

Forward the "Thought Police"

NOTHING could be so symptomatic of the drift towards war and militarisation than the new powers which the government seeks in regard to "sedition". The Sedition Act of 1934 was bitterly opposed—and rightly—as a major threat to freedom of speech and opinion, by the progressive left and the liberals of fifteen years ago. The new Act, which tightens it up and extends it, giving more powers to the police to search suspected persons' houses and otherwise molest their liberty, has received only any opposition at all. Such a situation exposes at once the governmental trend towards totalitarianism, and the decay of the tradition of freedom and the defence of its legal safeguards.

Towards the Police State

In 1914, after the outbreak of the war the government of the day passed through Parliament the Defence of the Realm Act, which gave any individual at the discretion of the police. It was repealed only to be replaced by the Sedition Act of 1934. In 1939 the government once more passed through an Act, this time the Emergency Powers Act, which gave even more comprehensive powers under DORA. Parts of this Act have been repealed since 1945, but the "state of emergency" has never been officially declared to have ended. Each time the powers are left with a little more over the individual than

before, the police force ever larger and with greater powers.

This is the trend towards totalitarianism which Anarchists—and disappointingly few other movements—have denounced for so many years now. That the new Act should be brought in without even the 'justification' of wartime, underlines the truth of our contention 12 years ago that the war for freedom against totalitarianism would result in increased totalitarianism. Militarism is inevitably the enemy of freedom.

Identity Cards

But if it confirms this general trend, the search for new powers also shows government in its most dishonest light. First of all, such legislation is always stamped through Parliament under cover of a "crisis". Nominally, the government deprecates such legislation—it is put forward simply to meet a national crisis. If pressed they are ready to promise that "of course" it will be repealed as soon as the crisis is past. In such a way, opposition is lulled.

Nothing could have been more foreign to English usage than the compulsory registration of individuals and the issue of Identity Cards. Sir John Anderson, defending the Emergency Powers Act (EPA) which introduced

this anti-libertarian feature, gave a solemn undertaking that at the end of the war Identity Cards would be abolished. Has the promise been kept?

To-day Identity Cards are embedded in the Administrative structure of the Welfare State. The National Registration number is incorporated into the National Insurance and National Health administration, and even into Post Office Savings, so that one cannot withdraw money without producing one's card. Officially, they are "necessary" and a "safeguard". But before the last war they managed to run Post Office Savings and National Health Insurance without them.

A prospective Liberal parliamentary candidate has recently challenged the law on this point, declaring that the right of the police to demand the production of identity cards was repealed with one of the sections of E.P.A. He is taking the matter to the higher courts. Of course, it is nearly futile merely to point out such loopholes; the government will simply thank him for pointing it out, and then proceed to stop it up, for that is the governmental attitude towards law—it is an instrument of government. The repeal of identity cards—or any other incursion on individual freedom—requires a will to freedom on the part of the governed themselves.

"Sedition"

And now still further "loopholes"—that is, individual freedoms—are to be stopped. "Sedition" is an almost meaningless concept. The government already has powers to proceed against any individual held to be trying to "seduce" members of the forces from doing "their duty". Such terminology bristles with question-begging. "Their duty" doesn't have anything to do with "moral duty" or doing right; it simply means obeying orders even if this means the police bombing of colonial villages from the air, or the burning of their houses, destruction of their water supply, the imposition and collection of collective fines or whatever. These

things used to happen in India. Similar things are happening to-day in the colonial empire. The army is used to enforce them. To protest to a soldier, to denounce the immorality of such procedures, is sedition.

Now the new Act extends the concept of sedition to cover not merely serving soldiers, but also those liable to be called up. It has been pointed out that, to criticise the morality or even the expediency of the government's preparations for war in such a way that men of military age may hear, can now be interpreted as seditious.

"Sedition" is simply anything opposed to the government of the day, for almost any opposition opinion can be held to be a potential cause of "disaffection". When the Editors of Freedom were tried for sedition in 1945 it was pointed out by the prosecution, moreover, that it was not necessary to prove that any serving soldier had in fact been seduced: all that was neces-

sary to "prove" sedition was that the accused should have the intention of seducing. Such a conception makes nonsense of the whole idea of evidence.

The People as Mugs

If sedition is an impossibly vague conception in law, it has a much wider implication for the people as a whole. The conception of toleration of dissident opinion, of freedom of speech, contains the implication that a free people has the right to hear all aspects of a case and to choose that which most appeals to them. The idea of sedition implies that they are such mugs that they must be protected from any but orthodox opinion. More significant still, opposition opinion is the more seditious the more likely it is to influence people: that is, if they are likely to accept it, it is more dangerous. Thus, although the conception of the

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Railmen Turn to Syndicalist Methods

SOME months ago we drew attention to the apparent re-emergence of the class-struggle in this country. There seemed to be certain indications that the honeymoon period between the workers and the Government was coming to an end. This has been amply borne out by recent events in the docks and on the railways.

What is of considerable interest to us, as anarchists and syndicalists, in recent working-class action, is not only that it implies an awakening to the nature of the trades unions and the government, but that it shows a return to direct action as the natural and instinctive means for the class struggle.

And the current agitation against Order 1305, shows that workers are fully aware that it seriously weakens the pos-

sibility of success in any strike if they have to give 21 days' notice, as the Order demands.

Lightning Strikes

Now the syndicalists, as the advocates of direct action as opposed to the class collaborationist methods of reformist unions, have always maintained that, in the small-scale, fragmentary actions which form the bulk of workers' strikes, is one of the decisive factors. The "lightning strike", as syndicalists call it, means that the workers stop work without notice, giving the employer no time to organise his forces for blacklegging or carrying on.

The 21 days' notice demanded by Order 1305 gives the bosses plenty of opportunity for that, and it is for this purpose, together with giving the union officials the chance to demoralise the intended strikers, that the Order is so important to the Government. The existence of this Order makes any prompt action "unofficial", and makes the strikers look as if they are dishonouring their agreements, when in fact the agreements have only been made in their name by union officials.

The effectiveness of immediate strike action has been shown in the recent rail strikes, and it is, in our view, significant that not only was the lightning strike operated, but also other traditionally syndicalist tactics, such as work-to-rule and go-slow. That these so aptly fitted the situation, and can be so intuitively turned to by masses of workers who have probably never heard of syndicalism, shows that their intelligence, and the knowledge of their effectiveness, has not waned in all the years of reformist trade-unionism, negotiation between the bosses and paid officials, and argument against direct action by socialist intellectuals.

The railmen, by prompt action as soon as they heard of the paltry nature of the wage awards offered by the Rail Executive, forced an immediate re-opening of negotiations and, within three days, new offers were forthcoming which were nearer to their original demands. The railmen are still not satisfied. Large numbers of them remain among the lowest paid workers in the country, but they can certainly take heart from the success of their recent action—they compelled the Executive to withdraw their demands for changes in working conditions and "restrictive practices" as well as forcing up the wage offer—and reflect upon their knowledge that the modern State depends upon communications for its very life. The railmen could get along without the State, but the State cannot manage without the railmen, whom it cannot replace by unskilled blacklegs in uniform. Let the railmen, then, look further ahead to the day when they will use their own strength, not merely for the defence of their standard of living, but to take over the entire industry and run it by workers' control. That is the syndicalist aim, and one which all workers will eventually find the only solution to the class struggle.

P.S.

BEHOLD THE GREAT.

Stalin writes, Attlee replies

ATTLEE writes a note to "Russia". "Russia" replies. Stalin makes a announcement. It is eagerly scrutinized, and seems with hope, by others seeking to put it to pieces. Editorials are written and it is to be seen. Attlee makes a reply and we are supposed to take heart. The fact that Stalin's pronouncement is so very banal: that Attlee's reply is in the manner of a schoolboy repartee (Stalin's comments are couched in the same vein), is not considered. What could be more humiliating to human dignity than the level at which statesmanship is carried out! James Connolly's remark that the great only appear great because we are not our knees was never truer than now—more indicative of the contempt in which the ruled are held by their rulers.

