

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"History shows us that governments are in their very essence a violation of justice."

—LEO TOLSTOY

Questions of our Times: 'When is a Paternal Despotism' A POLICE STATE?

NYASALAND is—no doubt only temporarily—a police state, where it is not safe for anyone to express approval of the policies of the Congress Party, to which before 3rd March, 1959, the vast majority of politically-minded Africans belonged, and where it is unwise to express any but the most restrained criticism of government policy.

This summing-up by the Devlin Commission of the situation in Nyasaland after the proclamation of the Emergency last month was described by the Government spokesman in the Commons debate as "singularly unfortunate". Russia is a police state, Germany under Hitler (only when he was at war with Britain *et alia*) was a police State. But to apply this "very unpleasant innuendo" to a British administration was more than our rulers could stomach. The Devlin report was a dispassionate statement of the facts as they emerged from the evidence. Far from exaggerating the situation we suggest that the facts not only fully justified the Commission's description of Nyasaland as a police state after March 3rd but could equally have been applied to the situation before the

Emergency. The Commission has generously described the set-up in Nyasaland prior to March 3rd as a "benevolent despotism". It is worth examining the nature of this benevolence as a background to current events in the territory.

In 1951 the Government of the United Kingdom told Parliament that it was "convinced that Federation was needed in spite of the fact that it recognised that African opinion in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland was opposed to it"! The new constitution was brought into force by Order in Council in August, 1953. The opposition to federation was led by Congress, which set up a supreme council of action including a number of chiefs, to direct the campaign which was to include strikes, non-payment of taxes and boycotts. The head of this council was Chief Gomani in the Ncheu district. That was in April. In May the Government decided to remove the Chief!

With the new constitution the Government "began to give consideration to the reform of the Nyasaland constitution". In June, 1955, they announced their intentions. In spite of the fact that Africans outnumber Europeans by

nearly 3 million to 8 thousand

"You [the British Government] decided that the composition of the Executive Council should remain as it was and that an African should not be included on it. You decided that in the Legislative Council there should be twelve official members including the Governor, of six non-African unofficials to be elected on a non-African electoral roll by constituencies and five African unofficials to be elected by the African Provincial Councils."

At the elections in 1956 the Congress Party secured all five African seats and the Commission draws attention to the fact that "the nominated African members [that is the African 'quislings'] of the old Council who stood for election were all heavily defeated" and cites the case of a Mr. Matinga, leader of a small party whose programme permitted it to work within the framework of the Federation who only managed to secure one vote! In Nyasaland—according to the Commission—not only was the Congress party "greatly heartened by its great success in the elections" but the people too "began to think that it might

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*Para. 24, Devlin Report (Stationery Office, 1959).

After forty years of what is supposed to be a socialist regime, the discernable attitudes of the Russians are the same as those of the most capitalist country on earth!

This will no doubt be taken to augur well for peace on earth. But not at all. Of all the Europeans, the Germans are said to be most like the British. Result: two wars this century.

The truth is that if two nations want the same things, the more likely is conflict between them. The emergence of both America and Russia as exporting capitalist economies is going to add economic competition to the existing ideological pretences and power and strategic conflicts.

THE NEW Merchants of Death

BEFORE and after the first world war, socialists directed a great deal of propaganda against the manufacturers of armaments. Books such as "The Bloody Traffic" by Fenner Brockway, and "The Merchants of Death" provided well-documented evidence that the capitalist firms involved in the war trade were quite prepared to sell to the highest bidder without any concern for the alleged rights and wrongs of the war, and that in South America the same firms had been supplying arms to both sides in the civil wars which sprang up from time to time. Later events showed that the merchants were carrying on a brisk trade with the Nazi government of Germany, even after it had become obvious that a war would eventually break out between Germany and Britain.

Since those times the League of Nations has come and gone, the second world war has been fought, and the United Nations taken the place of the League. Hundreds if not thousands of disarmament conferences have been held, and the various governments have repeated their assurances that their only desire is peace. Although none of them have accepted the advice of the democratic pacifists to undertake unilateral disarmament, they have all been quite clear that they were prepared to limit their armament levels, in conjunction with the others, and to discuss the possibility of mutual, gradual disarmament.

Now however, the report of the government's Select Committee on Estimates has been published. Its most startling point is a recommendation that the British government should be more active and lively in promoting sales of armaments to other states throughout the world. The Select Committee seems to follow the typical Civil Service line of making suggestions here and there for increased efficiency, better consultation and co-ordination between the men in London and the men on the spot, without even implying that there might be any deeper human considerations behind this ghastly procedure. It does remark in its report that "it is to be recognized that political considerations act as a strict limitation on what might otherwise be a much wider and larger trade". What a shame! In the good old days Britain could supply the world with arms, and while the Arabs, South Americans and Chinese were being driven to die in wars for the sake of their rulers, the British bosses were drawing the profits. Nowadays Britain is not the only power bent on bringing its enlightened rule to hold

sway throughout the world. The merchants of death are more or less nationalised, and there is the irritating thought that the trade has to be cut down in case the buyers should one day decide to use their arms in an independent war against an ally of Britain.

