

# Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

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# RETURN TO MAY DAY!

## Ourselves

WITH this issue, *Freedom* becomes a weekly newspaper. Our financial position does not justify this, nor does the number of our writers and collaborators in producing and distributing *Freedom*. But we feel that the quickening pace of events and the searching for an "alternative" that is to be found everywhere among the politically disillusioned, make it necessary for us to try more than ever to influence public opinion and events rather than wait for them to catch up with us.

*Freedom* seeks to present the case for anarchism as a valid alternative to the authoritarian ideologies which dominate the whole world today in political, social and economic life.

The circulation of a newspaper which opposes the authority of the politician, the priest, the general, the judge, the banker and the boss, is bound to be limited.

But we are convinced that we are very far indeed from our optimum circulation. We can tell this from the very large casual sales achieved by those of our friends who sell the paper in the open air and at meetings, and from those new readers who write regretting that they have only just discovered anarchist ideas.

When the normal trade channels of distribution are virtually closed to the publishers of small periodicals, we have to rely very largely on the goodwill and enthusiasm of those who value *Freedom*, for making new contacts, bringing it to the attention of potential readers, and persuading newsagents to stock and display it. We hope they will play their part in making the weekly *Freedom* a success.

We do not aim at spreading anarchist ideas by using the methods of mass propaganda, even if they were available to us. But people are not free to accept or reject the anarchist case, unless it is brought to their attention and we believe this to be our principal function. And since the subjugation of man to-day is not only political and not only economic, the scope of *Freedom* includes education, sex, literature and art, and our social environment. For, as anarchists we are concerned with widening the whole field of human activity.

The apparently unrewarding task of keeping alive an anarchist paper in the past has succeeded in keeping alive the idea. We want now to enlarge the nucleus of anarchist opinion in this country. We are conscious of the debt we owe to the founders of our paper sixty-five years ago and to the known and unknown comrades who succeeded them. To-day, there is amongst people who think for themselves, support for these ideas which at one time were airily denounced as "utopian" and "unrealistic". History itself has been the vindicator of the anarchist pioneers, and in publishing our newspaper as a weekly, although it is without capital, without paid workers, and without the distributive machinery which is at the command of the commercial press, we are trying to make anarchism a social force capable of resisting authority and affirming the desirability and possibility of human freedom.

IT was in 1889, at the first congress in Paris of the Second (Socialist) International that the choice of May Day as Labour Day was established. Celebrated from time immemorial as a Spring festival, the First day of May was chosen as an appropriate date for workers to demonstrate their faith in the future they were to make for themselves—a future as beautiful and fair as a May morning.

May the First was to be the day when, throughout the world, workers walked out of the "dark satanic mills" and joined hands across the frontiers, expressing the brotherhood of man, the international solidarity and dignity of Labour.

Alas for shattered dreams. Since those days of high optimism, Socialists have risen to position of power; mass workers' organisations have established "their" governments and the political

path they followed has led to the political goal.

But the fruit that has grown from that May blossom is strange fruit indeed, bitter and rotten. Instead of international solidarity—support for imperialist wars; instead of the abolition of frontiers—an iron curtain; instead of the golden age of peace and abundance—permanent war and scarcity.

What has gone wrong? Why is it that, except for tiny, ineffectual groups of opposition socialists with not the remotest chance of attaining power, the socialist parties and trade union movements have become corrupt and nationalistic in the process of achieving the power to carry out what they originally proposed?

The answer lies in that very process. The struggle for political power has nothing whatever to do with the attainment of the classless society, for a

power structure in society implies the existence of those who rule and those who are ruled—a ruling class and a working class. And simply to substitute one set of rulers for another alters the situation not one jot.

The degradation of May Day into meaningless sloganising, into military parades in the Red Square, Moscow, and jingoistic speeches in Westminster, London, is a direct result of the failure by the ordinary people everywhere to recognise the deception practised upon them.

But the original conception of May Day was a fine one. Anarchists have always maintained that direct action and the General Strike—the ideas behind the first May Days—are the only effective means to stop nationalist wars and establish a free society. Let us then reject the political trickery which has so weakened the cause of internationalism. Let us return to May Day!

## Oil Politics in Persia

THE politics of commerce are never savoury, but oil politics have always been particularly unpleasant, perhaps because the oil industry is highly technical and requires an advanced capitalist economy to operate it. Furthermore, oil itself is found in many backward and primitive countries with a fixed pattern of life, easily disrupted by the incursion of a large, powerful and isolated industry, negotiating with the government direct, and as often as not playing off one faction against another for the benefit of the oil company without regard for the interests of the indigenous population.

In Persia the question is further complicated by international rivalries. The Russians have been vigorously supporting the nationalist agitation against the British oil company, on the principle that they may gain by damaging British interests. Once more, therefore, a small country is involved in disputes in which much of the decisions and the manoeuvring is conducted from outside. In such circumstances the interests of the inhabitants stand a poor chance.

The Persian Government has fallen on the oil issue, and the new prime minister is a fervent nationalist, pledged to oust the oil company. He refused to take office unless the representative chamber accepted his Bill for nationalising the oil company first. On the face of it this might seem a Russian victory, but it has been pointed out that Dr. Mousadeq, the new prime minister and leader of the National Front is an opponent of the Communists. He also favours compensation for the expropriated oil company, and envisages employing the same technicians, and supplying the same customers who have made purchases over the past three years.

Obviously, an equitable solution to the problem would involve the industry being operated by the workers in it. But this would involve revolutionary re-orientations not only in Persia but also in this country which would, incidentally, radically alter the whole question of oil politics the world over.

an intention to use the granting and the withholding of the food as an instrument of diplomatic pressure upon a government with which we happen at this moment to disagree.

Canada has also offered a million tons of wheat as a gift, but this wheat is low grade (according to the *Times Weekly Edition* this is the only quality available), and the Indian Government have "had to refuse the responsibility of selling it as part of the Indian food ration in order to fulfil the condition that the proceeds must be applied to development projects."

## Propaganda for Russia and China

The Communist countries too have not been slow to draw propaganda value from India's famine sufferings. They offer straight commercial deals, and with relatively tiny amounts of food, but with immediate delivery as an open contrast to American dilatoriness. China offered 50,000 tons of food grains, to be paid for in rupees or dollars, and shipment

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## Malan Defends Racial Discrimination

An Opposition amendment rejecting the Separate Registration of Voters' Bill which seeks to remove coloured people in the Cape Province from the common voters' roll and to give them separate European representation in Parliament, was defeated by 76 votes to 70, earlier this week.

Dr. Dönges, Minister of the Interior, said the argument that the Bill was a breach of faith on the part of the white man in South Africa was "pernicious nonsense, meaningless, and dangerous talk."

## INDIA ONCE MORE FACES FAMINE

7 Million may die if no supplies are received this month

IN 1943 an appalling famine overtook Bengal. Official estimates gave the death toll as one million, but the *Manchester Guardian* remarked recently that the magnitude of the Bengal tragedy "will never be known, but . . . recent census figures suggest it may have taken as many as five million lives."