Stalin's every public word is treated like the word of God (equally contemptuous of human dignity) by millions of people. So are Attlee's, Churchill's, Truman's. That it is empty verbiage is true: but it controls the life of millions—even though they all said the opposite yesterday and will do so again on any tomorrow which suits them.

It is time to debunk this nonsense, to refuse to be insulted by this infantile clap-trap. These men's words and decisions are important only because we, the men and women of the world, accept them and accept our position of dependence, of inferiority. If we get up from our knees, filled our lungs with air, and started to take our own decisions, they and their power and their banal verbiage would fall away into perspective. And so also would the anxiety, the war clouds, the sense of frustration and the actuality of poverty and misery.

ADVICE FOR RESERVISTS (FROM THE B.B.C.)

First Comic: "You're looking pensive."

Second Comic: "I received a rather worrying letter this morning."

First Comic: "Ah, if it's one of those with 'Air Ministry' printed on it, mark it 'Not Known At This Address' and shove it right back at them. That's what I did!"

—Take It From Here,
 B.B.C. Light Programme,
 11th February, 1951.

Support Needed for Arrested Dockers

TEN thousand London dockers refused to work on Tuesday, February 20th, as to taken protest against the arrest of their seven workmates of the London and Merseyside Port Workers' Committees.

Several hundreds of them rallied to Bow Street in support of the Committee's appeal, and, after waiting some hours in pouring rain, carried the seven shoulder-high from the court-house, until interference by the police broke up their intended protest march back to dockland. Even as it was, however, they walked back through the City of London to the East End in a practically continuous column of small groups—"without leaders".

At the time of writing, the situation is that the hearing of the case has been again adjourned, but by the time this appears in print, that (third) hearing will have been held, and the men may be committed for trial at the Old Bailey.

It is difficult to see just how this is going to end. The Prosecuting Council has pointed out how the charges became inevitable in view of the actions of the men. Well, in view of the actions of the State, a conviction becomes next to inevitable, and although if the men are simply fined, funds will be quickly found to meet the fines—what will follow if they are imprisoned? The tempo of the dockers is not such that they will take that lying down, and it needed no urging from the unofficial committee to bring out on strike the 8,600 who spontaneously refused to work the morning after the arrests. It would not be unrealistic to foretell a complete stoppage in the Port of London and, with the inevitable use of troops by the State, a bitter struggle ensuing in which the real face of the Labour Government will be plainly unmasked.

For this action against the dockers is obviously a preliminary skirmish in a general tightening-up of discipline and gagging of militants. Laying its preparations for war, the State, with the support of the servile union leaders, is testing the degree of resistance among the

workers to repressive legislation. Order 1305 has lain dormant for ten years, but the economic condition of the workers is going to worsen as the new-old policy of "Guns before Butter" is developed. To fasten slavery on the British workers, the State must show its strength. That is the purpose of the present prosecution, and the fundamental, inalienable rights of the workers to with-hold their labour are to be swept away by a State bent on war.

All workers, therefore, should recognise the nature of this attack upon the seven dockers, and should recognise the necessity of supporting them. To-day the dockers, to-morrow the railmen, then next day the miners—the piecemeal attack could divide the workers unless they realise its class nature. It's the ruling class against the working class, the same as it always has been, and workers' rights can be maintained, as they have been won, by the same methods that always have been used when the issues are clearly seen, unclouded by political argument or class collaboration.

* We ask our readers to read the appeal below, sent to us by the Port Workers' Committee. We don't need to point out the hardships that will be suffered by the seven arrested dockers and their families, even if they are not finally convicted. Contributions, however small, will be an expression of solidarity with them in their struggle, and can be sent either to Freedom Press (please mark envelopes "Dockers' Fund"), or to the Treasurer, P.W.C., Mr. Mahony, 29, Coldsbrook Lane, Loughton, Essex.

SEVEN PORT WORKERS ARRESTED

(An appeal to all trade unionists)
 DEAR BROTHERS,
 On Thursday night, February 8th, plain clothes police officers invaded the upstairs rooms of the White Hart public house, Stepping, London, in which the

London Port Workers' Committee was meeting.

Six brothers were arrested, four from London, two visiting members from Merseyside and later a further one was arrested in Liverpool and put upon the mid-night train for London.

All were charged at Bow Street the following day, with conspiring to organise an illegal strike. This is Order 1305.

Not only were the arrests carried out in this atmosphere of police terror, but the homes of the accused were entered and searched. In some cases even the toys of the children were turned over.

We draw to your notice, that before the time of arrest we in London, at a mass meeting, had already called off our strike on the wages issue. And an orderly return to work was to have taken place on the following day, Friday, 9th Feb. The authorities must have been well aware of this.

We ask you to consider the effect of these charges against our brothers. It means that any Trade Unionist who has his just demands rejected cannot even discuss the possibility of striking to enforce them without the threat of arrest, fines or imprisonment. Where now are our trade union rights and liberties, the right of strike? What even has become of our proud boast that an Englishman's home is his castle? If men can be arrested in this fashion, these rights are gone. England has become that much less the land of the free—for trade unionists.

We say this is a matter for all trade unionists—not just dockers.

We Appeal to You:

1. Demand the release of these men, the withdrawal of the charges against them and the abolition of Order 1305.
2. Take collections and make donations towards the cost of this campaign and for the defence of the seven.

Yours fraternally,
 LONDON PORT WORKERS' COMMITTEE.

The Condition of Spain

MR. Brennan is too human and too sensitive to the sufferings of his fellow beings ever to be a successful political strategist, and his recently published account of a two months visit to Spain* is eloquent proof of this. All the reviews we have seen of this book—and there are many—have been loud in their praise of Mr. Brennan's intimate knowledge of Spain and his ability to write a fascinating travel book. Indeed, there can be no doubt that the author holds our attention throughout his journey. His eye for detail, and the skill with which he introduces historical material into his narrative without ever losing our interest, are sufficient reason for warmly recommending this book.

But most reviewers who actually mentioned Mr. Brennan's proposals for aiding Spain, did so with hardly a comment. Indeed to offer a solution after reading his account of misery, corruption and disintegration which dominate the social picture of Spain to-day is an onerous task which few of us would venture to attempt. To our mind, Mr. Brennan's proposals do not appear to offer any solution to the tragic problem of Spain to-day. If anything, they might be considered as harmful to the cause of those struggling for the liberation of Spain.

IN his foreword the author suggests there is only one "positive policy" for Spain to-day. It consists in making available the goods Spain most needs rather than credits, as they would stand a better chance of "finding their way to the places where they are needed". Mr. Brennan would like to see Franco out of office, but he does not think this will come about "by reducing the country to its last legs". In his opinion the Monarchist movement "offers the only hope of any change", but will remain a "weak fronde of café politicians and grumblers" while the idea persists that the alternative to Franco is parliamentary democracy. Such an alternative, Mr. Brennan points out, is feared by all Spaniards, not only by

Franco's supporters who fear for their lives but by many of the "old Left" as well. Apparently the watchword is "anything rather than another civil war". "Spain," Mr. Brennan concludes, "for some time to come needs to live under an authoritarian régime." He then goes on to answer a question which most readers who have followed his argument will want to ask: In what way would a Monarchist régime differ from Franco's? It would invite the refugees to return (all of them, Mr. Brennan?) and release the political prisoners (a little optimistic in view of the fact that not even the Popular Front Government of 1936 released all the anarchist political). Having the support of Socialists and Liberals such a régime would be popular with the people as a whole and thus "the bitterness of the Civil War would diminish". Nor would it maintain itself in power by buying and corrupting as at present, but would in fact "put down abuses and govern with a firm hand". With all this, Mr. Brennan does not expect any sweeping reforms nor that the land question or education would be seriously tackled by a Monarchist régime should it come to power.

