

# SHADOWS OF WAR

NOWADAYS we are living in a renewed atmosphere of war. Politicians, generals, journalists, and the common people everywhere are talking of it once again. And behind all this talk there is the concrete reality that, as Clement Davies, leader of the Liberal Party, pointed out in the House of Commons on the 24th October, there are still 19,000,000 men under arms in the world, and 40 nations, most of them suffering from a chronic shortage of food and other things necessary for their peoples to live a decent life, are nevertheless spending £7,000,000,000 a year on preparations for war.

There is no doubt whatever that the politicians and generals of the great powers, and particularly of America and Russia, are preparing feverishly for the next war, and the smaller countries are following their example. A country like France, for instance, caught in a food crisis unparalleled in her history, is deliberately building a large army, and minor imperialisms, like Holland, are joining in the race.

Meanwhile, these same political cheer-leaders of the various countries are doing their best to place the blame on their rivals, and none are more zealous than the Russian leaders. Vishinsky's outbursts at the United Nations have become notorious, but they are no worse than what is being said every day in the Russian press, while Zhdanov, one of the members of the Russian Politburo, addressing the newly-formed Comintern in Warsaw, accused the U.S.A. of military preparations in all parts of the world, and stated:

"The new U.S. policy is directed towards the strengthening of its monopolistic position and envisages placing its capitalist partners in a subordinate, dependent position.

"But, athwart the path of the U.S. striving for world domination stands the U.S.S.R.—this bulwark of anti-imperialist and anti-Fascist policy, with its growing international influence—and the workers of all countries."

## TRUTH AND HYPOCRISY

The first part of this statement is true enough, just as there is a nucleus of truth in the American propaganda which accuses Russian of expansionist intentions. But it is just as hypocritical on the part of the Russians to pose as the enemies of imperialism and Fascism as it is for the American ruling class to pretend to be champions of democratic freedom.

Russia at present dominates the whole of Eastern and half of Central Europe. Communists attempt to portray such countries as Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Rumania as free agents, but it is a significant fact that the foreign policy of these countries is dominated by Russian interests, and that individuals within such countries who oppose a pro-Russian policy are immediately liquidated. The Russians are making sure that, when they withdraw their own troops, these subject countries will remain within the fold. In Eastern Germany, of which they are not so certain, the numbers of occupying troops are actually being strengthened once again.

Something of the Russian plans for the next war were revealed when General Chaparidze of the Soviet Army fled from Austria, and made certain statements about Russian policy which on the face of it seemed somewhat startling. Chaparidze, whose statement is reported in *Time*, asserted that the Russians intended to try and occupy Western Europe, with the aid of Czech, Bulgar and Yugoslav troops, and afterwards to attempt to seal off the Mediterranean, but that their main theatre of war would be in the Far East, where their aim would be to seize the whole of China, and then reach a compromise agreement to share out the world with the United States.

## RUSSIA AND THE FAR EAST

Such reports should naturally be received with the greatest reserve. Nevertheless, the fact remains that recent events have actually tended to bear out the theory that the Russians are preparing for war in the Far East. For some weeks now fighting has been growing severe in Manchuria between the Chinese Communists and the

The Russian government is a terroristic and bloody dictatorship. America is an imperialist plutocracy aiming at economic world power. Both sides are preparing for war, and, whether they want it or not, would rather indulge in it than abandon their vested interests.

## THE REAL MOTIVES

It is the good they say about themselves that is false. The Russians have only their nationalist interests at heart; their claim to stand for the workers of the world is the purest hypocrisy, as is shown by their own internal tyranny and their systematic slaughter of working-class militants in countries under their control. The pretence of supporting democratic ideals on the part of the American leaders is shown to be false, not only by the radical discrimination within their own country, but also by their refusal to afford asylum to the victims of Russian tyranny, such as the million Eastern European displaced persons left in Germany under the care of I.R.O., who dare not return to the horrors of Russian revenge, and for whom the sole resources now left seem to be less than a million pounds' worth of gold fillings from the incinerators of the Nazi death camps.

We must judge the rulers of the world, not only by their protestations, but by the way in which their actions affect the lives of individual men and women. When we see the bleak prospect that either peace or war offers the majority of people in the world to-day, we can only condemn the men whose power manias have brought us to this pass.

We must refuse to accept the war propaganda of either the Russian or American rulers or of their journalistic stooges throughout the world. The alternative is not, as these apologists would have us believe, between supporting Russia or America. The real alternative is between acquiescing in war or resisting it with all our strength, between playing the politician's game of warmongering or striving to bring about that mass refusal to accept militarism and government which is the workers' only hope of liberation from an unending succession of wars and economic crises by which the governing classes of the world hope to preserve their domination.

Chinese Government troops, and, except for the main towns, the province is virtually in the hands of the Communists, who are clearly equipped and supported by the Russian Government. Reports from American observers in China even suggest that the Russians themselves will take over Manchuria in six months; what is much more likely is the foundation of a puppet republic like the Outer Mongolian People's Republic, which would be completely under Russian influence, and would govern a strategically important frontier on the north of China.

But, at the same time as the Russians are making their preparations for the next war, the Americans are steadily consolidating their economic power in the strategic areas of the world. The infiltration of South America continues. Economic relief to Western Europe is considered in terms of combatting Russian influence, not in terms of relieving human suffering. Plans for the establishment of American and English centres of petroleum exploitation in the Middle East continue, while in Persia, where Anglo-American influence is now in the ascendant, the *Manchester Guardian* correspondent reports the hanging or imprisonment of hundreds of Communist or alleged Communist supporters who assisted the Russian occupation of Azerbaidjan.

The unfortunate fact which the workers have to accept is that all the evil which Russian and American politicians say about each other is true.

## Washington Tally Ho!

"WESTWARD, look the land is bright!" quoted Churchill during the war whose principal result has been the enslavement of this country to the anonymous and irresponsible financiers of Wall St.

But America is bright only with the glint of hoarded gold, the glitter of high-pressure advertising and the hollow gleam of the arc-lights of Hollywood.

A recent manifestation of the psychopathic background of present-day American life was the annual convention of the American Legion in New York. The legionaries, who were flattered and patronised by the President and the candidates for the next presidential election, "crowded the streets of the city wearing their uniforms, medals and ribbons". *Resistance* (September) describes the scene:

"Ageing men with cold vacant faces wandered aimlessly through the streets squirting passers-by with water-pistols. Others jolted women with electrically-charged canes or handcuffed some unfortunate man to a lamp post. The legionaries fired miniature cannons and firecrackers, they misdirected traffic to cause snarls, they took over Broadway to drive crazily around in their 'locomotives'."

The latest example is the Hollywood heresy-hunt now being conducted by the Committee on Un-American Activities in Washington. Before members of Congress and the House of Representatives, swooning film-fans, and excited women, well-known film actors have been protesting their loyalty to "American institutions", their hatred of Russia and their

determination to eliminate "Communism" from American life. Hollywood was never renowned for the high-quality of its acting and these great screen lovers have given a most unconvincing performance reading their lines like second-rate comedians' stooges.

The most contemptible role was that played by Adolphe Menjou, who made a vicious attack on Charlie Chaplin to whom the calumnies of envious rivals and agents of American industrialists are nothing new. Years ago it was Chaplin who made Menjou a success. He is repaid by slanders and ill-concealed hatred.

With its tremendous publicity, its cameramen and flash-lights, its succession of witnesses repeating their story like children chanting their multiplication tables, the purge of Hollywood resembles nothing more than the Moscow trials and the periodic elimination of "anti-Soviet" elements in Russian life. It is not accidental that the rival totalitarian systems which seek to dominate the world to-day manifest themselves in similar ways. In Russia, those who manage to retain a sense of human values, of artistic integrity, of genuinely progressive ideas, are stigmatised as "Trotsky-fascists"; in America they are called "Communists".

Fifty years ago when the American nation murdered the Chicago anarchists the cry was "They're Reds, they ought to swing anyway". Twenty-five years ago, at the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti it was "They're Reds, they ought to burn anyway". To-day, the hysterical voice of Washington says of the mildest of progressive elements "They're Reds, they can love America or leave it". What will be the call of these champions of democracy in a few years time?

## SACRIFICES—FOR WHAT?

*The Queen said: "The rule is jam to-morrow and jam yesterday—but never jam to-day." "It must come sometimes to jam to-day," Alice objected. "No, it can't," said the Queen, "It's jam every other day: to-day isn't any other day, you know."*

—LEWIS CARROLL.

DAY after day, we are told of new cuts in our rations, in our standard of life, in our social services and amenities in the name of the economic state of siege which we are to endure, and whose duration is not yet known.

Food rations are to be lower than ever before. Sugar will be reduced to 8 oz. again. Bacon will continue to be 1 oz. a week (the lowest ration during the war was 4 oz. and was at one time 8 oz.), the meat ration will be one shilling's worth (in 1941 it was 2s. 2d. worth). Potatoes may be rationed and bakers and confectioners will have their supplies restricted. The purchase of tobacco from America has stopped altogether, and calf leather shoes are to be reserved entirely for export. Houses under construction will be completed but there is no indication of any housing work not already under contract, being started.

Less spectacular, but probably even more significant, are the cuts in capital expenditure. The socialist economists have frequently, and recently, been attacking the grasping and short-sighted policy of the British Tory industrialists who neglected to renew their capital

equipment and failed to "plough back" their profits into their under-capitalised, old-fashioned and inefficient industries and undertakings.

Now these pundits of the Fabian Society and the London School of Economics are following a similar and self-destructive panic policy. Here, indeed, is a vicious circle! They want to export more, and in order to do so, in successful competition with overseas rivals they must produce more cheaply; in order to produce more cheaply they must concentrate new capital expenditure on export industries and therefore must eliminate capital expenditure on home production and amenities. In doing this, they hope to "free" more labour (in other words create unemployment so as to put more workers in the hands of the Labour Exchange) for the export industries. But the ruthless cuts in home production and services and the consequent lowering of living standards and purchasing power will take away any zest and enthusiasm for increasing output that is left in our war-weary, crisis-weary people. Only fools will make luxuries for every quarter of the globe while necessities are lacking at home. He is a stupid cobbler who allows himself to remain the worst shod,

Cripps, the Archbishop of Austerity, cries: "I wish that to-day our country could refresh its heart and mind with a deep draught of that Christian faith which has come down to us over the centuries and inspired the peoples of Europe to fresh efforts and new hopes." Who is going to be inspired to fresh efforts because British cosmetics are selling cheaper

(Continued on page 8)

## The Housing Betrayal

"HOUSING WILL BE ONE OF THE GREATEST AND ONE OF THE EARLIEST TESTS OF A GOVERNMENT'S REAL DETERMINATION TO PUT THE NATION FIRST . . . LABOUR'S PLEDGE IS FIRM AND DIRECT . . . IT WILL PROCEED WITH A HOUSING PROGRAMME WITH THE MAXIMUM PRACTICAL SPEED UNTIL EVERY FAMILY IN THIS ISLAND HAS A GOOD STANDARD OF ACCOMMODATION."

THESE were words from the Electoral Programme which jockeyed our Government into power in 1945. Now although, as Baldwin (and who should know better than he?) admitted in 1936, electoral promises have no relation either to a government's intentions or its capabilities, Labour's housing programme was extremely modest—not to say inadequate. The Government in 1945 declared its intention to build "3 to 4 million houses in 10 to 12 years". Mr. Silkin, the present Minister of Town and Country Planning estimated the need in the first ten post-war years to be from 7 to 8 million, and Mr. Greenwood considered that the figure should "on any reasonable standard" be 5½ million. Because of deterioration, and the increase in the number of families, the requirements grow by about 350,000 each year.

How do these requirements compare with the numbers of houses actually built? In the two years since the war about 227,000 new houses were completed, half of them permanent, half temporary.

Thus it can be seen that, not only are we failing to make a real attack on the basic housing shortage, but we are not even keeping pace with the annual increases in the number of houses required. The housing situation is in

the politician's phrase "steadily deteriorating", and so are the houses we have got!

In the face of this desperate situation comes the report to Sir Stafford Cripps of the Planning Board, which, as reported in the *Observer*:

"would more than halve the number of houses completed each month and bring down the theoretical programme to a fifth—from 300,000 a year to 60,000.

"Mr. Bevan's original proposal was to finish 25,000 houses a month, but by midsummer the number was down to 12,500. The Planning Board now suggests, I understand, that Mr. Bevan should budget for 5,000 a month until the arrears are under control."

Of course, Cripps—a wealthy land-owner—cannot be expected to see the indefinite deferment of the housing programme in terms of human misery and ill-health. For the acute overcrowding is causing slum conditions far outside the pre-war slum areas. A correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* describes the situation well from the point of view of young married couples (the guardians of the future, as an eloquent member of the government described them):

"Married during the war, the wife, if she is not serving herself, continues to live with her parents, buys furniture on the instalment system for her future home, and gives birth to two or three children, which in itself overcrowds a two-bedroomed house. An unmarried son or two are demobilised and come back to their home to sleep on a sofa or on the floor; the husband returns to share one room with his wife and two or three children.

(Continued on page 8)



# The Myth of Czech Democracy

WE are getting used to the creation of myths. At one time we only had a Russian myth, now we have a Polish myth, an Eastern Zone of Germany myth, a Hungarian myth. The most popular, however, seems to be the Czech myth. According to fellow-travellers of Tom Driberg's type, we have a lot to learn from this model democracy which is wrongly being accused of hiding behind an iron curtain.

That the country is dominated by the Communists seemed to me obvious during my short stay in Czechoslovakia. Nobody seems to have any doubts about it in the country itself and they would no doubt be surprised to read the accounts of British journalists who claim that Czechoslovakia is free from any party's domination and foreign interference. No doubt these journalists have not met, as I have, people who have been imprisoned for months without any reason being given, people who have been interrogated by the secret police for alleged criticisms of the Communist Party. Some of these journalists were in Czechoslovakia at the time, or soon after, the 'arrest of brutal treatment of *Illustrated's* correspondents, yet none of them mentions the incident and they talk gaily about the freedom of the Press. None of them seems to have seen German prisoners employed as slave labour on the land. None of these brilliant and inquiring-minded journalists has apparently bothered to find out who were the women prisoners working in the fields, dressed in patched trousers made of camouflage material and torn shirts? None of them has asked why they were there, what they had done, if they received any pay, when they will be sent back to their families.

We hear, however, plenty of generalisations as to Czechoslovakia's democratic régime and complete independence. How do these stand up to the facts?