This year India again faces famine. The areas affected, Bihar, Bombay, Madras, contain twenty million people—nearly half the population of this country—and it is feared that famine deaths may reach seven millions.

One of the most appalling aspects of India's famines is that they can be seen coming so many months ahead. A press report from Bombay dated December 19th last, declared:

"India faces famines. She would need to import ten million tons of food grains in 1951 to make up for losses through natural calamity and the diversion of land crops for sale, and to provide for her increased population.

"The Food Ministry admits the loss of 6.8 million tons through floods, droughts, and earthquakes, nearly one million tons will be lost through diversion to cash crops, and one and a half millions tons are required at the lowest estimate to build up some reserve, while the four million people born every year require a minimum of half a million tons to eat."

This situation is the result of three years of bad harvests, together with earthquakes, floods, drought, and epidemics. The Indian Government has had to import 350,000 tons of food grains a month. In Bihar, because of the autumn drought, the rice crop is two and a half million tons short. There are no food reserves and the population is "living from hand to mouth on the half-withered standing crops. Experts estimate that the yield of these crops is but 25 per cent. of an average season's crop" (*The Times*). Rations for the whole of India represented twelve ounces of food grains a day per head, but for the past three months have been cut to nine ounces. Not only have the government been unable to keep their promise to restore it to twelve in March, but in parts of Madras the food shops have either had to dishonour the ration cards or supply only four ounces.

To understand what these figures mean, one may compare them with the scales suggested by the Medical Research Council for far eastern con-

ditions: for emergencies, twelve ounces (i.e., 1,500 calories); for moderate work, twenty ounces; for heavy work, twenty-four. Nine ounces represents 1,125 calories—somewhere about the Belsen level; four ounces is equivalent to 500 calories—well below starvation level.

## India Appeals to the World

On the 24th December last, Nehru officially conveyed to the United States' government India's urgent need of two million tons of food grains. On January 14th, the *New York Times* published a cable from New Delhi stating that "Indian friends of the United States as well as American observers here are convinced that a quick and generous response to Mr. Nehru's appeal would be the most effective demonstration that the United States could make to the Asian people of its altruistic intentions . . . (Mr. Nehru's appeal creates the first immediate opportunity to make a substantial and dramatic contribution toward the

stability of the most populous non-Communist nation in the world and a reasonably priced investment in Asian goodwill at a time when American prestige is low."

On February 12th, Truman and Acheson endorsed an immediate grant of one million tons, nearly two months after Nehru's appeal. But before the food can actually be shipped to India, Congress has to pass legal enactments which it is estimated will hold up actual delivery for a further six months. Some observers say November at the earliest.

The time factor is immensely important because the affected areas in India are almost cut off as soon as the monsoon breaks—in any case poor, and deliveries will have to start months before that (some reports say the middle of April at the latest) in order to be effective.

Truman and Acheson offered the million tons as an outright gift, since India is quite unable to make payment for it. ("To import a million tons of wheat would cost as much as a whole year's sterling releases under the Colombo Plan; to import a millions tons of rice would dissipate all the exchange earned by India's yearly tea exports to Great Britain. To import enough to make up for the total deficit would strip India of all her imports . . ." writes a press correspondent from Bombay). They urge Congress to make it immediately, and leave discussion to the second million tons. But already political opportunism is at work, for Senator Tom Connally, the Administration's Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, said on January 25th that India's foreign policy had lessened the chance of prompt and favourable action by Congress—a clear hint of political blackmail.

On February 8th, the Indian Government asked the U.S. "to give them *ad hoc* assistance during 1951 to obtain two million tons of food grains and would appreciate it if the grain be supplied on special and easy terms". Truman's suggestion of an outright gift has been widely supported but four Republicans in a minority report urged "we should make India a loan which she should repay in strategic materials. We should not make the Government of India a gift it has not asked for." This report is one of the reasons for delay.

Now America to-day has a surplus of grains and food generally. *Life* published several months ago a report with photographs of gigantic heaps of unwanted food. There can be no question therefore of America taking it out of current consumption. It is clear that the political capital that can be reaped from help at this point. Walter Lippman wrote in the *New York Herald Tribune* on February 2nd: "There is no doubt that India needs the food desperately and there is no doubt that America has the food and can easily make it available. Under these conditions failure to provide the food can be due only to one reason—

## UNREST in SPAIN

### Cruiser sent to Bilbao

An agency message states that the Spanish cruiser the *Almirante Cervera*, arrived last Monday at Bilbao, where "agitators" were reported to be calling for a May Day General Strike in protest against penalties imposed on workers who took part in the recent cost-of-living demonstrations.

Meanwhile the secretary-general of the Falange movement who is also the Minister of Justice, said in Seville that the party would never give way to attempts against it and would, if necessary, rise up again rather than lose the victory it had won. He added that the present agitation in Spain is the last effort "of an anti-Spanish movement which has failed abroad and which is now being fostered here", in spite of the fact that all eyewitnesses have been unanimous in declaring that the recent demonstrations have had the consent of all sections of the community and were obviously spontaneous. [Strikes spread in Spain, page 3]

Our Freedom Weekly Fund: Needed £600 Received £130. Will you help NOW?

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COMPARING the profession of the Schoolteacher with that of the Prison Officer may seem a far-fetched idea to some people. Teachers, in particular, may resent the comparison, yet there is a growing similarity and connection between the two occupations.

At the beginning of the last century it would have been ludicrous to compare the pedagogue with the turnkey. Such schooling as was then made available to the children of the masses was provided to fit them to play their part in the growing mercantile and industrial system of the country. The school provided the means whereby the brighter children could escape from the utter drudgery of the factory and the land, and achieve the more comfortable position of middle-class workers in an expanding free capitalist economy. The prison, on the other hand, was an instrument of sheer punishment, and the turnkey was a sort of hangman's mate. The prison system of the time was an avowed machine of repression, part of the terrorism by which the ruling class maintained its power.

Later in the 19th century, the State began to take a more positive interest in both the school system and the prison system, and realising the great potentialities of both these instruments for increasing centralised power, slowly revised their nature. The form and underlying idea of the school and the prison have, in fact, been made to approach each other more closely, and there are to-day institutions which are an absolute combination of school and prison.

Here is not the place to deal with the many reasons for the evolution of the State to a more complex and more powerful form during the 19th century; suffice it to note that by the end of the century the State had acquired a distinct entity divorced from the community at large, to a degree unknown in our previous history. The State had always been the instrument of the ruling class, but now this instrument was beginning to gather to itself such distinctive

# SCHOOLS AND PRISONS

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power that it was set fair to proceed on the course culminating in the Totalitarian epoch in which State bureaucracies become the ruling class.