But, in any case, the chances for such a change have been missed. In his opinion, two years ago America and Britain could have been instrumental in ridding Spain of Franco. To-day, because of the world situation, Franco is in a much stronger position politically and it would be "unrealistic" to suppose possible a chance such as he outlines. Hence, as a last resort, Mr. Brennan, suggests aid to Spain in the form of goods: corn, fertilizers, cement and machinery.

THE Central and Southern regions of Spain which Mr. Brennan covered in his travels bear a striking resemblance in their social and economic position to that large area of Italy south of Rome, right down to Sicily. In spite of considerable Marshall Aid to Italy there is little

*THE FACE OF SPAIN, by Gerald Brennan. (Turnstile Press, 12/6d.)

POLICY FOR THE WEST, by Barbara Ward (Penguin, 1/6)

THE editorial of the last issue of *Freedom* commented on the enlightened mediocrity which characterises the B.B.C. attitude to current affairs. This "Penguin Special" by the assistant editor of *The Economist*, exhibits the same competent confident reasonable realism which ignores nothing except the fundamentals. She shows how Russia seeks to disunite the "Western Powers" and how the West, by uniting, by "containing" Russia, by full employment, by avoiding inflation, deflation, etc., can safeguard peace. "The Western world is a world of freedom," she concludes, "and in it Western Powers can freely choose and freely act."

For those who have faith in our governmental and economic system and consider it perfectible, this book will be encouraging. For those who do not it will seem rather worthy and beside the point.

On page 249, Miss Ward declares: "The highly complex societies that can dispense with government are those in which social conditioning has produced such perfect adaptation to circumstance and work that no conflicts are conceivable—and no change and no progress either. We know of such societies. The bees and the ants have reached just such a degree of adaptation to environment. (And if environment is fatality, is reality, is God itself, what greater purpose for humanity can there be than to adapt itself?) Behind the concept of the withering away of the state lies not only the loss of freedom, but the loss of rationality and humanity itself."

But on the following page her point of view has already changed, for she says: "The crusaders for freedom and progress, for man's ever-renewed struggle to build a just and holy society" (by this she means the West), "appear to be on the defensive before those who seek to eliminate human freedom and restore the twin tyrannies of fate and government" (by those she means the East).

Having in the first passage described the absence of government with the ultimate degree of adaptation to environment, fatality, etc., in the second she finds them to be "twin tyrannies", a point of view with which we can find much more sympathy. But what seems to escape Miss Ward is that the nature of government, east or west, is the same.

evidence that it has in any way relieved the poverty and destitution in the South, and we think it reasonable to say that Mr. Brennan's advocacy of a "substantial injection of Marshall Aid" to Spain would do little to solve—or even relieve—the situation in Andalusia. Marshall Aid in Italy has largely been absorbed in maintaining uneconomical industries, in strengthening the internal security forces, and in rebuilding the armed forces. Any small reforms that have been carried out in Southern Italy are a sop to the landless peasants who resorted to direct action by occupying uncultivated estates, and as a political move to counter communist gains as a result of their support for the peasants' demands. But, the main problems of the millions of landless peasants in Italy has not even been touched. In Spain it is possible that the droughts in recent years may have been responsible for aggravating the economic situation; but it is only a small part of the picture. As Mr. Brennan has so clearly shown in *The Spanish Labyrinth** the agrarian question in Spain is a perennial one, which no government has ever tackled, least of all Franco's.

WHAT has Franco's régime done with the available resources during the past ten years? The answer to this question will give us some idea of what one might expect would be done with the goods Mr. Brennan suggests should be sent to relieve suffering in Spain. From Mr. Brennan's book it is clear that large sums of money have been spent—as in all dictatorships—in impressing, and very little on what are called the necessities of life. Thus we learn that in Malaga they were building a "two mile esplanade which, it is claimed, will transform Malaga into a Nice or Brighton. But work on it has been stopped because the credits are exhausted" (p. 78). Yet in nearby Churriana Mr. Brennan observes that "twenty working class families are living in a barn divided up by cane partitions; each family has an area of some ten feet by ten feet to live, sleep and eat" (p. 79).

*THE SPANISH LABYRINTH, by Gerald Brennan. (Cambridge, 2/-)

A One-Man Manifesto by HERBERT READ

THE most terrifying object in the world to-day is not the atom bomb but the political cliché. The political cliché is not merely verbal: the words reflect a mental reaction which is as automatic as it is false. It projects its own will into feelings into a chosen object—it used to be a harmless animal object, the scape-goat, but now it has to be a human object, the enemy, to whom we give a dehumanised name: the boche, the nazi, the red. Human guilt is now so enormous, that millions of scapegoats are needed to carry it. The human race is accordingly divided into two moieties, each serving as the scape-goat of the other.

To listen to the purveyors of clichés, the so-called statesmen, the politicians, generals and journalists, has become an inescapable infliction. Not to know the news is now a crime: ignorance is connivance and innocence is guilt. In a spirit of scientific detachment it becomes almost fascinating to watch this automatic projection of clichés: Dulles, Truman, Taft, Attlee, Bevin, Eden; Schumann and Adenauer—they are all the same. If by chance a public figure gets up and makes an utterance that is not a cliché—as Pastor Niemöller has been doing lately—there is a shocked surprise, as if an indecency has been committed in public. But that is a very rare occurrence.

The present alarm is not difficult to understand. Since the end of the last war (indeed since the end of the first world war) the spread of a phenomenon to which we give the name "communism" has been continuous. It suffers from apparent set-backs (Jugo-slavia), but these are not of a nature to give any real satisfaction to the opponents of communism. Communism now embraces about half the world, and the more widely diffused it becomes, the less easy it is to define. The conversion of the four hundred millions of China to communism is not an ideological phenomenon: it is in the nature of a mental landslide. Millions wake up one morning and find that they are communists. Theirs not to reason why: life goes on as before, with perhaps a change of landlords to mark the event; and, of course, a different symbol on the flag and a call-up to a people's army. But in the army it is the same drill, just

as in the fields it is the same relentless toil.

The people who get excited (Dr. Comfort's delinquents) are the people who run the bulldozers that cause the political land-slides. These bulldozers are very powerful machines, serviced by fanatical politicians and journalists, and they go about the world doing over peasants and workers and in a general way creating chaos—shovelling millions into the armed forces, and millions more into the "lines of communication". No one is allowed to get on with his natural function, which may be producing food, or building houses, or writing poetry.

The odd thing is that we all submit to this bulldozing. Hardly a squeak is to be heard. We are pushed here and we are pushed there, and at the end of the week we hand over to half our pay in taxes to feed the bulldozers, to keep them going against us. Nothing is so significant of the present age, and perhaps a symptom of its incurable decadence, as the prevailing apathy in all countries—the refusal to fight the bulldozing politicians and generals, the willingness to pay. It was not always so. Our liberties were won by the simple expedient of refusing to furnish the means (ship-money, etc.) of bulldozing the people. Such a practical procedure is not even discussed these days. Technically it may be treason: but it was by "treason" that we won the Magna Carta and every other advance in political liberty.

Most significant in this muted slaughter-house we live in is the apathy and inefficiency of the Christian Churches and of the secular pacifist movements. Though the churches profess, in accordance with the teachings of Christ, a belief in peace, they take no effective steps to instil that belief in their congregations (Pastor Niemöller and his followers excepted). They merely bless the rival combatants.

As for the breakdown of secular pacifism, it seems to be pathological. A belief requiring the highest degree of moral courage and personal sacrifice, there are no more than a handful of men in any country who are ready to propagate this belief, and they are mostly of an older generation. The youth in all countries is indifferent to pacifist propaganda and accepts with fatalistic indifference the militaristic evils which they have inherited.

