee in ignorance in order the better to exploit thee: we want to see thee educated and free." That is no longer possible; schools of all kinds rise on every side.

How much has been, and is, expected of education! Most progressive people expect everything of it, and, until recent years, many did not understand that instruction alone leads to illusions. Much of the knowledge actually imparted in schools is useless and the hope of reformers has been void because the organisation of the school, instead of serving an ideal purpose, has become one of the most powerful instruments of servitude in the hands of the ruling class. The teachers are merely conscious or unconscious organs of their will, and have been trained on their principles. From

their tenderest years, and more drastically than anybody, they have endured the discipline of authority. Very few have escaped this despotic domination; they are generally powerless against it, because they are oppressed by the scholastic organisation to such an extent that they have nothing to do but obey. It is unnecessary here to describe that organisation. One word will suffice to characterise it—Violence. The school dominates the children physically, morally, and intellectually, in order to control the development of their faculties in the way desired, and deprives them of contact with nature in order to modify them as required. This is the explanation of the failure; the eagerness of the ruling class to control education and the bankruptcy of the hopes of reformers. "Education" means in practice domination or domestication. I do not imagine that these systems have been put together with the deliberate aim of securing the desired result. That would be a work of genius. But things have happened just as if the actual scheme of education corresponded to some vast and deliberate conception; it could not have been done better. To attain it teachers have inspired themselves solely with the principles of discipline and authority, which always appeal to social organisers; such men have only one clear idea and one will—the children must learn to obey, to believe, and to think according to the prevailing social dogmas. It is this were the aim, education could not be other than we find it to-day. There is no question of promoting the spontaneous development of the child's faculties, or encouraging it to seek freely the satisfaction of its physical, intellectual, and moral needs. There is question only of imposing ready-made ideas on it, of preventing it from ever thinking otherwise than is required for the maintenance of existing social

institutions—of making it, in a word, an individual rigorously adapted to the social mechanism.

It cannot be expected that this kind of education will have any influence on the progress of humanity. I repeat that it is merely an instrument of domination in the hands of the ruling classes, who have never sought to uplift the individual, and it is quite useless to expect any good from the schools of the present day. What they have done up to the present they will continue to do in the future. There is no reason whatever why they should adopt a different system; they have resolved to use education for their purposes, and they will take advantage of every improvement of it. If only they preserve the spirit of the school and the authoritative discipline which rules it, every innovation will tend to their advantage. For this they will keep a constant watch, and take care that their interests are secured.

I would fix the attention of my readers on this point: the whole value of education consists in respect for the physical, intellectual, and moral faculties of the child. As in science, the only possible demonstration is demonstrated by facts; education is not worthy of the name unless it be stripped of all dogmatism, and unless it leaves to the child the direction of its powers and is content to support them in their manifestations. But nothing is easier than to alter this meaning of education, and nothing more difficult than to respect it. The teacher is always imposing, compelling, and using

(Continued on page 7)

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The Importance of NOW

NOW—9. Edited by George Woodcock. 72 pages. 2/- (Published by George Woodcock).

THE new issue of *Now*, the literary and social review edited by George Woodcock, comes just three months after the last one (reviewed in *Freedom*, 14/6/47). Although this falls short of the bi-monthly appearance which the editor aims at, it represents no mean achievement, as those who know something of the difficulties of magazine production at this time will realize. For the power cuts of the spring, the paper shortages, and the increasing costs of printing make the present an extremely hazardous time for enterprises of this kind. Altogether the career of this magazine presents many points of interest, and in some ways is quite remarkable.

The gradual emergence of a common social vision, an attitude towards the problems of creative activity in the social environment of to-day, was noted in *Freedom's* review of the last issue, *Now*—8. This attitude is maintained in the new number, and there is no need to stress it again here. It does, however, seem opportune to point to some aspects of the material career of this magazine, for the last few months have seen the closing down of some periodicals which fall into the same general class of magazines concerned with the social present, and showing an awareness of some of the underlying forces which condition the history of our times. The material position of *Now* is by no means, I should judge,

assured; finance is an ever-present worry for its editor and his helpers. But the very shakiness of its material foundations brings into relief the fact that material prosperity is not the sole arbiter of success or failure, for of its contemporaries which are suspending publication, some have not only derived a revenue from advertisements, but have also possessed wealthy "backers". *Now* derives revenue from neither of these sources, yet it looks as if it will not only be the most interesting and alive of such magazines, but will be left as the only surviving one! If this occurs we shall have witnessed the paradox of a small and unfinanced magazine surviving the serious economic blizzard in literature which is in process of engulfing wealthier contemporaries possessing material resources which *Now* never dreamed of!

