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# Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"If they've a brain and cerebellum, too,  
They've go to leave that brain outside,  
And vote just as their leaders tell 'em to."  
W. S. GILBERT.

## A NEW ALLY FOR WESTERN "DEMOCRACY"

# U.S. to Train Franco Troops

WHEN, in 1939, the Russians made the sudden volte-face of Stalin-Hitler pact, ideological pro-Nazis and anti-Nazis were greatly shocked. But those for whom the force of moral principle and the finest adhesion to expediency—the people who extol Lenin's "flexibility", these people were actually shocked by that demonstration of real facts" and so on which justify such action. Recognition of this factor explains why it is the very brutalities of Fascism, the callous bureaucratic ukases of Communism, the "realism" of the Bevins and the Morrisons of the Labour Party and of the U.S. politicians, which attract support. They answer a contemporary psychological need.

Spain

It is not difficult to see in the light of this phenomenon the strength of the American proposals in regard to Spain. In a minor way it constitutes a parallel to the Stalin-Hitler pact. But in the present world context of the cold war, the ideological reasons advanced against an American-Spanish defence pact, will have poor force compared with the apparent strategic and military advantages.

It must be remembered that such proposals are not suddenly hatched. Indeed, it is stated that the visit of Admiral Sherman came after two years of preparation between American and Spanish diplomatic staffs. Can one suppose that the British were unaware of that?

Significantly, the newspaper opposition to a pact with Franco is careful to eschew

undue pre-occupation with ideological issues. They stress the political and voting gain to the Communist parties in Italy and France. In order to show how practical it is, the *Observer* editorially insists that objections to the pact "do not consist only of the somewhat neurotic obsession of the European Left with General Franco..." (our italics). In the age of the cold war, of political witch-hunts and atomic espionage, anti-Fascism is regarded as a neurotic obsession, and we are not surprised. But it is surely significant that such an attitude should be openly expressed only a few years after the end of a war "to destroy Fascism".

Equally extraordinary is the calm way in which the Conservative press, in such papers as the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Sunday Times*, discuss the disadvantages of admitting a Fascist dictator, the former puppet of Mussolini and Hitler, to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. During the Civil War it was these very newspapers who mobilised support for Franco, and built him up as a Christian gentleman!

Minerals and Capital

Nothing has publicly been said about capital investment and mineral wealth, but we should not forget that British capital investment in Spain is very extensive and that Spain constitutes an important source of bauxite and other military minerals.

If American bases are established in Spain, America will have an even greater interest in the political stability of Spain. The price which Franco is supposed to pay in the shape of a "liberalising" of his régime may thus be seen as necessary manoeuvres for preventing its disintegration. The U.S. administration no doubt looked with some dismay on the recent strikes in Spain, and the emergence of expressed criticism of the régime.

It may be argued that Spaniards are so miserably poor that economic aid is more humane than political support for opposition elements. But American financial aid has been entering Spain for years. It has not reached the people or alleviated poverty. As with the case of Chiang Kai-shek, the corruption of the administration has seen it diverted into the black market economy.

As to British protests, their hollowness is exposed by consideration of British tolerance of and support for the neighbouring but much older dictatorship of Salazar over Portugal.

### Revolutionary Considerations

In short, the Spanish question illuminates once more the fact that if one is concerned with political action, with alliances, and with preparations involving "standing up to Russia"—the whole question of the cold war—then one is driven into the arms of the General Francos. One may sympathise with the Spanish people (or the Yugo-Slav people or any others oppressed by dictatorial tyranny) but one's sympathy does not stand in the way of more practical considerations.

Moral considerations—or if one likes, the practical concern for the eradication of tyranny—can only drive one away from alignments of governments and more and more into support for spontaneous movements of popular revolt. Such support involves anti-militarism and anti-State attitudes. Instead of accepting the cold war between the nations one is involved in the struggle of individuals and peoples against the State and against war.

## What will the Miners do?

ARTHUR HORNER'S remark that the anti-miner and anti-nationalisation measures which a Tory Government would apply would inevitably result in industrial resistance by the miners caused a storm amongst the hopeful members of a prospective Tory Government. So much so that Winston Churchill, the most hopeful of all, declared:

"Now I have always been a friend of the miners. Let them dismiss from their minds these malicious tales that a Conservative Government would be hostile to the mining community."

The remark of Winston's that he has always been a friend of the miners is possibly the best thing that he has said in recent weeks and ranks alongside Lord Shepherd's statement for the Government that one of the good things about identity cards is that they enable you to get passports more easily, or Joe Stalin's definition of an internationalist as "one who is ready, without qualification and hesitation, to defend the Soviet Union". While it is only one generation since a Conservative Government showed not merely that it would be hostile to the mining community but would actually enter what was tantamount to a state of war against them in which even the Armed Forces would be used.

Amongst the various statements made it transpires quite clearly that the Labour Party disavow any intention of a strike against a Tory Government, but like to say rather coyly that perhaps a Tory Government would provoke such measures. Frank Byers in a broadcast the other day put the Liberal Party view most definitely that he believed that such was the suspicion of workers against the Tories that industrial unrest would ensue. But industrial unrest is ever present and the only difference would be this: that while the trade union leaders are in the Government they will not lend even

qualified and hesitant approval to industrial action.

However, long and bitter experience before the days of a Labour Government with power has shown that the trade union leaders would not give much support to industrial action even if the Tories were in power and we might go even further and say, with justification and foreign examples to give us weight as well as our knowledge of the British Labour movement, that not even if a Communist or Fascist dictatorship were installed would they agree to industrial strikes levelled against the Government.