So much for the general diagnosis. Immediately at the opening of the year 1951, there is the danger, indeed already the actuality, of a Third World War. The communist revolution in China, completely successful, has thrown the United States into a treacherous panic. In defiance of all political decorum or absolute justice, this powerful nation clings desperately to a discredited régime led atrociously in the Chinese island of Formosa. On the mainland, with the support of the democratic half-world, she

has invaded Korea on a pretext of broken treaties. China has now retaliated and threatens to drive the invaders across the sea. The United States call for a wider war, a war that cannot be restricted to China, but must inevitably involve Western Europe and virtually the whole world.

It is at this point that the complete unreality of the situation becomes evident. The United States has a cover in the United Nations, an organisation dedicated to high ideals of a democratic character. Such ideals are supposedly an expression of the will of the people, and they do indeed represent the popular desire for peace. It is difficult to say who wants war. Certainly not the people—not the people in any country in the world. Certain politicians, perhaps; certain military commanders, perhaps; some calculating financiers and manufacturers. But it is difficult to believe, in the pre-war fashion, that a few scheming politicians, generals and capitalists are capable nowadays, for their private benefit, and against the will of the people, of precipitating a world war twice in a generation. Preparations for war keep certain industries at full stretch, but we have discovered that there is no certain profit, material or moral, for anybody in modern war. We can only conclude with a psychologist like Jung, that unconscious motives of a collectivist nature are responsible for such mass-insanity.

If that is the case, there are only two possibilities—either to accede to the drift to world destruction, on the assumption that individual action is futile; or to enter upon a course of action which would in effect be a mass self analysis, leading to the exposure of unconscious motives. What form such analysis should take is more than I can say, though I have made suggestions in *Education for Peace*. But no analysis or cure can take place unless the patient has the will to be cured. There is no sign of such a will anywhere among the peoples of the world. How should we recognise such signs? The first would be an absence of fear. Fear inhibits the cure of sick minds. In our half world we fear the unknown, perhaps in the shape of communism, perhaps in no shape at all.

Why are we afraid of communism (in its Russian shape)? Fundamentally because we are afraid of insecurity, of any change in our standards of living. But those standards of living are changing all the time, and insecurity already exists. It is war, and the immense economic burdens due to war, that have created insecurity in our minds and inflation and uncertainty in our economic affairs. It is doubtful if any of the political and economic rigours of a communistic state without the burdens of war, could be worse than our so-called democratic way of life with the burdens of war. This is the situation we are facing. The only way to leave out of account the non-material aspects of communism ("freedom"), but to that problem I will come presently.

forces and police, and only one fit on education (p. 220). He also appears in the Press, at the time, an announcement to the effect that all officers N.C.O.s were to receive a 40% increase in pay. His comment is particularly interesting: "A bribe to keep the faithful, a foreigner might remark. In fact the rise is a just one, because a long time it has been almost impossible for a Spanish officer or N.C.O. to get on his pay" (p. 117). Maybe so, since, as Mr. Brennan points out, the number of occasions, Franco and the owners maintain their power through strong loyal army and police force, obvious that they will be the first to a share of any outside aid, yes, as a bribe to keep them loyal!

This picture of Franco Spain would be complete without some reference to corruption, and Mr. Brennan provides with so many examples that we are embarrassed in our choice. In talking of a confectioner in Granada, he was to "There's no understanding our shorts. Last year there was a terrific crop of olives, yet this year oil is short. Last year there was a phenomenal crop, yet the ration remained as before. The fact is that these entries take food and sell it abroad. This is a country of rogues, many rogues, St. Seville (p. 125). Then there is the case of 50,000 tons of fertilizer which arrived in Malaga, as recounted to him by a farmer: "Headlines in all the papers, scrubbing the farmers' faces, for artificial manure the new treasure of the Incas. I went down at once with particulars of my claim to my share. But this share went out to be nothing—scarcely worth collecting. Then, hardly was I out of office than I found I could buy wheat wanted at double prices. The greater of the cargo had been sold on the *estraperlistas* [black marketeers]. You understand by the Municipal authorities" (p. 106). Elsewhere Mr. Brennan points out that building materials strictly controlled and one has to permit to purchase materials. "And the permit cost money," that is, a bribe. "Rightly or wrongly," it is widely believed that the Ministers who impose the controls are in the pay of the racketeers (p. 104).

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Our fear of communism is fundamentally a distrust of our own social and economic order—it is the sickly fear of vitality in others. We do not believe passionately, mystically or rationally, in whatever social and economic order prevails in our half world to-day, for the truth is that no order of any positive kind does exist. There are various degrees of disorder—of private capitalism in decay, of monopoly capitalism at war with labour monopolies of state capitalism the prey of apathy and absenteeism. There is no healthy society anywhere in the world to-day, unless (which I doubt) in Russia.

The way to lose fear, and incidentally to oppose the communism of the Soviet half-world, is to create an integrated social order in our half-world—an order that would challenge the Soviet order, not in military terms, but in social amenities and cultural achievements.

This cannot be done without a revolutionary desire to create such an order throughout our half-world; and there can be no question of creating such an order in a war atmosphere and with an economy dedicated to the provision of armaments.

Immediate unilateral disarmament is the necessary preliminary to the creation of such an order. The decision to disarm would in itself be an act of moral strength, sufficient for a further advance to a new world. But such a decision can only be made as an act of faith—an act of faith in humanity.

With such a faith we could resist communism in the only sense which it can be effectively resisted—by conversion. Even if we had to go through a stage of Soviet domination of the world, the passive fortitude of our humanism would in the end triumph over the active evil of inhumanism. That is the minimum faith on which a rational view of life can be based. All this can easily be dismissed as vague idealism, but there is no alternative belief—only as alternatives a nihilistic despair or a destructive spirit of aggression that must overwhelm the whole world.

HERBERT READ.

FREEDOM BOOKSHOP

<i>The Face of Spain</i>	Gerald Brennan 12/6
<i>The Spanish Labyrinth</i>	Gerald Brennan 25/-
<i>Homage to Catalonia</i>	George Orwell 10/6
<i>Critical Essays</i>	George Orwell 10/6
<i>News from Nowhere</i>	William Morris 3/6
<i>Men Against the Desert</i>	Ritchie Calder 12/6
For Fear of Weeping	Patrick O'Donovan 12/6
<i>Freedom Power and Democracy</i>	Karl Mannheim 25/-
<i>Brown Men and Red Sand</i>	Charles Mountford 18/-
<i>Dictionary of Biology</i>	(Penguin) 2/-
<i>Freedom and Catholic Power</i>	Paul Blanchard 16/-
<i>Catholic Church Against 20th Century</i>	Avro Manhattan 5/-
<i>On Life and Sex</i>	Havelock Ellis 17/6
<i>Adelphi, Jan.-March, 1951</i>	2/6
<i>Journal of Sex Education, Feb.-March, 1951</i>	2/-

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27 red lion st. london.
W.C.1

In Coming Issues of *Freedom*:

- A series of articles on *The Pacific Coast Indians* by George Woodcock.
- Schools and Prisons* by Tony Gibson.
- The sixth article in the series: *Pioneers of Freedom in Education* by Tom Earley, which will deal with the work of Maria Montessori.

THE TOTALITARIAN EPIDEMIC

NO part of the world, however remote, appears to be immune from the totalitarian epidemic. This does not come as a surprise. As we pointed out so often during the last war, "total war against Fascism" meant in fact a victory for totalitarianism whoever won the war. And though five years have passed since the defeat of Germany and Japan, there has been no let up in the totalitarian attitude of the so-called democratic governments. It is now impossible for workers to strike for better conditions without being accused of being Moscow agents or of endangering their country and every day new legislation makes the strike an illegal weapon punishable with heavy penalties. To what extent the State can interfere in the workers' right to withhold their labour is shown in the recent strike of New Zealand dockers whose demands for an increase of pay have been refused by the employers.

The New Zealand Government immediately stepped in and declared a State Emergency. If the dockers do not comply by a certain date it becomes a "wild strike" and action can be taken against the Watersiders Union or any other member of it. The Emergency Regulations also give the Minister the following power: (1) Appoint receivers of the funds, which may be blocked. (2) Make it an offence to contribute to the funds. (3) Suspend any award made to dockers. (4) Order Servicemen to work necessary work.