## The Reformers

The more far-sighted pioneers of 19th century "progress" realised that the schooling system could be a means by which children could be trained not only in the skills which increase their usefulness as clerks, shop-assistants and technical workers, but in habits of thinking and behaviour which make them a docile mass to govern when they grow up. The State therefore took schooling under its wing, and from the first tentative measures of subsidising the National School Society in 1832, it proceeded to take over the responsibility for schooling the masses, until forty years later attendance at school was not free but compulsory. The drive continues to-day, the New Education Act being the latest piece of legislation in the matter.

In recent times attention has been drawn to the fact that William Godwin, writing in 1793, foresaw the possibility of schools being taken over by the State, and he observed that:

"Before we put so powerful a machine under the direction of so ambiguous an agent, it behoves us to consider well what it is that we do. Government will not fail to employ it to strengthen its hands and perpetuate its institutions."

Now we see that Godwin was entirely right in his prognostications, and, having grown up with the idea, to take the matter for granted.

At the same time that the school system was coming under increasing State surveillance, so the prison system was coming under review as another machine with great potentialities for the science of government. Up to that time prisons had

never been as great a feature in our national life as they are to-day. Offences against property and the political order were mainly punished by hanging and transportation to the colonies. Prisons in the main served as clearing houses for the galleys and the convict ships. The precariousness of these institutions had been shown in the previous century by such incidents as the riots of 1780 when all the prisons of London were simply broken open and burnt by the popular fury with little difficulty.

A new concept of the function of the prison system was being born in the 19th century. It became evident that transportation of convicts to the colonies must one day cease, and the State was not successful in using the galleys as a panacea for all evils. The 19th century was one of incipient social revolution, even in this country, and all measures had to be taken not only to suppress but to evade the forces of mass revolt. The prison system was therefore remodelled on a reformist basis. If schools could be made to mould the young into docile citizens, the prisons (where they failed to deter or exterminate) could be made to remould criminals into docile beings. Such was the conscious intention of the reformists who built the great prisons which are a monument to Victorian "progress". Holloway, Pentonville, Brixton, Dartmoor, Barlinnie, Lewis and numerous others up and down the country, are outstanding architectural testaments to the idea of government.

It is a platitude to observe that the penal system is still largely punitive in character. The idea of savage retribution is eternally wedded to the law, but it is the reformatory aspect of penology with which we are concerned here. During the past 100 years there has been a degree of experiment in methods of trying to change the nature of criminals (which is, of course, the obverse of changing the nature of the law which makes them criminals). One of the earliest endeavours in the new penology was the founding of Pentonville Prison in 1842. This prison was dedicated to the idea of segregating the law-breaker from the company and even the sight of his companions in misfortune; during his term there he saw nobody but State officials and clergymen. After some years the Prison Commissioners reported:

"The rate of mortality has been remarkably low. There exists abundant proof of the moral and religious improvement of the prisoners, among whom a cheerful spirit of industry prevails. While these benefits have been conferred, the corrective influence of the discipline has been strictly maintained, and the penal character of the imprisonment has not been sacrificed to the objects of reformation. In reviewing, therefore, the whole of the circumstances bearing upon the state and condition of the prisoners, we have no hesitation in expressing our satisfaction at the results of the discipline. We are of the opinion that the adoption

of separate confinement, as established at Pentonville Prison, promises to effect a most salutary change in the treatment of criminals, and that it is well calculated to deter, correct and reclaim the offender."

Later, more work was done with young offenders. The "moral and religious improvement" of the old lads was found to be but skin deep when they left the idyllic walls of Pentonville. With young offenders it was easier to obtain results; if the school had failed in making boys subservient to the law, a further period of more intensive training seemed to be indicated. Thus the Borstal system was born. Interestingly enough, the Borstals have copied not only the more obvious features of ordinary State schools, but also some of the features of the snob Public Schools—the housemaster system, fagging, the Borstal school tie, the Old Borstalian tie is, as yet, a music-hall joke, but if to-day one boasts of a five-year stretch at Eton, to-morrow—who knows?

Experiments with older prisoners continue to be carried out on reformative lines, the emphasis being placed on docility and respect for authority as the cardinal virtues to be inculcated into the prisoners. It is difficult indeed to get at the real facts regarding how the majority of prisoners are influenced by these methods in their behaviour subsequent to their being discharged. We know what percentage return as "old lags", but what of the others—have they merely learnt the 11th Commandment, "Thou shalt not be found out?"

(To be concluded)

TONY GIBSON.

## Marxism and Nationalism in the 2nd International

The article below is extracted from a thesis on *The Second International and the Problem of War*, by a student in Switzerland. In one of the essays in the new Freedom Press publication *Marxism, Freedom and the State*, Bakunin with that insight which makes his writings so valuable even after 80 years, shows how the German nationalism of the early marxists, made the debacle of the Second International inevitable. After examining Marx's nationalism and his socialism, Bakunin observes:

"As a German patriot he wants the greatness and power, that is to say, the domination of Germany; but as a Socialist of the International he must wish for the emancipation of all the peoples of the world. How can this contradiction be resolved?"

"There is only one way, that is to proclaim, after he has persuaded himself of it, of course, that the greatness and power of Germany as a State, is a supreme condition of the emancipation of the whole world, that the national and political triumph of Germany is the triumph of humanity, and that all that is contrary to the advent of this great new omnivorous power is the enemy of humanity."

For the key to present-day "Marxism", one has only to substitute Russia for Germany in the last sentence above.

AN examination of Marx and Engel's views on the problem of nationalism will help to explain why the various workers' parties of which the strongest was the German Social Democracy, ranged themselves behind the bourgeois States at the outbreak of the First of the World Wars in 1914.

Marx and Engels are both considered as scientists and revolutionaries at the same time. The term "scientific socialism" corroborating Marx's famous saying that before them philosophers wanted to explain the state of affairs while he and Engels wanted to change it, shows clearly that in their case action dominated thought and revolutionary passion scientific objectivity. This duality between their doctrine of an impersonal and scientific appearance with its iron laws and economic theories, and their everyday activities and way of thinking marked with a revolutionary impatience foreign to determinism, could not fail to have repercussions among their followers. They kept the scientific side of marxism as an inflexible dogma but like Marx himself acted in flagrant contradiction to the doctrine. Only if Marx the poor eternal emigré found in his activities and apocalyptic visions a compensation for his hatred of the liberal bourgeois world, his disciples solidly entrenched in the workers' parties understood differently the rôle of the proletarian movement. In effect they followed the example of Marx in a dif-

ferent direction. Marx laid down laws of social science and then refuted them by his revolutionary impetuosity; the orthodox marxists waited for Marx's laws to ripen and in the meantime dabbled in reformism.

Marx's great intellectual powers and his dialectical method as the structural basis of his thinking conditioned his conceptions of nationalism and internationalism. His theory of dialectical materialism explained very badly the events of the 18th century for it ignored the problem of nationalism which played a secondary rôle in a theory where the history of the world is but an economic struggle of social classes. Nevertheless Marx as opposed to anarchists like Proudhon valued the existence of great nations from the point of view of large centralised political communities which he considered as indispensable for evolution. Just as for him the existence of rich and strong bourgeoisie is a condition for the advent of the proletariat, so the national state is the point of departure

from where mankind will embark towards the Internationale, i.e., the universal social republic. This explains why to Marx the nation and the proletarian revolution are two indissoluble conceptions, two subsequent steps and why socialism should have a German basis. For the same reason one will understand the juxtaposition of the theory of the sacred duty of the workers to defend national integrity with declarations of internationalism.