There is no doubt that the running of minority publications is an extremely hazardous proceeding, continuity in publication often being very tenuous indeed. But where these publications are carried on by people who are not themselves financially bound up with them, and do not draw their own means of life from them, their loves are sometimes more vigorous than one might expect from glancing at their appeal columns. Let no one run away with the idea, however, that such publications can live on air; they cannot. But they can apparently withstand temporary economic blasts which wither their more seeming-prosperous fellows.

Whatever the causes of its survival, *Now's* continued and continuous appearance for more than four years—including the transitional years of war and peace—is a remarkable tribute to its vitality. And the present issue shows that this vitality is still undimmed. There is not a single article which does not bear the mark of quality—the quality of an independent outlook and penetrating vision. Throughout them all there runs an unspoken reliance on human values which is all the more welcome during these lean years of cynicism and weariness of the spirit. Not that the writers of *Now* exhibit any facile optimism or uncritical belief in unfounded nostrums; the pages of the present issue are pervaded with a sense of awareness and strength of quite a different kind.

And this social awareness is present and perceptible even though none of the articles—except the continuation of Paul Mattick's review of Trotsky's *Life of Stalin*—directly concerns itself with social matters. Kenneth Rexroth contributes a penetrating study of D. H. Lawrence's poetry which is especially refreshing to the present reviewer after the oceans of sentimental or slyly denigrating verbiage which have almost submerged Lawrence's memory. Derek Savage's *Note on Social Responsibility* surveys the "social" poets of the thirties with special reference to Spender and Louis MacNiece, while Louis Adeane's review of eight new books of poems traces the influence of the Imagists in the younger writers of to-day,

as well as in such established poets as Stephen Spender and Herbert Read.

Limitations of space permit only a brief catalogue of the remaining items: Harry Roskolerko's letter from Japan is excellent; Herbert Read continues his fugitive philosophic jottings on the nature of freedom and of quality, but the reader is tantalized by a feeling that it has been cut off in the middle—presumably there is more to come; George Woodcock contributes a study of H. G. Wells's decline as a writer. There is a short story by Patricia Johnson and poems by John Atkins, Thomas Good, Thomas Parkinson, William Porritt, Emmanuel Litvinoff, Alex Austin, and Charles Fox.

Special mention must be made of Paul Mattick's review of Trotsky's book. At last we have it clearly stated that there is no fundamental difference between Bolshevism, Fascism and State Capitalism of other brands. His article deserves much fuller analysis.

Altogether this is an issue to buy.

J.H.

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The Reform of the School

(Continued from page 6)

violence; the true educator is the man who does not impose his own ideas and will on the child, but appeals to its own energies.

From this we can understand how easily education is conducted, and how light is the task of those who seek to dominate the individual. The best conceivable methods become in their hands so many new and more effective means of despotism. Our ideal is that of science; we appeal to it in demanding the power to educate the child by fostering its development and procuring a satisfaction of its needs as they manifest themselves.

We are convinced that the education of the future will be entirely spontaneous. It is plain that we cannot wholly realise this, but the evolution of methods in the direction of a broader comprehension of life and the fact that all improvement involves the suppression of violence indicate that we are on solid ground when we look to science for the liberation of the child.

Is this the ideal of those who actually control the scholastic system? Is this what they propose to bring about? Are they eager to abandon violence? Only in the sense that they employ new and more effective methods to attain the same end—that is to say, the formation of individuals who will accept all the conventions, all the prejudices, and all the untruths on which society is based.

We do not hesitate to say that we want men who will continue unceasingly to develop; men who are capable of constantly destroying and renewing their surroundings and renewing themselves; men whose intellectual independence is their supreme power, which they will yield to none; men always disposed for things that are better, eager for the triumph of new ideas, anxious to crowd many lives into the one life they have. Society fears such men; you cannot expect it to set up a system of education which will produce them.

Let us follow closely the work of the experts who are engaged in the study of the child, and let us endeavour to find a way of applying their principles to the education we seek to establish, aiming at an increasingly complete emancipation of the individual. But how are we to do this? By putting our hand energetically to the work, by promoting the establishment of new schools in which, as far as possible, there shall rule this spirit of freedom which, we feel, will colour the whole education of the future.

We have already had proof that it leads to excellent results. We can destroy whatever there is in the actual school that savours of violence, all the artificial devices by which the children are estranged from nature and life, the intellectual and moral discipline which has been used to impose ready-made thoughts, all beliefs which deprave and enervate the will. Without fear of injury we may place the child in a proper and natural environment, in which it will find itself in contact with all that it loves, and where vital impressions will be substituted for the wearisome reading of books. If we do no more than this, we shall have done much towards the emancipation of the child.

STEP TOWARDS COMMUNISM

Struggling German democracy has lost a fine man this week with the death of Hans Kahle.