The other extreme we have the case of a British journalist employed by the *Times* of Singapore who was dismissed because he took part in an attempt to form a journalists' trade union.

In a general meeting launching the strike was, however, held last month and presided by a trade union adviser. It also by Singapore press relations and radio journalists, and foreign correspondents. It appears that the proportion of men of all races is the same of its kind in South-east Africa.

THE NAVY STEPS IN THE WEST INDIES

The defeat a General Strike of agricultural workers on the West Indian of Grenada, parties of men from

the British cadet training cruiser *Devenshire* have been landed "to hold some strategic points and the airport", according to a *Reuter* report (23rd Feb.) and naturally "a State of Emergency" has been declared and as we go to press a union leader, Eric Gairy and a union executive, Gascoigne Blaize, have been detained. A part of police from another island was flown in, and one can anticipate the ruthless suppression of the strike in the best democratic (colonial) manner.

A later report states that five people, including a woman, had been wounded by police rifle fire, and that the cruiser *Superb* was speeding to the island.

DEPORTATION FROM ONE'S OWN COUNTRY

THE case of Seretse Khama has been given a great deal of publicity and is known to our readers. But it is not an isolated case. And though the numbers involved cannot be compared with Russia's record, what is important is not the number of people involved but the principle. It indicates that when someone is considered a menace to the status quo the ruling classes will not hesitate to get him removed.

Fenner Brockway, in a letter to the *New Statesman* (Feb. 3rd), draws attention to the case of Mr. Ignatius Musazi who was president of the Uganda African Farmers' Union. On his return to Uganda he was arrested and deported. It is a very simple matter when Colonial Governors have the power to expel their subjects without trial.

Even more inhuman is the treatment of an Australian aborigine, Fred Waters, who was exiled to a desolate "back country" settlement 1,200 miles from his home for leading a strike of Darwin aborigines. The *Reuter* report states the day after the strike—for higher wages and equal rights with white people—he was taken from his home to a settlement at Haasts Bluff, near Alice Springs, where the language and tribal customs are strange to him. The banishment was made on orders from the Northern Territory Director of Native Affairs.

The Condition of Spain

(Continued from page 2)

the squandering of the country's resources in luxury building, in maintaining huge armed force and police, in bribery and corruption, one must add, in a survey of Spain, the problem of the workers. A number of references will be found in *The Face of Spain*, but to understand the obstacle they constitute to any change, the chapter on "The Spanish Question" in the author's earlier book, *The Spanish Labyrinth*, should be carefully studied. The picture to-day is terrible one, for Spain has not changed for the good under Franco. "What is needed," writes Mr. Brennan, "is a complete reorganization of the system of cultivating the land, coupled with severe pressure applied to the landowners. And this is something that the present Government, weak and discredited as it is and fearful of making more enemies, cannot do" (p. 52).

HOW do the Spanish people themselves feel about the régime? Mr. Brennan's contacts were in the main with people who had opposed the "Reds" in 1936, and this makes their bitter criticism of the régime more significant than had they been anti-Franco from the start. But one cannot help feeling that perhaps Mr. Brennan's proposals might have been different had he had discussions with more of Franco's active opponents, both inside Spain as well as in France, where, it should not be forgotten, many thousands of them are working, and sacrificing all they have for the overthrow of the Franco régime.

Yet Mr. Brennan's impressions are intensely interesting. He feels that "in a sense [Spain] is even more revolutionary in feeling than it was in 1936, because it is corrupt and rotten and conditions are so bad that everyone except for a few Black marketeers wants a change. But no revolution can take place. The police and the Army see and will continue to see to that. . . . And they get the moral support they need, in the dread which everyone who has anything to lose feels about the Army side of the issue." "The of another Civil War" (p. 99-100). "The only real power in Spain to-day," writes Mr. Brennan on another page, "is the power of money, and neither they should nor *extrapolitarians* see why they should make sacrifices for the sake of warding off a revolution that, so long as the army and police stand firm, can never come" (p. 108).

IN the foreword to *The Face of Spain*

Mr. Brennan suggests that those who are shocked by his proposals should read his book and "see what I have seen." It is because we have been able—thanks to Mr. Brennan's great skill as a writer—to see what he has seen that we are deeply shocked by his proposals and diagnosis. We must, for space reasons, state our objections briefly, relying on the reader

having followed our argument so far. On the question of aid to Spain, all the evidence leads us to the conclusion that (i) it would result in no material amelioration in the conditions of the lowest paid workers, or in any kind of solution to the main problem of the land; (ii) that it would strengthen Franco since those who would derive most benefit would be the Army and the Police without whom Franco could not remain in power. The only alternative to Franco is a Monarchy, says Mr. Brennan. Yet the evidence shows that it would be no alternative (i) because it would still be faced with the "real power"—the landowners; (ii) it could not be democratic in any sense of the word; (iii) there is no reason to suppose, even if such a régime would be "considered eligible for partnership" with Western Europe, that that would necessarily have any bearing on the economic conditions of the working masses.

Mr. Brennan obviously does not himself believe that the Monarchy is a solution. But he wants Franco to go, and at the same time he is haunted by the idea of an anarchist, but he has no faith in any government—at least, in Spain. Not only Franco's but "every other régime, including the Republican, refused to grapple" with this problem of the land" (p. 52). And yet "the chief need of Spain to-day is, I would say, the revitalisation of its countryside". No reference is made by Mr. Brennan to the attempts made by peasants themselves in 1936-39 (in the Collectives). Does not the solution, in fact, lie in the expropriation of the large estates and in decentralisation? Mr. Brennan will dismiss such views as utopian (in spite of the concrete evidence the Spanish workers gave to the world in 1936). But then, can it not be said that Mr. Brennan is himself an utopian in still believing by one day—in Spain of all places—there may come into power a good Government supported by progressive landowners?

Spain, to our mind, cannot avoid a new struggle. And those of us who believe in the Spanish workers' cause, and who are convinced that Franco will go, not by diplomatic manoeuvrings in the Foreign Office but by the efforts of the Spanish people themselves, must be ever ready to support them in their cause and resist all attempts made from outside to bolster-up the existing régime. When Mr. Brennan proposes Marshall Aid to Spain, he does so out of a sense of solidarity with the Spanish people for whom he has such deep feelings. But since he expects this aid to come from our Governments, he should know that it would not be out of the kindness of their hearts; that if it is given, then Spain would have to pay for it; not by Franco and his friends, but by the Spanish workers and peasants. One has but to watch America's present policy in Spain. V.R.

The North Australian Workers' Union, which employed Waters, sought a writ of *habeas corpus* to compel the Northern Territory authorities to return him to his birthplace. The Judge, Mr. Justice Fullagar, ruled in chambers that he had no power to issue such a writ. But even the Judge felt obliged to add that he would have granted the order if he had had the jurisdiction.

MORE RACIALISM IN S. AFRICA

THE South African Parliament has now barred the entertainment of non-whites in the House unless they are accompanied by a senator who vouches for their social standing, according to the *Manchester Guardian* (23rd Feb.).

It is encouraging to note that cultural and scientific bodies are reacting against S. Africa's racial purity policy. First there is the refusal of the British Medical Association to take part in a joint conference at Johannesburg in July because of the S. African Government's refusal to guarantee entrance to non-European doctors. Now the plans for the fourth International Conference on African touring have been abandoned for the same reason.

The South African Medical Association in a public statement declare that the Union was now virtually isolated culturally and scientifically "through no choice of its own." What do they mean by that? What have they done about getting matters changed in S. Africa?

THE LAND OF LOVE

WE wrote at the beginning of this commentary that no part of the world was immune from the totalitarian epidemic. Actually we were forgetting one little oasis, or so it appears, about which we would like to have more information. We refer to the Tonga islands with a native population of 47,000 and 225 Europeans. They call them the Friendly Islands, and Nukualofa, where festivities have been held recently to mark the 50th Anniversary of their Friendship Pact with Britain, means the "Land of Love".