Marx's disciples accepted this dialectical reasoning. But their position became far more complex. Marx thought that the duration of national states and their influence would be relatively short in view of the contradictions of capitalism. But as this process ran counter to their forecasts, as nationalism instead of decreasing did not cease to grow, his followers were faced by a contradiction. Their doctrines required them to espouse internationalism while everyday politics drove them in another direction. Thus socialists of all tendencies could cite Marx. The socialist patriots in 1914 quoted patriotic phrases of Marx and Engels and they could not be accused of falsifying the ideas of their

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## COMMENT

### An East End Story

ONE of the most interesting and valuable aspects of the Festival is the "Live Architecture" Exhibition at Lansbury, Poplar (which will be described in a forthcoming issue of *Freedom*). The East End boroughs of Stepney and Poplar were (as the poorer districts of cities were everywhere), the worst hit in the bombing of London, and a Reconstruction Scheme was prepared for the whole area, divided into eleven neighbourhoods, each to be self-contained in amenities and public buildings. The neighbourhood of 124 acres between the Limehouse Cut and East India Dock Road has been named Lansbury. Thirty acres of this area is on show this summer and visitors will see part of it completed and occupied, and part actually being built. There are flats and houses, schools, churches, pubs, shops, gardens and a market square replacing Chrisp Street market. It will certainly be an object lesson of what could be done on a really big scale if our economy were centred on constructive achievement for satisfying human needs.

George Lansbury who was much loved in Poplar is often cited as an example of a good man in politics, but it was in fact his goodness which made him a political failure—how pathetically false to his nature were his attempts to be "realistic" about the nature of the Soviet régime, and to convince himself and others that Lenin was in fact putting into practice "the teachings of Jesus!" When he returned to Moscow from a visit to Kropotkin in 1920, with Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman, they saw starved and half-naked children begging for bread at the station, and Emma Goldman records the following conversation:

"A terrible sight," Sasha remarked. "Look here, Berkman, you are too sentimental," Lansbury retorted, "I could show you any number of poverty-stricken children in the East End of London." "I am sure you could," Sasha replied, "but you forget that the Revolution has

taken place in Russia, not in England."

An episode more in keeping with Lansbury's character was the famous Poplar Rates Dispute of 1921. He was the mayor of the borough when, as unemployment increased, the payments the council had to make under the old Poor Law were far greater than those of the wealthier boroughs. So the Poplar Council refused to levy the rates due to the London County Council. Lansbury and most of the other councillors were sent to jail—thirty men to Brixton and six women to Holloway, whence they were taken once a week in a Black Maria to join the men in Council meetings, while citizens of Poplar sang outside the prison gates. After six weeks, the law had to be changed to get the adamant Council out of jail.

In the Labour Government of 1929, Lansbury was given the then minor post of President of the Office of Works, and in this capacity he started the Lido in the Serpentine, to the horror and fury of the inhabitants of Mayfair who looked upon Hyde Park as their own back-yard. He became leader of what was left of the Labour Party after Ramsay MacDonald's sell-out in 1931, until he was thrown out for his pacifism by the Bevin teamroller in 1935. Lansbury died on the eve of his party's entry into the War Cabinet in 1940.

The leaders of all parties, who had smiled at him for his naivety, paid tribute to him and said, as was said later about James Maxton, that he had no enemies. And it was probably true, for his political honesty, apart from his Russian illusions in the twenties, was the guarantee of his political impotence. At the top of Campbell Road, Poplar, almost opposite the ruins of his home in the Bow Road, is a converted shop which used to be called Lansbury Hall. To-day its windows are filled with posters of the Army Cadet Force.

## BOOKS

### SARTRE'S NEW NOVEL

IRON IN THE SOUL by Jean-Paul Sartre. (Hamish Hamilton, 12/6)

Published in America as *Troubled Sleep* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York).

OF all Sartre's novels this is the most facetiously written and, alas, the one with least to say. And what it says flashes a kind of dull terror. For this is a novel of disintegration. And it is a social novel: a novel of the disintegration of France and particularly the army of the French in 1940. It cannot be the social factor alone which makes of this novel a less successful one for Sartre (for *The Reprieve* was even more political, but more daringly so). And that is perhaps the clue: Sartre (or the world) is using his characters too much as social or sociological characters; and they are real all right, but they are impoverished, and are pitiful; one more example of how conventional politics (i.e., society as we know it) can sap the lifeblood of personality and throw up cardboard caricatures of men, who talk like Communist literary criticism and act like corporals of the emotions.

Perhaps I am over-exaggerating here a bit, for Sartre's work never even approaches these extremes, but I am only comparing this work with what I consider Sartre's finer three previous novels.

For it is the penetration of the state, of "society", of war, the mass terrors of imprisonment or unemployment into the life of the individual that make of him less than he can be. Less of himself and

more of simple raw material to be processed; an "example" for the other prisoners. He is so filled with the daily routine of conforming to the mass institution: job, state, war, army, defeat that he has no time, energy, talent or ability left to be that unique individual he might become.

But this is an old story. The new story is how totally overwhelming this fact is becoming, how it is entering new areas: how the flowers of individualism of the West—England, America and France—are being over-rolled by the totalitarian personality, whose main characteristic is not terror but dullness, mediocrity, emptiness. And the emptier the barrel, the louder the noise. Mathieu, the confused intellectual, must be finished off here; war is no place for Hamlet. After surviving two novels (as the main character), Mathieu ends in a blaze of . . . nothing.

"He made his way to the parapet and stood there frigid." This was revenge on a big scale, each one of his shots wiped out some ancient scruple. One for Lola, whom I dared not rob; one for Marcelle, whom I ought to have ditched; one for Odette, who I didn't want to screw. This for the books I never dared to write; this for the journeys I never made; this for everybody in general whom I wanted to hate and tried to understand. He fired, and the tables of the law crashed about him—Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself—bang! in that bastard's face. Thou shalt not kill—bang! at that scarecrow opposite. He was firing on his fellow-men, on Virtue, on the whole world: Liberty is Terror. The *mairie* was ablaze; bullets were whining about him, free as the air. The world is going up in smoke, and me with it. He fired; he looked at his watch: fourteen minutes and thirty seconds. Nothing more to ask of fate now except one half-minute, just time enough to fire at that smart officer, at all the Beauty of the Earth, at the street, at the flowers, at the gardens, at everything he had loved. Beauty dived downwards obscenely, and Mathieu went on firing. He fired; he was cleansed, he was all-powerful, he was free."