One of the last people from this country to talk to Kahle was Gordon Schaffer, of *Reynolds News*, who has sent me this account of that meeting:

"Like so many other anti-Fascist Germans who returned from exile or concentration camps to help rebuild their country, Hans Kahle worked far beyond his strength.

"I spent an evening with him at his home in Schwerin last April. He was wearing the smart new uniform of Chief of Police, but it was the same old Hans whom I knew in England.

"He talked with over-brimming enthusiasm of the new people's police force which he had built up.

There were no Nazis left in Kahle's force. He had drawn new men and women from the factories and the villages and he was training them in a new tradition of co-operation with the people, and the democratic organisations.

Daily Worker, 11/9/47.

Presumably the "comrades" will tell us that Lenin (or Stalin) pointed out that the taking over of the police force is a first step to "Communism". And they wouldn't be far wrong.

GLAMOUR BOY

"They were given to me by three very attractive ladies," Field-Marshal Montgomery explained yesterday when he arrived with three bouquets at Northolt Airport from Germany and Brussels.

He also wore a new medal ribbon for "The Order of Leopold", and a diamond-studded buckle from the citizens of Brussels.

Reynolds News, 21/9/47.

Suggestion for a

Revolutionary Calendar

ALTHOUGH we may not believe in the religious significance of their origin, very few of us would forego our Christmas or Easter holidays on that account, and it is typical of the rise of capitalism that it abolished the many saints' days that used to be observed as feasts, not because it had any objection to religion; but because it objected to its interfering with business as usual. While we insist on taking the orthodox holidays because otherwise we would get none at all, we find it regrettable that the revolutionary movement has never adopted a "calendar" of its own, marking the dates and anniversaries of significance.

A beginning was made many years ago by the Chicago Anarchists, who proposed that May the First be set aside as a day of solidarity by the international working class. This was successful, in fact, too much so, since the charlatans and misleaders of the working-class adopted May the First as their day, too (much as the most "un-Christian" elements adopted Christmas Day) and we have witnessed with deep regret the borrowing of May the First as a day of military display for the rulers of Nazi Germany and Bolshevik Russia, as well as for a humbug feast by the Labour leaders in other countries. Still, however misused it may be, May the First has certain traditions attaching to it we ought not to forget. And since, in the struggles that surrounded the original May the First agitation, the Chicago Anarchists were framed by the State and hanged, on November 11th, 1886, November 11th has also been observed by Anarchists as an Anarchist day. (It is an ironical joke on us that this day too was borrowed by our opponents for an obverse kind of military display). Also in the past few years Anarchists have taken the opportunity of the anniversary of the Spanish Revolution, 19th July, 1936, to demonstrate for the Anarchist cause.

Libertarian Anniversaries

Although the coldly logical might object to "making a fetish of anniversaries" it is a fact that if we do not do so we will miss a valuable chance of teaching revolutionary and Anarchist history to our fellow-workers, and many dates which have a deep significance in the history of the Anarchist movement should be used for meetings and reunions celebrating the original cause and at the same time introducing people to Anarchist ideas and history. For instance, the Commune of Paris is an event which was once the subject of annual demonstrations, and coinciding as it does with Whitsun, it is an ideal time to hold meetings or reunions.

The rich and varied history of the Anarchist movement, in every part of the world, and in so many significant events and fruitful experiments could be a source of many important anniversaries, and I make the suggestion to comrades that a revolutionary calendar could be compiled with dates that mean a great deal to our movement. Apart from the obvious May 1st, November 11th, and July 19th, one could no doubt propose such anniversaries as the Commune of Paris, the Russian Revolution (and an appropriate date for its final betrayal, the taking of power by the Bolsheviks), the Mexican Revolution, the 1934 rising in Asturias, the French and British General Strikes and the Italian occupation of the factories, and such events as Kropotkin's funeral (the last open non-Bolshevik demonstration in Russia), the attempts of men like Lucetti, Schirru and Sbardellotto against Fascism in Italy, and so on.

Italy, Chartism in England and a rising in Ireland. During the revolutionary struggle on the Continent—which incidentally marked the entry of Michael Bakunin into an active role in the revolutionary movement—the Anarchists first began to find themselves a separate force. At first organised loosely and known as Federalists within the International Working Men's Association, they began to be a force in the original I.W.M.A. in opposition to the followers of Marx and Engels. Finally came the split in the International, which the Marxists left, and from that time there was distinct cleavage between the Marxists—who in later years, after the death of Marx, split from Social Democrats and Bolsheviks—and the Anarchists.