There are many intriguing things about this land of love. They appear to have the heaviest royal family on record: the queen weighs 280 lbs, the Crown Prince also 280 lbs, and his brother 300 lbs. Though one is not told whether all the population is as well fed, we are informed that in Tonga there is no taxation, no illiteracy and all social services are free. What is particularly interesting is that boys get a grant of land which returns to the State when they die. And in Tonga they believe in "taking life easy". Which probably explains the name "land of love".

But to any of our readers who may have a mind to build themselves a raft and sail to the Friendly Islands, may we point out that the ingredients for a "land of love" exist everywhere in the world.

LIBERTARIAN.

Through the Press

SIEG HEIL!

"Peasants of Asia, fight communism with all the means at your disposal! Resist it without let-up! Long live the leader of the international democratic front, the great and powerful American nation! Long live the United Nations, the champion of international law and order. . . ." All these, and many other bombastic slogans are to be found in the leaflet which the Washington Peasant International Union are now distributing throughout the world.

Peasant International Bulletin (London), 1/2/51.

LETTING THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG

(1) But the choice of so short a period is more subtle than it looks. It is apparent that the country as a whole is strongly opposed to any prolonged recall.

If large sections of the Z Reserve had been told that they would be called up for a long period of training a great number of them would never have allowed themselves to be drawn into the defence net at all. But nobody is going to risk a charge for evading a mere 15 days' service.

Public Opinion, 2/2/51.

(2)

The hard fact is that a proportion of our manhood may have to accept spells of military service abroad as a part of normal life.

Observer, 28/1/51.

UNFAIR TO TITO

Tito is pained that there are schools established in the West, including one near Paris, to train Chetniks and clearing D.P.s for sabotage inside Yugoslavia, allegedly in the cause of the former royal house. He says he could understand government tolerance of such courses in Russia, but cannot forgive such anti-Communism among his new friends. Public Opinion, 2/2/51.

American Re-armament INCREASES CLOTHING COSTS IN BRITAIN

THE American soldier is undoubtedly the best-dressed fighting man in the world. Probably half of the G.I. Brides who went West after the end of hostilities in 1945 fell just as much for the well-shouldered jackets as for the G.I. inside. And certainly more than half of the "Government Surplus" stores, which also sprang into action at the end of hostilities, have maintained their profitable existence thanks to the volume of unwanted material left behind by U.S. Forces.

Unfortunately, it is not only the American taxpayer who has to foot the bill for the sartorial excellence of G.I. Joe. World supplies of raw materials being what they are, and the hypnotic power of the almighty dollar being what it is, American buyers have only to step into a market to have a highly elevating effect on prices. No-one, it seems, wants to sell cheap to America, and why should they, now that Uncle Sam has appointed himself Sugar-Daddy-in-Chief for the rest of the (Western) world—in return for certain considerations, of course.

The Price of Wool

But this means that when, for instance, an English buyer of wool goes along to the Wool Auctions to get raw material for the home market, or in homelier language, stuff that will end up as a pair of trousers for you or me, he has to compete with the U.S. Government. Which is hardly fair.

Now, please don't think that I am suddenly getting sentimental on behalf of wool merchants. Of all the categories of people who will be rendered redundant in a free society, *merchants*—the middlemen who buy to sell again—will be those who will raise the least sympathy from me. But it is you and I who will, eventually, pay over the counter of the shop at the corner the fancy prices which are the result of Truman's re-armament programme.

Already, since last December, the market price of wool has risen about 30 per cent, and the general price level is now upwards of ten times the pre-war figure, but although some price-control machinery is under consideration, it is unlikely that any real brake on the soaring price will come about for many months yet.

Meanwhile, fortunes are being made on the sheep farms of Australia, but in Yorkshire, manufacturers are curtailing production for lack of material or the finance to buy it.

It would, perhaps, be unfair to put all the blame on the one cause, but undoubtedly American re-armament, entailing a demand for an additional 100 million lbs. of wool, is the biggest single factor for the fantastic rise in wool prices. And it is a fact that it is all to be wasted, which is so annoying, for

all war production can only be described as waste. World demands in general have increased, and flood damage in Australia made last year's wool clipping not as heavy as it was hoped. But still the fact remains: America re-arms, so you and I must pay more for clothing.

How Will Shortages be Met?

The Government will obviously be very hesitant to meet the coming clothing shortage by re-introducing rationing. And, of course, they may not be necessary, for if prices go high enough, clothes will ration themselves.

Already, as far as many workers are concerned, clothing prices are effecting a ration by the purse. The recent January "Sales" have come and gone—and how many of us were able to take advantage of the price reductions? When existing clothing stocks are exhausted, prices will continue to go still higher, and, in point of fact, the shortages will not be met. The workers will just have to go without.

This situation is coming about already, merely with the preparation for war. In 1939 Britain entered a war with her larders full, plenty of coal, textiles, steel, plenty of everything. For years her problem had been what to do with the stuff she produced. The coming war will be embarked upon with Britain—and the Commonwealth, for that matter—in a vastly different economic position. How can it be anything but disastrous?

There is one section of the community which will suffer most from all this. That section referred to so delicately as "the lower-income groups", who sacrifice all the time, in "peace" and war and in crisis after crisis. The workers, who have nothing to gain from capitalism or war, lose all the time.

P.S.

AMERICA PREPARES

Chicago, Feb. 17th.

WITH the United States moving into a full-scale wartime economy, the head of incipient fascism is rearing itself. The signs are evident throughout the entire country. Here are just a few of alarming events.

A study of the new Truman draft bill discloses that a new concept is being introduced by the administration. The new legislation, if passed, will declare that military training is the "duty" of all citizens. The bill also permits the drafting of 18-year-olds on a restricted basis.

One sign is evident in Georgia, a Southern State, notorious for its lynching of Negroes. The State's Governor, Herman Talmadge is railroading through the legislature several anti-newspaper bills which is undoubtedly the forerunner of an attack on all newspapers which dare to criticise the present system. Even Talmadge's closest friends admit that the bills are aimed at several newspapers which have been critical of the Talmadge administration.

Another alarming sign is a movement in New York State to give the notorious Republican Governor Dewey the right to declare a "state of emergency" at any time. If it becomes law, Dewey will have as much power as Stalin now has and Hitler previously had. W.G.

Australian Miners Prosecuted

(From our correspondent)

IN Australia we are in the midst, or perhaps I should say, the beginning, of a coal industry crisis, caused by the miners' dissatisfaction with a new wages award and by the Communists taking advantage of this dissatisfaction to cause an industrial upheaval. The miners' leaders have been summoned before the Federal Arbitration Court, because, it is stated, they gave explicit undertakings at the end of the coal strike in 1949 that they would obey the law and cause no more trouble. They deny they gave any such undertaking in the sense the Government understands it, and the case is proceeding. The leaders are all Communists or Communist inclined.

The Labour Party as such, has not come out openly on the matter, as the whole affair puts it in a difficult position. When it was in power in 1949 it gaoled men for leading a strike, and they were only released on giving the undertakings

THE ONE-MAN REVOLUTION AGAIN

Phoenix, Arizona, January.

FOLLOWING President Truman's declaration of a "State of Emergency", Ammon Hennacy (see *Freedom*, 28/10/50) and his friends, were again picketing public buildings, despite police intervention. Leaflets distributed read: "If the politicians think one person is important enough to become a soldier, a munition maker, a bond buyer, or an income tax payer, then one person is important enough to—
Refuse to become a soldier.
Refuse to make munitions.
Refuse to buy bonds.
Refuse to pay income taxes."

U.S. STUDENT AND COLOUR BAR

The United States Supreme Court on January 2nd, unanimously upheld a decision that Louisiana State University should admit a Negro student for the first time in its 90-year history. The university had appealed to the Supreme Court against the decision. *Times Educational Supplement*, 5/1/51.

