Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"The best form of government, like the most perfect of religions, is a contradictory idea. The problem is not to know how we shall best be governed, but how we shall be most free."

P. J. PROUDHON.

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GAITSKELL'S DIVIDEND CEILING

THE government's proposed Bill to limit dividends is yet another example of the sterility of socialist economics, when interpreted by exponents of governmental Socialism. Inevitably, it has been unfavourably received by the companies involved and by the Stock Exchange. And already the administrative difficulties foreshadow an enormous amount in the ever increasing volume of book work which the increasingly national type of capitalism is bringing into being.

To make the whole matter even more unreal, it is by no means certain that the Chancellor and the Labour Government generally ever intend it to be carried through. For it may be that this is an "issue" on which they want to represent themselves as being challenged by their political opponents, and from which they can open their election campaigns. If this is so, it provides another instance of the way in which democratic methods of election encourage deception and superficiality.

Gains to the Workers

Now, if one takes the view that the function of democratic socialism is gradually to level out the income disparities in society, then there might be a case for limiting dividends as part of a general limitation of profits. It could be argued that when a firm makes a large profit it is not the shareholders who deserve the reward but the workers. Hence such a profit might well be distributed as wage increases or bonuses. (Let us hasten to say that such a conception finds no place in Anarchist economics which is in no way concerned to improve the wage system, make it work better, or "more just"—but desires to see it and the social relations which flow from it abolished altogether. But such aims are not incompatible with socialist economics as conceived by adherents to the Labour Party).

Limitation of dividends as a means of raising wages makes some sense. But that is by no means the aim of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He proposes to restrain dividends in order to be able the better to restrain wages. Workers are restless because they see the cost of living going up, and profits being made and distributed to stock holders as dividends. At the same time "their" government and "their" trade unions urge "restraint" in regard to demands for wage increases. The Chancellor's logic for dealing with this situation is not to raise wages, but to make workers less envious by restraining dividends.

It might be thought that real wages will be increased by this measure because it will cause a decrease in prices and consequent increase in the value of money, an increase in the buying power of wages. No such delusions need be entertained however. The Chancellor went out of his way to stress that it would be wrong to suppose that they are "likely to bring a significant reduction in the retail price index".

Stealing Bevan's Thunder?

It may be that the main purpose behind this sterile proposal is to steal Bevan's thunder. If so it is an appeal to that kind of Socialist who thinks that socialism essentially consists in hatred of the boss combined with envy for his wealth and his way of life. Who feels as good when he thinks he has scored off the other fellow as when he has achieved some real benefit to himself. That is the kind of socialism based on envy which has no positive vision or philosophy of life of its own. It is in fact the socialism most prominently seen in the Labour Party, but it has little enough in common with the ideas of revolutionary socialism in the nineteenth century. By seeking to take over such essentially capitalist institutions as the state and centralized administration, the democratic socialists have reduced "socialism" to the level of capitalist longings in the lower economic levels. They appeal to the worst—and most illusory—sentiments of the workers.

Communists and the Law

(From our New York Correspondent)

CONFIRMATION by the U.S. Supreme Court of the conviction of the 11 Communist leaders, and the proceedings against the secondary corps of leadership, make it unmistakeable that the government will crush the C.P. organisational network as speedily as minimum adherence to legal form will allow. Just who will eventually be fished in the same net, it is fortunately still too early to tell. But some of the less obvious implications of these prosecutions will bear statement.

First of all, the prosecution of the Communists under the Smith Act is a subterfuge. This law provides: "It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly or wilfully advocate, abet, advise, or teach the duty, necessity, desirability or propriety of overthrowing or destroying any government in the United States by force or violence, or by assassination of any officer of any such government." In regard to such abridgment of free speech, the courts long ago worked out the formula: Does a clear and present danger exist? Considering the relevance of the free speech claim, the *New York Times* (editorial of June 22nd) unintentionally reveals the dishonesty of the prosecutions:

"The 'clear and present danger' is not the forcible overthrow of our Government. The danger is a programme of sabotage and espionage which can interfere with our national security. The First Amendment was never intended to cover such goings-on and cannot now logically be stretched to cover them. It is not free speech that is threatened—it is freedom to conspire."

This is perfectly true: whether the Communist leaders believe in or intend ever to promote armed revolution—what they are charged with—has nothing to do with the threat they constitute, and nothing to do with the desire of the government to break up their organisation. A forthright statement of the government's case would be: some of these people are liable to be saboteurs and spies, and their propaganda is likely to be indirect inducement to the same; therefore these organisations should be suppressed and the public activity of these people prohibited. But what a guessing about motives this would require. No law covers it; and the logical procedure would be injunctive, after the manner of the McCarran Act, and this would not allow conviction for past violations. Though the McCarran Act, with its catchword "subversive", might be considered to cover the case, the suspension of individual trial procedures, imprisonment without indictment, and concentration camps, would be a stench in the nostrils of the world; the Department of Justice is carrying forward plans for the concentration camps, but we are not quite there yet.

The government has evaded all these problems by invoking an irrelevant law, just as it prosecutes known gangsters under the income tax law. Hence the laborious trial-procedure to establish the uninteresting fact that the Communist Party holds to a doctrine known as Marxism-Leninism, and that this doctrine contains violation of the Smith Act of 1940.