There is no reason to believe that political changes will alter the reformists; they have gone down the slippery slope of collaboration and will never change now. Having tasted office, the possibility of titles, the immense chances to get ahead in the nationalised Boards and in industry, they are unlikely to get even as far ahead again as they got in 1926. There is going to be need of industrial action, there is going to be need of resistance, but it will have to be without the leaders who have found their place in capitalist society. In the event of a Tory Government, of course there will be industrial unrest. So will there be if "Socialism" continues. If the Tories have no better eyewash, however, to provide than statements that Winston Churchill has always been a friend of the miners, it is natural that under a Tory régime the industrial unrest will be more.

But the last person to speak of it should be Horner. After all, his ideal society is Soviet Russia, where industrial unrest has been liquidated as much as is humanly possible. It is at least possible for industrial unrest to be expressed by strikes under the Tory, Liberal and Labour Governments. When Arthur Horner is Commissar of Labour it may have to be expressed in a rather more violent form.

ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST.

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## OUTPUT BEFORE SAFETY IN THE PITS

RATHER than face a loss in output "we have people who are prepared to take a chance and endanger their own and other people's lives," states Mr. H. Ridley, inspector to the Philadelphia and District (County Durham) Mines Inspection Board, in his report for the three months ended July 7th, which has recently been issued.

The Board, to which workmen's organisations at nineteen collieries in North-East Durham are affiliated, includes Eppleton Colliery, where seven men were killed and two injured in an explosion two weeks ago.

Mr. Ridley said too much importance was being placed on production. Things were assumed to be safe because they looked safe, and chance was replacing logic. It would appear that stricter safety methods would result in a loss of production.

He urged that all miners must press for stricter observance of safety measures even if it meant a thorough re-organisation of the industry.

## ABDULLAH'S COUNTRY

THE assassination of Abdullah in the Mosque of Omar at Jerusalem, is naturally deplored by British statesmen as for so long Abdullah has worked hand-in-hand with their diplomacy and intrigues in the Middle East. It is also usual in any case to deplore any such action even when a ruler is pursuing a somewhat different course. But it is high time that men who aspire to absolute power learned what the risk is that they must run. The kings of England learned it long ago, and since Charles lost his head, they have managed to keep theirs. But when a man becomes an absolute ruler, appointed by himself and by arrangement with foreign powers, and allows no means whatever even to protest against his régime, let alone change it, he is asking for trouble and when he gets it we cannot pretend to shed any crocodile tears.

The picturesque descriptions of Abdullah's kingdom—sometimes known as the Hashemite dynasty, but more popularly known as the Bevinite—conceal an authoritarian feudal régime, and

### THE LAST CONSERVATIVES

THE latest from that human anachronism, Sir Waldron Smithers, Conservative M.P. for Orpington, is a question which he has put down for the Attorney-General:

"May I ask, if the Government is sincerely anti-Communist, will you now prosecute the Dean of Canterbury and, when he is convicted, if he may be publicly hanged?"

This gentleman, who has been in the House for the past twenty-six years (what a reflection on the intelligence of his constituents!) is reputed to have asked some 15,000 questions in the course of his political career, some of which, to quote the *Sunday Pictorial*, "have been so puerile, so asinine as to appear the jokes of a schoolboy, not those of a prosperous stockbroker of seventy-one."

His macabre turn of mind found expression on another occasion when he asked the Minister of Food: "Will the Rt. Hon. Gentleman earmark himself for slaughter?"

Sir Waldron declares that he is the "last Conservative". But the fact that several thousand electors are satisfied to have him as their representative might indicate that in Orpington at any rate there is no shortage of red-faced huntin' and shootin' Tories of the old school.

when one reads that Abdullah led one of the few nations to stand by Britain in 1940, it is so misleading a description as to beggar reply. This island may have been weak in 1940 but it kept its strength in the Middle East, particularly as compared with Germany, and Abdullah naturally stood by his old and strong protector. His stand had nothing to do with democracy or such modern idea (by Transjordan standards). The romantic stories of Abdullah getting out of his car and reproving women who were not wearing the veil read very nicely. They only do not go on to say what happened to the women who still refused to wear the veil.

Jordan became the spot much favoured of that eccentric character the pro-Arab British officer. One hastens to point out to the uninitiated that when a British officer is able to call himself Bimbashi or Ombashi, or even to put a Pasha or Bey after his name, there can be no more pro-Arab man—he may even finish up by becoming a Moslem, but in any case he will adopt practically all the tenets of aristocratic Islam—most of all, the one which separates the sheikhs and pashas and emirs and kings from the common herd. They will never be pro-fellahen who live in their ramshackle huts and provide the revenue. The overwhelming poverty of the Arab countries, the poorest in the world (which are yet the richest in the world, sitting on the fabulous profits of Oil which provide the magnificent cars and entourages of the princely robbers) creates a background from which Middle East politics can never escape.

The Press speaks of Abdullah's assassination throwing the Middle East into turmoil or ferment or chaos or any of the other pet journalistic phrases. It is like saying that the arrest of an alleged atomic spy throws America into hysteria. These things are symptoms. The turmoil of the Middle East is always there, like the hysteria of America. It is rooted in the soil of economic conditions. Abdullah may not have been killed by anyone sincerely seeking social betterment. We do not know for sure who he was killed by, as his guards (rather in the manner of Macbeth) killed all concerned on the spot. There will be no tales told. The Mufti is blamed—and he has long been in hostility to Abdullah (although so has every other Arab leader, not to mention Israel).