Forward the "Thought Police"

FROM PAGE ONE
"sovereign people" lies at the root of democratic theory, in fact, the government claims the right to censor what they shall hear, and so what they shall think and "direct" their representatives. Obviously, if government "represents" the people and receives its directives from their majority will, the people must be able to make up their own minds on the evidence. The idea of "sedition" makes nonsense of this concept.

The procedure of the government makes nonsense of it, too. For they rush these Acts through Parliament with a speed which makes it impossible for an M.P. to consult his constituents even if he wished to and were independent of the Party Whips.

Truth and the People

The Act illustrates also the corrupting effect of government. In 1934, one of the most active critics of the Sedition Acts was Aneurin Bevan. In 1944 and 1945 he was an active, and, we believe, sincere supporter of the "Freedom Press Defence Committee". And as a member of the Cabinet, he must take responsibility for the extension of legislation against sedition. Power corrupts.

Incidentally, sedition is only an excuse. The real aim of such an Act is to increase the power of the government, by removing the proper restrictions on the powers of the police. During the last war, we believe the sedition clauses were used only three times—against the Glasgow anarchists once, and against London anarchists twice. To make possible these trifling proceedings, an enormous and elaborate legal machinery had to be built up.

The whole trend of this legislation, of stamping calm and objective consideration of a problem under the urgency of crisis after crisis, is to play on anxiety and increase it further, and to diminish the power of the truth and the respect in which it is held. It does not matter that one's arguments are honest, and are true. Will they seduce a potential or an actual soldier from blind obedience?—and the truer and more honest they are, the more likely are they of course to "make the bayonets think" in Frederik the Great's phrase—that is the point. The concept of "sedition" is the counterpart of blind—yes, blind—obedience. At the Nuremberg trials, however, obedience to orders was held, by Sir Hartley Shawcross, not to exonerate the conscience and moral duty of an individual. A free people cannot have anything to do with blind obedience: nor can it be otherwise than insulted by the idea of "sedition".

WANTED

A reader requires the following publications: Politics July 1945 issue; Phoenix Pamphlet "What are you going to do about it now?" (Oct. 1945); F.D.C. Bulletin No. 1; Freedom Vol. 8, No. 23; This England, 2nd Series, 1940. Write to Freedom Bookshop stating price for each item available.

We regret that pressure of space has compelled us to hold over correspondence till the next issue.—Eds.

Meetings and Announcements

- LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP**
CENTRAL LONDON
Regular Sunday evening meetings will be held in future at 7.30 p.m., at THE PORCUPINE PUBLIC HOUSE, corner Charing Cross Rd. and St. Newport St., next Leicester Square Underground Sta.
- MAR. 4th Edgar Fridy
"THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE GROUP"
- MAR. 11th
"THE DOCKERS' STRUGGLE"
- MAR. 18th R. S. W. Pollard
"REPRESSIVE LEGISLATION AND THE DEFENCE REGULATIONS"
- MAR. 25th NO MEETING
- COMRADES IN WEST LONDON**
Will any Anarchists interested in forming a group in the West London area, please write to FREEDOM PRESS.
- NORTH-EAST LONDON GROUP**
Discussion Meetings fortnightly, 7.30 p.m. Enquiries c/o Freedom Press.
- MAR. 6th Bob London
"MAN FOR HIMSELF"
- MAR. 20th Rita Milton
"THE FAMILY"

- GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP**
INDOOR MEETINGS
EVERY SUNDAY AT 7 p.m.
at the CENTRAL HALLS, 25 Bath Street,
with Frank Loach, John Gaffney, Eddie Shaw,
J. Raeside

The Civil Defence Fantasy

THEY are advertising for recruits to the Civil Defence and the Air Raid Precautions for the next war. The slogan runs—"Better be Safe than Sorry"; but is there any prospect of safety in the proposed A.R.P. scheme—will it help to mitigate the horrors of a future war? It is my contention that this recruitment plan is mendacious and serving ends quite other than the safety of the people of our country. If some authorities think that their A.R.P. campaigns are at least a wise precaution "in case the worst happens" they are deceiving themselves. The organisation of Civil Defence may well prove a trap in which the people of our large towns will be caught and exterminated.

None of us can afford to neglect this question; either we should join wholeheartedly in the Defence scheme now—or realise what the alternative must be. The great majority of people do not like to think about this problem, yet they tamely acquiesce in the preparations for war which the State is demanding of them. In the last war the populace of the large towns managed to carry on some sort of tolerable social life, and to cope with the air raids. The Civil Defence plans for the next war are being laid down on the broad principles which were established in the last war; but with the advent of atomic bombs the whole picture would be entirely different. There would not be the same pattern of gradually crumbling, gradually burning towns, pitted by thousands of localised explosions and small fires. The centres of devastation would be immense, the casualties numbered in hundreds of thousands; no rescue workers, no hospitals could cope with the situation as they did before. Again, any able-bodied men going to the fringes of these deserts of desolation which atomic bombs would create, would be walking right into the dangerous area of radio-activity dust which would render them victims too, although they might survive for weeks.

What would be the point of trying to keep human life going in cities subject to atomic attack? Such areas would be useless for administrative, productive or distributive purposes; the surviving populace would be too utterly absorbed by their own terrible problems of survival to be of any value to the war effort or the economy of the country as a whole. Perhaps an efficient air-force defending the country might see that few planes bearing atomic bombs broke through, but even a few such bombs landing, say, on Greater London, would make the whole huge area a liability. There are, of course, other means by which the missiles may be landed on a large target with reasonable accuracy without the possibility of interception. The stratospheric rockets which landed on London in the last war gave us a foretaste of this.

One is forced to ask, therefore, what is behind this astounding plan that visualises setting up Civil Defence against atomic attack? The authorities are not ignorant of the facts about atomic explosions, which have been widely enough published in no uncertain detail; it is not through ignorance, therefore, that they go on treating the problem as if it were merely an extension of the air-raids which we have but recently passed through.

The answer is fourfold: (a) Desire to lull the public into present passivity; (b) Concern for the future of property; (c) Fear of social upheaval; (d) Chronic inability to face facts.

(a) The threat of war as an instrument of policy is still the major weapon of the modern State. The government poses as having the situation perpetually under control. Even when the government has no clear idea of what it is doing or what the consequences of its policies may be, it still wears this mask of confidence, and takes any convenient measures to hoodwink the people (and perhaps the members of H.M. Government themselves) that all eventualities are foreseen and prepared for. Civil Defence, insanely inappropriate, hopelessly impossible though it may be, is still a measure that has the ring of calmness and wise provision for the future. Without it, Mr. Attlee & Co. might break down under the strain and sob out that they have not the slightest idea what will happen if their bluff at U.N.O. falls through.

(b) The concern for the future of property is very pertinent to the problem. Cities would not be destroyed outright by atomic bombs and rockets, as these missiles must necessarily be few in number and dropped with some inaccuracy. A large area like London, therefore, even if treated to several gigantic explosions, would not necessarily be a total desert. Several boroughs would totally disappear, but as Greater London is about 200 square miles in area, a lot of property would remain comparatively unharmed from the direct blast and heat radiation, although rendered temporarily dangerous by radioactive dust. If the civil population has simply abandoned the whole area, this property will have no one to protect it, to put out the fires, patch up the damage and decontaminate it. An

CORRECTION.
IN the article on the Martinsville Case (*Freedom*, Feb. 17th) we appear to believe that there was no doubt about the guilt of the seven negroes. This was a misprint, and the passage in the third section, end of first paragraph, should read:—
"on such a charge. But even so, we cannot be as sure as Alistair Cooke that there was no doubt about their guilt or that they had a fair trial."

posed Civil Defence sounds no more crack-brained than the rest of the bag of tricks. I am not suggesting that the men and women who have the effective authority in our country are actually certifiable; most medical men would pronounce them sane. But, however basically sane they may be as individuals, they do not take their decisions as individuals, or act as individuals; they are committed to a policy that is lunatic, and behave as deranged beings in their official capacity.