Now, this is just the type of proceeding with which the word "lawyer" has come to be identified: to prove that the letter of some law or other has or has not been violated. Yet it is surely not a light thing to translate such principles from the realms of criminal law to that of politics. Moreover, this particular law is more than ordinarily evil; as cited above, it prohibits even the "teaching" of the "propriety" of violent revolution. And the law, again as quoted above, states that "it shall be unlawful for any person," and contains no reference to "clear and present danger" or the like; so that it violates one of the basic canons of law, that the person shall be able to know whether he is violating it. From the fact that the "Communist conspiracy" was left untouched for some eight years, and then prosecuted following changes in the international situation; from the fact that this law was applied against a politically insignificant Trotskyist party; it is clear that its application is purely at the whim of the government.

Such a close scrutiny of the morality of law may seem academic. But a large portion of the western claim to moral

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Nigeria and the Legacy of Imperialism

NIGERIA, in West Africa, the largest British colonial territory is having the first elections under its new constitution this month. The constitution drawn up by a committee under Sir Hugh Foot and the Governor Sir John Macpherson is the result of prolonged discussion and compromise since the short-lived Richards constitution of 1947. For Nigeria presents far greater problems for those who seek to administer it than the Gold Coast and a federal system of government has been decided upon.

"It is," observes Mr. E. F. Haig, "just over fifty years since the name *Nigeria* was coined for the fifteen or twenty (now estimated at twenty-five) million people who live, confined by accidental boundaries, within a few hundred miles of the Lower Niger. Restraining, at first, their curious passion for sewing people together, the British in 1900 recognized Northern and Southern Nigeria as separate countries: but temptation became too strong and in 1914 they proclaimed *The Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria.*"

There are, in fact, a great variety of African peoples within the country's 373,000 square miles, in addition to the three major ethnic groups, the *Hausa*, the *Yoruba*, and *Ibo*. In the North, the Hausa people are Moslems ruled by feudal Emirs, with a subsidiary pagan people. "All the great things that are happening in Nigeria," said Mr. Patrick O'Donovan after his recent visit, "are hundreds of miles away in what amounts to a different country and a different century." The nationalists of the south resent the suggestion that these "unprogressive" people who are more than half the population, should be their political equals. The Ibo people of the East live in what Mr. Haig calls "extreme fragmentation", and according to *him*, "Thousands of tiny units, accepting no allegiance higher than that of clan, village, or even extended family, have somehow to be welded into organisms large enough to attempt municipal viability and financial self-sufficiency." The Yoruba kingdoms of the South-West are, in principle, constitutional monarchies.

Mr. Okoi Arikpo, in the *Listener* (22/2/51), speaking on the future of the chieftainship system, says, "The chief lost his moral authority from the time he submitted to European rule from fear of superior physical force, and now he is regarded everywhere as the paid agent of the Colonial Government, on whose support he must depend in order to retain his status. Very often he is in the unhappy position of having to reconcile his ambivalent roles as representative of his people against a foreign ruler and as an agent of the latter against his own people . . . But as modern Nigeria emerges, chiefs no less than colonial administrators must sooner or later surrender political control in local as well as in national affairs to the accredited representatives of the people."

From Mr. Arikpo's point of view the change from a tribal to a national outlook is the key to social progress, and he comments that, "One of the paradoxes of the present situation is that inter-tribal hostility and prejudice are often encouraged not by the unsophisticated peasants, but by the young literate clerks and technicians who live and work in the urban centres away from their homes. Under the strange and frustrating conditions of urban life these young men often band themselves into groups, 'tribal unions' or 'improvement societies' which provide a means of expressing in-group solidarity and even opposition to other groups."

The elaborate mechanism of the new constitution, (connoisseurs of constitution-making are referred to George Padmore's exposition of it in the *Socialist Leader* for 28/7/51), provides for regional legislatures called Houses of Assembly and for Regional Executive Councils. There will also be a Central Legislature with a membership of 148 of whom 136 will be Africans, most of them elected by indirect voting through electoral colleges. It is easily seen that the federal automony provided for reflects the fears of its drafters, that the political extremists of the two southern regions would otherwise disrupt the whole country. Indeed, Mr. Padmore says that the nationalists point out that "by maintaining the division of the country into administrative regions, the British seek to exploit tribal divisions and the services of the chiefs, especially the Sultan and Emirs of the Northern Region, to maintain British dominate of 'divide and rule'."

This is the view of the best known of Nigerian politicians, Dr. Nmandi Azikiwe, usually known as Zik. Earlier this year Dr. Azikiwe, the founder of the *National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons*, announced his retirement from politics for five years, but in May he said that he had "agreed to come back because of popular demand, to contest the elections and expose in all its nakedness the deception hidden under the cloven hooves of the MacPherson Constitution". The N.C.N.C. draws its biggest support in the East. Its principle opponent is the Action Group in the West, whose leader is a lawyer, Mr. Obafemi Awolowo.