100 Years of Anarchist Movement

One may mention that the most important event is only a few months off. It can be said that Anarchism is a doctrine which can be traced back several hundreds of years, and, of course, the basic principles of anarchism—lack of government, community, and mutual aid—are to be found in the earliest history of man. These ideas may well be said to have first taken concrete shape during the French Revolution, when the term "Anarchist" was first used in the sense we use it to-day. But it was during the great year of revolution, 1848, that the Anarchist movement first began to take concrete shape as a movement. In that year there was a wave of revolt all over Europe: the downfall of royalty in France, the end of mediaevalism in Germany, the rising in

Italy, Chartism in England and a rising in Ireland. During the revolutionary struggle on the Continent—which incidentally marked the entry of Michael Bakunin into an active role in the revolutionary movement—the Anarchists first began to find themselves a separate force. At first organised loosely and known as Federalists within the International Working Men's Association, they began to be a force in the original I.W.M.A. in opposition to the followers of Marx and Engels. Finally came the split in the International, which the Marxists left, and from that time there was distinct cleavage between the Marxists—who in later years, after the death of Marx, split from Social Democrats and Bolsheviks—and the Anarchists.

In the hundred years between 1848 and 1948 the Anarchist movement has known a varied existence, divided between struggle and persecution and neglect. There was the great wave of revolutionary action in the '80s and '90s, when the Anarchist movement was in the front of the struggle against individual despotism by crowned heads. Then came the period of mass syndicalist activity in the Latin countries in particular, but also in many other lands, when Anarchism was the driving force behind a great working-class movement. There was the trying period of the war, followed by what was at first thought an achievement of all our aims: the

Russian Revolution, which was however seized by the Marxists and followed by persecution everywhere, under Bolshevism and Fascism alike. Then came a period of neglect; during which in spite of many militants holding fast to their beliefs, and keeping the movement alive; the working-class in general turned to political charlatans or submitted to dictatorship. Then the great revival of anarchist activity during the Spanish Revolution. The World War has been followed by a dangerous situation, the breeding ground for dictatorship and a period of mass misery and preparation for war. It remains to be seen what we shall achieve in this period.

As a preliminary to our great task of struggle and the revival of militancy, I suggest the Anarchist movement uses 1948 as a suitable anniversary for portraying its history to the workers. One hundred years of the Anarchist movement! In that time many of its original prophecies and warnings have become trite remarks—its warnings against centralised dictatorship hardly require pointing out now: its definition of the character of Marxism and State Socialism, as well as State Capitalism; the dangers of the total State; these are not warnings any more, but recorded history. That is why it is important to us to see that working-class history is more widely known.

M.

INTERNAL UPLIFT

Mr. Kenneth De Courcy prints 60,000 copies of his *Intelligence Digest*, of which he claims to sell about half at 30 shillings a year. To foster his publication he gives frequent lavish luncheon and dinner parties, for diplomats, ambassadors and other society high-ups, either at his London or country home. When he is entertaining at his Cotswold place, an advance party of the domestic staff is sent from London to prepare the splendour of the main banquet hall. It went down last week to prepare for a dinner party.

After grace, Mr. De Courcy sat down with his guests to a dinner of fresh tomato soup, grilled fillets of plaice, breasts of chicken with baked potatoes and creamed cauliflower, followed by apple meringue, grapes and peaches.

Then, while the company drank vintage port and coffee, accompanied by cigars for the men and Turkish cigarettes for the women, he talked about the "Christian Awakening" which he is holding at London's Albert Hall on September 23rd. As Chairman of the International Council for Christian Leadership in Great Britain, Mr. De Courcy "will be in the chair".

News Review, 18/9/47.

VOTE—WHAT FOR?

So great is the apathy in the Islington by-election that one political organiser to-day predicted: "I think all the candidates will lose their deposits."

Evening Standard, 27/9/47.

WHAT IS "OBSTRUCTION"?

The combined effect of the law of the highway and the law about obstructing the police (which means, very often, not doing what they tell you) is that this is only a relatively free country.

News Chronicle, 23/9/47.

HUMANITY ON THE BENCH

A 29-year-old mother-to-be, Mrs. Edna Flora Hall, who had no previous convictions, was sent to prison for six months here to-day for theft.

There were three women magistrates on the bench.

Mrs. Hall pleaded guilty to stealing collecting-boxes, obtaining 9s. credit by fraud, and shoplifting. The contents of the collecting-boxes amounted to £10 16s. 6d. and the value of the articles stolen from shops was £16 1s.

Mrs. Hall, of no settled address, was said by a previous employer to be a good worker.

Mrs. Hall had told the police that she had been deserted by her husband and was expecting a baby in November.

Det-Constable Walker said that in November, 1946, Mrs. Hall's little boy, aged four, was accidentally drowned and she had been unable to work since.

The mayor, Alderman Mrs. Mary Whitmore said: "We have no alternative but to send you to prison. We are sure you will be well looked after and it is really the best thing for you."