## Prague or Moscow?

Francis Lint, writing in *World Review*, Oct. 1947, asserts: "There has, till now, been no evident interference with Czechoslovakia's external and internal affairs."

This was written two months after we had seen the most glaring example of Russia's interference in Czechoslovakia's foreign policy regarding the Marshall plan. On July 9th, the Czechoslovak Government announced that it would go to Paris to discuss the Marshall Plan, a few hours later this decision was suddenly reversed. How could a decision, reached unanimously by the four parties in the Government: Communist, National Socialist, Social Democratic and People's Catholic Party, be changed so rapidly?

*Worldover Press* (U.S.A.) in its bulletin 12-19th Sept., gives a detailed analysis of the reasons for this volte-face. It points out that the first decision was mainly dictated by economic reasons, the need for trade with the West, while the second was political and dictated by Stalin's foreign policy.

## The Economic Reasons

Czechoslovakia's economy depends on the West and can only with difficulty be geared to that of Russia. "Even in February, 1947," *Worldover Press* points out, "when Czech exports to Russia reached their peak, they were no more than seven per cent. of the total exports. In August of this year, one of the largest orders was delivered to Russia: 10,000,000 Czech crowns (£50,000) worth of lathes. But such an order is exceptional. On the whole Czechoslovak industry cannot meet Soviet needs."

"For example, the most important industrial production in Czechoslovakia is that of fine, specialized glass: cut glass, optical and art glass including the recently developed etched glass. But there is no

## ANARCHISM

### - Interpretations

"No human laws are of any validity if contrary to the law of nature; and such of them as are valid derive all their force and all their authority mediately or immediately from this original." Thus writes Blackstone, to whom let all honour be given for having so far outseen the ideas of his time—and, indeed, we may say of our time. A good antidote, this, for those political superstitions which so widely prevail. A good check upon that sentiment of power-worship which still misleads us by magnifying the prerogatives of constitutional governments as it did those of monarchs. Let men learn that a legislative is NOT "our God upon earth," though, by the authority they ascribe to it and the things they expect of it, they would seem to think it is an institution serving a purely temporary purpose, whose power, when not stolen, is, at the best, borrowed.

—HERBERT SPENCER

*The Right to Ignore the State.*

the Soviet Union sends something to Czechoslovakia, the Czech papers announce it loudly with such headlines as 'Russia Meets Her Obligation'."

## Political Reasons

The article quoted above explains that the very day on which Prague announced that Czechoslovakia would take part in the Paris conference, Stalin received Gottwald, the Communist Prime Minister and other Czech delegates to discuss the political implications of a treaty of alliance with France. This question was, however, left aside and Stalin instead asked the Czech Government to stay away from Paris. Gottwald reported this talk by phone to his colleagues in Prague and at a secret session, in spite of the opposition of some members, the Czech Government reversed their previous decision.

This policy was justified on the grounds that Czechoslovakia could not afford to cut herself off from the East as, in case of a new German aggression, no country but Russia was certain to come to her rescue.

## Communists in Power

At the elections in May, 1946, the Communists polled 38% of all votes, which made them the largest party in the country. The Communist success was due in great part to the role played by Russia in the liberation of the country (although it is generally believed that if the Americans stopped before Prague and waited for five days for the Red Army to liberate the capital it was because of an understanding between the Allied High Commands).

Another reason, according to Francis Lint, is that many "voted Communist because, having become members of the Party at a time when it was generally assumed they would grab power under the shadow of Russian bayonets, they were interested in a Communist victory to secure their positions."

The Government is a coalition in which the Communists hold the key ministries: the Prime Minister is a Communist and the Ministry of Interior which controls the police, the Ministry of Information which controls the State-

owned radio, the film industry and paper supplies, the Ministries of Agriculture and Social Welfare, are all in the hands of the Communist Party.

The Communists only obtained the majority of votes among the Czechs; in Slovakia they are in a minority, having obtained 21 seats while the Slovak Democrats obtained 43. But even in Slovakia the Communists are holding the Ministry of Interior with the police.

## Towards C.P. Control of Slovakia

Slovakia has proved refractory to Communist propaganda. 'Slovaks' aim at greater autonomy, having little in common with the Czechs. They have a shadow cabinet in Bratislava but the Ministries of War, Finance and Foreign Affairs are centralised in Prague. Unable to get the support of the Slovak population the Communist Party has begun a conversion by force, according to the well-known pattern.

A plot has been discovered in Slovakia and the Communist Minister of Interior, Vaclav Nosek, has asked Parliament to suspend the immunity of two M.P.s, belonging to the Slovak Democratic Party, accused of being involved in the plot. *News Review* dryly comments: "It is a neat move. The Slovak Democrats have 43 members in the Czechoslovak Parliament, 43 minus two is 41. This sort of arithmetic did wonders in Hungary. It brings Gottwald a little nearer his majority."

Stalin can withdraw his Red Army from Central Europe with a light heart. By the time the last Russian soldier has left most of the opposition will be in jail, shot or hanged.

## The "Freedom" of the Press

Tourists are given a booklet to guide them during their Czechoslovak holiday. It explains concisely what "freedom of the Press" means in that country: "The Press has been reorganised and no newspaper may be privately owned. All papers and periodicals have to be published, under licence of the Czechoslovak Ministry of Information, by Political Parties or ap-

proved cultural or professional associations. Beyond this there is no censorship of the Press."

Further censorship is understandably enough unnecessary; the Minister of Information is a Communist.

How free journalists are in Czechoslovakia has been discovered the hard way of cameramen Erich Auerbach and Jack Winocour, of the British weekly *Illustrated*, who went to Czechoslovakia last month, at the invitation of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They received assurances from various ministers that they would have complete freedom for their work. "If you run into any iron curtain, come and tell us," they were told jokingly.

As it happened they did run into it, but when they tried to tell the ministers about it they only got insults and threats. While they visited Slovakia they were arrested, manhandled and assaulted by the State Security Police, their camera and films confiscated. They do not know to this day the reason for this treatment and for the fine which they were given under a Fascist law which is still in force. They were only released after the intervention of the British Consul.

This could be dismissed as the irresponsible action of stupid and brutal policemen if apologies or explanations had been offered them after their release. Instead they found an hostile attitude in the ministers who had warmly welcomed them on their arrival and the Ministry of the Interior when returning the negatives used threatening language and warned them that they were liable to five years' imprisonment. The Press completely distorted the incident. I was in Czechoslovakia at the time and from the Communist newspapers one got the impressions that the two British correspondents had assaulted frontier guards!

The Ministers responsible for this incident are: the Slovak Minister of Interior (Communist), the Czech Minister of Interior (Communist) the Minister of Information (Communist)—in other words, the people who laugh loudest when the words "iron curtain" are mentioned.

(Continued on page 4)

# THE PROBLEM OF WORK

By Camillo Berneri

We are printing below the second of a series of articles which comprise an abridged translation of a pamphlet by Camillo Berneri *Il Lavoro Attraente* (Attractive Work). The first article, published in the last issue of *Freedom*, stressed the importance of discussing the problem of work from an anarchist viewpoint and showed that work has always been slavery since the beginning of civilization, that Christian ethics considered it a punishment imposed by God. Modern systems of rationalisation have transformed workers into robots with dangerous results for their physical and mental health.

A YOUNG professor of an industrial school in Northern France gave the following thought by Jean-Richard Bloch to his pupils as a subject for an essay:—"If the factory aspires to be not only a place of physical work but also a place of dignity, pride and happiness, it is clear that it must lose all resemblance to that which we call 'factory' in our own countries."

J. R. Bloch, to whom the professor sent a collection of these essays, has picked out some significant passages (*Europe*, Paris, June, 1934). Nearly all these sons of workers, living in an over-industrialised region, stress the brutality of bosses and foremen, and the ugliness of the factories. One of them writes:—"The directors should understand that they will not get men to do good work by behaving brutally towards them." Another says:—"That which wounds the worker most is the contempt with which he is treated." Nearly all the pupils expressed disgust for the "foul smell", the "workshops filthy with grease", the "factory walls black with soot". They contrast the factory they see with the 'ideal' factory, which will be the 'real' factory in the not far-distant future.

## THE IDEAL FACTORY

"In the ideal workshop," writes one of these children, "the foreman distributes the work to the operatives in the morning and talks to them as equals. They are not heard yelling and swearing at the workers, as is usual at present. The manager, for his part, is careful not to offend the works-foremen with order."

All the pupils, too, portray the ideal factory as being situated in the country. They all visualise light-coloured walls, they all speak of sun, light, health. The workshops will be cooled in summer, warmed in winter, for "human nature has need of a minimum of well-being to remain good." Another says:—"A worker will enter a factory of this kind as if he were entering his own home. There will be washing facilities, that he may leave the factory as clean as he entered it. He will be proud of his factory; when he passes by it in company of a friend, he will say, 'This is the factory where I work,' and as he will be happy in his work this will lead to a happy family life." Nearly all furnish this imaginary place with practical means of communication, and nearly all dream of libraries, recreation-rooms, etc.

These are the fancies of children who have read neither Kropotkin's *Conquest of Bread*, nor Zola's *Travail*, nor yet the forecasts of William Morris and Bellamy; and yet the bright dream still flourishes, for it is the workers' aspiration on the threshold of a new era.

The idea of attractive work is a very ancient one. We

find it clearly expressed in *The Works and Days* of Hesiod, the Greek poet who lived eight or nine centuries before Christ. The formula "Do what you will" as applied to work, is one of the characteristics of the life of the Thelemites expressed by Rabelais in the sixteenth century (*Gargantua* Chap. 57). Fenelon in the third book of the *Telemachus* (1699) also applies this formula to work. Morelly, in *Basiliade* wrote:—"In admitting that man's free activity pours into the common pool more than his needs take out of it, it is clear that laws and regulations become practically worthless, for every necessary function corresponds in the individual to a natural taste, a well-defined vocation. The leaders' opinions will be accepted with pleasure; no one will think himself dispensed from work which an unanimous and collective effort will render varied and attractive. Nothing would be easier to regulate than a fraternal concourse of this kind, since from the most enlightened freedom would result the most perfect order."

It was Fourier who amply and systematically developed the principle of attractive work, the first condition of which is—according to him—variety; and the second, brevity of duration—"Pleasant and effortless" work is one of the socialist achievements foretold in Cabet's *Voyage en Icarie* (1840).

Victor Considérant, who was champion and elaborator of the idea of attractive work, was right when he told M. Lausac (*Plus Loin*, Paris, July, 1933) that among Fourier's conceptions, the notion of "attractive work" for groups or individuals would be one of those receiving greatest attention from future generations—Benoit Malon, Georges Renard, Jean Jaurès, and other French socialists were clearly influenced by Fourier's conception of the organisation of work. Emile Zola in his novel *Travail* shows us a factory where varied work, carried out in clean and well-lighted surroundings and aided by machines, has become a "recreation, a joy and a real pleasure." Zola gives us a fundamental principle, an act of faith and a sure prophecy that work shall become "the law of life itself."

## THE IDEA OF PLEASANT WORK

Certain nineteenth-century physiologists have also maintained the possibility of attractive work. One of these—Rossi-Doria, wrote in one of his reports that "Work must no longer be a torment and a source of ills, but a joy and an important factor in physical and moral health."

The Anarchist writers in particular have contributed in keeping alive the idea of attractive work. Peter Kropotkin makes this categorical affirmation:—"In collective work, carried out with gay spirit to reach the desired goal—be it book, work of art or luxury article—each one will find the stimulus, the uplift necessary to make life pleasant." When, in our writings and speeches, we predict that the day will come when all, or nearly all, will work spontaneously and with pleasure, frequently comes the reply, "It is a Utopian dream!" Nevertheless, there are men in our society to-day who work longer hours without weariness; with, on the contrary, a deep sense of satisfaction. These are the scientists, the thinkers, and the artists.

I have in front of me some very interesting replies to an enquiry made by the *Philosophical and Allied Sciences Review* of 1907. Here are a few of them: Maffeo Pantaleoni, the economist, says, "Ten hours at my desk do not tire me at all," and adds that work is to him joy or pain according to the results of his labours, but that "the ardour does not diminish, for it is feverish determination and perseverance. I never feel weary." The Danish philosopher Harald Høffding says: "I have rarely been able to work for long on a single subject. I have to handle various subjects by turns. I can work five hours in the morning and another five in the evening when I am in good form." The hours of work are to him "perhaps the greatest moments of happiness that life has to offer."

Roberto Ardigò declares: "Work is my irresistible need. I work until tired out, but the weariness is accompanied by a sense of satisfaction in the work done." The astronomer Schiaparelli replies that he has nearly always worked ten hours a day, between the ages of twenty-five and sixty, and has even worked sixteen hours consecutively at the same occupation. He further states that to remain idle has always been a torture to him. The writer Arturo Graf, says that he works with great willingness, for to him work is "a source of living joy", but that he finds it very wearisome to have to write even a short article by request and on a given subject.

## WORK WITHOUT FATIGUE

The artists' replies all agree in asserting that their work brings them such joy as to keep them from feeling weary. The very few answers which speak of incapacity to work for any length of time, or the hardship occasioned by work, are accompanied by statements regarding ill-health or other physical defects.

It might be argued that the above-mentioned cases refer to exceptional personalities. The objection would not be valid, however, for we have seen that even these persons are ill-disposed towards occupations which do not absorb or interest them.

The case of Gustav Flaubert is typical from this point of view. He often worked eighteen hours at his desk without pause, but at certain times his work lay heavily on him; when, for instance, he was only putting finishing touches of style, or when engaged in making preparatory investigations.

While he was writing *Madame Bovary* he said in a letter (September 17th, 1835), "I hope that in a month's time the Bovary will have the arsenic in her belly"—which remark is explained by a passage in another letter of the same month (September 20th): "I am working badly, without pleasure, rather with distaste. I am really tired of this work; it is now become a veritable penance to me." When in 1858 he was writing *Salammbô* one chapter of which took him three months of intense work, he wrote to a friend: "Each evening I tumble into bed as worn out as a labourer who has been breaking stones on the highway."

That which is observable in the great personalities is also apparent in the average man. Good results from intellectual work of lengthy duration can be achieved by everyone provided that it is stimulated by "interest" in the spiritual sense of the word. To say "I work without

(Continued on page 3)



# HOW SHALL WE CATCH THE SPIVS?

WE have never taken the propaganda about the Spiv very seriously—looking at them as potential workers, that is. The vast campaign against them and all their menagerie (the eels, butterflies and drones) was so obviously a 'red herring' that one could only be amused at the importance given it in certain quarters, although the causes behind the growth of such a body of people are certainly serious.