We cannot enthuse over these, or any of the ambitious politicians who are engaged in the struggle for power in Nigeria, nor over the British paternalism and the chiefs which they will eventually displace. Still less can we offer a solution to the extraordinarily complex prob-

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A. S. Neill Refused American Visa

THE following letter appeared in last week's New Statesman:

After two lecture visits to the U.S., I have twice been refused a visa to go there again. The refusal is on political grounds, under Title 22, Section 53.33 (k) of the Code of Federal Regulations (which I have not read). I have never been a member of the C.P. In earlier days I had hope in Russian education because it seemed to be going the way I had advocated for years—the way of freedom and self-government for children. Then came a long period of gradual disillusionment; freedom in schools gave place to moulding of character and all the evils of State discipline. To-day the Rules for Soviet Children are such that the most reactionary schoolmaster in Britain would approve of. I am a communist (with a small *c*) in the sense that the early Christians were communists, but here I should follow H. G. Wells and call myself a communalist, but obviously I cannot be a supporter of Communism (with a large C) when its triumph in Britain would abolish my job straight away.

The U.S. State Department assumes that I would or might be a danger to America, but the thousands who have heard me lecture at home and in Scandinavia, South Africa, America know that I am only a danger to the teachers and parents who prevent the natural growth of children by anti-life training.

This attitude to Communism has been explained to the U.S. Embassy, both by myself and a friendly M.P. but the ban remains. I am thus cut off from some of the most advanced educationists and psychologists in the world, men who are also fighting for an educational philosophy that is the only fundamental counter revolution against Communist mass moulding.

I presume that there must be others who are in my position, "Left wing" in education and philosophy or science, who are like myself suspect and wrongly suspect. Mr. Truman has appealed to Russia to raise her Iron Curtain and let her people travel abroad. I wonder if others will join me in a joint appeal to the U.S. authorities to raise their political curtain to allow the entry of travellers who have no wish nor motive to preach a creed that has become the antithesis of their most profound beliefs.

Summerhill School. A. S. NEILL.

Secret Trials in Prisons to Stay

WHEN an inmate of one of our prisons is charged with a serious infraction of discipline he is brought before the Visiting Committee. He is permitted no legal representation, or even a "prisoner's friend" to speak for him—and prisoners are often hopelessly inarticulate—and the proceedings are held in secret. There is a form of appeal—by petition to the Home Secretary, but prisoners know that this is no more than a form.

Prison reformers have recently been urging the unfairness of these secret tribunals and the government appointed the Franklin Committee to enquire into punishment in prisons and Borstals. The result for progress has been nil. The Home Secretary, Mr. Chuter Ede, bluntly said in Parliament: "As regards prisons, the committee reached the conclusion that prisoners charged with offences against prison discipline should not be allowed legal or other representation at the hearing before a visiting committee (or board of visitors) . . . I accept these recommendations."

So secret tribunals in prisons are to continue.

The general level of prison administration, and especially the reluctance to make any progress is illustrated by the fact that both the Home Office and the Franklin Committee accept dietary punishment. Bread and water for naughty children was a commonplace in Victorian nursery discipline. It has disappeared from all but the most reactionary homes. But true to the governmental trait of being a century behind the times, bread and water for naughty prisoners not only remains but survives critical enquiry from the Home Office and it Committees.

CLEMENCY

The Court of Criminal Appeal yesterday reduced to 12 months' imprisonment a sentence of seven years' preventive detention passed at Essex Quarter Sessions upon George William Priddy (47) for stealing a bottle of milk from outside a house at Holland-on-Sea.

News Chronicle, 25/7/51.

Errico Malatesta on SCIENCE AND SOCIAL REFORM

THE great scientific discoveries of the nineteenth century and the victorious criticism which science made against the lies and errors of religions, had the effect upon progressive spirits of making them enthusiastic admirers, if not intelligent and patient cultivators, of science. These progressives exaggerated the importance of science by attributing to it the power to solve and understand everything; they made of science a new religion.

Social reformers of every kind who, by whatever means and ends, wish to modify the existing social order, believed themselves obliged to found their aspirations upon science. Similarly, the conservatives also, when they saw that religious faith was vacillating and that it was no longer sufficient to keep the people in subjection, sought to justify the existing requirements by means of science. It was indeed a state of mental intoxication (not yet vanished) which caused the loss of a clear concept of nature and of the methods and scope of science, and it was to the utter detriment of scientific truth and social action.

Hardly anyone was saved, and if we anarchists were saved from the ridiculousness of calling ourselves *scientific anarchists*, it was perhaps only because the adjective "scientific" had already been taken and rendered antipathetic by marxian socialism. In fact, many of our comrades (and among them some of the most discerning and illustrious) actually maintained that anarchism is a deduction consolidated with scientific truths, and furthermore, that it is nothing but the application of the mechanical conception of the universe to human interests.[1]

1 In particular, Kropotkin in his *Modern Science and Anarchism*.—S.E.P.

Meanwhile, the fact that they remain anarchists even while science progresses and changes, demonstrates the fallacy of their scientificism and demonstrates likewise that their anarchism is derived from their sentiments and not from their scientific convictions. But, in spite of their professed objectivism, in practice they will not admit facts or accept theories which contradict their anarchical aspirations. And, if they had not had the opportunity to pursue scientific studies, or it remained in the state in which it was centuries ago, they would probably be anarchists just the same because, being good and sensible men, they would suffer because of human sorrows and would want to find a remedy, and because, being proud and just men, they would rebel against oppression and would want complete liberty for themselves and for all. In addition they recognise the quality of conscious anarchism in that immense majority of comrades who do not know science, and, when they do propaganda work, they do just as we do, that is, they seek to awaken in men the sentiments of personal dignity and love of others; they strive to excite the passion for liberty and justice; they speak of general well-being and of human brotherhood; they bring to light the social ills and they arouse the desire to destroy them; and they do not wait until the people have studied mathematics, astronomy and chemistry.