News Chronicle, 23/9/47.

POLITICAL MINISTRONE

Those who believe that the Government will not survive the crisis are asking: "What alternative is there?" A suggestion gaining ground is that a Government of distinguished business men, free of any political past or party allegiance, would provide the best opportunity for Britain's survival.

Who will be the leader? His friends say that Montgomery is the man. The Field-Marshal, like the Duke of Wellington, has a secure place in history as a great soldier. Will he emulate the Duke by leading in the political field? I am assured that the idea is not so remote as it appears.

News of the World, 7/9/47.

ACCURATE FORECASTING

On September 11th, Edgehill will treat the election as a straight fight between the Opposition and the Government, however many other candidates there may be in the field. The I.L.P. candidate will take a few hundred of the Labour vote. The Liberals will take a few hundred off each side. But the result is a foregone conclusion; a Labour victory with a reduced majority—reduced by apathy and a measure of discontent, but not by anything which has been offered by the Tories.

Woodrow Wyatt in
New Statesman, 6/9/47.

And it turned out just like that.

Through the Press

MONOPOLY ON HEALTH, TOO?

The British Ministry of Health issued a cautious statement yesterday of streptomycin as a tuberculosis "wonder drug" and announced at the same time that imports of the drug from the United States have been arranged to begin regular treatment of cases...

British production is very limited due to the fact that an American patent controls the most effective method of extracting the drug from the mold, much as penicillin is extracted.

New York Herald Tribune, 5/9/47.

Freedom for the scientists of all nations to interchange their discoveries was demanded here to-day by Professor M. L. E. Oliphant, pioneer of atomic research.

"Men are dying all over the world for lack of anti-bacteriological substances developed to combat the bacteriological weapons which nations hope to employ in a future war," he declared.

News Chronicle, 31/7/47.

SENSIBLE PARENTS

No more prizes will be awarded to bright boys in Long Row School, Belper, near Derby, because parents and teachers have agreed that prizes cause inferiority complex—to the not-so-bright pupils.

The school has 200 pupils, and parents have voted by 133—8 against further prize days.

News Chronicle, 23/9/47.

We applaud the decision of these parents, but we hope they take the same sensible attitude to punishments!

TIP FOR Mr. DALTON

For the current year, Parliament has voted £12,183,785 for British embassies, missions and consular establishments abroad. This is an increase of £220,280 over last year's cost.

The axe ought to be aimed particularly at the public information services, the cost of which this year is £1,852,640 (£2,567,988 last year).

The salaries and allowances bill alone of the 2734 officials who tell the tale is £1,047,200. They range from seven information counsellors and controllers who get from £900 to £1,700 (plus allowances), through 93 information officers (£550 to £1,100), and 17 assistant information officers (£400 to £950) to two classes of "other officers" (£150 to £1,200).

Their travels cost £135,000, and they spend £55,000 on "entertainment in connection with their official duties."

Their output is weighty; carriage including postage and freight of correspondence and of publicity matter is £100,000. And that does not include the cost of its distribution.

Evening Standard, 12/9/47.

Mr. Aneurin Bevan (Minister of Health) told Sir William Darling (C.—Edinburgh S.) that the amount of paper used in identity cards was about 18½ tons a year. The staff employed at the central offices was approximately 855 and the total annual cost of those offices was about £230,000. It was not possible to state separately how much of the work of the joint local National Registration and Food Offices was attributable to

national registration. The same local staff does both classes of work.

Manchester Guardian, 31/7/47.

★

In a leading article last week we stated that the Services use £13 million pounds' worth of petrol annually. This was an error: the figure which we gave relates to the Army only; and the total consumption by the Forces amounts to roughly £32 millions this year.

New Statesman, 13/9/47.

By cutting out this unnecessary expenditure the country would be saving £44½ millions a year, which could be more usefully spent on importing some of the necessities of life.

ON THE SCRAP HEAP

A widow of 80 has been ejected from a "tied" cottage at Stebbing, Essex, on the death of her farm-worker husband. Stebbing Tenants' Association have asked Mr. Bevan to provide alternative accommodation in future cases.

Evening News, 23/9/47.

INTENSIVE EDUCATION

Five hundred children at Bourne Primary School, near Northolt Airport, work under such over-crowded conditions that some classes have to be taken in the cloakrooms.

I found that 50 children are taught in one small classroom. In one room, 13 desks and 26 children occupy a space measuring 14 ft. by 8 ft.

Reynolds News, 21/9/47.

Anarchist Commentary

Shades of the Prison House

THE magazine Picture Post has often performed a useful task in attempting to draw the attention of its readers to the great and small social evils of our day, and especially to the thoughtless inhumanity and unimaginative callousness which are inherent in so many of our social institutions, though they escape the attention, and the conscience, of the outsider.