Spivs, however, have now assumed national importance, but are still presenting many thorny problems for our masters. The problem of defining the spiv has not yet been settled, to begin with. Can it be that there is no way of describing those who live without working or resorting to crime, without at the same time describing those who are sometimes known as "our betters"? Without making class distinction obvious, how could the definition be framed to include only the workers?

However, that is not our problem. What is amusing us just now is how the Ministry of Labour has found himself worked into a position of having to do

something about directing the spivs. Twice he has had to adjourn the explanation of the plan which he was going to give to the National Joint Advisory Council, but enough has leaked out already to make the whole business seem ridiculous—as it really is.

## Closed Shop Helps The Spivs

IN response to an inquiry from Raymond Blackburn in the House of Commons, the Minister of Labour admitted that any person who expresses objections to joining a trade union will not be directed to any job in which union membership is a condition of employment. Nor will he be sent to a job where his failure to join a union is likely to cause an "industrial dispute".

So all the eels have to do is develop a conscience against joining a union!

Furthermore, Ministry of Labour experts do not expect to round up more than 10,000 in the spiv category (when they get down to it) and in order to do even that, 3,000 civil servants will be required!

So we are faced with a typical result of coercion and stupidity. The closed shop principle of the T.U.C. is now going to react against the government's schemes for getting labour, and 10,000 unwilling workers who will definitely not pull their weight will be joined by 3,000 more unproductive pen-pushers. These latter, by the way, being presumably, industrious and patriotic, would probably, if they were themselves directed into essential work, produce more than three times their number of resentful slackers.

## The Wide Boys

Has anyone in the Government thought, by the way, of the disturbing influence on morale that the introduction of the "Wide Boys" into the factory may have? Workers keep going at dull and monotonous work mainly because they can see no alternative. The Spivs are the boys who know all the alternatives, and how many honest workers may not be corrupted by contact with these hangers-on of the underworld?

Anarchists have been kept out of the mines, and others have been discharged from the army for no other reason than that their militant presence was a threat to the authority in control. Workers are not so slow to learn—put spivs among the workers and who knows what new methods of ca-canny and go-slow might be evolved!

Frankly, though, we do not think the spivs are in much danger from direction. Although checks will be made upon amusement arcades, pin-table saloons, race-tracks, football pools, and so on, direction will raise more problems than it can solve. Like any other governmental activity, in fact.

But don't think from these words of encouragement to him that we are wholeheartedly in favour of the spiv. He is a product of capitalist society and is as unproductive and useless as a politician or bank clerk.

But not more so.

P.S.

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Can you sell a few copies among your friends? We can supply you with copies of the current issue (6 copies 1/-, 12 copies 2/- post free).

## LandNotes

# Tweedledum & Tweedledee!

THE revival of interest in the land and its potentialities, to which I referred in the last Land Notes, appears to be causing a resurgence of those little books and pamphlets putting forward a "Plan" or a "Policy" for British Agriculture which were a feature of the planning mania of the war years. At a time when the civilized world was harnessing all its productive powers, with ever-greater efficiency, to the task of annihilating itself, the impulse to indulge in phantasies of a world where some semblance of sanity prevailed was understandable enough. Planning became a popular mechanism of escape from an intolerable reality. But unfortunately, most of the plans bore unmistakable signs of their, psychologically, escapist origin and were essentially houses to be re-built on sand, the same foundations in fact on which the present house of capitalism was tumbling and still is. Nevertheless, the planners, with an ostrich-like detachment, continue to plan and I—God help me—will, I suppose, have to continue to read them, most of those that concern themselves with farming at any rate. It's a grim prospect.

These thoughts are occasioned by having just thrown down on the table a copy of *Policy for British Horticulture*, published by the Conservative Political Centre. It consists mainly of statistics and is not really of much interest except to those people connected with horticulture. Indeed, but for one significant fact about the whole pamphlet, I would not use up space referring to the damn thing at all. This fact is that, although it is "A Survey and Statement by a Group of Conservative M.P.s," it might just as well have been compiled by a group of Labour M.P.s, Liberal M.P.s or what have you. While reading it I was reminded of the leading article in the last issue of *Freedom* which, while commenting on the Conservative Party's "Industrial Charter", pointed out that there was really little, if any, fundamental difference between Labour and Tory policies, that either provided "a traditionally perfidious cover for the advancing totalitarianism of the twentieth-century."

## Labour and Tory Policies

Capitalism is too often taken to mean what has come to be known as the *laissez-faire* capitalism of the nineteenth-century. Whereas, in actual fact capitalism is by no means antagonistic to, or incompatible with, a planned society, as has been shown, for example, by Mr. Dobb in his *The Development of Capitalism. Policy for British Horticulture*, like most Conservative thought of the more "enlightened" variety, accepts the necessity for planned production and advocates it in a manner almost identical to that of Labour spokesmen. The pamphlet is full of such phrases as "Particular care will have to be taken in the regulation of the imports of . . .", "Future policy must be governed by public need" (an old

one, that), "To secure of proper regulation of . . .", and more of the same.

Likewise the growing of more food at home is advocated, not on grounds of commonsense, but on the grounds that, in the words of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it is "the great dollar-saver". The implication being that, if we had plenty of dollars to spare, no one would propose anything so daft as increasing home-production of food.

Referring to the policy of the present government, these Conservative M.P.s give it as their opinion that "it is doubtful if the policy of any other government would be very different under existing circumstances". On this point, if not on many others in this pamphlet, anarchists will find themselves in agreement.

## D.P.'s Again

Re: my reference in the last issue to the dangers of the employment of Displaced Persons on the land, from the British worker's point of view, here in passing is a cutting from *The Daily Herald* (22/10/47) in support of my comments:

Protest against the alleged "pampering" of foreign labour by farmers was made at Hereford yesterday.

Mr. W. Thomas, district organiser, told the Executive Committee of the Herefordshire branch of the Union of Agricultural Workers that while most farmers were playing the game, some had sacked British labour in favour of foreigners.

Regular farm workers, he said, were becoming unemployed because farmers would not keep them on permanently while there were reserves of foreign workers.

Foreign workers were given extra rations, full wages whether they worked or not, extra clothing coupons every three months and transport to take them to and from work, and for recreation.

## Oh-Deer-What-Can-The-Matter-be Dept.

One is given to understand that both rural housing and the farming industry are now important priorities. To judge, however, from these two items of news, culled from *The Farmer's Weekly* (3/10/47), things don't seem to have got properly under way yet.

(i)

Despite the fact that water mains have passed their door for over six months, the 100 inhabitants of Normanby-le-Wold, near Market Rasen, still have to depend on Caister which is five miles away for drinking water, sent by council lorry.

(ii)

A Monmouthshire farmer, Mr. Roger Chapman, Llwynhaid Farm, Bettws, is a little cynical of Mr. Herbert Morrison's promise of "aggressive support" for agriculture.

With the intention of producing more T.T. milk, he placed plans for a new cowshed before the local council in June last.

Six weeks later, after the plans had been approved, he sent the plans and an application for a building licence to the Ministry of Works.

The Ministry of Works sent them to Monmouthshire A.E.C.

The A.E.C. sent them to the Ministry of Agriculture.

The Ministry of Agriculture sent them back to the Ministry of Works.

Then Mr. Chapman was granted a building licence and special priorities for steel and timber.

But there was no priority for cement. "You can't have cement," he was told, "because agriculture is not on the Prime Minister's priority list for cement, and nothing can be done about it until all priority orders have been fulfilled." G.V.

## GRIMETHORPE

### Fact Finders Back Strikers

THE fact-finding committee appointed to look into the grievances and causes of the Grimethorpe (Sth. Yorkshire) stint strike has made its report, and it has been read to the Grimethorpe miners.

The strike, the most determined and embarrassing the Coal Board has yet had to face was fully reported and discussed in *Freedom* (6th Sept. and 20th Sept.) and it is only necessary here to remember that the apparent cause of the strike was the arbitrary decision of the Coal Board and the N.U.M. to increase the stint (length of coal face worked) in the Melton Field seam at Grimethorpe—and the men were not having it.

The fact-finders' report has not yet been made generally public, but apparently the Grimethorpe miners are satisfied that it backs up the justice of their claims. The committee consisted of two face-workers from neighbouring collieries and the

N.U.M. Yorkshire area secretary, W. Ernest Jones, who must have played his part in the original decision to increase the stint, but is now forced to admit through the report that "on evidence from only one coal-face the sub-committee assessed what should be done by four coal-faces," a way of assessing which forgets the elementary fact that no two coal-faces have exactly the same conditions.

All Mr. Jones says now is that "the report will now go to the Divisional Conciliation Board," but we may be sure that neither Mr. Jones nor the Conciliation Board have forgotten that the Grimethorpe miners were tearing up their union cards and that the words "Burn Will Lawther" were painted on the colliery wall. As so often happens, the workers have made plain what they were prepared to do and not do, and now the officials are running round trying to make it constitutional. So far there has been no date fixed for the Conciliation Board to meet to discuss the report. We are sure that as far as the Grimethorpe miners are concerned it will not make the slightest difference if it never meets.

## BACK TO TRADITIONAL INCENTIVE!

IN the last issue of *Freedom* we discussed the division within the ranks of the Conservatives, as betrayed by the older, outspoken diehards and the younger "progressive" faction with their Industrial Charter.

One of the leaders of the old guard is Lord Woolton, chairman of the party, who, at a recent Chamber of Commerce meeting at Stoke-on-Trent, came out with a demand for the creation of a pool of unemployed to solve the present alleged shortage of manpower.

Woolton's idea was to cut immediately all public works and long-term capital projects, throwing the workers therein out of work so that they would be forced into other employment, producing for export. This, he said, is "infinitely more acceptable to British habits than the State direction of labour".

There could hardly be a more blatant admission of the economic coercion exerted on the workers under "Free Enterprise", and those workers who are now getting browned-off with the Labour government should seriously ask themselves what are the alternatives?

## UNREST AMONG LANARK MINERS

SIX weeks ago miners in Blantyre, and other parts of Lanarkshire were out on strike against unequal wage awards in the industry. They were the on-cost workers (mainly on haulage, roads and roofs, who struck because other grades had been granted a pay increase which made the on-cost workers by far the poorest paid mine workers.

The strikers went back on the understanding that their claims would be considered by October 17th. Came October 20th and still they had heard nothing more, and so they did the only thing—come out again.

On the first day, 4,500 men in 17 pits were idle, and by the second day the strike had spread from Lanarkshire and Stirlingshire to the Lothians and Fife. At the time of writing over 20,000 miners are on strike, in spite of a resolution at the delegate meeting of the Scottish area

of the N.U.M. deploring unofficial stoppages and calling on all mineworkers to behave.

Although supporting the strikers wholeheartedly, we cannot regard these (almost routine) wage-strikes as of any great fundamental importance—except to the wage-earners concerned, of course. But we do get a certain amount of satisfaction out of seeing the same struggles going on in a nationalised industry as in any other, for we have always asserted that the State as a boss is no more benevolent than any private company.

So we say to strikers anywhere: "Fight for your bread-and-butter now, by all means, but don't be satisfied with the crumbs you will gain. Make the whole loaf your aim and make the control of your own industry—your own life—your goal. Be satisfied with nothing less than Workers' Control!"

getting tired" means "I work without being conscious of fatigue".

An accountant and an astronomer who both work at calculations—the former simple and the latter very complicated—both become tired; but while the former, not being animated by any passion for knowledge, feels the full weight of drudgery, the latter finds vital inspiration in the dry mechanism of his formulae, a light which bids him remain vigilant, keeping him alert and wakeful and masking weariness.

## ABOLITION OF BOREDOM

The negative element in work is boredom. Boredom is continuous consciousness of tiredness and also at the same time a factor of that tiredness. The relation between boredom and fatigue is just as valid for manual as for intellectual work, for any physical activity implies of necessity a measure of intellectual effort.

Physical fatigue is more or less intense according to the condition of spirit in which it is carried out. Boredom is a depressive element. It shows as torpor in intellectual work. The person who works with a bored mind is reduced to a state of drowsiness. In manual work boredom lengthens the time. Michelet, in his memoirs, tells of his experiences, as a boy while working at his father's

## THE PROBLEM OF WORK

(Continued from page 2)

printing-press—"Immobile in the cashier's desk, under the weight of boredom, nothing but boredom, I learned the meaning of long hours."

How is it possible to keep boredom away from work? That is the problem arising out of these considerations. Work is always fatigue. We must endeavour to find out how it may become pleasant fatigue for all.

Every manifestation of energy is accompanied by a feeling of pleasure when it is proportioned to the strength of the organism. A walk is pleasant, but a forced march is a penance. In the same way, any activity which follows a spontaneous impulse is pleasant. When, on the other hand, an individual is obliged by external conditions to act in opposition to his natural tendencies, he exhausts himself in his effort of will on himself, with consequent suffering and lessened productive capacity.

These considerations lead to the following conclusions:

1. The duration of work must be proportional to the effort involved.
2. Everyone must be free to follow that productive capacity to which they feel most attracted. With regard to the duration of working time, the type of occupation must be taken into account; there are certain essentially

uninspiring occupations which thus appear lengthy; it is therefore necessary to consider the time taken from the subjective point of view, that is, taking into account the psychological reflex which the work induces in the person who does it. There are certain jobs which, although "light" because they do not require a large expenditure of muscular energy are nevertheless extremely tiring because uninteresting and as such are the cause of an enormous waste of nervous energies.

The second point (2) is connected with the first: since any occupation is the more fatiguing the less interesting it is, it follows that everyone will become less tired, and will therefore work longer and more efficiently, when he is allowed to develop his activity in the field of his own choice.

This is not possible without the economic emancipation and technical development of the worker. When, as Carlyle predicted, every individual will be able to choose as his sphere of work that to which he is naturally inclined, work will no longer be labour, and will become a joy for many.

Many lazy people are like that personage in the play *The Hotel of the Poor* who says: "When work is pleasant, life is beautiful. Find me a pleasurable occupation and I will work."

(To be continued.)