The study of the sciences is an excellent thing and we will speak later of those which they serve, but to pretend that anarchism (and the same holds true for socialism and any other human aspiration) is a scientific deduction and especially, therefore, a consequence of one of those vast cosmological hypotheses in which philosophy takes such a great delight, is a thing which is false *per se* and is pernicious because of the consequent effect it can have on the intellectual development of individuals and upon their capacity as combatants.

The idea of a personal god, creator of all things, which is the oldest, the most ingenious, and the most grossly absurd of these hypotheses has done immense harm because it has accustomed people to believing without understanding and, by suffocating the spirit of examination, it has made intellectual slaves, well prepared to support political and economic slavery.

But do not scientific hypotheses do the same where they are presented as firm facts and as motives for actions, to those who know little or nothing of science and who are, therefore, in no position to judge? Some vague notions of scientific facts, more or less true, and the knowledge of a few strange words, are not enough to make of a man a scientist, or even one who knows what he is talking about or who can choose from among the things he is told.

For the public in general, Moses and Haeckel are equally mythical figures and the belief in the monism of one rather than in the genesis of the other just because it happens to be the style in the present environment does not make one any the less ignorant, any the less superstitious, or any the less religious. And to speak to the unbelievers of atoms, ions and electrons (which are only hypotheses for explaining and binding certain categories of facts—convenient hypotheses useful to the ends of scientific research, but, nevertheless, only hypotheses, simple mental concepts, and not at all positive discoveries . . .) to speak, I say, without adequate preparation of mysterious and incomprehensible things to one who does not understand, is the same as to speak to him of god and angels. It means the teaching of words as things and of accustoming the mind to contenting itself with affirmations which it can neither understand, nor prove, nor define.

This would only be a change in religions, because it would still be a religion in the sense of blind submission to a revealed truth, which can neither be controlled nor comprehended. If it were true that anarchy is a scientific truth, then there would be no real anarchists except the very few scientists who would call themselves such; we others would constitute a non-conscious herd, which would blindly follow a few holy men who had been initiated into the reasons for faith.

Nor is there any difference in the moral deductions or in the social applications which can be obtained out of the various cosmological theories. The priests had God say the things which were convenient to them and used him as a medium for justifying and strengthening the dominion of the victors. However, in the course of history there was no lack of rebels, who, in the name of God, preached justice and equality. It is said that everything occurs by the will of God and that, therefore, we must accept with resignation our own position. But it can also be said that rebellion is holy since it does occur and hence must be willed by God. It can also be said that, if God is the common father, we are all brothers, and ought, therefore, to be equal. In sum, this idea may be turned in any manner to suit any taste—for example, we know that Mazzini invented a god of goodness, of love, and of progress, who was entirely different from the ferocious god of Pius IX.

Bakunin used to say that, if God exists men can have neither liberty nor dignity. Another might say—and many, in fact, have said it—that if all else is matter, if everything is subject to natural laws, the will is an illusion, liberty a chimera and man nothing but an automaton.

So it is that, if the convictions and the moral aspirations are based on the mobile foundations of philosophic hypotheses, they are always uncertain and mutable. Like the catholic who, basing his conduct upon belief in God, is left without any moral criterion as soon as his faith is shaken, so the anarchist, if he were really an anarchist because of scientific convictions, would have to continually consult the latest bulletins of the Academy of Science, in order to determine whether he can continue to be an anarchist.

Cassira furnishes an example of how, by means of philosophy, the simplest and most evident things can be confounded. According to him "the principle of property is based on the false belief in creation from nothing". I, truly, do not understand what he wants to say, but it seems to me that if before having a revolution and expropriating the holders of social wealth we must first attend to nothing but the question of the origin of the world, then the capitalists may sleep in tranquillity! Oh, isn't it much more simple, much more comprehensible, to say that, however the world may have been formed it is here and ought to serve the needs of all, and to incite the workers to take it and to work it on their own account, and to no longer permit themselves to be despoiled by those who, by violence or fraud, have made themselves the owners?

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If then from the clouds of philosophy, we descend to the more solid domain of the positive sciences and of the so-called social sciences, we find here, too, that they can serve to defend the most diverse political régimes, the most contradictory social aspirations. From the immense heap of more or less established facts, each one chooses those which support his own position, and each one formulates theories which in reality, become programmes, desires, and objectives which he proposes and which he, deluding himself as well as others, calls scientific truths. In the interpretation of the facts of natural history, in anthropology, in the philosophy of history, in political economy, and in every phase of sociology, at every turning of a page we come upon dubious affirmations which say it is when they should say it ought to be, or, better, I wish it were. The result is that scientific, objective, and imparted investigation suffers; the social struggle passes from the ardent field of passion and interest which are its very own, to degenerate into the chattering academicians and the pedants.

Science gathers facts, classifies them, and when it finds that these facts are necessary, and that they necessarily reproduce themselves every time the same conditions are set up, formulates natural laws. The latter are, for this reason, nothing but affirmations that under given conditions certain definite phenomena occur. But this does not tell man what to desire, whether he should love or hate, be good or bad, just or unjust. Goodness, justice and right are concepts which science ignores completely.