Whatever the case may be, the violent ends of Arab leaders in Syria, in Persia, in Jordan, are symptoms of the same malaise. Hunger, poverty, illiteracy, disease, and all in the middle of the most incredible source of riches since El

Dorado, do not combine to make the Arab statesmen good security risks for insurance companies, and there is not one of them, not even Farouk, who can say for sure where and how they will end their days: in a luxurious palace among a populace instructed to mourn, in a hotel bedroom in Europe, or struck down in the streets by the populace.

It is idle to talk about Communism, as the British Press has done over Persia. Even these conditions do not breed communism in Mohamedan countries. It may be fashionable to blame the communists for everything now, but it has nothing to do with the matter, and indeed the Foreign Office may regret that there are no communists of any proportion, for the rulers who choose the moment to assert their independence from Britain, would soon welcome the troops to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them whether against communists seeking a new state or revolutionists. Of course, it is something they are reluctant to do, because the British Army has a habit of staying in a country once it is invited there (as the Egyptians know to their cost), but they would all soon be as British as Abdullah if it was that or quitting themselves.

While we do not begrudge any governmental messages of sympathy to Abdullah's widows (all three of them), the sympathy the workers should extend would be better spent on the real victims: not on the Prime Ministers and Kings and Emirs who are struck down by an assassin's bullet, perhaps on behalf of a rival claimant who may one day himself ascend the chair of state to be struck down himself in his turn, but on the oppressed, despised and downtrodden fellahen, who go on tending their herds of goats and watering their scanty patch of land. One day enlightenment will spread through the narrow alleys and mean streets of Cairo and Amman and Damascus. The last descendants of the Prophet may complete the circle and go back to tending camels for rich widows when tribute is no longer paid to them. There may be for the time being no social revolution in countries not yet liberated from the age-old customs. But in a very few years there may be the most terrible vengeance. A few measures of toleration and alleviation of distress by the governments concerned might not prevent their overthrow but they would at least mitigate the day of reckoning. As it is at present they are carrying on in luxury in the midst of want in a fashion which makes the pre-Revolution king of France by contrast as wise as Solomon.



## Loyalty and Law, Patriotism & Mankind

IN the case of Burgess and Maclean we remarked that the latitude which newspaper editors permitted in the discussion of these men's characters was near to libellous, and that it seemed a reasonable deduction therefrom that they were known to have gone for good. At the same time, the Government were insistent that they were not known—as yet—to have committed any offence.

Now, if they had not committed any offence, it is most unjust to attack them either directly or by inference. If they have, it is still more unjust to the best spirit of law, since in effect, pre-judges their case. This kind of lawless injustice from the administration becomes more and more frequent. It is not exaggerating to say that it is, in lesser degree, the function of an independent legal system (that is, as far as independence in such matters can go in a class-divided society. Nevertheless, it can go a very considerable way), with totalitarian conceptions of law.

An example is the breakdown of the political asylum system for which this country in the nineteenth century was justly famous, and of which Marx, Bakunin, Kropotkin and Lenin do not mention but a few—availed themselves. For years now refugees have been screened, tested, and often turned back or deported.

Now comes the case of Dr. Burhop, fellow-travelling physicist, who has had his passport withdrawn to prevent him going to Moscow. He states that he has not worked on atomic projects for six years and does not possess any newer information. One may hazard the guess that the Government are afraid that he may be useful in discussion to the Russians or even elect to work in Russia.

But to deny him the right to discuss, or to sell his labour elsewhere if he so wishes is hardly better than slavery. We are brought up against a problem which *Freedom* mentioned in the case of Dr. Klaus Fuchs. Fuchs was put away for 14 years. But when he comes out? He still will be a most able brain, a first-class nuclear physicist. On the condition of cold war—with Russia or with some other power—the administration will hardly stand by indifferent to his movements. Such men are like the Man in the Iron Mask or those mediaeval claimants to thrones whose very existence threatened the *de facto* ruler and who were kept imprisoned *sine die*, or as is said, "during the king's pleasure"—that is, indefinitely.

As the implications of Klaus on the major scale and Burhop at the minor end become apparent, one can imagine a disinclination for entering the field of atomic physics developing among the younger generation.

The next step has been for the Attorney-General to announce that the Government have in mind to alter the treason laws. Perhaps to lessen the penalty (it is now a capital offence) but with the real aim of bringing "lesser degrees", e.g., "disloyalty" under penalty. How far hysteria goes is shown by the M.P. (Mr. Peter Thorneycroft, Conservative) who asked "if the Attorney-General would agree that there were a certain number of men and women in this country who were quite plainly traitors in the ordinary accepted sense of the term...?" Sir Frank Soskice made a guarded response.

Now the Communists' transferred patriotism to Russia is repulsive enough—because patriotism itself is repulsive to all imaginative minds. When Donne wrote that every man was a part of mankind, he did not mean only part of the British or the American or the Russian or the Negro. He meant of mankind. Group loyalties of the patriotic type have always had a doubtful value. To-day they are baneful.

# THE ECONOMICS OF REARMAMENT

READERS of this column are urged to first turn to the Correspondence Columns of this journal to read T. Temple's letter, *War and Big Business*, since I am proposing to deal with our correspondent's criticism of my references to this subject last month.

From my two paragraphs—one referring to the sacking of 20,000 Chrysler employees for an "indefinite" period during the change-over from civilian to war production, the other to American stock markets' unfavourable reaction to "Korean peace prospects", Mr. Temple assumes that I therefore conclude that "capitalist economies find war profitable and prefer it". He then shows that by this logic, since the American stock markets reacted unfavourably at the outbreak of the Korean war, the opposite conclusions would also be true! I agree. But then the conclusions Mr. Temple attributes to me were not mine! I do, however, unlike Mr. Temple, hold the view that wars are profitable, and that a war economy is an integral part of capitalism. I subscribe to the point of view expressed frequently in *Freedom* that "it is the economic structure of the modern state which makes wars inevitable. While capitalism (transitional between private and state in Britain and America, frankly state capitalism in Russia) continues, wars cannot be 'avoided'; on the contrary, they are becoming increasingly an integral part of the economic structure of society." (*Freedom*, 6/1/51.)