## CORRECTION:

In the "Land Notes" of our last issue, three printing errors occurred which radically altered the sense of G.V.'s argument. Five lines above the sub-heading "The Futility of Planning", the line should read "of producers, if it is more profitable"; three lines above "Farm Workers and D.P.s" the line should read "forbidden to seek employment outside the"; and seventeen lines from the end of the article the line should read "long as there is any actual unemployment."



## France

## SWING TO THE RIGHT

THE Municipal Elections which have taken place in France during the past fortnight have been represented as a plebiscite between Washington and Moscow. The two main parties, Communist and Gaullist have in fact used these elections, which should have concerned themselves merely with the affairs of local government, as a test of strength between Russian and American influences.

The Rally of French People, General de Gaulle's newly-formed party, has come out on top though it has no programme, except to defend France against Bolshevism. It gained the majority of the votes at the expense of the Christian Democrats and to a much lesser extent of the Socialist.

The Communists claim that the election results show an increase in the Communist vote (*Daily Worker*, 21/10/47) but figures for the 344 largest communes in France, including Paris, show that the Communist vote has declined from 32.4 per cent. at last year's elections to 29.3 per cent. The final figures show a more considerable loss.

Little attention has been drawn to the fact that 30% of the electorate did not vote, a very high proportion considering the intensity with which electoral propaganda had been carried out.

## Foreign Commentary

## Does Freedom Matter?

IT seems as if in present-day society people are so concerned with what they consider the realities of life that all else is abandoned or ignored. And human values seem to have been among the first victims of this new trend which has been hastened by the six war years. Wherever there are signs of mass feeling on government restrictions, one can almost always discover in them some material interest, or some political interest. Rarely does one find a disinterested attitude, in the sense of attacking an injustice for its own sake. Thus, in this country the only large-scale agitation occurs when, for instance, the Minister of Power and Fuel announces that basic petrol is to be abolished, or against the Food Minister when small food cuts are announced. But on matters which have nothing to do with the belly or comforts, apathy reigns supreme! And, in fact, when politicians talk about "traditions of freedom" etc., they are just bandying slogans, for if one takes the trouble to examine what this love for freedom, and this horror for injustice amount to, one comes to the conclusion that the real defenders of the freedom of the individual are limited to a very small minority of the population. It is the writer's opinion that in this country at any rate, this small minority is even smaller than it was during the years before the war. And one cannot underestimate the consequences, as we shall attempt to show by examples from the Continent, where in many cases the development has been even more rapid.

## THE SITUATION IN FRANCE

France has a "tradition of freedom" and in the last 20 years one has only to recall the monster demonstrations on behalf of "Sacco and Vanzetti" and on behalf of the Spanish people in their struggle against Franco to really appreciate the extent to which these values have suffered during the war and post-war years.

We will limit ourselves to one example, though others have already been given in this column and more evidence still can be obtained in the anarchist weekly *Le Libertaire* (obtainable from Freedom Press 3d.). In a recent issue of *Combat* (which can be described as the French equivalent of our *Manchester Guardian*) the case was reported of a man who appeared in court charged with having denounced to the Germans fellow detainees in Buchenwald Concentration Camp. Witnesses contradicted one another or withdrew their evidence. In fact, the prosecution case was so incomplete that the defending counsel demanded and obtained the agreement of the prosecuting counsel, that more information should be forthcoming to justify the case proceeding. Neverthe-

The policy of the Communist Party on the eve of the elections has greatly contributed to de Gaulle's victory. They have done all in their power to weaken Ramadier's Government and this inevitably led to a loss of confidence in the Socialist and Christian Democratic parties but also to a rapid ascendancy of the Gaullists.

The policy decided upon by the Communist International Bureau which stressed the need for a co-ordinated programme of action against the "treacherous policy of Right-wing Socialists of the type of Blum in France" and advised the "anti-imperialist democratic camp" (Communist, for short) to evolve its own tactics, has borne its first fruits.

These tactics have already been used before in Germany in 1931 and 1932 when the German Communist Party used all its powers of attack against the Social Democrats and favoured Hitler's rise to power, thinking of dealing with him later. It seems that, once again, the Communists have underestimated the strength of nationalism and that they have not only succeeded in giving the neo-fascist General some of the Socialist votes but also some of their own.

The Communist-inspired transport strike, the unrest artificially created during the past few weeks, as for example, over the transport of sugar

to Germany, have certainly discredited and embarrassed the Government but they have also lost the Communist Party a number of supporters who have realised that they were merely used in the vote-catching game. They have, on the other hand, strengthened the reactionaries in their desire to have at the head of France a "strong man" who will put an end to disorder.

They have also succeeded in antagonising completely the Socialists, whom they deluged with invectives up to the day of the elections and to whom they extended a hand to "consolidate the unity of the working-class" the moment election results were known. Not surprisingly, there have been sneers among those "socialist traitors" who were now asked to bar the road to the personal dictatorship of de Gaulle. The Socialist Party has put up a poster which recalls:

"The co-operation between General de Gaulle and M. Thorez; the General's responsibility for the withdrawal of the charge of desertion that hung over the head of the Communist leader; their common insistence on the Soviet alliance; their common suspicion (in 1944 and 1945) of England; their common refusal to carry through the Belgian policy of calling in the banknotes and so preventing inflation and, finally, their separation on parallel lines, the General to denounce the Eastern block and M. Thorez to denounce the United States."

*Manchester Guardian*, 20/10/47.

This call of unity was not mere routine. It was calculated to draw the votes of the Socialists in the second elections which take place in villages to fill those seats in municipal councils for which no candidate received an absolute majority. In past elections the rule had been for Socialists to vote for Communists and *vice versa*, but Socialists prefer now to vote for right-wing parties as being the lesser evil. That Socialists should put Gaullist mayors in power shows how dangerous and absurd the use of a ballot paper can be.

The high percentage of abstentions is a sign of the disgust and disillusionment created by the recent intrigues, mannerisms, mud-slinging in which political parties have indulged. If this mood leads only to despair and apathy the parallel with Germany will be carried a step further. Whether de Gaulle or Thorez will play the role of the new Fuehrer, the results will be the same.

## FRANCO'S 1947 RECORD

According to *Forward* (18/10/47) the official figures of political enemies shot by Franco's regime during 1947 were 13 in January, 9 in February, 79 in March, 32 in April, 23 in May, 11 in June, 18 in July, 29 in August—Total 214.

It would be interesting to complete this official picture of Franco's Spain with the official figures of the prison sentences awarded during the corresponding period.

## RACE HATRED IN U.S.A.

On the sun-baked afternoon of July 11, the inmates of a prison camp near Thalma, Ga., heard that the state inspector was coming. Twenty-seven refused to work until they could air their grievances. Warden W. G. Worthy tried to get them out. There were angry words, followed by a burst of gunfire. The next minute five prisoners were dead, eight injured. The following day two more had died and an inquest was held. Prisoners testified that they were fired upon with no more excuse than the warden's command, "Let 'em have it!" Warden Worthy said they were trying to escape. As *Life* commented at the time: "If so, most of them chose a strange route—under the barracks."

A Glynn County grand jury decided that Warden Worthy and four camp guards were justified in firing on the prisoners. But *Time* (Oct. 13th) reports that "At nearby Savannah, a federal grand jury thought differently. It indicted the warden and his guards for depriving Negroes of their lives without due process of law."

## WITHIN POLAND

THE way in which so-called Socialist countries in Eastern Europe, under Russian domination, are reverting to capitalist methods of starvation in order to induce people to work hard is illustrated in a recent article which appeared in *Picture Post*, by a journalist who had been investigating conditions in Poland.

Apparently, there is no actual open direction of labour. Instead, the government resort to "manipulation of ration scales and other non-cash payments", by which they induce people to enter heavy industries. The rationing system is discriminatory in the extreme. Ration cards are issued only to heavy workers, mothers with young babies, and significantly, civil servants and some intellectuals—presumably those who toe the line! These entitle the privileged individuals to sugar, bread, fats, meat and soap. All other foods are sold on the open market, and people with no ration cards, who form the majority, have to buy everything in this way, at prices about three times those paid by holders of ration cards. At the official rate of exchange, "1lb of butter costs about 12s. 6d. on the free market, sugar 2s. 6d. a lb, potatoes 7d. a lb,

dark bread 1s. 3d. for a pound loaf. There is plenty of food in the shops and restaurants if you have the money to pay for it."

Naturally, as the *Picture Post* journalist remarks, this system has "the grave disadvantage of penalising the poorer classes" and "is detested by the people."

Prices of clothes and other consumer goods, of which there is a vast shortage, have risen out of all proportion—"a cheap dress costs £30, a suit £90, a pair of shoes £50." The consequence of this is that only the rich can afford new clothes, and the cost-of-living has become so high that most people have to take on part-time jobs in the evening to make ends meet. Work and want is the order of the day.

The *Picture Post* article completes the picture by drawing attention to the press and radio censorship and the political police, and points out that "there are denunciations by informers and intimidation of critics by the Government."

This is the kind of freedom that Communism brings to Eastern Europe.

## THE CZECH MYTH

(Continued from page 2)

We are told that Czechoslovakia's politics are governed by fear and distrust of Germany. Inside the country it manifested itself by the expulsion of 3 million Germans (one-fifth of the population) and the confiscation of their property. The justification for this inhuman policy is to be found, apparently, in the sufferings undergone by the Czechs under the German occupation.

This explanation seems particularly startling when one hears it on arriving in Czechoslovakia after having crossed Germany. After seeing a devastated, half-starved country, Czechoslovakia, where there is hardly any trace of bombing, where people are well-fed and dressed, where shops are filled with luxury goods, seems almost unreal. They have suffered through Hitler but the German people are paying more dearly for his crimes.

One does not wish to underestimate the sufferings of the Czechs under German occupation but if sufferings inevitably breed hatred many other European countries would have far greater reasons to hate the Germans. Yet nowhere in Europe has hatred manifested itself in such a violent, base, petty manner. It would certainly never have assumed such a character had it not been exacerbated for political and economic reasons.

The expulsion of three million Germans deprived Czechoslovakia of valuable manpower but the property of these people was transferred to Czechs. To expel Germans meant that there was a possibility of acquiring freely a shop, a farm, or some other property.

According to Francis Lint, who tries to justify this policy: "Driving out these Germans, turning these regions into Czech districts and repopulating them was a hard task. In the beginning people

flocked in their thousands into the border regions. When it became known, however, that nobody could be certain of owning the farm, the house, the shop, he had taken over, when it became clear that the Government considered them only as some sort of 'national caretakers' the situation became difficult. A lot of adventurers just sucked dry what they had taken over, and left before they were found out. Others, qualified and honest citizens who really wanted to make a new start, became disgusted when the Government put off the decision to hand the properties over to private ownership. This state of affairs led for a short time to re-emigration into the interior, but the Government has realised its error and all properties are shortly to be handed over to their present holders."

If the occupation disorganised State finances, it left, on the other hand, many new factories, such as, for example, the refineries for synthetic oil in North-Western Bohemia which produce enough synthetic oils to cover the whole country's petrol consumption. This Mammoth works, says Lint, "has been named 'Stalin's Works', as a token of gratitude to the Russians who did not confiscate it as war booty but handed it over as a gift to the Czechoslovak Government" (French people never thought of renaming the Renault works after Churchill or Roosevelt!).

As far as Slovakia was concerned she seemed to have prospered economically during the war, being for a long time Germany's hinterland.

All this cannot and should not be put against the executions, arrests, deportations carried out by the Nazis, but one is obliged to remember these facts when Czechoslovakia is represented as Germany's victim *par excellence*. They also lead one to believe that the hatred of Germany has been, to a considerable extent, fostered to serve political ends.

To keep Czechoslovakia under Russia's influence the Communist Party must encourage the fear of Germany and, at the same time, the distrust of the Western Powers. To this end they must hide these elementary truths:

(a) To hate Germans as a nation is contrary to every principle of socialism—a distinction must be made between the Nazi and the ordinary German people.

(b) Chamberlain's Munich which the Czechs can neither forget nor forgive was followed by Molotov's Munich which might have prevented their liberation for years to come.

(c) When Spain was fighting alone against fascism did Czechoslovakia, which possessed one of the finest airforces of Europe, send any help?

(d) Russia has clearly demonstrated that she has no respect for the independence of small states (Baltic States, Poland, etc.). If the Czechs are so concerned with their national independence, it is ridiculous for them to fear a defeated Germany and yet to trust Russia's power.

Fear of Germany, distrust of Britain and America, hopes of Russian protection will only lead the Czech people to new and probably greater sufferings. Their allies are the workers of other countries, whether in Germany, Britain or Russia. Together they can struggle for a common aim of freedom and peace.

M.L.B.

## "VICTORY HOUSES"

In the *New Statesman and Nation* 4/10/47, H. N. Brailsford draws attention to one of the most revolting aspects of the military occupation of Germany.

I cannot refrain from reporting the bitterness which the extravagant claims of the military command for accommodation are causing. The army is much too numerous and it occupies more buildings than it needs. Like Mr. Gollancz, I was shocked by the sight of "Victory House", a colossal modern building, which has been turned into a recreation centre for the troops. Its vast rooms were almost empty when I visited it. A quarter of it would suffice for this proper and necessary purpose, yet further space is being made ready under its roof. Then there is the famous hotel, *Vier Jahreszeiten*, which has been taken over as officers' quarters. It has three hundred bedrooms, with a hundred servants, and it houses twenty-five British officers. As their "country club" the officers of the garrison have taken over in the outskirts of Hamburg one of the most famous modern buildings in Germany, a palace set in a park, which belonged to a tobacco millionaire. It has its covered swimming pool, its golf course and its tennis courts. But I found the city's architects grappling

with the estimates for an additional building of two storeys, containing four squash courts, a kitchen and much else. This by a peremptory military order must be built at once. I tried to reckon out how many homeless workers' families might be rehoused by Hamburg's standards of austerity with the concrete which these squash courts will require. "All that has happened," as a Socialist Senator put it, "is that militarism has changed its nationality."

Hamburg is not an exception, everywhere in Germany one hears bitter complaints about labour and materials being used to satisfy the whims of Allied officers and of German families being thrown out of their houses to make room for the wives and children of Allied personnel. Two hours notice is given for the people to leave their homes, they are not allowed to take away their furniture, house linen, etc., nor is any alternative accommodation found for them. The situation is particularly tragic in the big towns where already tens of thousands of people spend their nights in dirty and overcrowded bunkers.