The Committee comments on Britain's sale of arms to the Batista government in Cuba, at the time when it was on the point of falling to the rebel forces of Castro. Yet its only criticism is that the government was mistaken in choosing the losing side. There is no mention of the fact that for seven years Batista had been ruling Cuba with a vicious secret police force, imprisoning, torturing and executing his political opponents and terrorising the entire population. This fact even aroused some liberal sentiment in England to indignation at the time, but now the Foreign Office is merely accused of a diplomatic mistake.

The trade in arms is described as being "highly competitive", and the Committee, although making it clear that it does not wish to see Britain adopting the same tactics as some other governments, wishes to see it trying more effectively. Perhaps the British touch and the Victorian way of doing things still have a little financial value, even if they need using more skilfully.

A particularly brilliant piece of salesmanship during the past year was the delivery of a consignment of Saracen armoured cars to South Africa. These armour-plated vehicles, equipped with turret guns, were sold, not to the army, but to the police force, especially for use against native Africans.

The German branch comes in for particular criticism from Head Office. Although the representatives out there reported satisfaction with their liaisons with London, trade was disappointing. One only needs to recall that during the whole period of the report, committees, conferences and meetings of powers have been going on, ostensibly with the aim of achieving disarmament in Germany, to realise the futility of expecting sincerity or peace to come from these meetings.

The State has largely taken over the role of the private capitalists in the armaments field, and has adopted from them the creed of Undershaft, as portrayed by Shaw: to sell arms to whoever will buy, black, white or yellow; communist, socialist or capitalist; friends or enemies; with the modern modifications of "political considerations". The quick-

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Trade Exhibitions in Moscow & New York The Appalling Likeness

CO-EXISTENCE has reached a new high level recently with the simultaneous presentation in Moscow and New York of trade exhibitions by "the other side".

Apparently the results in terms of increased trade have not been impressive, but those citizens of these two friendly countries who have managed to make contact have each been astonished by what they found out.

In Moscow the Russians have queued and struggled to get into the exhibition in the park where they have been dazzled by their first glimpse of the American way of life as the Americans want it to be seen. Instead of the grinding poverty of the capitalist hell, as expounded by Pravda, the Muscovites have gaped at the gadgets, the \$14,500 "typical" house, and the huge fish-tailed cars ("Those cars are wide enough for four people in front and back. But why are they so long?" inquired one wide-eyed Armenian. "Do the Americans carry so much luggage?") and the secrets of the American beauty salon.

Contemptuous as they pretend to be of the American way of life, the Soviet authorities were, however, not taking too many risks. No jazz was allowed; the beauty salon was threatened with eviction if it continued its original practice of free hair-dos for its Russian visitors and no hand-outs of cosmetics were permitted.

At the same time groups of party comrades mingle with the crowds and bombard the American guides with the inevitable barbed questions on unemployment and the colour question. Even so, those Russians able to get tickets (originally distributed through official and trade union channels but filtering through to the black market) have been impressed by what they have had presented to them as American stan-

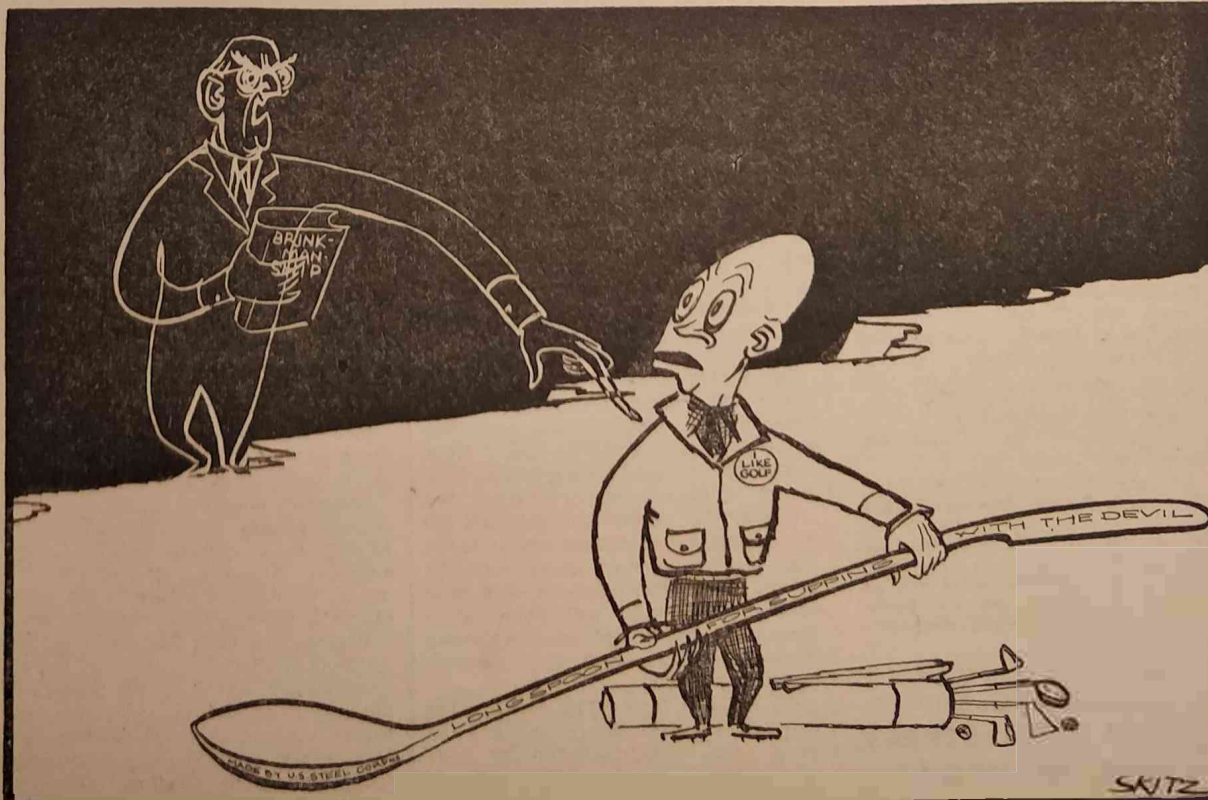
dards of living.