The religious wars which once devastated Europe and the Near East used to be fought for the Greater Glory of God. Their protagonists did not pretend to be primarily interested in the welfare of men and women—at least not in their earthly lives. Political thinking to-day is less rational; the mottopieces of the great military States of to-day actually claim that their policies are directly related to the welfare of human beings—a claim that is quite ridiculous in view of the history of the past half-century. The Crusaders of to-day are therefore rather more dangerous and far less rational than the religious war-lords of earlier centuries, for they have the illusion that they are moved by practical and even humanistic policies.

The Only Defence

We cannot be concerned with curing the psychopathology which afflicts the power-wielders of to-day. The best we can hope to do is to oppose the practical manifestations of their disorder. The Civil Defence fantasy is just one aspect of an insane policy; we can only oppose it by refusing to accept war at any price. Anarchists cannot be accused of chicanery in this matter; we opposed the last war with Germany consistently, even though the Nazis would have sought to repress the libertarian minority here as their first victims. The same goes for the Stalinists; we have denounced their régime in Russia for thirty years, and we condemn it as one of the greatest tyrannies in the world to-day. We know what to expect as a minority from a Stalinist victory, yet we say in no uncertain terms that all preparation for war is utterly futile. We call upon all people in this country and across the world to join in the prevention of war—not by signing peace petitions and begging statesmen to consider the morality of their actions, but by showing these statesmen plainly that they have no power to declare war, because the ordinary people can simply refuse to obey them. Mass civil disobedience must begin at home, and the practical threat of it is the only way of jolting our rulers into relinquishing their macabre fantasies of atomic war.

ANARCHIST CASE HEARD IN BRADFORD

From a correspondent.
ON Tuesday, the 13th February, Eddie Shaw spoke at a public meeting in Bradford, organised by the Bradford Constructive Peace Council. The title of his talk, "Can Governments Make Peace?", was suggested by the Council, but since this is composed of delegates of widely differing groups and societies, and therefore has no views of its own, it put no restrictions on (and of course took no responsibility for) what he might say.

Notice to Subscribers in Europe and America

There are still many readers who have not answered our circular letter. May we remind them that this will be the last issue of "Freedom" we shall mail them until we hear from them. We do not want to lose readers but we cannot indefinitely send the paper to people who not only do not subscribe but cannot even take the trouble of writing to say that they receive "Freedom" and want to go on receiving it. American readers who have been sent a similar letter have until the end of March to get in touch with us, after which date those who do not reply will no longer receive their copy.

politics, the church, capitalism, and slavery in all its forms. His simple, clever illustrations included a beautiful imitation of Winston Churchill, several quotations from poets and scientists, and a conversation between himself and a gigantic police officer. Owing to the unfamiliarity of his accent and his message, he spent nearly fifteen minutes and wasted some good jokes winning the audience over; it says much for his ability and confidence that having won them, he kept them amused and interested until the end. "Go on with any form of government," Eddie concluded, "and you go to lunacy and destruction."

After discussion, the Reverend Dudley Richards, independent chairman of the Council, concluded the meeting on a note of harmony and tolerance by quoting "a religious gem from Eddie Shaw—'What's good enough for my Father is good enough for me'; there are rumours that he is to preach a sermon using this sacrilegious and egoistic maxim as his text."

The audience, numbered only about fifty and it became apparent during the discussion that many of these were already acquainted with anarchist ideas. But two reporters from the local press were present, and the meeting was reported in the Gossip Column "... probably the wittiest speaker the Council have ever invited" and, in some editions, as a separate news item. The Gossip Column was incredulous, the other hostile if not libellous, but both reports made it clear the reporters had enjoyed themselves, so on his next visit to Bradford, Eddie should have a more worthy audience.

Freedom — Weekly

Special Appeal
February 9th to February 23rd:

San Francisco: C.S. £1/1/0; San Francisco: P.J. 1/4; Glasgow: H.L.S. 5/-; Palo Alto: J.N. 15/3; Anon: 2/6; London: R.R. 6/-; Cleve Hill: T.W.B. 1/6; Coventry: A.D.W. 1/6; East Boston, Mass.: Aurora Club £3/10/0; Newark: N.J.: per O.M. [Providence, R.I.: Circolo Libertario] £5/5/0; Paterson, N.J.: D.V. 7/-; Allenton, Pa.: 1/1/0; San Jose, Cal.: G.P. 14/- £7/7/0; London: Anon 10/-; Spokane, F.N. 17/6; Edinburgh: T.O.M.* 5/-; Bradford: A.R. 6/-; Pontardulais: Anon 5/-; Bradford: D.B.H. 2/-; London: M.G.W. 10/-; London: F.H. 7/6.

TOTAL £17 1 3
Previously acknowledged £57 6 8
1951 TOTAL TO DATE £74 7 5

WAYS AND MEANS
A NEW reader writes: "I note that you are making an appeal for money to publish 'Freedom' weekly. I think it would be far better to ask readers to increase the circulation, which would provide funds in the best possible way. And he goes on: 'Example being better than precept—will you please send me five dozen copies of the next issue and I shall try to sell them. Payment guaranteed!'"

We agree entirely with what our reader says. When we announced the weekly "Freedom" we pointed out that by increasing our circulation only by 1,000 readers we would be able to pay our way. Of course, this is possible because the only expenses incurred in the production of our paper are printing, postages and office rent; there are no wages to pay nor fees to our contributors.

Our reader, who is a student in Swansea, adds the interesting comment: "I feel a little bitter about the fact that only recently has the anarchist point of view been brought to my notice... I feel that someone should be blamed for what seems almost criminal neglect! Can't anything be done to put the anarchist case before a general public..."

We have always held the view that potential public for anarchist ideas is large one, if only people were to see publications. There are three ways could be done: (1) by booksellers/newsagents handling our literature; (2) advertising; (3) by personal contacts.

1. Booksellers and Newsagents:
During the war our publications were stocked by some 300 booksellers, but shortage of books allowed us to "sell" Now that most booksellers' shelves are overloaded, the situation has been reversed. But at no time have we been able to get "Freedom" distributed by the usual distributors. We are hoping, however, when "Freedom" becomes a weekly we will be more successful, though we shall bank on solving our circulation problem in this direction—particularly if the political situation worsens. However, we are pleased if readers could supply us with the names and addresses of newsagents whom they think might be approached. Better still would it be if they approached them first.

2. Advertising:
We believe this to be a useful method for increasing our circulation. But to more than scratch the surface one must dispense sums of money which we cannot spare. In our appeal for £500 we have, however, budgeted to spend a small proportion advertising "Freedom". This method, therefore, depends entirely on our financial resources.

3. Personal Contacts:
This is our most important method for increasing our readership. We will limit ourselves to mentioning only a few ways that can be done: (a) by subscribing to two copies of "Freedom" and either selling the second copy to friends or by posting a number of issues to one particular person then inviting him or her to subscribe. One then sends the second copy to another person, and so on; (b) if you have no interested friends, may we suggest that you look through the correspondence columns of local papers and select a person who has written a letter which appears sympathetic and send him the paper [we can supply you with subscription forms to enclose with the copy of "Freedom"]. Then again, you may read an article in "Freedom" on a specific subject which will particularly interest a friend. Make sure he has that issue. (c) Many political meetings are being held up and down the country. Why not try and make contacts by selling "Freedom" outside the meeting halls? For instance, at a recent meeting at Conway Hall, three young comrades sold over 50 copies in a very short time. Comrades and sympathetic readers such as our Swansea friend will be pleased to know that we had to print more copies of the last issue of "Freedom" because we had sold out the normal printing. That, we feel, is a good sign. But to maintain this progress we need more willing hands!

COME ALL YE FAITHFUL

"A new star of peace is shining from the East," writes the Dean of Canterbury in an article in Saturday's *Daily Worker* which will have a universal peace appeal to all who read it. *Daily Worker*, 21/12/50.

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