# EVACUATION?

THE undercurrents of talk of civil war in Palestine have been stirred up by the British Government's declaration that it intends to evacuate British troops from Palestine. It need hardly be said that this declaration is one which the majority of people at home will support, because very few people are still taken in by the delusion that our forces are needed everywhere in the world in order to "keep the peace". When imperial domination becomes a bit unprofitable they are withdrawn; in spite of the myth for the benefit of schoolbooks that Britain rules her Empire only in order to keep peace among her subjects. It can, however, be added that the majority of people in Palestine, even those who are the most pessimistic regarding its future when the British troops are withdrawn, will welcome this withdrawal instead of a continued period of uncertainty about the future and a hopeless condition of impermanence only bolstered up by the British forces.

The Arab League has already declared its intention to fight for Arab Palestine; and has even given out statements as to the numbers of troops it is prepared to put into the field. Many Palestine Arabs are, however, extremely pessimistic as to the amount of support they can in reality expect to receive from elsewhere: and point to the fact that if a small minority like the Irgun or the Sternists could in fact hold up and even to a certain extent defeat picked divisions of the British Army working on active service conditions, a much larger force than has been promised would be necessary to defeat a body like the Haganah which has the support of the majority (and in time of crisis could even rely on the entire support) of Palestine Jewry.

In these circumstances there is a call to the Arab League to muster up greater support for the illegal army of 1936 that is now waiting its chance on the borders of Palestine, led by Fawzi Kawoukji, which is certain too to receive support from the paramilitary Arab bodies inside Palestine. But, as has been noted in these columns before, the Arabs are even more divided among themselves than the Jews (due largely to monarchical principles); and it is certain that King Ibn Saud who is loudest for demanding aid for the Palestine Arabs, will not co-operate with Kawoukji who is under sentence of death in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, King Abdullah is playing a game of his own while marching in pretended step with the Arab League.

Since the last demarcation of frontiers Abdullah has never had the chance to extend his boundaries. By co-operation with British Imperialism he gained a kingdom; it is likely that he will use the present turmoil to extend that kingdom. His proposals for "Greater Syria"—Transjordan to swallow up Syria—have roused the anger of the Arab League, which however must depend on Abdullah for any action they take on Palestine; and up to the present he has given an

"unsatisfactory reply" to demands that British troops should not be switched to Transjordan when they leave Palestine. It is reasonable to infer that Abdullah is after 'Greater Syria'—Transjordan, Syria and a partitioned Arab Palestine—under British influence and his rule. This would be a major stroke of 'diplomacy' on the part of the Foreign Office, since it would give a partitioned Jewish Palestine favourable to Britain in any emergency; a 'Greater Syria' under permanent British influence as is Abdullah's Transjordan (Glubb Pasha being the British officer commanding Abdullah's forces and the 'man behind the scenes'); and incidentally solve the problem of intransigency in the Middle East. From this point of view it may well be the case that recent events have been staged for the purpose of persuading Syria to take precipitate action. The British Charge d'Affaires in Damascus did in fact warn the Syrian authorities against any action taken against Palestine prior to British evacuation stating that such "would be considered an act of aggression against His Majesty's Government".

It is often assumed that the Foreign Office had just let matters drift in the Middle East, and that it has been "inefficient" owing to the trouble there. But so far as "trouble" is concerned—a few soldiers killed here and there is not the responsibility of the Foreign Office; there is a statistical department of the War Office to deal with that—the situation could not have developed more favourably for the plans of the Foreign Office; and unless the other Powers upset the applecart, they have made a tactical move in proposing the evacuation of Palestine which may in point of fact make imperialist influence even stronger by proxy. Labour Party Imperialism is a bit shoddy and "utility" owing to the times, but it is still the old firm that is making the goods.

A.M.

## RUMANIAN PEASANTS STRIKE TO DEFEND MANIU

The reason for the sudden postponement of the trial of Dr. Iuliu Maniu, the Rumanian Peasant Party leader—it was due to open in Bucarest last Friday—is now known to be a peasants' strike.

Reports from Bucarest indicate that discontent caused by the outlawing of the Peasant Party and the putting on trial of its leader has become so great that the peasants have refused to bring their harvests into the open market, in spite of the increased prices offered by the Government.

As a result the black market is flourishing and the whole of the Government's stabilisation programme is threatened.

The British and U.S. Governments have received no answer to their request to be allowed to send observers to the trial of Dr. Maniu, who is accused of treason.

*The Observer*, 19/10/47. Direct action of this kind shows that Moscow may crush the leaders but it will not be able to enslave the people.

# Germany—4

(The following information is extracted from reports written by comrades who have escaped from the Russian Zone, repatriated prisoners of war, deported and displaced persons. We have supplemented these by using information from German papers and magazines printed under licence from the Soviet military administration.)

THE elections in Russian-occupied Berlin, in Saxony and Thuringia, have shown to a surprising degree the silent opposition of the German masses. In spite of immense propaganda efforts of the Socialist Unity Party (under complete Stalinist domination), in spite of obvious threats and bribery and the usual means of indirect pressure, exactly half of the population did not vote for the Marxists, and, of this half, a considerable number misused and invalidated their votes.

Shortly before the elections the Russians increased the rations. The news-

state of apathy and subconscious resistance to propaganda. Instead of Nazi officers they see Russian officers, their chests covered with decorations. On every wall they see gigantic posters of Father Stalin and the heroes of the Soviet Union; they read a censored press; they swallow newsreel and wireless dope and endless appeals for greater sacrifice and harder work; their reaction is "Just like the Nazis!"

### Workers Disillusioned

Even if we were not in possession of reports from workers in industry, we could guess the real state of affairs from the attempts of the S.E.P. press to raise morale. The workers, who expected liberation and an immediate introduction of workers' control, are bitterly disappointed. When the Russians came there remained only a small rearguard of the old German Communist Party. The party was flooded with masses of "May Communists", headed by eager opportunists who were only seeking advantage for themselves. The expected Socialisation soon proved to have about as

occasional trip ... Die Welt...

There follows a long list of quotations from Western zone papers, stating shocking facts concerning black market, racketeering, chaotic administration, starvation, strikes and demonstrations. Naturally, the Berliners feel sorry for their compatriots—but even more sorry for themselves for being completely deprived of every means of protest and action! In theory one may still listen to the news service of the B.B.C.: in practice all big wireless sets have been confiscated or are available only on the black market.

### The Silent Front

What can portray better the morale of the workers than the fact that thirty thousand of them have escaped from the Eastern to the Western Zone; the Communists have replaced them by directing so far eleven thousand youths. At the same time there are indications that mere passive resistance is being driven into

# THE RUSSIAN ZONE

papers announced that tobacco, vegetables and building materials were on their way from Russia and that 120,000 German prisoners were to be repatriated. In local meetings of the S.E.P., newly-joined members were given extra ration cards for butter and cheese; naturally the other parties could not compete with this! According to the Russians, complete freedom for propaganda under truly democratic conditions was permitted. But in fact the S.E.P. were allowed 800 tons of paper while all the other parties received 9 tons!

### "Democracy" Stinks

Nowhere does the catchword "democracy" appear so consistently, in speech and in print, as in the Eastern Zone. But the general suspicion against the ill-reputed word will not wear off; on the contrary, it seems to grow with each new utterance. The following extract from the letter of one disillusioned party member is typical of what is felt by thousands of Communists:

"What is most unbearable is not so much the material misery as the disillusionment. What has shaken me more than all the terror through which we passed is the subsequent betrayal of our principles. Social justice, comradeship, and all we believed in has lost its meaning. Socialism lost its meaning of liberation the moment it allied itself, for tactical purposes and in order to gain power, with chauvinism and, disregarding reason and conscience, not only excused but strengthened violent injustice. Russia has gained a position in world politics, but the great line of socialist development towards freedom for all as visualised by Luxemburg and Silone has been broken."

Many left-wing comrades who accepted the excuses made by the Communist Party and were willing to co-operate with them, soon found this to be impossible in practice without becoming servile yes-men or getting themselves into serious trouble. We know of Communists who fought in the International Brigade in Spain and returned to the Eastern Zone, only to be lured into the Communist headquarters, beaten up and imprisoned; they had merely been denounced as 'politically unreliable' and their unreliability consisted in expressing some critical remarks. In prison they found S.P.D. workers who had protested against the removal of machinery, as well as German Communist functionaries who had objected to Moscow's practice of enforcing its policy without the least regard for the views of the German Communist Party. After some time these people were informed that they would not be prosecuted, but given the opportunity of proving their loyalty by taking part in vital reconstructional work in Russia.

"Just like the Nazis" has become a common phrase in the Eastern zone. The Russian propagandists have failed to diagnose correctly the psychological state of the Germans. After having been bombarded night and day for over a decade by Goebbels's propaganda, they are in a

much resemblance to the Communism envisaged by the sincere Communist workers as has the nationalisation in Great Britain. Workers councils were formed in industry to proceed with reconstruction, production and distribution on syndicalist lines, but their lack of power was soon realised.

The workers cannot forget the acts of brutality, looting and wilful destruction, committed by the first Russian troops. These troops were replaced by others, and open looting stopped, but instead the Russians appeared on the black market with big cases and bought, for a loaf of bread, a few potatoes, a piece of bacon, the treasures of hungry people, things which in Russia only the privileged could afford, such as gramophones, watches, rings, clothing, cameras, bicycles, and so on. The Germans in all their poverty were still richer than the average inhabitant of the "worker's paradise".

The Germans realise and resent bitterly the fact that they are being paid for these goods with coal, butter, bread and meat of which they have been robbed. The Russian 'comrades', 'champions' of the poor and disinherited, pay, not with Russian currency, but with their rations from German food stocks.

### Reparations Condemned

The workers condemn the dismantling and removal of machinery and technical equipment—they call it plain destruction and robbery. They condemn reparations outright. They remember how Trotsky, under the pressure of the Russian Soviets (consisting in the early stages of a non-Bolshevik majority), refused to acknowledge the debts incurred under the Tsarist regime. Ironically enough, the Communist Party of the Western Zone is trying to exploit the popular resentment against reparations, but makes no mention of the fact that Russia persists with stubborn obstinacy in the demand for her pound of flesh.

The number of wholehearted supporters of the Communist Party is relatively small. They consist chiefly of opportunists and functionaries who reap advantage from their services. The great number of S.E.P. supporters are people frightened into membership for the sake of security and an alibi. The intelligentsia, with the exception of corrupt time-servers, and the discontented middle-class remain in silent but growing opposition.

The population is less informed on world politics and events than it was ever under the Nazis. The Russians, well-versed in traditional underground methods, have so far combated successfully all propaganda against their interests.

The press of the Eastern Zone devotes much space to describing the starvation and corruption in the West. The purpose becomes clear when one reads:

"Listen to the Berliners and one would think they were hungry. Though they have received every week their full rations, Berlin shoppers talk unceasingly

channels of direct action. The S.E.P. press is now launching the first attacks on the saboteurs, obstructionists and neo-Nazi elements in the Western zone. All those who will not accept unquestioningly the superiority of Soviet culture, all those who lack spontaneous outbursts of enthusiasm, are being defamed and discredited. This is not addressed so much to the enemies of the Communist Party abroad as to the 'silent front' in the Eastern Zone.

Admittedly there is full employment in the Eastern Zone, but since this seems to have no uplifting effect on morale the old Roman policy, so well remembered by the Nazis, of bread and circuses, is now being applied. The shortage of transport has been accentuated by the Russian removal of large strips of railway line and quantities of rolling stock, while at the same time certain tracks remain for purposes of propaganda, for the needs of the Russians themselves and for the transportation of 50,000 people at a time to witness boxing matches and other organised entertainments. Bicycle racing in Neuköln, Chemnitz, Dresden and Zwickau draws tremendous audiences. Elsewhere other sports, especially for youth, receive the greatest encouragement. The many sports organisations favoured by the authorities serve not only for amusement and the raising of health standards, but are also purposely designed instruments to capture the youth, to divert the vitality which might otherwise lead to political resistance into easily controlled channels. The militarist purpose of this organised sport is evident from the following case. American soldiers in Berlin used to play baseball and attract numbers of German youths. This led to fraternisation and the boys, being instructed in the game, began to play enthusiastically with their instructors. The Russian authorities, forgetting all old time principles of solidarity, protested to the American authorities against this 'prelude to a military education' of the German youth!

### Stalinised Education

The Ministry of Education in Thuringia has issued an order whereby in all elementary schools the eldest pupil must recite, before classes begin, an extract from either Lenin or Stalin. The Soviet Military Administration has issued another order by which every schoolroom must be decorated with a picture of Marx or a leading Russian statesman. History lessons on the Russian Revolution were to be introduced, but this was not practicable, since apparently the teachers were not sufficiently acquainted with the subject. A modern Arts and Crafts School, organised on the pattern of the Moscow Institute, has been founded in Berlin: the children are selected after a special examination: in addition to art, lessons are given in literature, languages and history. If these subjects are taught on the same Schadanov lines as in Moscow, it will amount to the following:

"Russia has produced the greatest poets, artists, technicians and army in the world. It was not Bessemer, Siemens or Martens who invented new methods of steel production, but Dmitri Schernov. It was not Edison who invented the electric bulb, but Vladimir Ladigin Jabloshkov. It was not Marconi who invented wireless telegraphy, but Topoff. The principle of the electric dynamo was discovered not by Siemens but by Faradin. Russian literature has not only stood at all times above that of the West, but has influenced it fundamentally. The originators of scientific socialism, Marx and Engels, were not Western thinkers."