Science tends to delimit the field between fatalism and free will. The more science advances the more powerful does man become because he learns what are the necessary conditions which he must fulfil in order to be able to execute his will. But this will, executed or not, remains an extra-scientific force with its own origins and its own tendencies.

Toxology teaches the physiology of poisons, but it does not tell us whether we should use the acquired knowledge to poison or to cure people. Mechanics discovers the laws of equilibrium and of the resistance of materials; it teaches us to build bridges, steamships and aeroplanes, but it does not tell us whether it is better to build the bridge where it may serve the greed of a proprietor, or where it may serve the interests of all; it does not tell us whether ships and planes should be used to carry soldiers and to hurl bombs upon people or to spread throughout the world civility, well-being and brotherhood. Science is a weapon that can serve for good or for evil, but it ignores completely the idea of good or evil.

So then, we are not anarchists, because science tells us to be; we are, instead, anarchists because, among other reasons, we want everyone to be able to enjoy the advantages and joys that science can procure for us.

ERRICO MALATESTA.

[NOTE.—*The above translation, by E. J. Boche, first appeared in that excellent, but unfortunately now extinct, American anarchist journal* Man, *for March* 1935.—*S.E.P.*]

Problems of the Land

LAND POTENTIAL. By T. W. Evans. (Faber, 12/6d.)

A FEW days ago, in a high Austrian valley, I was watching the peasants cutting their green grass in the traditional manner—by scythe, on slopes which would often be completely impracticable for a mechanical mower—drying it on little wooden double crosses called "haymen", and storing it away with all the extra goodness that it retains from this process, as compared with the English custom of cutting when it is half-dry and near seeding point. On the mown ground they were carefully spreading the manure from their cowsheds, the sludge from their cesspools, everything that could give the land extra fertility, and liming it where the vegetation showed signs of acidity. In this way they will reap a rich aftermath and, after a further manuring, the grass will come up fresh and green again in the following spring. Thus, for centuries, the Alpine peoples have been preserving the fertility of their pastures and mowing fields, by treating grass as a crop which must be tended just like any other, and they have been able to cut rich yields of animal-food every year without injuring the fertility of the soil.

In England, on the other hand, a century of bad farming, since the policy of importing cheap food to balance the export of manufactured materials was instituted by the politically powerful industrialists of the nineteenth century, has resulted in a diminution of grassland fertility which has become too notorious to need further exposition.

An important school of agriculturists, centring round Sir George Stapledon, has taken in hand this problem of rejuvenating the English grasslands and bringing them back, through an intelligent use of ley farming, into their balanced position in a mixed farming economy. The book under review, *Land Potential*, is a study of the relationship of this process to the growing potentialities of the land. Mr. Evans is particularly concerned with the way in which the excessive use of fertilisers can sometimes produce extraordinary crops while at the same time weakening the land, and he contends rightly, that a permanent policy of increased agricultural production must be based on a careful scientific study of each farm and each type of farming country in order to find the kind of cultivation for which it is best fitted within the soil's intrinsic potentialities.

This is a book which will interest all who are concerned with this problem of raising farming to its position in British regional economy. In parts it is highly technical, and the formulæ which Mr. Evans produces towards the end will be useful to the farmer, but a little outside the field of the general reader, who, however, should not be repelled by this from studying the main arguments. Two criticisms are necessary. The author at times indulges in an exasperating quaintness of language and, although one does not expect such books to be written with literary perfection, a little editing would have been very helpful in this case. Secondly, Mr. Evans writes as an expert in extensive farming, only touching here and there on the problems of the market gardener. Yet it is surely in the intelligent and balanced development of a system of intensive culture which will not at the same time destroy the fertility of the land that the hope of growing a sufficiency of food on the land of Britain will always remain.

GEORGE WOODCOCK.

Freedom for Man or for Property

IF Capitalism means exploitation of class by class, Communism means the bondage of all classes to the State; and Socialism to-day, save for its unrealised ideals, means for most some sort of arrested development of both Capitalism and Communism—which is hardly a conception to attract the devotion of very many people. In what direction, then, is the "arrested" idealism of social thinkers to flow?

Two developments may be recognised as growing out of this situation. First, there is the revival of Anarchism—not the bomb-throwing type of anarchism associated in the public mind with Johann Most and Alexander Berkman, but an anarchism which is usually united with war resistance and non-violent methods of revolution. This movement is represented in both England and the United States by a growing number of young men and women who challenge the increasing controls of government over their lives. At its fringes—and an anarchist movement, being relatively unorganised on principle, always has very large fringes—anarchist thinking blends imperceptibly with a variety of anti-state schools of thought. Albert Jay Nock's *Our Enemy, the State* has found many enthusiastic readers during recent years, and Herbert Spencer's essay, *Man and the State* is winning new converts to *laissez faire* theories of government and economics. In fact, somewhere at about this point, the search for first principles leaves the anarchist camp and pursues its devious way through *Saturday Evening Post* editorials and the pamphleteering efforts of Garet Garrett. As Dwight MacDonald pointed out in *The Root Is Man*, the new "radical" outlook has certain views in common with traditional Conservative doctrine, an association which causes "a good deal of confusion." But while anarchists fear the loss of their freedom at the hands of the State, the modern advocates of *laissez faire* economics fear the loss of or interference with their property—and Freedom and Property, John Locke to the contrary, are not the same thing.