At the same time, in New York, the Russian exhibition has been shaking up American ideas about Russian technology. Instead of the grinding poverty of the Communist hell, the Americans have had a glimpse of a modern, industrialised society not unlike their own. In fact the thing which has shaken them most has been the similarity rather than the difference—especially in the attitudes of the Russians.

The American director of the Coliseum, where the Russian exhibition was housed, is reported as saying:

"I'm appalled (sic)," he said, "by the Russians' similarity to Americans. Of all the peoples of the world I've met these are the most like Americans—gregarious, full of good humour, competent, well-organised and dedicated to their jobs. They like good food, good wine and entertainment." The Russian exhibition staff hastened to agree with him, the Russian press officer coming in on the same breathless note—"All the Russians who came here for the first time were surprised by it."

It may be rather amusing to hear these tough nuts saying, in effect, "Why, they're just like us", but the sad aspects are several. One, that there should be this sudden surprise shows that the Americans really believed their own propaganda. We feel that they would have been less surprised at discovering the Russians wearing horns. Secondly, the sad feature is, paradoxically, that there is so little difference. For the solid American citizen, admission of the similarity between Russian and American go-getting represents a grudging admission of success for the Russians. But for us, it is only one more admission of the failure of the revolution, of communism, of socialism.



"No, honestly, Foster—I didn't pick it up at the Trade Fair. It's made in America!"

Communal Farming and Work Relationships



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A Police State?

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...an the end of Federation. But you [the government] thought it desirable to make a statement in the House of Commons, which was given special publicity in Nyasaland, that Federation should come to stay and statements to the effect that Nyasaland's participation in the Federation was not on a permanent basis were "responsible and uninformed." (Our italics).

It was clear that there was no question of changing the balance of (white) power. The election of Africans to the Legislative Council, as the Commission points out

had not altered the fact that the Government was a benevolent despotism.

Though our four just men are at pains to stress the "benevolence" of white despotism, they recognise, in their opinion, the hopelessness of the Africans role within the Legislative Council when they say that

...the forms of government and the attitude of the Government are essentially the same. The leaders of Congress have been pouring new wine into old skins. (Our italics).

PARAGRAPH 33 of the Commission's report would deserve to be quoted in full had we the space, for it illustrates so clearly the opportunism and hypocrisy of government. It deals with the question of the authority of the chiefs "with which is tied up respect of authority" which, we need hardly point out is the keystone of government. In a colony or Protectorate what cynics are these *herrenvolk!*)

A District Commissioner cannot afford to be jeered at or insulted in public; if that is tolerated it would lead to a loss of authority which would be fatal. Many official Europeans consider that the same thing applies to them. . . . Government in Nyasaland is based on respect for authority and this applies to the Chiefs as much as Europeans.

The government supports the authority of the chiefs not of course when their loyalties are with the people or congress—for "the administration relies greatly on the powers of the chief, who is in effect a salaried government servant allowed, to a certain extent, to go his own way" (so long as he does not support Congress!) For this reason

the respect which by native traditions and custom is paid to chiefs is something which the government is anxious to preserve

and indeed one of the things about Congress which most "disturbed" the Government

was their practice of stirring up disrespectful demonstrations against loyal chiefs. The Government attitude is that the Chief should be above politics.

This attitude, the Commission hastens to point out (with tongue in cheek, we feel)

means in practice that he should not be a supporter of Congress; we have not encountered any case in which a chief incurred Government displeasure by taking action against Congress. (Our italics).