There is here more than nothing, of course. Inside of nothing is this sense of freedom, of life attained only in the act, the only desired act permitted to modern man: freedom to kill. Once again the theme of murder and pain presenting to crippled modern man his only sense of life.

However, there is also here foreshadowed the theme of resistance: for in spite of the terrible inanity of this scene: this chosen act of resistance has delayed the Germans 15 minutes (in a war already lost, whose loss is not desired by any of the resisters).

This tragic and half-ironical fact moves into the new character of Schneider of the prison camp: he is a former associate of the Stalinists who must now associate with them in the resistance, but with no illusions. He is fortified only by a kind of compassion without hope.

What Sartre can do with the resistance theme itself is already magnificently shown by his play, "The Victors". One eagerly awaits his next novel.

JACK GALLEGÓ.

## FREEDOM BOOKSHOP

- Heavens on Earth Mark Holloway 16/-  
An illustrated history of Utopian Communities in America. "The settlements proved that community of property was not only a workable proposition, but was one that could bring with it increased prosperity."
- Building Modern Sweden Bertil Hultén 3/6  
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## MAN & HIS DESTINY

INDIA contains nearly a fifth of the population of the earth. The recurring famines (which are discussed in more detail elsewhere in this issue) inevitably prompt the reflection that despite the technical advances of the last few centuries, man is still very far from controlling his environment. Individual men and women, of course, under the system of governmental tutelage are not given the opportunity to attempt this control. Not only do they have to contend with natural obstacles, but also with the artificial ones of our economic system, and its political reflection, government from above. Rents and tax exactions cripple the world's most basic workers, the peasants, where they are not further crippled by exactions in the form of deliveries in kind. A market economy meanwhile cripples the free distribution of goods to meet needs. When a man is drowning it seems only natural for someone to jump in and save him. But for the American Government to offer grain as a gift to India is a procedure so unusual as to provoke opposition and intolerable delays.

If the physical means to remedy India's famines are always hampered by economic and social obstacles, one would perhaps have thought that men's minds would rise superior to such. And the governmental system would seem to have justification only in the wisdom of the few being applied for the welfare of the many. Wisdom is scarcely however a quality one expects in politicians. India's teeming population required the benefits which birth control has been obvious for generations to everyone but the "responsible" administrations. Yet in all their long control of India, the British never even began to tackle this task. Now India's population is rising at the rate of four million every year, or ten thousand a day. Nehru has declared himself in favour of birth control. But the Health Minister, Rajkumari Amrikkaur, is a Roman Catholic, and opposes such a course, declaring that raising the marriage age (at present 14—that is much higher than was the practice a generation ago) will achieve the same result.

Malthus, the clergyman who opposed with his famous book Godwin's revolutionary and anarchist proposals (in *Political Justice*), declared that population was kept stationary by the "natural" checks of war, famine and pestilence. The last forty years have given us a belliful of life destroying wars on a scale that Malthus can hardly have dreamed of. Yet the population of Europe increased by several millions between 1939 and 1949. India has provided famine enough and pestilence enough in the last decade to satisfy the most diabolical Malthusian conservative; yet the population pressure increases. The conception of an intelligent social control of environment requires that problems be tackled early, and that the social system be so organised as to be able to meet such problems. But governments only attempt remedies when the problems have become looming disasters. The simplest intelligence demanded birth control for India decades ago; but the Indian Government is clearly only going to be kicked into it by the misery and deaths of millions.

It may be said that India is a special case. But social problems exist everywhere, though not in such gigantic forms as in a nation of nearly four hundred millions. Governments are manifestly incompetent to solve these problems, yet their monopoly of initiative and economic power prevents the population turning their own hands to their solution. India is not simply a special problem; it underlines the social illness of the world.

# MOROCCO: Conflict in Blood

(From a correspondent)

THE Sultan of Morocco recently granted an interview to an Egyptian journalist, declaring: "I signed the protocol of the 25th February last (with the French Residency) under force."

This declaration has stunned French opinion, which is accustomed to receiving its information from the Residency, dominated by General Juin.

M. Ch.-André Julien, Professor of Colonial History at the Sorbonne, a specialist in Moslem questions and North African problems, stated in *Le Monde* some weeks ago: "Morocco is a protectorate. However trite it may be to say this, it is indispensable to bear this in mind. A protectorate does not cancel sovereign power, but controls it... the establishment of direct administration has confused this fact until opinion at home does not see any difference between a protectorate and a colony."

But French opinion knows what to believe in regard to Morocco. It has followed the perplexities of the struggle between the Residency and the Sultan. It has applauded the movements made by the tribes of the interior, who have come up to the gates of Fez and Rabat in order to put pressure on the sovereign. It knows the rôle played by the Pasha of Marrakesh, El Glaoui, puppet of the protectorate, who has the one purpose of giving the French the appearance of a popular Moroccan base.

At the Grand Council, where Moroccan opposition has been manifested, the Resident General has expelled recalcitrants. In the country, where the Istiklal party has the sympathy on nationalist grounds of the bourgeoisie and the sentiments of emancipation from the fellahen and town workers, arrests have been carried out.

The conflict between the Residency and the Sultan in reality reflects the opposition between the French installed as masters and their class rivals, the Moroccan bourgeoisie, who are supported by the Moroccan proletarian elements. There are certainly many contradictions, but it is easy to understand that the fanatical racist sentiments preached by the leaders of Istiklal are created by the acts of Residency.

Thus General Juin ordered the trade union movement of Morocco to be composed half of Europeans, half of Moroccans, although the immense majority would have been compatriots.

The accusations against the Istiklal of being an instrument in the hands of the Russians are really ridiculous. Al Fassi, leader of the Istiklal, has been an exile in Tangier for 20 years. Although the unions are semi-legal, the C.G.T. (controlled by the Moroccan Communists) is officially recognised by the Residency. This does not mean to say

that feelings of independence would not be used by the Russians. But in this case the fault would be due to the blindness and selfishness of the European dominant class which refuses any concessions.

The mentality of the French and Moroccan capitalists is easily explained, when one realises the investments which they have in Morocco, and when one notes that the price of land in Casablanca has doubled in a few years.

Other aspects of the Moroccan question surpass in importance these local aspects. At the end of 1950, the Sultan counted on the aid of the U.S.A. He also had in France the sympathy of the Socialist Party and of the President of the

Republic, Vincent Auriol. But imperative military reasons have caused the Pentagon to modify the State Department's opinion. The problems of Atlantic defence mean the sacrifice of promises of emancipation. While the visit of General Juin to Paris has apparently perplexed and disarmed Auriol.

All that remains to the Sultan is the propaganda of the Arab League. But the League agitators do not possess popular movements. The exaggerations of the Egyptian press have discredited the worth of their protests. Here as in all parts of the world, war preparations resolve nothing. They are only preparing an explosion.