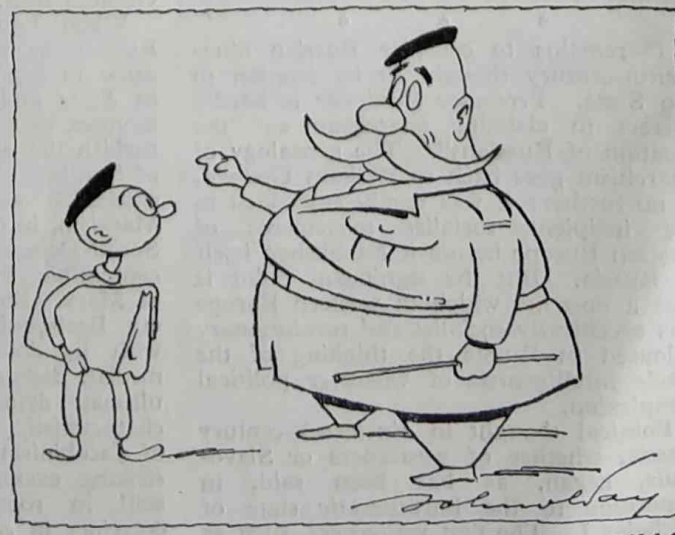
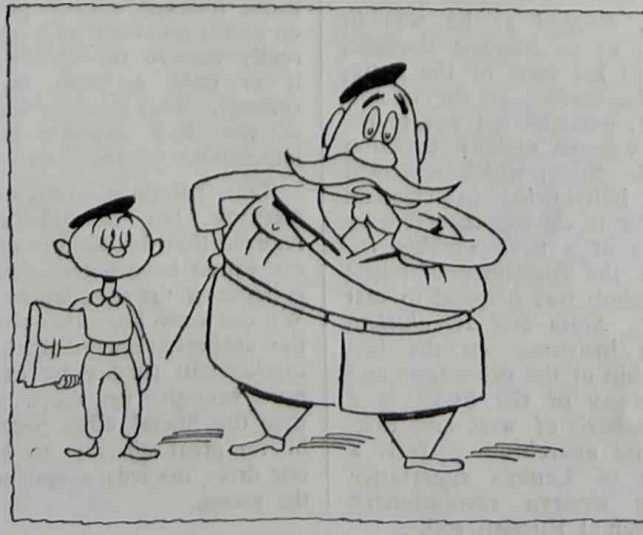
WELTWOCHTE,

Life has become so grey and joyless, and the people are so desperate that they pin their hopes on a new war which might at least liberate them from their Russian masters. Torn between a desire to be rid of the Russians and the fear of a new and terrible war, many Germans are driven to accept forlornly the desire for a horrible end rather than an endless horror.

JOHN OLDAY.

(To be continued.)

## THE THREE MUSKETEERS—16



POOR THINGS THEY DO LOOK THIN... NOW THAT REMINDS ME...

I MUST HAVE SOME SLIMMING PILLS!

By JOHN OLDAY



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ANOTHER  
SOVIET PURGE

Inside the Soviet Union the new political "line" is being as rigidly enforced as on the Communist parties outside. As always in Russia, this means disgrace—if not worse—for prominent leaders in the field of science and art as well as in politics.

At the end of last month, the Central Council of the Soviet Trade Unions opened the attack with a decree aiming at the final suppression of any conceivable "Western" influence on Soviet art and science and, indeed, of any intellectual or artistic intercourse between the Soviet and the Western world. The decree began by indicting "a certain part of the intelligentsia" who are accused of "an unworthy adulation and servility towards things foreign and towards the pretrefying reactionary culture of the bourgeois West. The malady is widespread among the least stable representatives of the Soviet intelligentsia..." The decree further states that such intellectual and artistic aberrations are due to "agents of imperialism who seek in every way to support and vivify harmful survivals of capitalism in the minds of the least stable Soviet citizens and thereby weaken the Soviet State."

This decree was accompanied by a press campaign indicting historians, writers and scientists who had offended against "Soviet patriotism". Some scientists and inventors, it was stated, "thirsting for praise from foreign scientists and pseudo-scientists and moved by considerations of petty personal glory, are hastening to publish abroad articles on their work, which is really the property of the Soviet State..."

The latest and one of the best-known victims of this campaign is Eugen Varga, Soviet Russia's foremost economist. The occasion was the publication of Varga's book on the "Changes in the Economics of Capitalism Resulting from the Second World War". This book, and its "deviations" were considered sufficiently important to be made the subject of a special three days' conference of the Institute of Economics, which is part of the Academy of Science of the U.S.S.R. All the most prominent economists of the Soviet Union were assembled, and, according to a report in the last number of the *Bolshevik*, unanimously condemned Varga for a number of unpardonable aberrations.

His analysis is denounced as non-Marxist and as being influenced by bourgeois propaganda. Instances quoted are his assertions that war-time rationing in Britain has contributed to a distribution system in favour of the working people, and that there was something like genuine national unity in Britain during the war.

Even more serious apparently are his errors about the role of the Eastern European countries whose significance and weight in terms of world economy he estimates to be "comparatively small"; whose nationalised industries he describes as "state-capitalistic"; and whose methods of carrying out agrarian reform he holds responsible "as one of the main factors (apart from the drought) in the decrease of agricultural output."

Tribune, 17/10/47.

## What We Don't Like In Films

THE film has long been an important factor in the 'education' of the contemporary citizen. With its usual output of inhibited sex, sadism, crime-doesn't-pay, the-law-is-always-right and riches-are-the-reward-of-virtue themes, it provides but one more factor alongside state controlled schools, the national press and the radio as an aid to creating an unthinking stupor in its audience and leading the sympathies of the individuals concerned to being, with it, 'on the side of the angels'.

We are not pretending that as a result of a carefully and systematically planned scheme the various film companies are told what they must produce, but do assert that, because of the nature of film production and conditions imposed upon it by censorship laws, themes and treatments are guided into very restricted channels.

The main motive with the Board of Directors of any company is the profit motive and particularly so, this would seem, in the industry in question. Controversial matter might be prejudicial to public approval and thus to takings, so controversy is out. Art (with a capital 'A') and other such doubtful matters are, purely as an experiment, given an occasional trial—if there is no box-office response the Board will be no longer interested.

"For a time Luce (an American publisher and promoter of *March of Time*) was on the Board of Directors of Paramount Pictures. Hoped to learn something of cinema, heard nothing discussed but banking, resigned sadly." *New Yorker*, No. 28th, 1936.

That the promoter-producer system so restricts the director that he can have little or no voice in the story, the editing or

even in the actual shooting of a picture, is, of course, a fact which is ridiculous and can produce only quite chaotic results as far as film treatment is concerned.

The biggest bug-bear of all, however, is that of the censor. There may be no actual dictating from official quarters of what must go into non-governmental productions, but there are certainly wide prohibitive powers at work saying what must not! These prohibitions cover the whole panorama of contemporary social taboo (sex, illegality, swearing—this particularly so far as the Hays Office of America is concerned—anti-patriotism and so on), irreverence and political controversy, in such a way that any expression of thought in opposition to the prevailing system of social organisation and mode of thought through the film medium is almost impossible.

It is true that occasionally something like *Odd Man Out* may pass the Board, but even in films of this nature public sympathy is evoked rather for the rebel than for the idea for which he stands: we are made to feel little or no resentment against the forces which cause man's suffering but merely sorrow and charitable intent towards the man himself.

We will agree that the film is, or should be, an art form and not something concerned solely with propaganda as such, but as an art form it must be recognised that it is an expression of life and, in this sense, an expression, whether realistic or surrealistic, of fact. If a film concerns a morality which is prejudiced and based on false values, we must object; if it should deal with history, economics or psychology, we must expect its historical, economical and psychological data to be correct; if, as an art form, it

should be subordinated to political or financial interests, then we who seek to gain enjoyment and satisfaction from it are right to feel and to express resentment.

It is in this spirit that we hope from time to time in future issues to criticise current film productions. We are not attempting to compete with the outpourings of the National Press on this

subject—we have neither space nor time for the necessary profusion of epithets—nor is it intended that we should provide a comprehensive film review—there will be occasion for that only when we can afford to publish daily—but we do hope to be able to counteract in some small way the mentally distorting and distorted elements in certain productions.

RON LANDER.

## FILM REVIEW

## "CAPTAIN BOYCOTT" (Gaumont).

"When a man takes a farm from which another has been evicted, you must show him on the roadside when you meet him, you must show him in the streets of the town, you must show him in the fair and in the market place, and even in the house of worship, by leaving him severely alone, by isolating him from his kind as if he were a leper of old—you must show him your detestation of the crime he has committed, and you may depend upon it that there will be no man so full of avarice, so lost to shame, as to dare the public opinion of all right-thinking men and to transgress your unwritten code of laws."

These words were not spoken in answer to the question "but what can be done to prevent anti-social behaviour should it occur in an anarchist society". They were delivered on September 19th, 1880, at Ennis, by Charles Stewart Parnell, leader of the Irish Land League. It was from the immediate application of what he advocated that the policy of the 'boycott' derived its name.

Captain Boycott was the agent to Lord Erne, who refused to consider a plea for

just rents made by the tenants of the Erne estate. The tenants refused to pay and when ejection notices were sent out both the servers and the police were forced to retire and take refuge. Boycott's servants left him en masse. Shopkeepers would not supply him with his needs, letters and telegrams were not delivered and it was only by the labour of fifty Orangemen, heavily protected by the police and the military, that his crops were gathered in. When this was done he moved to Dublin but even here the landlord of the Herman Hotel refused him accommodation and he was forced to go to London and then to the U.S.

There is surprisingly little to criticise in the veracity of this story as given in the film. If we give it so much prominence here it is because of the lesson which it would seem to offer and the concession of a point from our opposition.

Captain Boycott could, perhaps, have been portrayed a little less of a fool and more of the rogue he was. The fact that this same business of evictions, after demands for exorbitant rents were unfulfilled, was taking place throughout Ireland, seemed to be given no importance. This, in the film, was a small incident, an unfortunate and isolated event due mainly to a rather too Blimpish and not at all representative English landlord.

Ignored, too, is the fact that the people did resist successfully the actual attempts at eviction. The film makes a great show of bonfires being lit from hilltop to hilltop, of horses in a race for life against death and of one illegal 'revolver' (incidentally unused), but the actual evictions take place with a crowd of lookers-on observing the struggle of a battering ram against a door with a table and a few chairs behind it.

Cracks like that of the Irish postman that "the Government have got plenty of time and most of our money" seemed much appreciated by the audiences. R.L.

## Book Reviews

## ON BRINGING UP CHILDREN

YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN by  
Dr. Doris Odium.

Published for the Ministry of Health by  
H.M. Stationery Office. Price 6d.

This is a pamphlet compiled from B.B.C. broadcast talks by a medical psychologist. The text, having been heard by millions, is now attractively produced by the Stationery Office, and one may assume that it will be read and kept for reference by a substantial proportion of the public.

The pamphlet really represents the outlook on the bringing up of children

which is common to the more enlightened sections of the community. It is therefore a work of considerable social significance. All social forms, and the nature of the people who operate them, are strongly influenced by the way the young have been brought up. This cannot be too strongly stressed by revolutionaries.

What does this pamphlet show? To an extent it is encouraging. The old ideas of rule by fear, of exacting an unnatural pattern of behaviour from children, of ceaselessly "improving their minds" from

the time they can lisp, have died down somewhat. Three generations of increasing revolt against the godhead of the Victorian ideal, have left their mark on family life. Indeed, the pamphlet pays some tribute to the simple idea (long recognized by amoral and simple people) that what young children principally need is sheer animal love from parents and those around them.

All this represents the development of the ideas of the more sensible sections of the community; but it is a very precarious advance. Pessimists may say that it is a transient phenomenon. We have, at best, learnt that children should be positively happy, that they have some sorts of rights as individuals, that adults are neither justified nor wise in lying to them. But still the average well-meaning man and woman is not free to enjoy a natural human relationship with children. A taboo significant of our time enters into the child-parent relationship, and the adult feels compelled to draw back from his natural behaviour, and cold-bloodedly play the role of magistrate. This passage deserves attention:—

"The great thing in punishing a child is to make it feel that there's no personal quarrel between you and it. Just as a child feels that praise or reward are merited if it's good, so we want to help it to feel that punishment is fair and reasonable when it behaves badly. Make it a rule not to punish a child when you are in a temper; if you do it's apt to become a trial of wits and strength between you and the child—and when this happens, the child only too often wins."

Oh pernicious nonsense! You cannot remain friends with the child on this basis, and the child will neither forget nor forgive the punishment you devised, because it was given calmly and in cold blood. Clip his ear and shout at him if you are really angered beyond all endurance, and he will understand and forgive you for it later. And why should not the child come out of a row with an adult feeling morally superior? It is a mean trick to swallow one's anger at the time and then, when the incident has passed over, to bring forward a calm punishment based on moral grounds; such sophistry does not really deceive the child—he knows that it is only a form of delayed-action revenge. This mode of thinking is typical of the 20th century humbug of the impartiality of the Law.

This pamphlet contains nothing very startling, but nevertheless it must be realized that the moralists of the Victorian era would have regarded it as the virtual collapse of the foundations of the Family. We can only hope that the revolt against the authoritarianism of the past will be carried still further by children who are now brought up more humanely, and that the liberal ethic portrayed here will be no great obstacle to be overcome in our drive towards a real emancipation of the young.

G.

ANARCHIST INFLUENCE  
ON RUSSIAN THOUGHT

We reprint below extracts from a review of Nicholas Berdyaev's book *The Russian Idea*, published in *The Times Literary Supplement* 11/10/47.

Russian nineteenth-century thought revolves unceasingly round the central idea of revolution. It was Nikolai I—so far as responsibility can be assigned to any one person—who, by virtually proscribing all forms of political, social and philosophical speculation, threw the whole intellectual movement of three generations into a revolutionary mould. The first overt act was the trivial "December" insurrection of 1825—a sort of officers' mutiny; its promoters were the first representatives of the so-called "conscience-stricken gentry", who illustrated the perennial truth that the seeds of revolution are sown when the ruling class loses its belief in its right to rule. This stage of the movement developed under the predominant influence of Hegel. It culminated in the forties in the brilliant figures of Bakunin and Herzen, the first Russian revolutionary émigrés, who not only mediated western ideas to Russia but also, though somewhat later, broke fresh ground by introducing Russian ideas to the revolutionary movements of Western Europe.

It remains to consider Russian nineteenth-century thought in its relation to the State. Professor Berdyaev is hardly correct in claiming anarchism as "the creation of Russians". The genealogy of anarchism goes back to William Godwin, if no further: it was firmly embedded in the incipient socialist movements of western Europe before it established itself in Russia. But the significant point is that a doctrine which in western Europe was specifically socialist and revolutionary coloured in Russia the thinking of the whole intelligentsia of whatever political complexion.

Political thought in nineteenth-century Russia, whether of westerners or Slavophiles, began, as has been said, in opposition to the bureaucratic state of Nicholas I. The first westerners, such as

Herzen, were at best grudging advocates of the western democratic State; from the first, as M. Berdyaev says, the Russian idea of freedom was bound up not with liberalism but with anarchism. The first Slavophiles unreservedly treated the State—any State—as an evil. Dostoevsky passed in his later years for a fervent upholder of the autocracy. Yet the "Legend of the Grand Inquisitor", though ostensibly directed against the secular arm of Catholicism, is in fact valid against any attempt to set up a "kingdom of this world". Tolstoy in theory rejected not only the State, but every exercise of power.