In 1939, it showed us the terrible conditions in Spanish refugee camps in France, last year an unforgettable picture of an English mental hospital, and a recent issue (Sept. 13th) draws our attention to Britain's largest women's prison:

"You can see part of Holloway Prison from Camden Road. Buses stop just by it, and there is a bustle of traffic past it between Camden Town and the Nag's Head. Only 20 yards of space, four-foot-thick walls of stone, and nearly 100 years of thought, separate the prison and the busy street."

Women Behind Bars

The photographs tell us more than words can of the unbearably drag routine. Here are the prisoners—goulish figures in shapeless cloaks taking their dealy exercise, their glimpse of the world outside. "On one side they see the main prison building, on the other, the prison walls"... Here are the warders, their heels clicking on the polished floor of the long suicide-proofed galleries going from cell to cell unlocking the doors in the morning. And here is the cell, 14 ft by 9 ft. where the prisoners spend 16 hours out of the 24. "What every prisoner longs for is something that will make her cell look different, that will stamp it as her own. So she puts up photographs of her family, picture post-cards coloured illustrations from magazines, and old Christmas cards." Here are the tin bowls of dinner being handed out, here the girls sitting in rows stitching mailbags. Their heads are bent over their work at a uniform angle as tables are not provided. And here in two pictures we see the sickening and infuriating hypocrisy of our benevolent prison system. The first shows Sunday morning in Holloway, with the prisoners at the Church of England chapel. The second photograph shows the prisoner mothers bathing their babies in a row. The caption reads: "The babies who are spending the first months of their lives in prison. The babies spend the day in the ward and go back to their mothers' cells in the evening. Some were born in prison, other came in with their mothers." One thing is striking about this photograph—although the mothers are all doing the same thing—bathing their

babies—they emerge from the picture as individuals—despite the obscuring of their faces, done to avoid identification—whereas in all the other photographs they seem undifferentiated and lifeless.

You will notice in our "Through the Press" feature, under the heading "Humanity on the Bench", the story of an expectant mother sent to jail by three women magistrates. The mayor told her "We have no alternative but to send you to prison. We are sure you will be well looked after and it is really the best thing for you."

We are reminded of Chesterton's verse: "Your vicious things shall melt in air— But for the virtuous things you do The Righteous Work, the Public Care It shall not be forgiven you."

Justice Is Done

The two men sentenced to death for their part in the murder of Mr. Alec de Antiquis, have been hanged. "Justice" has been done and a crowd of about a hundred waited outside the prison for the notices to be posted on the gate. At the inquest on the executed men (how typical of the law to hold an enquiry into the cause of death of the men it has just killed), the coroner (surely outside his legal function?), said: "It seems to me that a conviction in a case of this kind may act as a deterrent to others who may be like-minded, and it is your efforts and those who work under you that saved the public at large from a recurrence."

And, as though he had just won the cup final, Superintendent Fabian replied: "I was only the captain of a good team." In the face of all evidence and experience, the coroner thinks that this case will act as a deterrent to further crimes, but isn't it certain that the same social factors that made criminals of these boys (ages 20 and 23) and their accomplice, who was "detained during the king's pleasure" (age 17), will have a similar effect on others?

Their history seems almost predetermined—petty theft, Borstal, robbery with violence, and so on, ending, tragically and dramatically in their case, with murder. Prisoners, as Kropotkin said, are the universities of crime.

Meetings and Announcements

UNION OF ANARCHIST GROUPS:

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

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

4th OCTOBER John Larkman "The Colour Bar"

11th OCTOBER To be announced

N.E. LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

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

TUESDAY, OCT. 7th at 7.30 TOM CARLISLE—Nationalisation—from a Miner's Point of View.

Any enquiries to:— 27 Red Lion Street, W.C.1.

CHORLEY AREA GROUP

LECTURES Sun., Oct. 26th J. H. Moorhouse Anarchism and Healing Wed., Nov. 19th Anarchism and Psychology Commence 7 p.m. At the Oddfellows Rooms, 9, Cunliffe St., Chorley, Lancs.

GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP

Public Meetings at CENTRAL HALLS, BATH ST., will be held every Sunday evening. Speakers: Preston Clements, John Gaffney, Frank Leech, Eddie Shaw. Doors open 6.30 p.m. Make a point of telling your friends and workmates of these indoor meetings to be held in Glasgow during the coming months.

BIRMINGHAM ANARCHIST GROUP

Regular fortnightly public discussion meetings are held on Sundays at 7 p.m. at Dick Sheppard House, 36 Holloway Head.