## Strikes Spread in Spain

THE situation in Spain demands critical observation. The general strike in Barcelona of a few weeks ago showed that it was possible for the workers even under dictatorship to defy the anti-strike laws and force concessions from the government. Now the strikes in the industrial towns of northern Spain, Bilbao, San Sebastian and Mondragon, indicate that the lessons of Barcelona have been learnt. In Barcelona province itself, at Manresa, there has been a stay-in strike of six thousand textile workers. The police arrested five hundred strikers, but after protests, including demonstrations by women, they have been released.

An observer writes that, whereas the Barcelona strike appeared to be quite spontaneous, the strikes in the north bear evidence of organisation. The Spanish Government shouts about "Communist agitators", and the *Daily Worker* here claims full credit for the Spanish Communists. It should be remembered, however, that the Spanish Communist Party was tiny in 1936—smaller even than the Trotskyist Party—and that its influence was based first on a blackmailing distribution of Russian arms, and secondly on appeals to the small bourgeois class of shopkeepers and others. The overwhelming mass of the workers were organised in the anarchist syndicalist C.N.T. National Confederation of Workers or the Socialist U.G.T. (General Union of Labour). The C.N.T. especially has a tradition of maintaining illegal organisation, since more than half of their period of existence has been spent underground.

Information is necessarily scant, but it would be surprising if the C.N.T. had not retained some measure of organisation despite the Franco régime.

The political situation in Spain appears fundamentally tense at the present time. The official press is quite devoid of news, yet knowledge of the strikes travels fast and is universal. Franco's reiterated claim to be the personal saviour of Spain has securely fastened on to him the full odium for the catastrophic fall in living standards, the parasitic army (which absorbs half the total revenue) and the corruption of the régime. It was said that he was defended by some who alleged that the dictator did not know of the corruption and black market, and therefore must not be blamed for the faults of the bureaucracy. But now Franco has declared that he will personally investigate these things. "Ignorance" can no longer be a defence.

An interesting feature of the strikes was that they have affected all sections of workers, clerks and office workers coming out as well as the "industrial" workers, so that in some factories as many as 70 per cent. of the staff were involved. This fact not only made the task of repression much more difficult, but shows also the extent of dissatisfaction with the régime. It is too early to make any wide prophecies, or to engage in wishful exaggeration; but such cracks in a dictatorship show the basic weakness of the régime, and demonstrate once again that the State is powerless against determined concerted action by the population.

## MATE-O-MATIC MARRIAGES

MARRIAGE bureaus, furtive institutions with ambiguous newspaper advertisements through which the lonely and usually the middle-aged seek some kind of stability in their lives, have been for long a feature of metropolitan civilisations. But it was reserved for American capitalism—and American loneliness—to bring this trade in the open and put it on a big business basis.

To-day, in New York and sixteen other cities in the United States there are branches of a business concern known as the Friendship Centre. This organisation claims to have brought about 100,000 marriages, and its methods and experience are certainly highly significant as the basis for comments on the life of large cities. The fees of the centre are stiff—50 dollars flat rate for men, and anything from 100 to 200 dollars for women, who are harder to dispose of owing to their relative superfluity. However, even at these rates there are plenty of customers. Most of them are people who have come from outside the cities and have failed almost completely to break into a social environment which allows them normal opportunities for mating. Perhaps even more significant of the solitary nature of life in great cities is the relative youthfulness of the applicants. The average age of the women is less than thirty, that of men only two or three years older.

The offices of the Friendship Centre are staffed by expert interviewers, whose task is to introduce people who may decide to marry, but the latest "improvement" is a machine for arranging these meetings. Cards are punched with the characteristics, interests and so forth of each applicant, and these are then put through the machine which sorts out the people who are likely to get on with each other. The push-button Mate-o-Matic marriage! What an ironic comment on the havoc which modern civilisation has wrought on the personal and emotional lives of its victims! And the terrible possibility is that at some not far distant date the State, egged on and applauded by the eugenists, will try and regulate all our amatory unions by machine. In some impregnable ministry the machine will churn out affinities day by day, and in due course A.C.1179 will receive his marriage papers to appear and be married to X.G.1867 at Clapham Registry Office. Oh, that Plato and Hitler could have lived to see the day! G.W.

## FOREIGN COMMENTARY

### Which Side Commits the Atrocities?

ATROCITIES are only committed by your enemies, or, in retrospect, by your former allies turned enemy. When they are committed by your side and someone actually exposes them, they are referred to as "unfortunate incidents" and the assurance is always given that the guilty ones (generally scapegoats) will be severely punished.

We have consistently refused to be taken-in by atrocity stories. Not that we do not believe that atrocities are being committed—for us, was is the first and biggest atrocity—but because they are used by governments simply to work up nationalistic feelings and to create that atmosphere of "hate" without which it becomes difficult to induce people to kill one another (though it would seem that even the "hate" element is no longer necessary to induce young men to press buttons which will release deadly weapons on defenceless civilians). There is no real human indignation behind the "atrocity" stories put out by governments; and this is understandable, for they know very well that there are bound to be to a lesser or greater degree, atrocities committed by

their own side. To-day, it can perhaps be said that whereas in the democracies there is still an opportunity for exposing these atrocities, and a minority of vocal people left to protest against them, in the totalitarian countries it is a relatively easy matter to suppress such information and, what is even worse, there appears to be such a deadening of sensibility to cruelty and injustice that an atrocity can actually be confused with a concept of justice.

LET us illustrate what we have so far attempted to say by quoting two cases, both from *Reuter* messages, and both of April 25th. One refers to Communist China, the other comes from S. Korea (bastion of the United Nations):

1. "RED" CHINA.  
HONG KONG, April 25th.  
A crowd in Canton today-sent at least twenty people to their deaths on a show of hands. This trial, one of the public denunciation meetings which the Communists have introduced for dealing with political enemies, was broadcast and was heard by thousands of Chinese in Hong Kong and Macao.

The meeting lasted four and a half hours but a crowd gathered more than two hours earlier to be addressed by Communist officials. They were told the "denunciation meetings" were arranged in deference to public demand. Everyone with a grievance against the accused would have a hearing and the People's Government would punish them in accordance with the law and the wishes of the people. The accused were then brought in and paraded before their jurors.

The chairman went through the indictments and advised those who had suffered from the defendants' actions to "assault, bite, or spit on them". With official encouragement the crowd shouted "Shoot them, shoot them". Those sentenced had no counsel, no defence witnesses, and no appeal.—*Reuter*.

2. "DEMOCRATIC" KOREA.  
TAGBU, April 25.  
Dr. Cho Pyung-ok, the South Korean Minister of the Interior, resigned to-day following the execution of 187 villagers accused of collaborating with Communist guerrillas. A Government statement earlier to-day announced that a South Korean battalion commander had ordered a summary court-martial at Kochang, near Taegu.

The trial had followed an eighteen-hour battle in which the guerrillas had lost 39 men killed and 68 wounded. "In anger

at the villagers", the statement said, "the army and police continued the furious battle, killing many Communists including villagers who had collaborated."—*Reuter*.

These were both atrocities. In Canton it passed off as justice, and in Korea the Minister resigned in the best democratic tradition.