The struggle between Marx and Bakunin thus acquires fresh significance as a struggle between western and eastern conceptions of revolution, between the Jacobin conception of revolution through the State by seizing and using State power and the anarchist conception of revolution through the people by destroying the power of the State. Marx, it is true, paid tribute to socialist freedom by postulating the eventual dying away of the State. But his immediate concern was with the dictatorship of the proletariat. The essence of Bakunin's case against Marx was that Marx was a believer in State power—which the Russian anarchist regarded as a characteristically German trait.

When Lenin, steeped as he was in Russian as well as in Marxist thought, came to expound his view of the State, in *State and Revolution*, at the critical moment of 1917, what he did was to refurbish the old western socialist tradition of hostility to the State, which remained embedded and half-buried in classical Marxism, in order to convict the German Social-Democrats of a State-worship incompatible with the fundamental tenets of Marx. Beelzebub was invoked to cast out Beelzebub. *State and Revolution*, with its double insistence on the immediate dictatorship of the proletariat and ultimate dying away of the State, is a characteristic synthesis of west and east, of Jacobinism and anarchism. It is a striking example of Lenin's superlative skill in rooting western revolutionary doctrines in congenial Russian soil.

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# Letters to the Editors

## FOR AN IMMEDIATE AMNESTY

DEAR EDITORS,

The position of deserters and the complete failure of the Government to deal with the problem has frequently been referred to in your paper, and it is therefore unnecessary to go into the question in great detail. It is sufficient to say that the situation is still in the same deplorably indeterminate state, and it seems that it will remain so unless the responsible members of the Government find a new source of moral courage, or are coerced into action by a widespread public demand. The former being a doubtful possibility, we must have recourse to the latter.

It is my belief that circumstances and conditions of men continue largely owing to lack of imagination on the part of those who have the power to bring about a change, and this seems to apply in the case of deserters. If only we had some means of bringing home to the consciousness of the people as a whole the extent of misery, frustration and neuroses which is entailed in the phrase "17,000 men on the run", then I am convinced that a spontaneous demand for an immediate amnesty would result. An open-hearted generosity towards these scapegoats of society is what is needed—but generosity is not very popular to-day—we are too afraid to give anything away—we might need it when the dollars dry up! But in this case we should only be giving away the right to coerce 17,000 men to live furtively, with the perpetual fear of being caged up by the righteous authorities. But I fear I am preaching to the converted.

On behalf of our Committee, I appeal to your readers to do everything possible to publicize the Amnesty Campaign—by writing to your local newspapers and periodicals, to your M.P., asking if he is prepared to support the demand for an amnesty when the question is next raised in the House of Commons (already a group of M.P.s have promised to support) by distributing leaflets and pamphlets (now being printed), raising the matter at Trades Union meetings, and in any other ways in which support for the

campaign may be obtained.

Finally, please send a donation towards the Campaign Fund—and if your friends are in sympathy, ask them for a contribution. We like sympathy, but unfortunately it costs over £1 to send out a hundred letters, and already considerable expenditure has been involved. Please assist in any way you can, and forward any news of local publicity, etc., to this office.

Yours sincerely,

Laurie Hislam,  
Organising Secretary,  
FREEDOM DEFENCE COMMITTEE,  
8, Endsleigh Gardens,  
London, W.C.1.

## A CRITICISM

DEAR COMRADES,

On my recent return from overseas, I found a large heap of copies of *Freedom* which had accumulated during my absence, and having spent some time looking through these am moved to make some comments. (I have been a silent reader of your paper for too long now, anyway.)

I believe that the only way for Anarchism to develop is along the lines indicated by Herbert Read in his article on "Anarchism—Past and Future". With regard to non-violence, surely the only real weapon of the workers is strike, and that in most cases is passive resistance and precludes the necessity of adopting violence as a principle. Moreover if and when the masses are educated to believe in anarchism, the structure of State will collapse for there will be nobody to support it.

Let me add that certain of your contributors prejudice your case in the extremity of their reaction away from existing institutions; for instance the tramp fantasy of a few weeks ago: apparently the normal hobo is a wandering philosopher, much maligned, something after the type portrayed in old Hollywood epics. (My heart bleeds to think of the poor tramps brutally forced into the bathrooms of institutions and immersed in soapy water—ugh!—by the fascist torturers employed by the State.)

# Regionalism v. Nationalism

## Question

I AM very much interested in knowing what you mean in an article entitled "The Commune as a Factor in a Free Society" (June 17th), when you advocated rebuilding society on an "organically regional basis". I believe that if this concept is enlarged it may well lay the groundwork for

future Anarchist thought. I know that a study of Regionalism in my own statist environment has led me to a libertarian concept, and there are hints that other individuals, particularly sociologists in America, are beginning to draw anti-state conclusions.

W.L.A., Madison, U.S.A.

## & Answer

REGIONALISM has always been a fundamental concept of anarchist thought. As early as Godwin we find the advocacy of breaking down society into "parishes", and by the time of Kropotkin the idea of integrated regional foci had been strongly developed. In our own day it has been advocated strongly by the anarchists and also by such libertarian sociologists as Lewis Mumford.

Regionalism is linked intimately with the anarchist idea of decentralisation. History shows that when society is organised in small units, where all the activities of life are balanced and organically related, a much richer personal and cultural life is the result. The centralised state destroys this balanced life by the creation of large cities which drain everything towards them and not merely destroy the balance between urban and rural life, but also deprive the provincial districts of any foci of cultural life. The large cities themselves become so unwieldy that any productive relationship within their society as a whole is difficult; their life becomes atomised into small groups and families, until the places where most people live are those in which many people feel most lonely and uprooted.

A further element of centralisation in modern industrial societies which also adds to their unbalance is the concentration of industry in a few areas, where the people are condemned to an unhealthy and aesthetically disgusting life in a devastated countryside. The need for this has now passed, with the supersession of coal by electricity as a source of power, and the appearance of motor transport to end the necessity of valley transport imposed by the low gradients of railways. Now it has become possible for clean and healthy factories to be built almost anywhere, without harming the countryside but bringing a much more healthy and restful element into the worker's life.

The anarchist idea of regionalism looks forward to the gradual breaking up of the metropolises, and their substitution by small towns, each of which would be a regional centre of industrial, cultural and agricultural life, re-uniting rural and urban pursuits and bringing them close together as they were in the fruitful ages of human culture in the past.

On the "political" plane this would accompany the ending of centralised authority and would produce a society in which it would be impossible for a great state organisation to arise. Thus regionalism of this type, as distinct from nationalism, is perfectly compatible with an unlimited extension of freedom, and is, indeed, a necessary preliminary to it.

G.W.

[NOTE.—In future issues of *Freedom* we will give further consideration to the idea of regionalism by a study of the part it plays in the writings of Kropotkin and the modern sociologist, Lewis Mumford.]

## WISE WEDLOCK

(I)

In spite of some loose talk and the arguments of a few conscientious anarchists, the intention expressed in the words, "Till death us do part," which recall the Biblical words of Ruth to Naomi, "If aught but death part thee and me," remains as a rock in the national life, and a rock-like element in the national conscience.

★

About birth and old age and death we are not consulted. They happen, and there it is. But being married and entering a monastery are voluntary acts. Their irrevocable character is part of the charm and the secret of much of their strength.

There is much wisdom and much knowledge of human nature in the Christian Marriage Law. And there was divine wisdom in the Mind from which it came.

—Dean of Exeter in

*Daily Telegraph*, 18/10/47.

(II)

With 50,000 divorces granted or to be heard in British courts this year, an alarming report was issued by the National Marriage Guidance Council last night.

It asserted that "disloyalty, unfaithfulness and disregard of social responsibilities" in present-day marriages are unparalleled in our history.

In America the break-up of marriages has reached even more serious proportions. Yesterday a Chicago divorce Judge predicted, "Within eighteen years one out of every two American marriages will end in divorce."

*Sunday Pictorial*, 7/9/47.

## THE BUREAUCRATIC MIND

At Stratford Court yesterday, in the course of a case, Mr. F. G. Southgate, borough accountant for Walthamstow, said that if a person wished to paint or repair his own house it was incumbent upon him to apply for a building licence, as the council took into consideration the value of the labour which a man put into the work in addition to the value of materials to be used. For example, if paint, &c., was costing about £5 it might well be that the man's own labour would increase the cost to over the £10 limit so that a licence was necessary.

*Times*, 16/10/47.

## PRIESTS' SHORTAGE

The Bishop of Whitby is distressed. It seems there is only one priest to 53,000 people. That is probably bad—for the priest, but it may be a stroke of luck for the people. The Bishop says "It is our duty to see that the matter has necessary attention." We note that it is not the people that are complaining.

*The Freethinker*, 19/10/47.

## CLUB FOR THE UPPER CRUST

To-day the Ladies' Carlton has well over two thousand members. Its object, as set out in the rules, is "to provide a central and convenient rendezvous in London for ladies who are willing to do all in their power to promote the interest of the Conservative and Unionist Party." Nobody can sail under false colours in this matter at the Ladies' Carlton. If a member is misguided enough to marry outside the party fence, inquiries are

## COINCIDENCE?

Composer of the notorious Nazi war hymn "We are Sailing Against England," Norbert Schultze, has now written "March for the U.S.A. Police Battalion" which was played in Bavaria.

*Reynolds News*, 12/10/47

## STAYING PUT

A defendant at Walsall told the County Court judge he had received more than 1,000 notices to quit his house but he was still there.

*Reynolds News*, 19/10/47.

## PROGRESS

Members of the National Funeral Directors Association met in Boston for their 66th annual convention. Some exhibits of new equipment for the trade: the "Jewel Box" ("a gem of a casket") with a semi-circular peephole and well-padded velvet and satin interior; the "Blickens 4 in 1 Positioner", an elaborate arrangement of clamps and bars for forcing a rigid body into a suitable position of repose.

*Time (U.S.A.)*, 13/10/47.

## LOSE EVERYTHING BUT MONEY

Retirement allowances for 11 families of the Imperial household, it is estimated, will cost the Japanese Government £735,000.

The highest amount, £142,000, goes to the Kuni family of 11 members; the lowest, £5,625, to the sole member of the Higashi-Fushimi household.

All will lose their princely titles in about three months. The Emperor has given them permission to earn their livings at trades which "will not disgrace their royal blood".

They will retain any estates which they lawfully hold, if they can pay the severe income-tax, introduced by Gen. MacArthur. Before the war they paid no taxes. Now, even the Emperor has to pay.

*News Chronicle*, 16/10/47.

It will be small consolation for the Japanese people to hear that their rulers have lost their titles since they will still have to supply them with cash.

## RESULTS OF BRAIN WAVE

The meatless and poultryless days, aimed at saving grain to export to Europe, are cancelling each other out. On "meatless Tuesday" last week purchases of poultry and eggs jumped by over 15 per cent. On "eggless and poultryless Thursday" meat consumption increased by a similar amount.

*Manchester Guardian*, 13/10/47.

Responsible for the idea is newly appointed head of the "save food to save Europe" campaign, Charles Luckman, president of Lever Bros. (Pepsodent, Lifebuoy, Rinso, Spry, Lux); he had less difficulties in making people spend.

## AMERICAN POLICE METHODS

Remember the janitor who confessed the Degnan kidnapping and murder? After 48 hours grilling by the Chicago police, he could stand the treatment no longer and confessed as "the line of least resistance". He has not been able to work since.

He has now sued 17 police for \$100,000. The cops deny beating him.

Following his confession it was found later that he could not have committed the crime and it was pinned on Heirens.

Shortly after that there was a flurry of too many confessions to several other crimes in the Chicago area. Could Chicago's finest have been taking lessons from Moscow?

*Industrial Worker*, 13/9/47.

# Through the Press

quickly made. Only if the committee is satisfied that the bride intends to stay true blue in spite of a faintly pink husband can she remain a member.

The entrance fee is fifteen guineas and the annual subscription is ten. There is a flourishing junior section for young women between seventeen and twenty-seven. They pay five guineas a year. Many of the junior members work in London and find the luxurious amenities offered by the club good value.

Although a large part of one house, including the swimming pool and the squash courts, was damaged by bombs, there is still a huge, well-staffed dining room, endless lounges and drawing rooms furnished with elegance, rooms for reading, writing and bridge, and a snack bar for inexpensive meals.

*Picture Post*, 11/10/47.

## MILITANT PACIFISM!

For example, we pacifists would rather men refused to be conscripted on conscientious grounds than enlisted in the armed services; but some of us would also rather they enlisted than refused on grounds of self-interest or deserted. Our advice to the young conscript would be Penn's "Wear the sword as long as thou canst."

Editorial in *Peace News*, 17/10/47.

## LET THEM FREE!

I have been making inquiries about the IRA prisoners still serving sentences imposed here eight years ago for bomb terrorism. Last February there were 36 prisoners. Now there are 30.

The six men freed had either finished sentences or were released for good conduct. As these men leave prison they receive travel papers from the Eire High Commissioner.

*Evening Standard*, 14/10/47.

## WARDERS WITH A CONSCIENCE

The most surprising prison in the world was run at Shizuoka, Japan, where the convicts did the ordering about and the warders obeyed them.

Eleven of them decided to escape and the head warden provided them with escorts for the first 50 miles, gave them 100 pounds of rice cakes—and failed to report the escape for three hours. His explanation was that a guard must first build up his own character before influencing others.

*Star*, 21/10/47.

## TARRED WITH THE SAME BRUSH

The case against Captain Farran depended upon two pieces of circumstantial evidence. One was the contents of a note book in which he wrote on May 19th, the day he escaped from Allenbury Barracks. This the court ruled to be privileged. The other was a conversation, alleged to have taken place the day after the alleged kidnapping, between Captain Farran and Colonel Bernard Fergusson, an Army officer who had held the post of Assistant Inspector-General of the Palestine police. This evidence was withheld with the consent of the Court, since the Colonel was not prepared to say anything which might incriminate himself. In judging the effect of this case in Palestine, we must recall the background of the struggle between the Palestine police and the Jewish terrorists. It is widely believed that flying squads have been given a free hand to counter-attack the Irgun by the use of its own methods; these include kidnapping and interrogation by methods so rough that in certain instances the victim died and the body had to be disposed of.

*New Statesman*, 11/10/47.