I also share *Freedom's* view that "it is becoming increasingly clear that contemporary economy can only exist by reference to war preparation and war production. This is a horrible conception. But it explains why war is so insistently knocking at humanity's door. And if it is true that practically no one consciously wants war (and we think this is true), then the reappearance of war must come from some other agency—the needs of a profit-making economy based upon some kind of value exchange. We criticise such a mode of economy because of its intrinsic lack of morality or ethics or justice, and because it produces poverty and war." (*Freedom*, 3/2/51.)

I really quoted from the *New York Herald Tribune* those words about "Korean peace prospects" because it showed the lack of any morality or humanity in Big Business. Whilst millions of ordinary people would sigh with relief if the slaughter were to end in Korea, the Stock Exchange's first reaction is to record a minor slump! Just as, incidentally, "the Kansas floods gave more aid to wheat markets, futures for the bread cereals advancing 3/8 to 1 cent. a bushel in Chicago." (*N.Y. Herald Tribune*, 13/7/51.)

MR. Temple wants us to believe that "most businesses make smaller profits during a war than they make during a peace time boom—which is what you had in America before Korea". In the first place, to call the period before Korea "peace time" when the U.S. military budget was nearly 20 billion dollars a year, is hardly an accurate use of terms, and secondly, profits for the first quarter of this year have risen and as was demonstrated in this column ("Death Pays Handsome Dividends", 26/5/51) even record profits have been made by some of the largest companies, including the *National Steel Corporation* whose gross profits rose from \$23½ millions in the first quarter of 1950 to \$36½ millions in the same period in 1951. And whilst on the subject of steel about which Mr. Temple writes that the mills "don't seem to be as flourishing as they were before the fighting started", a *New York report* (July 8th), states that: "American steel production in May reached the new record figure of 9,094,000 tons, 23,000

## Racial Rioting in Chicago

A WOMAN who owned a flat building in Cicero, Chicago, was found to have collected more rent than the regulations permit. A suit was brought against her and she was ordered to repay \$350. She was faced with other suits which seemed likely to cost her ten times as much.

"Perhaps from a mistaken notion of how to avenge herself," says the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, "or for some other reason, one of the apartments in the building was offered for rent to a Negro family of good education and excellent reputation."

The neighbourhood was aroused, the new tenant's furniture was smashed and thrown into the street, and efforts were made to set the building on fire. Three thousand men and women broke through the police lines. On June 13th, the area was surrounded by troops and barbed wire after twenty-three soldiers, policemen and civilians had been injured on the previous night.

tons more than the previous record set last March. During the first five months of the year, production totalled 43,614,444 tons, which is 4,500,000, or 12 per cent., more than in the same period of 1950."

In Britain in the first six months of this year, according to the *Financial Times* record, the published report of over two thousand companies showed a rise of about 20 per cent. in gross profits, compared with the previous financial year. Provisions for taxation were increased by 25 per cent.; those for depreciation by 16 per cent.; and dividends by 10 per cent.

WE wrote that we thought it was true that practically no one consciously wants war, but it does not exclude the view that if the alternative to widespread slumps is war or a war economy, then the ruling classes will prefer the latter to the former. Because modern wars create almost as many problems as they solve, from the capitalist point of view, it may be that capitalism will seek to survive by means of a cold, rather than a hot, war economy. Certainly it appears to an observer (who, incidentally, has no pretensions of being an economist!) that the present rearmament programme is capitalism's short-term answer to the threatened slump. Let me quote some views of the economists and from the financial columns of the Press:

1. Oscar Hobson, City Editor of the *News Chronicle* writes (*N.C.*, 18/7/51): "The state of trade is not satisfactory. That remark applies to many if not most individual branches of trade, home and export, wholesale and retail. Most of all it applies to the textile trades."

"Note that I speak of trade not of industry. Production still goes on at high level. But orders are falling off and cancellations of orders are coming forward."

"One big merchant said yesterday that in the export trade there has taken place in the last few weeks a change as decisive as that which occurred a year ago after the Korea outbreak—but in the opposite direction. A buyers' market then gave

place to a sellers' market; now the sellers' market is yielding again to a buyers' market."

"The managing director of a great firm of textile merchants and manufacturers, whose name is a household word at home and abroad, said that the situation was 'pretty disturbing' and that he saw 'not a hope in hell' of the textile trade being able to fulfil the Government's hopes of a substantial increase upon last year's £415 million worth of exports."

"In both cotton and wool next month is regarded as rather crucial. It will see publication of the American Cotton Bureau's crop forecast which will enable the first reliable estimate of the size of the new crop to be made. It will see, too, the early Australian wool sales. In both cotton and wool these events, it is thought, will go far towards determining the new season's price levels of the two main textile fibres."

What this means is that the trade recession which set in in the United States in April has now spread to this country and generally throughout the Western world. It is still increasing in depth, for slumps like booms feed upon themselves.

"A year ago buyers, i.e., both the final consumer and intermediate trades, hastened their purchases beyond immediate requirements because they thought prices were going higher and as prices did go higher more buyers came in and the process quickened. Now buyers are retarding purchases and letting the stocks, built up to generous proportions last year, run down; and as prices fall the incentive to hold off a little longer is strengthened."