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Australia

Greetings to a Comrade



AN Australian paper, recently received, reminds Aus of the tireless activity of our old comrade J. W. Fleming, who has been carrying on anarchist propaganda at Melbourne for 50 years.

"Yes, 'Chummy' is still dishing it out from the same old rock platform, under the same old elm, under the same red banner proclaiming ANARCHY to the four winds... At 84, he can still draw the crowds at Melbourne's most famous Sunday institution."

"Chummy" Fleming was one of the earliest revolutionary propagandists in Australia and organised the first May Day procession there. He was already a veteran when, during the First World War, he addressed crowds of up to 100,000 at the anti-conscription rallies at the Yarra Bank. Year in, year out, and despite frequent visits to jail, he has kept up his agitation against the State, against the so-called "Labour" government which works hand-in-glove with capitalism and militarism, and against the obscurantism of the Catholic Church.

During the war, on his 80th birthday, "Chummy" wrote to us to give us a laconic account of his activities.

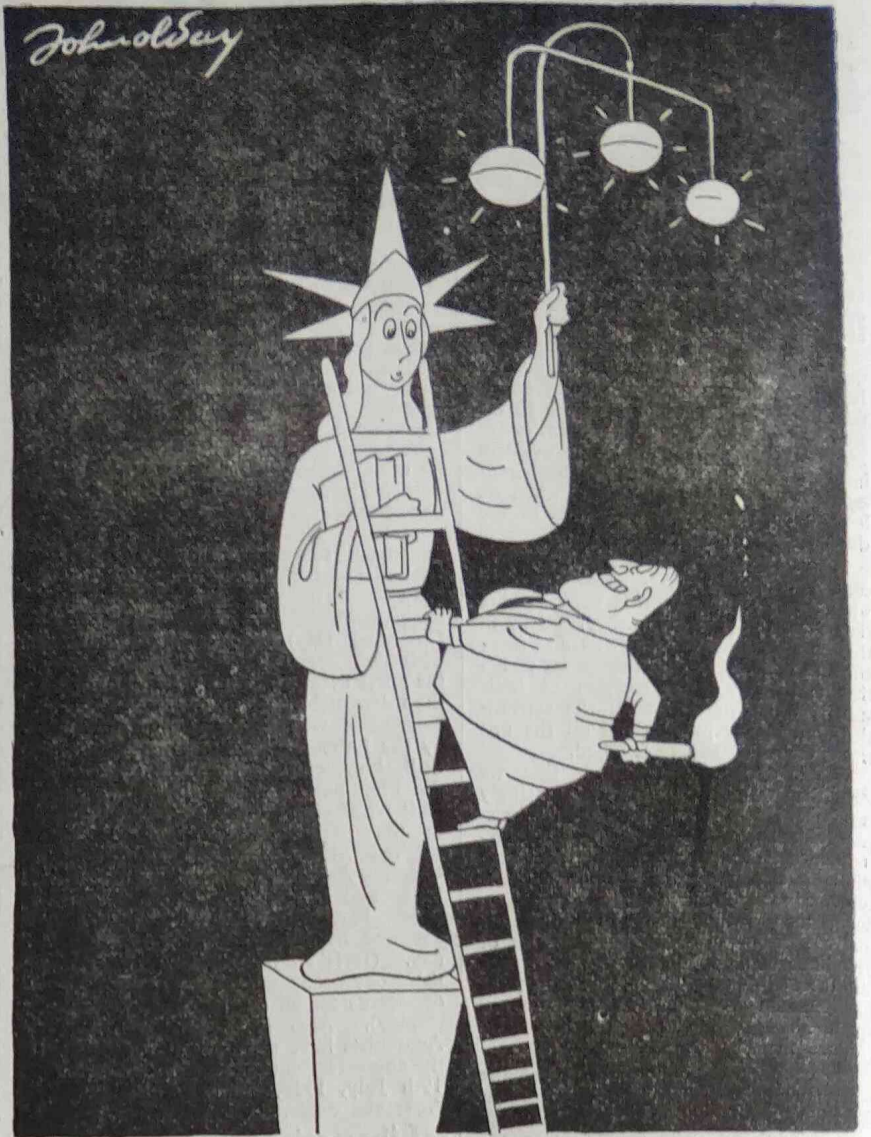
"Last May Day I led the May procession with a banner on which was written 'Long Live Anarchy'. I had proceeded a short distance when the police put me out of the procession. I ran down two more streets and got in again in the march to the Yarra Bank. I have been circulating Freedom among the University students, with success. They invited me to lecture on Anarchism and were pleased with the lecture. Australia is not England—the Roman Catholics are strong so I continually attack their superstition. The war has caused a boom, wage are high and the workers cling to their chains."

We send our warmest greetings to our old comrade and to the other anarchists and anti-militarists who are keeping up the struggle "down under".