Hitler, it may be recalled, ruled occupied Europe through his Quislings. Before "liberation" they were police states. British rule in Nyasaland before the Emergency depended on the loyalty of, and respect for, the chiefs. It may not have been a police state, but by what stretch of imagination could such a system through the words of a Commission of Tories, be described as democracy or even a "benevolent despotism"?

The power of the chiefs which "the government is anxious to preserve" permits them to prohibit assemblies. . . . It remains

The following is the substance of a talk given by Alan Albon at this year's Summer School. He is an experienced farmer who for the moment is managing a farm in Sussex.—(Eds.)

THE subjects on which I have been asked to speak give one plenty of scope for talk, but writing and talking should be associated with solid experience; experience is associated with experiment, and experiment puts life and reality into theories which may otherwise be dead. Anarchism to me, postulates growth, change and development, the interaction of personalities, things and situations. Anarchism is an attitude to life which should colour most aspects of living.

André Prunier, one of our French comrades, has said:

"The mutual education, and the mutual aid, which, practised in an anarchist group, can assure to those who compose it possibilities of individual development that they could not have known without them, ought not to make of the group, as sometimes happens, a family shut in on itself, and defended against the outer world by formulas, routines, and prejudices. Access should be easy for any person manifesting goodwill and intellectual probity. And members already recognised, instead of making a bloc around one or two leaders, should find the means to act on their own, in the most varied situations, and the most different planes, ready to ask at need for the support or advice of a comrade in whom they have a particular confidence. Thus the group will live, not an existence confined and annoying, like a handful of shipwrecked sailors on a desert island, but to become a rendezvous at a crossroad of activities and of researches converging and diverging, rich also with enterprises which may find their support there, without however any pretension of constituting a headquarters. . . . The group will leave to its members the question of co-operating individually with any exterior group in which he considers that he can express himself, and conduct himself as an anarchist should, and that on his own responsibility."

It seems to me that the best basis for a free development of an anarchist group is based around an agricultural community, the development of mutual aid plus the development of individual personality requires the space and the broad requirements demanded by agricultural work. There is also a realisation of the natural disciplines necessary for a balanced and creative life. This is not to say that we should return to pre-industrial revolution modes of life, but to use techniques which could promise a better control of our environment and enable men to return to a more natural pace of life pursuing the things that really matter. It is upon the agricultural-system that all civilisation depends; we cannot escape from this, and as world populations grow the crucial balance becomes more and more precarious, therefore it is essential that any movement that is concerned with the development of man's relationships towards a free and humane society should have a first-hand working knowledge of the problems of agriculture.

in almost all districts in Nyasaland and is regulated by rules made under the Native Authority Ordinance. These require that a chief must be given seven days' notice of intention to convene . . . a public meeting and he may forbid it if he has reason to believe that it may occasion a breach of the peace or undermine his authority or that of the government. A similar power is given by law to the police. It extends to processions as well as assemblies. . . .

How this power is applied, will be described in a further article. What a mine of information is this Government-abused Devlin Report!

And space limitations prevent us from going into more detail. For instance Paragraph 34 of the Devlin Report deals with Freedom of Speech, "one of the essential conditions of democracy and therefore the right of assembly is jealously preserved: public meetings are not held by permission of the Government. His right has never been recognised among Africans, perhaps because assemblies in Africa can lead so much more easily to a breach of the peace [surely only because the forces of law and order, as the Commission reported were over-zealous in dealing with assemblies!] By native custom a chief may prohibit assemblies and under British rule . . . has been preserved."

Agriculture is no longer primitive and backward, but machinery has to be used carefully for it is very easy to deplete the fertility of the soil. The skill and art of agriculture is to take into consideration the imponderables, to mix science with intuition and to keenly observe the ecological relationships which one is readjusting when undertaking agricultural activity.

While I contend that an agricultural basis is the most desirable one for the anarchist community in the broad sense and also in the narrow concept of groups under existing conditions, it must be realised that agriculture is an occupation that requires a great deal of skill, adaptability and experience. The various agricultural groups I have been associated with have had varied success, even during the war when it was easy to make agriculture pay, some groups had great difficulty in making ends meet without the experience necessary.

However, even if it is not possible to depend on agriculture as the basic income-earning source for a group it does give the group a primary independence from which a greater independence could spring for the individual. If agriculture is to perform its function of supplying man adequately with his needs without depleting its capacity to do so, a responsible attitude is necessary by those working and living off of the land. Agriculture is a source of Freedom, it bestows, or could bestow, a certainty upon which any sort of civilised life is based. Within the agricultural framework one can absorb the natural disciplines and responsibilities which are the basis of a free society workable only if there is an understanding of those disciplines.

It was Kropotkin, who above most anarchists was concerned with things growing and living (I think this is significant and in consequence anarchism has a realism that Marxism lacks); it is essential that anarchists today should also be concerned with this most vital part of man's activities. Vast conglomerations of populations are, I think, a danger to man's physical and mental health and some of the reasons for it have passed. The fluidity of power and easy means of communication makes smaller communities where the individual has more direct control over his environment much more feasible in conjunction with a saner policy of land use.