"Of course, the recession, like the boom, germinates the seeds of its own correction. When stocks have been worked off to inconveniently low levels buying must start again. *Left to itself this natural process might take quite a long time—say two or three years. The question of the moment is, how soon and how far quickened rearmament demand will come in as a reinforcement of the natural recuperative force.*

"The assumption hitherto has been that

[\*Italics are mine. LIBERTARIAN.]

rearmament demand, direct and indirect, would make itself fairly decisively felt this autumn and that the depression would then rapidly fill up. It begins to look as if that forecast might be over-optimistic and that the depression may last longer than was expected."

2. A U.P. report from New York (12/7/51) states that: "Wholesale food prices dropped this week to the lowest level of the year. Dun and Bradstreet's index of wholesale food prices showed an eight cent drop to \$6.92."

"This was in contrast to a year ago when prices were skyrocketing on increased demands caused by the Korean war." The index this week registered its eighth decline in nine weeks, but still was 10.2 per cent. above a year ago and 16 per cent. above the pre-Korea level.

"The wholesale barometer is based on prices of 31 foods in general use."

3. The Financial Editor of the *Manchester Guardian* discussing Business Failures (16/7/51) writes: "There may well be an increase in business failures later in the year but there seem to be two main reasons for expecting it to be slight. In both 1920-1 and 1929-30 the drop in material prices was also accompanied by a recession in trade. Firms which overbought during the recent boom, however, will be cushioned not only by continued full employment but the prospects of an increasing arms programme."

4. Jack Cypin, an American economist and University Lecturer, writing in the *Socialist Call* (New York, 8/6/51) points out that even before the Korean war almost five million people were employed in America on war work out of a total labour force of 60 millions, and that at the time there were 5 million workers who were unemployed. The Korean war and rearmament has not only eliminated the 5 million unemployed and absorbed the million workers who are added to the American labour market each year, but "even produced a labour shortage of over 7 million people 'for the next two years' which will partly be solved by transferring 'three million workers from non-defence to defence activities'". Full employment, according to Mr. Cypin, can only be maintained by such a programme of war preparation. At any rate so long as policies "are controlled by business men, political bosses and criminals". And he concludes: "The political atmosphere will be such that we may find our rulers preferring extended war as the way out of the insoluble problems of peace."

MR. Temple is right when he says that modern war is not a business venture, or nationalism a business manoeuvre or the State, an economic institution. But such definitions are not as wide of the mark as our governments and many theorists would have us believe.

Certainly, war, nationalism and the State without the economic factor would be radically different problems. But economics does play a part, and whilst it is obviously part of the politicians' game to convince us that rearmament is necessary in the name of freedom, it will be a sorry state of affairs if revolutionaries also fall victims to this kind of propaganda just because the "economic argument" is less fashionable than the psychological explanations which are now being put forward. The psychological argument explains why people can be induced to take part in wars. It doesn't explain the root causes of war. LIBERTARIAN.

## Elections in Portugal

THERE was only one candidate at the Presidential elections which took place in Portugal last Sunday. He was General Lopes, nominee of Salazar's dictatorship. Two other candidates were ruled ineligible. One, Professor Gomes, because he refused to repudiate Communism, saying he was neither for it nor against it. The other was Admiral Meireles, who suddenly withdrew from the elections because, he complained, it would not be a "free election".

For many years Portugal has suffered under an iron dictatorship. The

Trade Unions were suppressed more than twenty years ago, and no-one knows exactly how many political victims have been claimed by Salazar.

*Voluntad*, an anarchist monthly published in Montevideo, reports in its June issue that the 75-year-old poet, Tomas da Fonseca, has been relieved of his post as professor at the University of Coimbra and imprisoned by the Salazar dictatorship because some hundreds of copies of his "Sermones da Montanha" published in Brazil were brought into Portugal. Actually, the official reason given for his detention is that he collaborated in *A Batalha*, the clandestine organ of the revolutionary syndicalist General Workers Confederation, which has been an illegal organisation for the past twenty years.

How hollow is all this talk of democracy in the mouths of politicians! Portugal, this country's oldest ally, virtually exists behind an iron curtain quite as news-proof as any Russian satellite country. In fact more so because the iron curtain on information about Portugal is also operated from outside.

The new President outlining his programme, declared: "We wish to maintain the closest relations with all countries which are determined to defend Western civilisation from the Communist menace."

Portugal's foreign policy, he said, would continue to have as its fundamental pillars "the strengthening of the alliance with England, the tightening of friendly ties of solidarity with Spain and Brazil, and the developing of relations with the United States which became very intimate these last few years."

Which explains much regarding the silence in this country about the appalling living conditions in Portugal, the absence of even the most elementary political rights, the suppression of opposition political parties and of free Trades Unions. It makes the British Government's aloofness to Franco's régime during these past years, seem just sheer hypocrisy and political opportunism.

R.

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## Private Goals in S. Africa

IN our issue of June 16th we commented on the South African Director of Prisons' denial that there were "private jails" in the Union, in his annual report. There are, in fact, privately-built prison "outstations" for non-Europeans only, which provide profitable cheap convict labour for farmers. We learn from *The Guardian* (Cape Town) further particulars of these "outstations".

"The daily average number of prisoners in 1949 was 26,895—an increase of 1,868.2 over 1948. The total admissions to penal institutions during the year was 257,916 as against 241,901 for the previous year."

"During 1949, too, the number of infant children of female prisoners admitted to or born in gaol was 886—9 more than the year before! Further on in the report you read that six of these infants subsequently died in gaol."

"In case you think that corporal punishment is slowly dying out, you read in the report that 1,117 more prisoners were sentenced to corporal punishment in 1949 than in 1948, and that the total number of strokes imposed increased in 1949 by 6,074 over the previous year."