ARRESTS WITHOUT TRIAL IN PALESTINE

Reference has frequently been made in the columns of this paper to the numerous arrests of Jews in Palestine and their detention for indefinite periods without trial. An organization was formed earlier this year to provide legal aid for these detainees and financial assistance for their dependents often destitute, and it is in their A.Z. News Letter that figures of the number of persons detained without trial are published. The figures quoted as at 1st March, 1946, were: Asmara (Eritrea) 305 men, Latrun (Palestine) 207 men, Bethlehem (Palestine) 36 women. Total 548 detainees. To-day, according to the Committee the numbers have risen to something between 700 and 800 detainees. It is interesting to note that 145 detainees were under 20 years of age and the rest between 20 and 40.

What is "freedom loving" British public opinion doing in the matter? Remember that some of these people have been detained without trial since 1943!



"It shines just as bright, and ain't so incendiary"

"Hands Off My Dad!"

A street ice-cream salesman, continually charged with obstruction, who as a protest chained himself to a lamp-post, has again been fined. He arrived at the court with his seven children who paraded outside with placards stating his case. In court, he said, "I have paid about 50 fines in less than three months, and have got a right to grouse."

The magistrate said: "If all of us decided to air our grievances by chaining ourselves up, it would be impossible for life to carry on. There would be so many people chained up that there would not be enough to cut them free."

"What I don't like to hear is the way you brought your children into this. It is wrong for a man to try to breed spite into his children."

But it is evident that the element of spite in this case is provided by the police in their continued persecution of the ice-cream man and he may be doing his children a service in disabusing them at a tender age of the illusion of "justice".

What Is "Obstruction"?

This issue of "obstruction" is of importance to us. A year or so ago there was a wave of police persecution of our comrades selling this paper in the street, in particular, at Marble Arch, and only their determination to stand their ground maintained their right. This was an obvious case of political persecution—who ever heard of the commercial newspaper sellers being prosecuted?

An amazing case of "obstruction" was reported last week in the Evening Standard:

It is against the law to stand on the pavement, even if you are talking to someone.

Herbert Redford Blake, aged 24, was told this at Marlborough-street court to-day, when he was charged with obstructing a policeman.

Evidence was that while talking to a friend at Marble Arch, Blake refused to move along when requested to do so by a policeman and said: "You can't move me. This is free country, and I am a citizen and I know my rights. I am entitled to stand here as much as you are."

When Mr. Paul Bennett, V.C., the

magistrate, had heard this evidence, he said to Blake: "Quite wrong. You have no right to stand still on the pavement. You have only a right to move up and down."

He fined Blake 2s. 6d. The magistrate overlooked the fact that if Mr. Blake had not right to stand on the pavement, neither had the policeman. A writer in the News Chronicle summed it up thus:

"The combined effect of the law of the highway and the law about obstructing the police (which means, very often, not doing what they tell you) is that this is only a relatively free country."

Our ice-cream man was told that life couldn't carry on, if we all aired our grievances in the way he adopted. We may be sure that if all of us resisted, the intolerable and stupid restrictions placed, in big matters and small, on our daily lives, then the system that imposed them couldn't carry on. C.

SALUTE THE SOLDIER

Soldiers of the 1st Batt. The Green Howards were warned by Derby magistrates to-day that they had better keep away from the town. A police inspector had said that over the week-end 50 of the troops had attempted to storm the police station to release a prisoner. Star, 15/9/47.

DIVIDED LOYALTIES

A 16-year-old boy who had absconded from an approved school at Redhill, arrived at his home in Hanwell, in time for breakfast to-day.

After giving him a meal his mother telephoned the police and handed him over to them. Star, 15/9/47.

CORRECTION

A bad misprint occurred in the caption to the cartoon in some copies of the last issue. It should have read "My dear, you're charming but stupid" the Royal horse said, very stiffly. "For you it's always work and want. For us it's simply pivving and living."

I.R.A. HUNGERSTRIKER

David Fleming, a former I.R.A. leader, was still on hunger strike at Belfast Prison yesterday afternoon. No decision has yet been arrived at by the Minister of Home Affairs regarding what is to be done with him. He has been refusing food since his arrest at Nutt's Corner Airport, Belfast, on Saturday, when he arrived by plane from Dublin.

Last year Fleming refused food for 78 days in Belfast Prison. He was then deported to Eire.

Manchester Guardian, 24/9/47.

Press Fund

SEPTEMBER 11th—24th: Gosport: F.G. 5/-; Acton: E.W.P. £1/7/0; London: E.G. 2/-; S. Francisco: Two Friends £1/5/0; Guildford: M.J.P. 1/-; Fulham: F.C.D. 1/-.

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