Workers' Control

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seems most improbable that a union could fulfil any of these tasks successfully if it were also the organ of industrial administration or, in other words, if it had ceased to be a voluntary association. The difficulties would be almost insuperable in the case of the second task. The union would have to take up the case of its members against itself, and this would be an impossible situation. The union can carry out these functions if it remains independent of management. . . .

"It was unfortunate that the idea of workers' control was almost completely identified with the concept of union control. . . . It was obvious throughout that the unions would oppose any doctrine aiming at creating a representative structure in industry parallel to their own. They feared that any such organisation would undermine their own position by establishing a new centre of workers' interests and loyalty."

Mr. Pribicevic concludes that "One of the greatest problems before the advocates of "Industrial Democracy" in Gt. Britain is to determine the place of the unions within a democratically-controlled industry. Their main difficulty will be to persuade the unions to accept a new representative structure in industry which could alter their position, but need not necessarily undermine it."

He also expresses an opinion which he shares both with the Western socialists who have written off workers' control as impracticable and with the Eastern Communists who are determined that it shall not be given any real existence!

"No industrial system can be imagined today without some kind of hierarchical organisation involving the existence of experts and managers to make and execute decisions. Even with a system of workers' control these will be necessary if anarchy is not to result."

The "anarchy" they fear will be discussed in a concluding article next week. C.W.

It is unrealistic to suggest that this could be achieved quickly but it is worth considering whether there is some possibility of farming in association with a town group, a centre where anarchists and sympathisers could come and enjoy with their children the freedom that such a centre could offer. Commercially offered foods are notorious for their attractive presentation combined with a certain lack of quality, and the association could be a source of supply and would benefit those who are compelled to live in the towns.

The application of the scientific method is a legitimate way of discovering how things work, but applied to ends which are not necessarily good can become a positive danger to mankind. For instance, the reason for agriculture is, I may repeat, to supply the highest possible quality of foodstuff in sufficient quantity to feed mankind and to maintain the soil in a state of fertility—this conflicts in many instances with commercial demands of profit.

In most important areas of living, of which agriculture is one, there are so many imponderables that the application of limited but scientific knowledge can be positively dangerous and research undertaken must be considered carefully, not ignored, but applied only in conjunction with experience.

It is often difficult to explain why things are going on because of the complexity of living matter, and the results of laboratory experiment may often be misleading. For instance, the chemical analysis of soil can only be a very rough guide as it is a continually changing mass of living organisms that respond to changing conditions. Man is a delicate instrument who stands in the centre of a myriad of activities, it is essential, therefore, if he is to survive, to use all his senses and apply them as objectively as possible to his environment. I believe that in mass cities, cut off to some extent from the environmental forces that matter, and in a position to be more effectively conditioned, it is more difficult to maintain the awareness that is necessary to control the environment. It is, therefore, necessary to mix somehow the influences of town and country to our mutual benefit, and we might well lend our minds to considering how this can be achieved.

From agriculture to relationships is a short step, because a farm is a relationship of human beings and their sources of food. Compromises are difficult and an anarchist in a position of management cannot always form ideal relationships. Most agricultural workers have a sense of responsibility and pride and joy in their work, even if grossly underpaid, therefore it is possible to communicate when one is discussing activities with which all the participants are experienced and familiar. The greatest difficulty comes from managing the owners of the land who have the power but not the experience.

The individual could strengthen his power immeasurably thus, and we see in Israel the development of natural sources of power which are independent of centralised authority.

I think that we might consider Prunier's suggestions, and although he had the publishing of FREEDOM and the activities of Freedom Bookshop as examples in mind, we might well extend our activities.

It is our intention as anarchists to extend the are of mutual aid and to build a community without coercive authority, but the mutual should be just as important as the aid and an attempt made to be as objective as possible in our relationships with others.

As was stated yesterday (referring to Bob Green's lecture), enquiry about human relationships is often limited to that which will benefit the production of profit and the defence of the establishment, and people (even "Progressives") are singularly afraid of experiment in the most vital part of human affairs.

As we are products to some degree of an authoritarian environment the acceptance of these beliefs must involve a constant effort to extend the area of our understanding and relationships to which our anarchistic attitude can be applied.

One of the prime necessities is to know where and when to draw the line; when to retreat and when to challenge and to extend the field in which the area of freedom may be expanded. At one time the issues facing mankind could not

have the catastrophic results that threaten our existence today. Together with these issues is a social organisation that makes men impotent in face of the power that confronts him. The family, and as Prunier points out, the group that tends to copy it, is shut in on itself. Where love and work are confined by formulas, routines and prejudices, these prejudices affect "progressives" and anarchists and there is a general retreat after a period of youthful rebellion to the forms and behaviour of society which in theory they condemn. Once in the mesh of family life, responsibilities and emotional encumbrance it is difficult to assist in activity that can offer a fundamental change in the affairs of men. It is often alleged that to live in a group is to escape from society and the cynics who generally live in a world of their own unhappiness, unable to think or act creatively, sneer and point to the failures of such groups. The human spirit unable to expand will ignore the larger responsibilities of being a human being in favour of the smaller ones, but often the consequences of the larger responsibilities in due course of time reduce the smaller ones to insignificance.