"With the exception of 123 Native adults and 5 Coloured adults, who were sentenced to receive lashes with a 'cat', all the prisoners... had their strokes inflicted with a cane," the report states.

"Convict-hiring is also getting more profitable, it seems. Thus the total earnings for the year in respect of prisoners hired out amounted to £126,291 as compared with £115,695 in 1948, £96,424 in 1947, £112,840 in 1946 and £84,601 in 1945."

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

WAR & BIG BUSINESS

DEAR SIR,  
 "Libertarian" in his Foreign Commentary (*Freedom*, 7/7/51), quotes the New York *Herald-Tribune's* report that "Korean peace prospects" led to a slump in the New York stock exchange. And he seems to conclude that American capitalists—perhaps capitalist economies generally—find war profitable and prefer it.  
 If he would consult the same source for the end of June a year ago, he would find that the outbreak of the Korean war led to a slump in the stock exchange much more severe than this recent one. Which, by the same logic, would show that American capitalists, and perhaps capitalists generally, fear losses in war and prefer peace.

I suggest that in both cases what worried investors was the change from a war economy to a peace economy, or vice versa (necessitating re-tooling, new lay-outs and at least temporary general uncertainty about the course of trade). From which you cannot conclude that capitalists prefer war on account of its profits.

I don't know how much the jitters of stock exchange speculators will show you about the wishes of capitalists anyway. In any case, most businesses make smaller profits during a war than they make during a peace time boom—which is what you had in America before Korea. Even in a "semi" war economy like the present one, their business is considerably restricted to government contracts, and these are—for the big firms, anyway—less profitable than private trading. Firms like General Motors and Chrysler (whose condition *Libertarian* quotes, without batting an eye, in this very context) are severely affected by the restrictions on raw materials. And even steel mills don't seem to be as flourishing as they were before the fighting started.

You will never understand modern war if you try to think of it just as a business venture. No more than you can understand nationalism, if you try to think of it just as a business manoeuvre. Or than you can understand the state, if you try to think of it just as an economic institu-

tion. In each case it might be less objectionable if it were.

Yours,  
 TOM TEMPLE.  
*Swansea, July 8.*  
 [See *Libertarian's* answer on p. 3.]

Z-MAN ANARCHIST

I MUST presume from the absence of quotation marks round the headline last week *Z-Man Anarchist*, that the editors think some readers will agree with the views expressed before the Scottish Appellate Tribunal by the former Army officer, Joseph Mardell.

Mardell, according to the report, objected to Z-training "because he is now an anarchist", though "he insisted he wasn't a pacifist".

While I cannot doubt Mardell's sincerity as an anti-authoritarian, I can doubt the validity of his claim to anarchism—unless my logic leads me into false paths.

Since the aim of anarchism is to free the populace from authority, anarchists realise (I insist) that the means to that end is to deny authority—not to overwhelm it with a greater one.

In fine, authority (to-day) commands by the gunpower behind it. It is no solution to upset authority by confronting it with greater gunpower.

If Mardell hopes for anarchy, he should realise violence begets violence, and become a pacifist. If he dreams of a violent revolution, let him consider that in such times arise "leaders" who invariably pervert successful insurrections to their own advantage. It is no argument to say that the people should not lend authority to these "leaders": human nature is not yet civilised enough to appreciate that it can face the dark without an elder to guide and protect it—precisely the rôle in which these "leaders" first see themselves.

Anarchists may regret that the denial of authority unaccompanied by violence (from our side), cannot be accomplished until a great majority has been convinced of anarchy's worth; but no lasting utopia was won on any battlefield. R.F.T.

Living in Society

Housing: The Cinderella—3

WE are still in the grip of the private landlord who owns the majority of properties. These are bought up as investments, and in most cases bought and sold over the heads of the tenants. Up to now they have seen no cause to be indignant over this indignity, perhaps a little more propaganda would soon reconcile them to the buying and selling of human flesh once again. The private landlord faces some restrictions in this country, now, however. All the Conservative rentiers who so placidly lived in Cheltenham and Bournemouth on the proceeds of their houses and tut-tutted at the un-Christian doctrines of class-hatred and bitterness have now been faced with a reduction in their incomes because they cannot raise rents to meet the rising costs of the luxuries to which they are accustomed. The Christian ideas have rapidly gone down the drain. There is no more bitter class-hatred from anyone in the world than from these refined rentiers who are not getting as much profit as they should. The wail of the dispossessed has been so loud that one might be deceived into thinking that a revolution had really occurred. After reading their plaintive moans in the Press when, after all, they have merely suffered a small reduction in their means of living which remains higher than anyone else's although they seem to feel it most, one is hardly surprised that when a social revolution does occur, as in Spain in 1936, they have to go to such flights of fancy. If the millionaires going to the Bahamas to escape taxation talk like downtrodden refugees to their Yankee pals, one can well understand the fact that the Spanish grandees told the yellow press such highly-coloured stories about "raped nuns", etc.

The private landlord is, however, dealing in properties which are becoming slums. He will not spend money on repairs and it is terrible to go through any average area in the big towns and see how decent accommodation is deteriorating. If his rents were increased he would not

spend the money on repairs. We have seen the great orgy of War Damage contributions, the money poured out for war repairs, and it would be interesting to know how many tenants are satisfied with the way the landlord spent it. The War Damage authorities professed themselves uninterested in any complaints made by tenants that the builders did a quick, cheap job. Here is a positive case for direct action, for if the stones of the streets are not crying out for blood just yet, the walls of the houses are certainly crying out for a lick of paint. It needs stoppage of rent to pay for repairs.