## MASTERPIECE OF UNDERSTATEMENT

Congressman John Taber sailed from Southampton in the Queen Mary for home to-day, declaring that Britain "must work harder". He has spent a month touring Europe.

"Starving Europe?" he said to-day, "I have been around and I have seen the picture as far as I could. Some places, they didn't look so well fed. How near they are to starving I wouldn't know. I think in a good many places they are short of food."

*Evening Standard*, 18/10/47.

How could you possibly know, Mr. Taber, have you tried to live on German rations? But if you don't know why not keep your mouth shut?

## INITIATIVE FROM BELOW

Residents of King's Langley, by volunteer labour, are building their own Village Centre.

*Reynolds News*, 19/10/47.

## MORE FOOLS THEM!

Seats for views of the Royal wedding processions are selling at prices well in excess of the Coronation scale.

To-day at the lower end of Whitehall a private firm offered to rent a friend of mine a small room overlooking the route. It has two windows 4ft wide. Annual rent for the room is £100. They asked £900 for its use on November 20th.

Twenty-two people will be crowded into that room, 11 at each window, paying £40 each.

Some window seats at the far end from the Abbey have been sold for £75. For the Coronation £50 was ample to secure a whole large room.

All window-seat holders must bring passport or identity card.

*Evening Standard*, 16/10/47.



Anarchist Commentary

# ROYAL IDOLS

"A limited monarchy is a device for combining the inertia of a wooden idol with the credibility of a flesh and blood one."

—BERNARD SHAW.

THE tyrannous force of British Public Opinion places restrictions on free expression of opinions which would horrify our robust ancestors. In the days of religious bigotry, the most forthright denunciations upon religious institutions could be made; to-day however they are considered "bad taste" and to attack their sanctimonious hypocrisy is just "not done". In the days when royalty really ruled, anti-monarchical sentiments were freely expressed—at the beginning of the 19th century the Royal family were stoned in the streets of London and as late as the opening years of this century a cabinet minister, Joseph Chamberlain, was an openly-avowed Republican.

Since Victoria's time, however, there has been a sedulous and silent conspiracy to "endear the royal family in the hearts of the people", as a model of simple and modest English life. It is considered a regrettable lapse of taste, "shockingly bad form" to criticize these gentry in any way, or to express one's disgust at the fawning journalists, sycophantic politicians and platitudinous prelates who act as publicity agents for the monarchy which they describe as "our most cherished and inviolable institution".

Is it to take our mind off the desperate future that the press is regaling us with details of the forthcoming royal wedding?

Serious discussion is going on as to whether the princess should or should not promise to obey her husband in the marriage service, since he will be her subject. We are told the details of the number of clothing coupons with which she and her attendants will be issued and of the innumerable and lavish presents the lucky girl will have. The *Evening Standard*

has excelled itself in a journalistic scoop and has brought us the "secret picture" of the wedding dress, or rather, of the lengths of material from which it will be made, which, so important is it to this benighted nation, occupies a large part of the front page.

In Parliament Attlee and Churchill vied each other in paying tribute to the royal house. "Millions will welcome the joyous event," said the leader of the opposition. "From the bottoms of our hearts the goodwill of the British nation flows out to the Princess and the young sailor who are so soon to be united in the bonds of holy matrimony." The only dissenting voice was that of Wullie Galagher who could not forbear to bring in the Party Line on Greece, only to earn a stern rebuke from that erstwhile revolutionary of the I.L.P., John McGovern. The *Manchester Guardian* reports:

"Had he not finished his speech when he did he would plainly have been shouted down. Mr. McGovern, old Republican and Socialist as he called himself, rose without premeditation to denounce Mr. Gallagher's 'disgraceful' speech and added, amid a tremendous cheer from all parts of the House, that the more he looked at the Red royal family in Moscow the more he thought the British Royal Family had a place in the hearts of the people."

"Mr. Churchill was palpably and deeply moved by these words of Mr. McGovern and, leaving the Chamber a moment later, he signalled his approbation across the floor to the member for Shettleston—an unusual sight." An unusual sight—but a symbolic one!

## Byrnes exposes Inter-Allied Machinations

THE hypocrisy of Allied agreements during the war has been exposed in the recent statements of James Byrnes, former U.S. Secretary of State, who has revealed the secret agreements which were made between Churchill and Stalin to divide up the Balkans into their spheres of influence. In particular, he quoted a message from Churchill to Roosevelt on the 8th March, 1945, relating to Russian actions in Rumania, which ran as follows:

"We have been hampered in our protests against these developments by the fact that in order to have the freedom to save Greece, Eden and I at Moscow in October recognised that Russia should have a largely preponderant voice in Rumania and Bulgaria, while we took the lead in Greece."

"Stalin adhered very strictly to this understanding during the 30 days' fighting against the Communists and Elmas in the city of Athens in spite of the fact that all this was most disagreeable to him and those around him." This statement shows most clearly the cynicism with which the politicians of Britain and Russia were prepared to further their own power politics in dividing up spheres of influence in the Balkans, so much so that, while the British were prepared to sacrifice their friends in Rumania and Bulgaria, Stalin was quite prepared to stand aside and see his own Communist followers suppressed by British troops in Greece.

"Put not your trust in princes," said one of the Hebrew poets; it is just as foolish to have any faith in politicians, who are always prepared to throw overboard their most faithful adherents for some strategic advantage and to maintain their own power more securely.

## The Terrorist Scares

FEELING in this country is being steadily inflamed against the Jews by a series of terrorist scares which in fact have little substance. There has recently been a great deal of newspaper publicity given to a plot to assassinate Bevin. No details of the plot have, however, been made public, and no evidence has been presented to substantiate the story. It is instructive, however, to compare it with the much-publicised story of the attempt to bomb London, which turned out to be the work of an agent-provocateur.

The key figure in this affair was an American pilot, named Gilbert, who wormed himself into the confidence of a number of Jews in Paris, and at the same time placed himself in the confidence of the Special Branch representatives at the British Embassy in Paris, the French police and the *New York Herald-Tribune*. The French authorities provided the plane, Gilbert lured his Jewish dupes to the airfield, and then the police and the *Herald-Tribune* reporters appeared on the scene. All the occupants of the plane were arrested, but Gilbert was released a few hours later, and flown by the R.A.F. to London, where he broadcast to America on how he "prevented the transport of bombs he had been assigned to carry."

The whole story was splashed in the newspapers as a plot to bomb London, and feeling was worked up against the

Jews by this means. In fact there were no bombs in the plane, but only leaflets which the occupants hoped to scatter over London.

It was then said that bombs had been found in a house in La Villette. But when the examining magistrate began to consider the case, the police had to admit that no bombs had been found in the plane, on the persons of the accused or in the house at La Villette. The police told the lame story that the bombs were spirited away in a cab while they were actually watching the house. To add to the confusion, Gilbert, the one witness who might have spoilt the police case, had already been taken out of French territory and could not be brought forward.

Thus the story of the bomb plot completely fell to pieces. But the newspapers showed their dishonesty by completely failing to give the same publicity to this fact as they did to the bomb scare. Only the *News Review* carried a full story.

With the history of this case in view, every terrorist scare of this kind should be taken with a pinch of salt. The chances are ten to one that it is a story fabricated by police agents or newspaper men to increase anti-Semitic feeling and justify the British government's own terrorist policy in Palestine.

## Lesson in Democracy

THREE German prisoners of war stopped to listen at an open-air meeting of the Revolutionary Communist Party. One of the Trotskyists, William Ainsworth, spoke to them in German and gave one a copy of a pamphlet entitled *Solidarity* which voiced sympathy with "the millions of German people who suffer under the yoke of occupation".

He was arrested and fined £5. The prosecutor stated that it was illegal to convey printed matter to prisoners-of-war except by post.

This is an interesting and sinister case. Why was the Trotskyist charged? If it was for the purely technical offence of not sending the pamphlet by post, then why did the prosecutor, Mr. M. P. Pugh, read out extracts from it in court? Evidently his real crime was in daring to express sympathy with the sufferings of the German people. This is how we are showing the German prisoners in this country the virtues of democracy, the British way of life, and freedom of expression.

## HOUSING BETRAYAL

(Continued from page 1)

"I am quite certain that it is useless to expect that men and women will render good service to the State if forced to live under conditions which the Ministry of Agriculture would not tolerate in the case of a dairy herd of cattle."

The militant direct action of the "Vigilantes" and the "Squatters" in the last two years have shown how closely the housing shortage affects the majority of the people. Are they now going to put up with the present destruction of their hopes for better living conditions? The homeless must force the authorities to adopt an attitude very different from the present inhuman proposals. In France the text of the rehousing laws calls for the provision of accommodation for "all persons whose homeless situation might cause a public disturbance". It is clear, and it applies equally to this country, that the housing programme is not undertaken out of consideration for desperate human needs, but from motives of maintaining order. We must learn the significance of this and by our militant action give a much-needed lesson to the "planners" who can only plan for us the road to economic disaster and catastrophe.

In Parliament last week the enormous sums spent on luxury building work were revealed.

In the same week the King unveiled the grandiose statue of his father in Westminster.

"The people ask for houses and they have been given—a stone."

## TO THOSE COMRADES WHO ATTENDED THE ANARCHIST SUMMER SCHOOL, 1947.

A loss of £4 10s. 0d. was incurred this year, and it was decided at a recent meeting of the Committee to appeal to the comrades who attended the School to share the burden of this loss as there are no funds from which it can be met. The suggestion is a levy of 3/- per person. Will those comrades who wish to support this suggestion please send their contributions to PIP WALKER, c/o FREEDOM PRESS, 27, Red Lion Street, London, W.C.1.



## RECONSTRUCTION ?

# SIDNEY WEBB

SIDNEY WEBB has just died and his death has been the subject of eulogistic obituaries from all sides. It is therefore all the more necessary to point out that few men have done more harm in their lives or contributed more to the perversion of the Labour movement in England than this erudite bureaucrat, who hid beneath an unassuming exterior one of the most dangerous minds of his age.

It was Webb, more than any other, who directed the Fabian counter-attack against revolutionary Socialism in England, and who stamped on the English Labour movement the faith in bureaucratic administration which has led it into the present authoritarian channels. Webb worshipped the state as an efficient machine, and foresaw a society governed by an élite of state officials who would know what was good for the people and do it for them. This was natural enough; his own profession was that of a civil servant, and he had a vested interest in furthering civil service dictatorship. He saw the trade unions and co-operatives

as eventual agents and collaborators of the state, and laid down the general plans of authoritarian socialism which the Labour government follows to-day.

It was the main tragedy of the English labour movement that Webb and his fellow Fabians were able to gain the ascendant and turn its development away from the libertarian socialism of Morris and Owen, and the revolutionary unionism of the English syndicalists.

Webb also founded the London School of Economics, a stronghold of bureaucratic socialism, and, in collaboration with his wife, wrote an appreciation of Soviet Russia, *Soviet Communism: a New Civilization*, in which he showed his essentially dictatorial attitude by praising fulsomely the bureaucratic organisation of the Communists, and completely neglecting any discussion of the destruction of personal liberty and the vast persecution of opposition movements in Russia. This was natural enough, for in Webb's own scheme of things freedom played only a nominal part; the perfect bureaucratic dictatorship was his ideal.

## Sacrifices—For What

(Continued from page 1)

in Lisbon than the American products, or because the wealthy of Capetown prefer British refrigerators, or because our woolen goods are much appreciated in Buenos Ayres. The exhortations and the brass bands do not, and will not, have the effect upon our productive population, which the distant bureaucrats and planners desire. They will therefore have to take still further dictatorial steps which are already foreshadowed as the big stick in the background.

Jam tomorrow is the mirage held out before us in the melancholy succession of wars and crises. "Pie in the sky" has been the traditional promise of the Christian church in averting revolution and the new religion of the Socialist State holds out tomorrow's carrot before hungry and dispirited people. It worked in Nazi Germany, it worked in Soviet Russia; are the British working class going to be donkeys and fall for the same old confidence trick?

Or will we learn before it is too late that the path upon which we are being led, is the road to economic conflicts between rival producers, and thus the road to war? We must refuse to accept hardship to-day as the price of a bright future that never comes. We will be called 'Quislings' and selfish and irresponsible agitators. (The sane man in an asylum finds it hard to get a hearing.) But our message must be put before the workers before it is too late. It is this: The productive capacity of this country's and every country's industry and agriculture can be used to meet the needs of the people of the world only if the people have direct control of, and responsibility for production.

In other words, we call for the workers to take control of industry and to exercise that control directly without the intervention of bureaucrats and politicians. To those who claim, like Cripps, that the

workers are not capable of directing their own work we would answer with the question: "Is anyone else?" The experience of the various forms of wage-slavery offered by independent capitalism and by the State-capitalism that masquerades as 'socialism', show very clearly that not only are they directed to anti-social ends, but also that they cannot even be made to function efficiently.

To those who say that the State with its highly-developed coercive system is too strong to be defeated in the fight for control of the means of production, we would answer with the question: "Who produces the goods?" Not the officials of innumerable Ministries, not the Controllers of this or the Directors of that, not the Planning Board, or the Economic Dictators, but the workers themselves who thus already control the industrial potential, if they would only exercise that control. Even the strongest of dictatorships relies on the co-operation of the majority of the people—if that co-operation is withdrawn, the whole State edifice must collapse like a deflated balloon.

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## Meetings and Announcements

UNION OF ANARCHIST GROUPS:

### LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

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

NOV. 2nd Wilfred Harrison

The Free People's Theatre

NOV. 9th Tom Carlike

The Nationalisation of Railways

### N.E. LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

NEXT MEETING,  
at Flat 3, 43, New Wanstead  
(Nr. Green Man, E11)

TUES., NOV. 4th Tom Brown

Anarchism & Syndicalism

NOV. 18th Gerald Vaughan

The Sexology of Wilhelm Reich

DEC. 2nd Bill Angliss

The Colonial Question

### MERSEYSIDE ANARCHIST GROUP

PUBLIC MEETING  
Sunday, 9th November

at 7 p.m.

Speaker: Preston Clements, of Glasgow.  
"The People, Labour Direction, and the Politicians"

Coopers Hall, Shaw Street, Liverpool.

### 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.

★

Comrades interested in the formation of a discussion group in the Addlestone area should write to: Constance Stork, 55, Byron Road, Addlestone, Surrey.

★

Having received a number of protests following the publication of a notice advertising a lecture by Tom Brown, we wish to point out that the lectures are organized by groups belonging to the U. of A.G. and that Freedom is not responsible for any of them.