Christians are often accused of confining their beliefs to proslitising on a Sunday and indeed if some of the tenets of the Christian church were applied to modes of living, there would be a vast change in society but of course they only apply the negative concepts.

Most of man's activities are social activities and are therefore based on relationships, and this is I think, Prunier's point, that a group should be an expanding thing so that rather than concentrating on denouncing the evils of society we should among ourselves create a society not exclusive but extending out towards the various spheres of interest which among anarchists is pretty wide and varied.

ALAN ALBON.

Briefly

THE END OF THE ROBOTS

Field-Marshal Lord Montgomery said at the Royal Warwickshire Regiment's depot at Budbrooke Barracks, Warwick, on Saturday that he believed it was a good thing for young men to get away from their homes and do their part in the armed forces. He was attending the last old comrades' day and open day expected to be held at the barracks, due to close next year under Army reorganisation.

Lord Montgomery, who is Colonel of the regiment, told parents:

"We hope you will think that we have turned your boy into a better boy than he was when he left home. . . . I believe it is a great pity that National Service is coming to an end. No doubt many of the boys are rather glad, but it did give you in the nation a large number of young men who had been disciplined and who had learned loyalty and a sense of duty—all those things that are so necessary when you have an emergency."

38 Years in Prison

Hearing that John Jones (50) had spent 38 years in prison or detention, the chairman of the Bedfordshire Quarter Sessions, Mr. J. G. S. Hobson, Q.C., told him: "The State has spent enough keeping you for nothing. It is about time you managed to keep yourself." He put Jones on probation for two years for breaking into his former lodgings at Luton and stealing £92.

Jones said that he would try to lead a straightforward life. "I have got to an age where I feel it is now or never." He was said to have had 21 previous convictions, but to have made an effort to go straight since coming out of prison two years ago. Mr. Hobson commented that that was a remarkable achievement for a confirmed criminal. (M.G.)

[What an admission of the failure of the penal system to deter or to reform. Only as a last resort they are using freedom instead of punishment as a cure.]

The Cure

To stimulate interest in the film "Hole in the Head", American exhibitors are sending out a do-it-yourself brain surgery kit, including a coconut for experimenting on.

What is an Anarchist?

DEAR EDITORS,

What is an Anarchist? The timely and lively contribution from S.F. pinpoints, as he says, the weak link in Anarchist ideology, and will, I hope, provoke others to reply and take part in which could be an immensely beneficial discussion.

If S.F. is correct in his analysis of anarchist thought and personality, anarchists differ little from the majority of people, which, I think, is as it should be. Anarchists are not necessarily either inspired or cranks, but just average people who happen to have a different outlook from others. All normal people desire betterment, and I would agree that even the stone-age reactionary is convinced that his way is better for all. Without doubt, the "do-gooders" of various religious sects, and the "left wingers" on the political stage, really believe that theirs is the way of progress. Even Labour "carcerists" can soothe uneasy consciences with the complacent hope that it is all for the best, and that it is just a coincidence that they are provided with a comfortable ride.

Quite clearly then, we must agree that mere desire for betterment does not distinguish anarchists from others. Even what S.F. describes as the "protest attitude", being as he says of a negative nature, oftentimes dogmatic and lacking in clarity, is a characteristic of the "red rebels". What then is the difference between anarchists and others? Before reading S.F., I would have said a conspicuous difference is rejection of the principle of government, but now even S.F. tells us that government is necessary in many ways in any group of people, a necessity which only the hermit

can escape. I am sorry that he holds this view.

Indicating various ways of achieving the "healthier Society" shared by others, S.F. includes Communalism. Regretfully, I must agree that this cannot be regarded as synonymous with Anarchism, since many anarchists do not accept it. I wish it were otherwise, as I personally cannot visualise anarchist society on any other basis. If though all Anarchists are not Communalists, all Communalists are Anarchists, with the single exception of the small socialist party which professes to abolish the State by "capturing the forces of Government". S.F. refers to Communists, by which I assume he means the Russian-inspired coercionists who have perverted the name so that it no longer has any real meaning. I think S.F. recognises this in his use of the term Communalists, which is preferable to Communist.

Perhaps the outstanding distinction between Anarchist and non-Anarchist is that the former alone seeks no power over others. Liberty has so many lip-server (even dictators assume power under promise to restore "liberty" when conditions permit) and is hedged with so many reservations, that it becomes merely another label for authoritarianism. The qualification "consistent with the liberty of others" is a negation of liberty, and pin-points a Society based on conflicting interests. True liberty cannot be qualified. Only when the interests of all are identical (by means of common ownership) can liberty function, and the theory of Anarchism proved to be the "one different thing". Freedom through Anarchism. Why has this delightfully apt slogan been discontinued?