In most cases tenants have bought their houses over and over again by the amount of rent they have paid. Nevertheless, landlords pretend they are "losing money" on them. There is a simple answer to this. Let us be philanthropic and just to the suffering landlords losing money on houses, and take the houses away from them. They will at least have cut their losses. It should be an accepted principle in men's minds that when they have paid four or five times the cost of the house it should by rights be theirs. Nothing less than a change in the property relations of society will make it so, but at the very least this principle will guide their actions in their dealings with the landlord's agents, and they will not be put off by the excuse that "repairs cost so much these days". The more troublesome and annoying tenants are the less attractive landlordism will be. The less finance will come into it the more prices will fall and eventually rents be lowered and standards raised. At present every successful business man finds it a safe proposition to put money into a couple of houses. Only a lunatic would have done so at one time in Ireland.

New houses are not being built as they were once, except by the authorities. There are some advantages in living in a council house or flat, but they begin to look a little tarnished when Mrs. Wowsler of the Council decides that her colour scheme is the only one for the estate and if you don't like it, get out. There is nothing worse than the way in which these local bumble get so much power over people and their jurisdiction over so important a matter as housing adds to their self-esteem. One council recently named all the new houses after members of the council! Fortunately, tenants' associations provide some corrective to this and if only they could be impregnated with the idea that they live in their house or flat by right and not by sufferance they may manage under the present society to live at least as securely as if they were there by arrangement with the bank or mortgagors.

We can push on progress in the building of new towns and the building of better houses by being alive to these needs and refusing to be bamboozled by excuses (of which there will never be any lack) or bigwigs. The fact is that housing has been neglected as nothing else has. When one reads of life in 1851 (as one has had plenty of opportunity to do this year) or even 1848 (as subscribers of this paper have had the chance to do!) consider life in that time—and recollect that the people living then lived in houses that are still in use. The district in which I live is a busy industrial suburb that serves the whole world with its products. Behind me is a row of cottages built when Japan was a country closed to the West, when Americans owned slaves, Islington was almost a country village, Turkish

The Law and the Banks

(Continued from page 2)

General be denied me by your Lordships, either in this or in subsequent proceedings, that constitutes absolute outlawry, from the protection of the Courts against the violent expropriation of my property not for its alleged national purpose but to provide the loanable capital of private banks."

Professor Soddy pointed out that resisting the payment of taxes was the method by which our constitutional liberties were won for us by our ancestors. He added that for twenty-five years he had held that "the proper remedy to the dangerous political economic and financial evils that accrue from the dishonest money system lay through legal and constitutional means".

The Appeal Court Judge dismissed his appeal, remarking that "the Court cannot help you, Mr. Soddy". The legal means have not therefore proved a very effective remedy therefore.

Professor Soddy belongs to a determined band of men and women who understand the rôle of banks in world affairs and regard it as the dominant one. Their case—and it is a formidable one—is fully set out in Dr. Robertson's book, *Human Ecology* (Glasgow, MacLellan, 1948). His attempt to get the Courts to pass an adverse judgment on the banks has failed. But it may be held that the secrecy of the proceedings—the Appeal Court case was the first of five to which the public had access—and the general air of prejudice by themselves demonstrate the power of the banks over all other branches of society.

women wore veils, you could ride your horse from Paris to Moscow without the need of a passport, and the railway had not penetrated Australia! The same houses are still in use. Think how transport has altered. The telephone, radio, cinema, motorbike are within the reach of the people living in those houses, one even has T.V., but up to the present they have not managed to get a bathroom or indoor closet. There you have the housing problem in a nutshell. "Jubilee Terrace" and "Railway Cottages 1868" are still inscribed on the walls of dwelling places round here. They have not yet come down. When will the surrounding jerrybuilt monstrosities of the '20s come down? Possibly when—as happened near to me—a bomb hits one and the others fall down in sympathy.

"The time is not opportune" for extensive building, we are told. When will it be? If it is not now, is there any hope whatever that it will be after the atomic war? Have the tenements got to see our civilisation out? Let us get rid of the double-think that surrounds these crises, pretensions, and get our own ideas of what should be built, when it should be built, how it should be built. And get down to building them ourselves. Nothing is more heartening than to see people who exasperated at official delays have got together and actually built their own house. It is no use relying on the goodwill of officials, the security afforded by capital, the chance that something will turn up or the remote possibility that political powermongers will allow us permanent peace some time another after one war or another.

The growth of local associations, the germ of the free commune, in which housing will be a direct responsibility of the small township, the people in themselves. The hope for the future contained in two things only: decentralisation and the class struggle: that is to say, in communal living and workers' control. A.M.

1,000 WANT TO LEAVE PARADISE

A thousand of the inhabitants of the "Paradise" Islands in the Indian Ocean which have been handed over to Australia for use as an air base, asked to leave in the first two days after the transfer of the territory.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

OPEN-AIR MEETINGS at HYDE PARK  
 Every Sunday at 3.30 p.m.  
 INDOOR MEETINGS  
 Every Sunday at 7.30 p.m.  
 at the PORCUPINE (corner Charing Cross Road at St. Newport Street, near Leicester Sq. Underground Stn.)  
 These Meetings are suspended for the Summer months. They will re-commence in SEPTEMBER.  
 Watch this column for future Announcements.

NORTH-EAST LONDON DISCUSSION MEETINGS IN EAST HAM at 7.30

AUGUST 7—Desmon Mills LECTURE RECITAL  
 Enquiries c/o Freedom Press

SOUTH LONDON

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, Peckham (corner of High Street and Rye Lane)

GLASGOW

OUTDOOR MEETINGS at MAXWELL STREET  
 Every Sunday at 7 p.m.  
 With John Gaffney, Frank Leech, Jimmy Raeside, Eddie Shaw  
 KINGSTON  
 Any Comrades interested in forming a Group in the KINGSTON area, are invited to write to Freedom Press.