Manas (Los Angeles)

COMMENT on R. J. Flaherty

The Man with Open Eyes

ROBERT FLAHERTY, who died last week in America, was a film producer who had nothing at all in common with the "motion picture industry": he did not speak its language or obey its rules. He was concerned, not with finance, output or the supposed requirements of the box office, but with using the medium of film for enhancing our perception of human life and the land and water on which it is lived.

Flaherty began his working life as a prospector looking for iron ore in Northern Canada and then between 1910 and 1916 became an explorer, discovering a land mass bigger than England at the north of Hudson's Bay, where an island bears his name. On his last journey, he took with him a film camera, and when in an accident while processing the film it was burnt, he became filled with the idea of returning to make a film of the life of the Eskimos. With seven thousand pounds from Revillon Frères, the fur traders, he got together an expedition to Port Harrison, Hudson's Bay, where he took eighteen months to make the film which was first shown to the public in 1922 and has had welcome revivals ever since.

Nanook of the North is a story of man's life at its very hardest, a constant desperate struggle for food, a struggle which leads not to competition, but to all food being common to all. "It has to be so," said Flaherty,[1] "an Eskimo family on its own would starve. If I went into an Eskimo igloo, whatever food they had was mine . . . I often think of the Eskimo after a long journey, starving and with not even oil for his lamp, coming to the white man's store full of bacon and salt beef and tins of food and tons of flour, and yet the white man will not give him anything unless he has skins. That is something the Eskimo cannot understand. Nanook died of starvation just two years after the film was finished." And yet, he concluded, "These people, with less resources than any other people on earth, are the happiest people I have ever known."

In 1923, Flaherty went to the South Seas to make *Moana*, which described the ceremonial tattooing which marked the Samoan's coming of age. It was not what his sponsors had expected and when it appeared in 1926, it was introduced, says Paul Rotha in *Documentary Film*, "as the love-life of a South Sea siren, prologued by stripped chorus girls and jangling guitars." So he parted with Paramount and was sent by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer to make a film in Tahiti. But Mr. Goldwyn wanted an "epic drama" and Flaherty tore up his contract, returning with the German director, F. W. Murnau, to make *his* kind of film, *Tabu* (1929-31). After this, he came to Europe and after making his film on *Industrial Britain*, with John Grierson, for the G.P.O., he went to the far west of Ireland and produced *Man of Arran* (1932-4), about the never-ending struggle of the islanders with the sea. He went to India and brought back in 1936, *Elephant Boy*, based upon a story of Kipling's.

He was asked in 1940 to produce a film for the United States Government on the subject of soil erosion. The film was made, but the authorities neither showed it nor permitted it to be shown, apparently because of the bitterness with which the film shows the squalor and misery resulting from the commercial exploitation of the land. Flaherty's last film, *Louisiana Story*, was begun two years after the war and shown here first in 1949. It is an exquisite and elegiac picture of the swamps and forests of Southern Louisiana and the coming of floating derricks drilling for oil, in the creeks where alligators swim, watched from his canoe by the son of a Cajun trapper. (The Cajuns descend from French settlers deported from Canada for sedition in 1750.)

"Do it again and you will be immortal—and excommunicated from Hollywood, which is a good fate," wrote Charlie Chaplin, but Flaherty will not do it again and the films he planned to make, about Burma and Abyssinia, will not be produced by him. His films were few in number compared with those of the successful directors in "the industry", for he worked slowly, spending months in absorbing the life which he was to photograph and interpret, and working with a small team of enthusiasts and little equipment, but his influence on other directors has been profound, from S. M. Eisenstein who said, "We wore 'Nanook' out, studying it. In a way, it was our beginning", to John Grierson, Paul Rotha and Basil Wright who made such good documentary films before the war (and are now presumably hamstrung by finance).

The qualities which Flaherty gave to his films are a sense of the uniqueness of individual people, of the dignity of human activities and of the reciprocity between man and his environment, his home and family, and the tools with which he earns his living. He had an extraordinary perception of the delicate personal relationships of simple people. He looked at the world with open eyes and painstakingly interpreted it through his films to enlarge our vision also. Both for his work and his influence, we owe much to this passionate ecologist.

C

1 In a broadcast talk when he revisited England two years ago.—(*The Listener*, 4/8/49).

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

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CONTRADICTIONS OF CAPITALISM

AMID all the recent talk about reducing prices, some discordant remarks of Sir Hartley Shawcross, the President of the Board of Trade, seem to have passed almost unnoticed. To all appearances the Labour government is in favour of checking inflation by keeping prices down. In a recent debate a Labour speaker, Mr. Anthony Crossland, declared that what we want to do is to restore a degree of healthy price competition because we believe that everybody will gain and nobody will lose by it". And Sir Hartley supported him: "We must indeed seek to . . . break the chains which at present hold back . . . the general progress of industry under the spur of free competition."

In politics, the legal gift of seeing both sides of a question is a great help. For in the same week Sir Hartley Shawcross had announced that the government had decided to discriminate against Japanese imports. The government, he explained, was bearing in mind the pre-war record of Japanese competition especially in the textile trades. "We feel we must at the present retain our freedom to protect our economy if necessary against abnormal and injurious competition."

This restriction applies also against Japanese imports into colonial territories on the grounds that Japanese wage rates and production costs are lower than ours.