(It must be added that this warping of the elementary concepts of justice, noted in the totalitarian régimes, has also affected their supporters in the "democratic" countries. Thus the *Daily Worker* (26/4/51) headlines the Taegu massacre, increasing the number of victims to 1,000, but nowhere does one find any reference to or protest about the Canton atrocity).

IN *Freedom* (14/4/51) we have already referred to the remarks made by the judge of a British Control Commission High Court in Düsseldorf regarding the detention of suspected persons in prison without trial. He actually called them "secret prisons". Such arrangements have since been publicly justified by high officials on the grounds of "security requirements", in spite of the fact that on their own admission "this procedure would not be legal in the United Kingdom."

But that this is not an isolated case is shown by the appeal made to the Government in the leading Malay newspaper *Utusan Melayu* for better treatment of Malays detained under the Emergency Regulations. The paper states that some Malays have been detained for three years without trial.

These facts, which not only are not denied by the British authorities but condoned by the usual excuse that "there is evidence that so-and-so has been working to overthrow the government"—these facts must be borne in mind when the hair-raising stories that are bound to be circulated about the American spy, Mr. Vogeler, who has just been released after serving fourteen months of a 15-year sentence imposed on him by a Hungarian court, are put out by the West bloc. Mr. Vogeler may have been induced to talk by the well-known third degree methods of the Russian political police (long familiar, we believe, to the American police) but he has also admitted that part of his confession was probably true.

But with what is going on in the territories under "democratic" control, who is the pot to call the kettle black?

LIBERTARIAN.

## Nationalism & Marxism

(Continued from page 2)

teacher just as the socialist internationalists could cite completely different passages from the same sources. Which of them was right will always remain an open question and only Marx, who was alive in 1914, could have provided a solution. But this was not the case.

It seems evident that Marx and Engels were responsible for certain views of German socialists. They busied themselves with German problems not less than Lassalle. They greatly esteemed the qualities of the Germans and particularly German science and philosophy. They considered the German proletariat as the most capable under all aspects and attributed to it without hesitation the leadership of the international socialist movement. In these ways they helped to strengthen the patriotism and self-confidence of their German Social Democratic party and of its leaders.

But their influence also left traces on another more dangerous level. Marx's hatred of Russia was shared by his followers and became a legacy which will hide the possibility of transforming itself into a chauvinism with a social basis. All the more if one remembers that in Marx and Engels' case one can speak of an undeniable Slavophobia which while insisting that the majority of Slav peoples played in history a rôle objectively reactionary and counter-revolutionary nonetheless contained the danger of a specific but effective racial discrimination. Also their contempt for French thinkers like Proudhon as well as their often manifested references to what they considered as the characteristic features of French mentality always gave support to German nationalism. Lastly the worship of centralisation in which Marx saw the measure of national power and working-class strength could very easily be reconciled to the centralism of the Bismarckian German Empire (1871-1918).

By saying all this we do not wish to imply that Marx and Engels were pangermanists or racialists but their doctrine and day to day activities were bound to influence a great many German socialists in a direction that was neither internationalist nor humanitarian. Under this aspect the marxist influence was but one of the currents which contributed to the vast complex of barred materialism so characteristic of Kaiser Wilhelm's Germany. M.D.

## LA PRENSA'S STRANGE ALLIES

IN his campaign against *La Prensa*, dictator Peron has used every smear weapon in his armoury, with the result that the more charges he levels at *La Prensa* (and they now now include that of sending "false reports", of being an "imperialist spy centre" of "tax evasion reaching figures of enormous importance") the less likely is anybody to believe him.

However equally suspect is the *Pro-Prensa* campaign throughout America, including reactionary and monopolist newspapers which certainly have not been known in the past as champions of the freedom of the Press.

We did not notice any such protest when a large number of Socialist and Anarchist papers were suppressed by Peron over a year ago, among them *La Protesta*, the anarchist weekly (for many years a daily) founded over fifty years ago.

From our Special Correspondent

THE Tribunals judging the consciences of the Z-Men who object to going back in the military fold, have been sitting for some weeks now, and one may get some idea of the official attitude which is being taken to the phenomenon of conscientious objection at the present time.

Study of the practical functioning of these Tribunals reveals that it is pointless for any man to go before his judges armed with nothing more than a genuine conviction that military service and war are wrong. Judge Hargreaves recently stated to an applicant which the Tribunal turned down, "I don't doubt for a moment that you most genuinely feel that it would be morally wrong to go back into the army, but here you have to establish the reasons why you feel that war is wrong." The substance of this pronouncement was reiterated endlessly to applicants who did not appear to appreciate the rules of the game. Applicant after applicant who was turned down was advised to "read a few books" and have a shot at presenting a better case before the Appellate Tribunal. The inference which one must draw from this advice is obvious: reading books will not strengthen a man's conscience, but it will put him up to some arguments which he has not been cute enough to think up for himself. Many of the applicants must have left the Tribunal with more worldly wisdom than when they went in.

The main rules of the game which the applicant is expected to observe appear to be as follows:

- (a) He must conscientiously object to all war and military service.
(b) He must treat the many ridiculous questions which the Tribunal will pose, with dead seriousness, and try to conceal his contempt for their childish casuistry.
(c) If he is aligned with a well-known 'line' (e.g., P.P.U., Non-conformist Christian, Socialist, etc.) so much the better.
(d) He should produce letters from solid citizens, preferably non-pacifist, or from people with a sentimental appeal (e.g., a wife with young children), who say what a real paragon of virtue he is.
(e) He should produce witnesses to testify for him as above.
(f) He should look clean and manly.

If anyone should feel outraged by the imposition of such rules, when ostensibly it is all a matter of judging the genuineness of his conscientious objection, let him reflect on the fact that Z-men have no legal right to be exempted on conscientious grounds, but if the Tribunal thinks fit they will recommend to the military authorities that a man be left alone, and, as an act of grace, the military authorities will accept such a recommendation. The members of the Tribunal must therefore be regarded in the light of influential old men who may or may not pull a useful wire as they see fit.

Below are tabulated the results of 27 cases which were recently heard at the Fulham Tribunal. It will be seen that four Communists were turned down; this was because they did not appreciate point (a). Judge Hargreaves pointed out with dry humour that it used to be the Fascists who were repeatedly turned down under this ruling; now times have changed. It seems remarkably naive of these Stalinists who, not so long ago, were fire-eating militarists denouncing

7 Million Threatened by Starvation in India

FROM PAGE ONE
is almost complete. Another 50,000 tons is on the way. Russia offered an original 50,000 tons to be bartered against jute. This was refused because India has not enough jute to spare, but now the Russians offer 500,000 tons against other Indian goods. Russia itself is importing food grains from Eastern Europe.
The friends of the United States in India are dismayed at this development, while the partisans of China and Russia, and the almost discredited Indian Communist Party have received considerable advantage. It seems as though the propaganda to be extracted from the famine is a far more important spur to relief by the great powers than the fact of famine—and a possible seven million deaths—itsself.