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SYNDICALISM — THE WORKERS' NEXT STEP—II

Conclusions—The Chances for Today

CONTRARY to the pessimistic "Everything is useless" and "The workers are hopeless" point of view, I honestly think that the situation to-day is a very favourable one for the propagation of Syndicalist ideas. Although whether or not those ideas are accepted is another matter!

Looking at the general world situation, the outlook is certainly pretty black. Reaction seems in the ascendancy everywhere; the ideas of centralism, gradualism, totalitarianism in some form or another seem to be more strongly held than ever before. And yet—it is precisely because reaction is gaining ground that I think the chances are good to-day for a revival of Syndicalist action.

After all, in Britain at least, reaction is stronger to-day because of the failure of reformism. The workers are finding themselves in a very difficult situation because the Labour Government they put into power with such high hopes in 1945, and the Trade Unions they have built up over the last century, have both turned out to be completely useless. Wherever one goes to-day one finds the supporters of the Labour Government on the defensive—and where is the worker who is satisfied with his trade union leadership? There is more criticism of the unions nowadays from the rank-and-file membership than from their supposed enemies, the employers, while the nationalisation which was the trade union alternative to private capitalism has shown that it only aggravates the problems of capitalism.

The disparity of income between the managers and the workers; the lack of responsibility accorded the producers; the dehumanising effect of centralisation and the increasing armies of bureaucrats it necessitates—all the unsatisfactory characteristics of nationalisation are combining to produce a deep-seated feeling of frustration and discontent among working people.

Which way are they to turn? The tricky arguments of the Conservatives and Liberals do not really take any of us in at all. Too many workers have vivid memories of "the good old days" to want to return to them. We have seen—in this country or elsewhere—all the political alternatives except those of tiny groups too bound by dogma to make headway in the political racket. The Liberals, the Conservatives and now the Labour Party we have had in this country—including coalitions of all three. The ruins of Germany and Italy and the agony of Spain show us the heritage of Fascism. The tyrannical creeds of the Communist States are attracting fewer and fewer thinking workers—even attracting fewer unthinking workers! The political systems have shown themselves all to be the product of class-division and the authoritarian attitude. They have represented what seemed in many cases the easy way out—perhaps they seemed the only way out—but they have all turned out to be no way out at all, but just another way in to the non-stop performance of exploitation and war.

The Anarchists and the Syndicalists could, if they chose, feel very smug and say "We told you so" to every worker who now stands disillusioned and bitter as the prospects of our immediate future unfold before him. But there is small satisfaction in that. There is more satisfaction in looking for signs of the re-emergence of a fighting spirit among the workers, and they are not entirely lacking.

The most hopeful signs of the post-war years have been the creation of rank-and-file unofficial committees and the resurgence of Syndicalist methods of struggle. The unofficial committees among the dockers, the railwaymen, road transport workers, miners and many others when the occasion arose, have

shown that the ability to spontaneously organise has not been lost under the pressure of legality and the "constitutional" official unions.

And the fact that, faced with the failure of their unions to represent them, they have quite naturally turned to various methods of direct action, shows how deep-seated, how traditionally right, are those methods. As I write, recent incidents spring to my mind in which railwaymen, trolleybus drivers and Post Office workers have used the "work-to-rule" method with complete success. The massive strikes of the dockers of London and Merseyside during the trial of seven members of their Portworkers' Committees (on charges of incitement to strike) have been heartening examples of working-class solidarity. And the many strikes that have taken place as protests against workers being declared "redundant" have shown a clear enough grasp of the principle "An injury to one is an injury to all."

Most of the problems the workers are faced with now have no solution under capitalism. Mechanisation is one such issue. While the introduction of labour-saving machinery means the standing-off of workers, they are naturally going to fight it. But would it not be better to fight for the reduction of hours and increase in leisure that mechanisation could bring? This, however, would create chaos among wage scales. We should all be wanting such benefits—and why not? But the solution could not be found within the wage system and the profit economy. No employer is going to spend money on machinery simply to provide an easier life for his employees. He wants more production and more profit in return. Only the workers themselves have the social incentive to introduce labour-saving machinery—and they will not be able to do that until they have established workers' control.

No matter which of the problems of society to which we give thought, if we approach them with an unprejudiced mind we are inescapably brought back to the Anarchist or Syndicalist solution. Capitalism, whether private or State-controlled, cannot satisfy the needs of human society, nor can governments radically alter the authoritarian structure of present-day society because they depend upon it. Our own direct experience shows us this, and the experience of workers in other countries—in Russia in the early days of the Revolution, in Spain in 1936, in Italy in 1920—shows us what can be done by ordinary working people when once they realise their strength.

The issue before us is clearly this: Either the means of production are controlled by capitalists for their private profit, or by politicians for the purposes of the State (war is chief of these), in which two cases the workers are mere wage-slaves, or they are controlled by the people who actually do the work, for the benefit of society as a whole, in which case the workers achieve their human dignity and social responsibility. There are no other alternatives before us.

Up to the present time, the strength of the workers in this country has not been fully tried out—and will not be as long as they hand over their power to those who use it against them. But when the workers by hand and brain, in industry and on the land, decide that they have had enough of the perpetual shortage and war which governments ensure, and decide that they are going to establish a sane and reasonable society in place of the State, they could—and will—transform the world "between two suns".

PHILIP SANSON.

This is the last of this series of articles on Syndicalism. It will shortly be re-printed as a pamphlet.