Yours sincerely,
B.F.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

DEAR COMRADES,

May I thank S. E. Parker for correcting me on the matter of alternative anarchist theories of industrial co-operation. Whether or not individualistic industrial theories have any application in such a large-scale industrial society as our own is another question and perhaps beside the point.

It would perhaps clear up a misunderstanding if I stated that I do not advocate majority control as a matter of right or principle. It is merely my belief that this is the inevitable result of abolishing privilege and authority. By majority control I mean control by the majority of group members over those aspects of social activity which concern them as a whole.

In my opinion control by "all" is impossible. There are for example people whom, no matter what freedom they possess, are physically or mentally incapable. Such a category will include all newly born babies, and some older children, invalids or aged people. Furthermore, the delinquent who wishes to exert anti-social control well, in most cases, be prevented from doing so. Besides this we have individuals who sincerely disagree with the social movement accepted by most other members of society.

The question of individual autonomy depends upon what extent one's sphere of activity overlaps that of others. The degree to which this is tolerated varies

Majority Control

from individual to individual. Hence in a society free from minority control the degree of an individual's freedom is directly proportional to the number of people who recognise it. Therefore the limits of a person's freedom will be controlled, implicitly or explicitly, by the majority of his contacts. I challenge comrade Parker to refute this logically.

Next concerning the question of individual sovereignty there is a difference between individual and co-operative co-operative activity. In the foregoing the person, within his (or her) restricted limits, controls the whole of his activity. In sharing a common organisation or property however, activity must be dovetailed with that of others and decisions must allow for views of fellow group members. The larger the group or the more interdependent its members, the greater the restriction of decision in some fields. This however may be compensated for by economy of effort and a wider scope of freedom in other fields, inside or outside the organisations.

I repeat therefore that complete individual sovereignty is impossible in any group activity. In this respect the difference between an anarchist and authoritarian society is one of degree. The anarchist will enjoy greater individual sovereignty within the group and less discomfort, preferably none, from leaving it.

Comrade Parker thinks that in writing of organisation permitting individual sovereignty, one is putting the cart before the horse. I prefer the proverb concerning the chicken and the egg. The individual is concerned through the sexual act of two co-operators who have usually organised their life together. We are born helpless into a society already organised. Emancipation comes later. If complete individual sovereignty is the aim of anarchism then we had better dissolve all social ties including sexual relationships. My interpretation of anarchism however is the abolition of privilege and government (which no matter how democratic and representative it claims to be, constitutes minority control) and the achievement of maximum individual sovereignty.

Referring to my remarks on policy, S. E. Parker asks by what right can the majority compel the minority to conform or get out. Avoiding discussion of rights and duties, I would answer that they have no moral grounds for so acting but I forecast this is what will happen in the majority of cases. In my opinion remaining an acquiescent member of an organisation whose policy you disagree with is "conforming". If however you obstruct its activities you are interfering with other people's freedom which they are bound to resent and therefore take counter measures. If, as comrade Parker suggests in the case of irreconcilable disagreements, the group is dissolved and new groupings formed I fail to see, apart from the property question, how this differs from defection by a minority.

Comrade Parker doesn't count drunks and delinquents relative to question of majority control. I specifically referred to a case where a drunk minority were affecting the livelihood of their fellow-workers. In mentioning crime in a free society I assumed criminals were in a minority. If they were not the case preventative action would be almost impossible in a society devoid of authority and various solutions proposed by anarchists irrelevant. One might even have to revise one's conception of crime.

A group doesn't always require a meeting before acting in an emergency and a decision doesn't always imply lengthy deliberation. Hence an impulsive vote, i.e. in protecting common property, can be expressive of a group decision.

In reply to Robert McKean's letter, know of at least one anarchist group where a vote is never taken. Nevertheless, in my opinion, decisions taken are based on majority consent.

Yours faithfully,
P.G.F.
London, Aug. 2.

DAVID BELL FUND

On behalf of David Bell, we would like to thank friends for the many messages of solidarity and sympathy received. We had some contribution from the U.S.A. and Canada, besides the from Argentinian and Spanish comrades already mentioned.

The balance of the fund and any further contributions will be used to help him during and immediately after term of imprisonment.

The address of the Fund is:

PETER FEAK,
27 Walcot Square,
Kennington, S.E.11.

LIST No. 6

S.N. 3/-; P.C.O. 5/-; A.G. (U.S.) 14/-; (W.G. (Canada) 14/6; J.S. (U.S.) 14/-.

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MAX PATRICK.

Political Comments

IT is really becoming quite fashionable to poke fun at politicians, but nowhere outside of FREEDOM can one find a serious suggestion that society could "be run" without them.