"Practical" Measures of Relief

India is so large, and its climatic and cultivation conditions so variable, that

crop failures in one part could usually be offset by good crops elsewhere. The British administration controlled famine by a system of emergency shifting of food from one area to another. When crop failure is too universal this method becomes ineffectual, as in 1943. The present government of India has plans to increase total food output by bringing more areas under cultivation, and by increasing existing crop yields. These methods will in any case require several years to show results, and are in any case open to disadvantages of the kind found where experts seek to apply planning to peasants, without taking into account the social basis of existing peasant procedures, or seeking to modify them. These questions cannot be discussed here, and are in any case irrelevant to the problem of immediate relief. They will form the basis of an article in a later issue of Freedom.

The Indian Congress faces India's first general election with the shadow of the

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- Refused Recognition.
1. Baptist. Religious case.
2. Roman Catholic. Religious and humanitarian.
3. Jehovah's Witness. Peculiar mysticism.
4. C. of E. Religious and political.
5. C. of E. Religious and humanitarian.
6. Communist. Stalinist case.
7. Communist. Stalinist case.
8. Communist. Stalinist case.
9. Communist. Stalinist case.
10. No Affinities. War revulsion.
11. No Affinities. War revulsion.
12. No Affinities. War revulsion.
13. No Affinities. Logical case.
14. No Affinities. Logical case.
15. No Affinities. Humanitarian.
16. No Affinities. Humanitarian.
17. Vague Christian. Religious case.

One of the strange features of the Tribunal is the repeated invitation to unsuccessful applicants to appeal against its verdict to the Appellate Tribunal. It is as though every magistrate on passing sentence were to say, "How about appealing to a higher court? Now you know the racket you might stand a better chance of getting away with it!" The great majority of unsuccessful applicants will undoubtedly appeal to the Appellate Tribunal, and it will be interesting to see if a higher standard of debate is maintained at their second go. If Judge Hargreaves' advice about reading up books is taken, there will be some crude tiffans

Syndicalist Notebook

WHO makes the rules and regulations by which workers work? Certainly not the workers themselves, and it is obvious that in many occupations, the work can only be done efficiently by wholesale disregard of the rules and regulations.

Syndicalists have always recognised this, and have brought into the vocabulary of working-class struggle the "work-to-rule" action, which has many advantages over the ordinary walk-out strike.

"Work-to-rule" means that the workers express their grievance and seek to bring pressure on their employers, not by downing tools and walking out, but by remaining at work, and, instead of working in the most efficient way, operate strictly according to the book of rules. This very effectively slows down the work and puts the boss on a spot. Not only are his profits threatened and his rules and regulations made to look silly, but the workers are acting strictly within their "rights" and are not on strike!

This form of action has been used with terrific effect by French railwaymen. In the 1936 strike-wave in France, train crews would stop at every bridge and check up on every nut and bolt before driving the train over, because that is what it told them to do in the rule book! The delay involved can be imagined.

This sort of action, of course, works best in large organisations such as public

Postmen Go Slow

services, which are hedged in with countless regulations and by-laws. London Post Office workers have been operating a "work-to-rule" in support of a wage claim. The have decided to work thus every Wednesday until their claims are met, and the delays so caused are already cutting deliveries to many commercial firms.

SIR HARTLEY'S HARD WORK

THE gossip columnist of the Evening Standard, referring recently to Sir Hartley Shawcross' change of job (Attorney-General to President of the Board of Trade) said: "The country will recognise Sir Hartley's financial sacrifice. He drops from £10,000 a year as Attorney-General to £5,000 a year in his new post. "Shawcross is 49, a man with great reserves of strength. I have known him conduct a case in court in the afternoon, make a witty, light-hearted speech after dinner, then go to the Commons and help get a Socialist Bill through the House. And at the last he has seemed quite fresh."

A heavy day, one must admit. And to accept a pay cut from £200 per week to £100 is indeed self-sacrifice. The dockers, such as those Sir Hartley prosecuted at the Old Bailey, have a much easier time of it. In the course of their 10-11 hours day, a gang of dockers will only shift 450 tons of sugar, or anything up to 16,000 carcasses of mutton. Their speeches, though, can also be witty, if not particularly light-hearted, as Sir Hartley found out for himself when they were quoted against him at the Old Bailey.

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A NEW 1305

ONE of the first jobs of the new Minister of Labour, Alfred Robens, will be the discussion of the future of 1305. Bevan was said to be "not in favour" of it, but held up the proposed talks with the consultative committee (of employers and T.U. leaders) while the dockers' trial was going on. Now that is over, the way is clear to sort out the old regulation and bring in a new one. What a waste of time! The workers will act just the same, whatever regulation exists.

THE PLIGHT OF THE DISABLED

THIRTY-FIVE blind men employed in a Swansea workshop run by the Swansea & S. Wales Institute for the Blind were made unemployed as from March 30th, because the local corporation will not increase a grant (which is in any case reimbursed by the Ministry of Labour) from £80 to £94 10s. a year. Other authorities have been paying the increase since July 1948, but Swansea corporation say they cannot pay because they are going to municipalise the workshops for the blind. In a free society, the blind and disabled would not have to depend on grants or charity. A decent society would gladly look after those so afflicted.

Ministry Threaten

A correspondent passes on to us an item from a report of a meeting of the Executive Council of BLESMA (British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association) It reads: "Discussion took place on the ultimatum given by the Ministry of Labour to a member of their staff who is the Chairman of a BLESMA branch that he must resign from that office or from the Ministry. The matter was being pushed with the Government and several M.P.s had put questions. A report will be issued to branches when negotiations are completed." Our correspondent (himself an officer of the Association) adds: "If the Government can do that to EX-HEROES performing the recognised legitimate job of conducting meetings of a charitable fellowship (the patron of BLESMA is H.R.H. the Duchess of Gloucester—Eds.) then, indeed, it is what may be justly termed a . . . .!" To which I can add no further comment.

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MAY 6th Tony Gibson "CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION—ITS SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE"
MAY 13th Whitsun—No Meeting
MAY 20th John Hewetson "IRISH COMMUNE"
MAY 27th Ernest Silverman "THE MENTAL DEFICIENCY ACT"

NORTH-EAST LONDON GROUP
Discussion Meetings fortnightly, 7.30 p.m. Enquiries c/o Freedom Press.

SOUTH LONDON LIBERTARIAN DISCUSSION GROUP
Fortnightly meetings, sponsored by the S. London Anarchist Group, are held on alternate Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., at the Kentish Drovers Public House, Beckham (corner of High Street and Eye Lane).
MAY 8th Philip Sansom "ANARCHISM TODAY"
MAY 12nd S. E. Parker "ANARCHISM versus SOCIALISM"

GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP
OUTDOOR MEETINGS
At MAXWELL STREET EVERY SUNDAY
with Frank Leach, John Gaffney, Eddie Shaw, J. Raeside

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