Now everyone remembers how Japanese cotton goods almost destroyed the Lancashire cotton industry in the thirties. But, of course, consumers gained by the cheaper goods, and this applies especially in India and the Far East. On the other hand the Lancashire textile workers went into unemployment. Protection from the government will preserve them from this now that Japanese industry is getting going again, but the Indians will regard it as a betrayal of the Colombo Plan for the advancing of the standard of living of the Asiatic peoples.

If one takes an international standpoint (socialists used to do so—in theory) what of the Japanese workers? Because their standard of living is lower, they must be discriminated against, and so their standard of living will go down still further. (Historically minded readers will recall that in order to make India a market for Lancashire cottons in the early nineteenth century the British administration in India destroyed Indian home-spinning crafts by taxing spinning wheels out of existence).

We have pointed out before that the nature of capitalist competition for markets makes the owning class desire low wages at home so that their goods can compete favourably in foreign markets, but like to see foreign workers getting high wages so that foreign goods compete poorly against ours, while at the same time the high paid foreign workers become potential buyers of our goods. Hence the capitalist-socialist solution to Japanese competition is to raise Japanese wage rates (such considerations no doubt indicate the democratic encouragement of trade unions in Japan) and so reduce the "unfair" competitive margin. How little such a solution is motivated by concern for Japanese workers is shown by the fact that if it is for the moment unfeasible discrimination against Japan is put into force.

The syndicalist solution would be for Lancashire textile trade unions to co-ordinate their policy with the Japanese trade unions. But both would clearly have to be animated by revolutionary and internationalist convictions. Even so, the problems of "restoring" competition in a world where wages are favourably affected by capitalist prosperity makes such a solution, to our mind, a great deal less practicable than the anarchist aim of destroying competition and wages altogether. What is required is to free the Lancashire worker from the situation where his (or her) prosperity is achieved at the expense of the Japanese worker.

Letter from Germany

IN the *Law for the Democratisation of German Schools*, promulgated in the Eastern Zone in 1946, we may read that "The educational ideal in the new school is a militant and democratic humanism, that is to say a humanism which must always be fought for and defended."

What is to be understood by this affirmation of principle? It is evident that words like "militant", "humanism" and "democratic" can be applied in many different ways, as can the final phrase. But this text, since the passing of the law, has received a clear and precise interpretation, which leaves no room for doubts or evasions: "There must be inculcated in youth love for the Democratic German Republic and for its President, Wilhelm Pieck", is what we read in fact in an explanatory circular from the Ministry of Education to the teaching profession, dated 1950.

Thus the "humanism" of the 1946 Decree has actually a very limited meaning. It is the same with international peace which was defined by Heinrich Deiters in *Pädagogik*, the official teachers' organ in East Germany, as follows: "Peace, for which we struggle to-day, is not a general humanitarian idea, but a form of relations between peoples, which arises as a result of precise conditions in world politics." And he added, "We designate this peace with the term "democratic peace".

"If the school creates in the pupil a general disposition to struggle for democratic peace, the particular task of the teaching staff is to concentrate this tendency and to give it a very clear view as to the essence of democratic peace and its significance," wrote Deiters in the same official publication.

The school children of the Eastern Zone must be made "partisans of peace", all perfectly in step. "It would be dangerous," observes Erwin Marquardt, one of the principal Directors of Education, "to expose the pupil to individual influences. This would be a proof of non-socialist thought, going back to the individualism of a departed epoch . . . ."

★

A rigorous control has thus resulted from the total "democratisation" of teaching. The organ of the Russian authorities, the *Tägliche Rundschau* (11/10/50), has given us an edifying example of the political collaboration from a school at Leipzig during the "elections":

"The pupils hastily established a wall newspaper . . . for agitation in the neighbouring streets . . . Two pupils set up the big blackboard in the road outside the school. As a surprise, they proposed to make propaganda with the aid of luminous signs. A dove and the word 'peace' appeared on the 1st October, the election date."

The teachers in this school evidently could not lag behind. Participation in the electoral preparations they declared in an unanimous resolution, "We detest war and are training our pupils in the spirit of Peace and for the unity of Germany. On the 1st October we stand for the National Front".

The educational programme dated 4th September, 1950, prescribed for teachers the following themes:

1. The National Congress for German Unity.
2. The American aggression in Korea.
3. The rally of 100,000 partisans of peace in the Ruhr.
4. What is the reason for the single electoral programme and single electoral list.
5. How can the school help the electoral campaign.
6. The 5-year plan for peace and well-being.
7. The preparations for war in Western Germany.
8. The great Socialist October Revolution.
9. The Oder-Neisse frontier of peace.
10. The World Peace Congress.
11. The importance of the "Free Democratic Youth" and the "Young Pioneers".
12. The Stalin Constitution.
13. Stalin, leader of the World Front for Peace.

A vast programme—completed by tasks imposed upon the pupils of which this is an example: "What is a Partisan of Peace? Each man who rises courageously against the Anglo-Saxon imperialists and their lackeys. Describe the life of a partisan of Peace! You can chose a great personality, (Stalin, Max Reimann, Joliot-Curie) or an anonymous figure among the innumerable fighters (Youth, Women, Workers) who defend peace in all lands. Describe their life as you imagine it!"

★

The national educational system in the Eastern Zone is a mechanism ruled from above in an extremely precise fashion, in every aspect. For example the teachers have always to give a special place to the names of Lenin and Stalin: "Underline their importance as founders of the Soviet Union, their pre-eminence as leaders . . . of the workers' movement and of the construction of socialism; insist on their political wisdom and their disinterested struggle for the well-being of the working class!"