Commentators are quick to expose the political motives behind a politician's actions but none of them ever ask whether there is something wrong with a society which accepts without too much questioning the intellectual dishonesty of its leaders.

The relationship which exists between the people and the politician, at any rate in the "older democracies", is rather like a marriage of long-standing which is neither very exciting nor idealistic but nevertheless each partner depends on the other carrying out certain accepted functions. Rarely, however, do they question the basis of the relationship, or seriously consider altering it.

Cynical newspaper commentators may sometimes strike a chord in their readers but none are imaginative enough to explore the possibilities of a different form of society. One can only suppose that there is a certain comfort in dullness and uniformity which fills a deep-rooted need.

There is of course an important difference between a dreary marriage and the relationship between politician and people; our society makes provisions for the termination of the former which may only effect one man, woman and their children, but there is no law which allows for escape from a political system, except by a conscious effort by the whole of society.

One can only hope that the cynical professional writers, the men with power but no responsibility, will at least accidentally start "the people thinking" along constructive

lines and awaken them to the realisation that their leaders are treating them with contempt.

AN African, Mr. Patrick Matimba, who is not respectable enough to get an invitation to Balmoral, is instead on his way to Holland where he is going to settle for the time being after being banished from his home in Southern Rhodesia.

Mr. Matimba, who had a small printing business in Salisbury was "detained" at the time of the declaration of the state of emergency in February. Because he faced the possibility of up to five years' imprisonment he has accepted the Government's offer to give him his "freedom" on conditions that he should leave Rhodesia and not return. The Government paid his fare to Holland, tourist class!

Whether Mr. Matimba did the wisest thing in accepting the conditions is not for us to judge, but his view as to who really are the prisoners in Rhodesia does not to our mind mark him as a dangerous criminal.

He says that the:

"Real prisoners in this country are not his fellow-Africans still behind barbed wire at Khami, but Sir Edgar Whitehead and the other members of the administration. They are incapable of breaking the political paralysis, and only an outside force—perhaps the British Government—can set new ideas in motion."

This does not sound like a fanatical nationalist, but of a "moderate" who can still express some faith in the British Government who after all must take much of the responsibility for events in Southern Rhodesia.

Merchants of Death

Continued from p. 1

ness with which arms become obsolete makes for continual business, and removes the traces of political blunders within a few years.

Besides the profit to be derived from arms manufacture, which no doubt were the leading consideration for the Under-shafts of fifty years ago, the traffic provides employment for the workers at home and is a bulwark against unemployment and political instability. It brings prestige and power to the seller government in its foreign manoeuvres.

In their efforts to maintain influence in the Middle East, successive British governments have sold arms to Arab states and to Israel. The Labour Party is as much committed to the policy as is the Conservative government.

Arms are made for use, for killing people and destroying wealth. The labour and wealth tied up in their manufacture is a direct deprivation of better homes and food, and leisure to all the people of the country. Yet it is the people who are consenting to this waste of their wealth, and making the arms with which others are killed. The weapons which were sent to Cuba and to South Africa were designed by scientists and technicians, built by factory workers, transported and loaded by dockers or flown by pilots. At each stage there is the opportunity for the people concerned to act directly to break up the trade, and set an example which could be followed by workers throughout the world, to act over the heads of governments, Ministries and Select Committees, and make a contribution to lessening the horror of war. Are there people willing to take this action? P.H.

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Teachers ...

DEAR FRIENDS,

Isn't the argument between Ian and Ernie largely beside the point? In a competitive society we must compete, contract out or go under. Personally, as a schoolmaster, I intend to go right on doing the job as best I can, competing for a share in the meagre pickings of our society and trying to do my bit to change that society from one based on (allegedly) skill and status and (really) on capacity for economic blackmail, to a society of free persons freely associating and co-operating on a basis of social and economic equality.

Yours truly,
A.R.
Manchester.

... and Teaching

DEAR EDITORS,

A "basic fact" that Ian Leslie does not seem to appreciate is that teachers do not protest against the "policies of a small hierarchy of extremely powerful financier-capitalists" who "ensure that we are all much poorer than we need be". There is only one teacher in this district who cares or dares to write cogitantly to the local press on such matters—she is a capitalist-minded type. Let's be honest and admit that teachers, generally, uphold the system.

Finally, if "Freedom" is to apply a "don't let's be beastly to the teachers" policy, we had better apologise for all those things we have said about politicians—it has been our whole "burden and refrain".

Slough, Aug. 1. ERNIE CROSSWELL.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

London Anarchist Group meetings are suspended for the Summer. They will be resumed at new premises in the Autumn.

Date and place to be announced.

NEW YORK LIBERTARIAN FORUM MEETINGS

Held every Friday night at 86 East 10th Street, N.Y.C., 8.30 p.m.

AUG. 14—Ruth Reynolds on PRESENT STATUS OF THE MOVEMENT FOR PUERTO-RICAN INDEPENDENCE.

AUG. 21—Russell Blackwell on HUMAN NATURE AND CULTURAL PATTERNS.

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