The local chiefs, Pieck, Ulhricht and Grotewohl, are also made the objects of a tremendous cult. But all this fades away before the passion with which the Ministry of Education tries to inject the teaching of the Russian language into the primary schools. Thus we read in a circular from the Ministry addressed to teachers: "The teaching of Russian is to to advanced as a most important qualification of the teaching personnel, through the simplifying of methods, for example in teaching pupils Russian songs, in organising the exchange of letters with Soviet children and *by the ideological support given to the teacher of the Russian language by the entire teaching staff*" (our italics).

This circular is accompanied by a threat: "Primary pupils who get insufficient marks in Russian will have to repeat the class, in cases where a bad spirit or a lack of interest have been the cause, and the eventual complaints of parents are to be addressed to the *Bezirksschulamt*" The central institute of teaching in the district).

★

The "Young Pioneers" is the Communist organisation for children up to the age of 14 years. A circular on this subject from the *Central Office for Schools*, says:

1. The leaders of the Young Pioneers participate in all conferences of the teaching personnel.
2. The Young Pioneers are responsible for progressive education in the schools, in collaboration with the school principals.
3. Sports meetings and other rallies are organised in collaboration between the school and the Young Pioneers.
4. The choice of pupils due to go on to grammar schools is to be made in consultation with the Young Pioneers.

Thus, from their infancy, the Youth of East Germany is to be submitted to an "education" which is essentially political, to the neglect of real education. It can indeed be said that to a certain extent, political indoctrination is taking the place of teaching. As in the time of the Third Reich the cult of the leader is developed to extremes: "Youth loves President Wilhelm Pieck, it is necessary to display his portrait in every school". Féte days at school are numerous: The Day of Peace; The Day of Resistance Fighters; Anniversary of the Foundation of the Democratic German Republic; World Youth Day; October Revolution Day; Commemoration of the Founding of the Young Pioneers; President Pieck's Birthday; Liberation Day; International Women's Day. This list comprises only a few of the "occasions" which can be used for inculcating in children the doctrine of Leninist-Stalinism. . . .

★

We have already mentioned the insistence with which the teaching of the Russian language to children is enforced. This effort is accompanied by a veritable "Soviet Cult". In all schools "Josef Stalin corners" have been started where the "Russian Example" can be meditated upon: "We attach particular importance to a direct relationship between our schools and those of the Soviet Union," says a Ministry Circular, and it continues, "Each teacher must be a true friend of the Soviet Union and must become among both pupils and parents a propagandist for a real friendship with the Soviet Union".

Even if a teacher should decide not to act upon this prescription, it would be impossible for him not to read to his pupils a text like this, sent by the Ministry of Education, which it is obligatory to write on the blackboard:

"Dear Stalin! The boys and girls of the Democratic German Republic send you their most cordial greetings on the occasion of your 70th birthday. We promise you, great genius of humanity and leader of youth, to fight still more courageously for world peace, to work more effectively and resolutely for a unified Germany, peaceful and democratic, to stay at the side of our president, Wilhelm Pieck, to make still greater efforts to win German Youth for friendship with the peoples of the Soviet Union. . . ."

The Red Army is an object of veneration. A poem by Johannes R. Becher, the German Fadaiev, figures in the school books. It reads:

Who has accomplished heroic acts,
Who has delivered us from slavery?
The Soviet soldiers,
The heroes of the Soviet Union.
Thank you, Soviet soldiers,
Thank you, heroes of the Soviet Union!

★

The teacher has, in the new school, very precise duties. One cannot better define his "work of education" than by reproducing part of a circular sent at the beginning of this year to the teaching personnel: "The new democratic school demands the politically conscious teacher. It is thus necessary that each teacher should acquire, besides a good general training, an objective understanding of Marxist-Leninism . . . " In fact, "The tasks of the new democratic school can only be tackled by a teacher who fulfils the following conditions:

1. The teacher . . . has the duty of unreservedly helping the struggle for the unity of Germany, the struggle of the Democratic German National Front and the strengthening of the Democratic German Republic.

In the official review, *Pädagogik*, already quoted, Werner Dorst interprets the circular thus: "In insisting on 'general understanding of Marxist-Leninism' our programme is enriched in an essential way. Teachers thus receive the ideological basis necessary for an understanding of the great international rôle of the Soviet Union, the guiding force of the World Peace Movement, and an understanding that Soviet teaching and Soviet schools are the most progressive in the world. . . . "

G.S.

Communists and the Law

(Continued from page 1)

superiority over Russia is based on the legal processes: a codified, knowable law, not law by whim or decree; a law applying equally to all citizens; a law administered rationally and on the basis of the evidence, etc. If, for the powerless, these protections are often meaningless, the American government and even ruling classes have been aware that a tranquil populace is the best condition for civil peace and continuity of production and profit; and a tranquil populace is one without overt grievances against the government, and secure in its sense of personal liberty. And to this we owe it that in recent times we did not have to deal with serious general attacks on the system of legal liberty. It is this security, meagre and by implication condescending as it is, that is threatened in the present instance.

The liberals who support the repressive measures ask, granted they are odious, do we have any alternative? And the conservatives, characteristically more blunt, add: if we have the right to kill Communists in Korea, by what mysterious morality are their American allies to be immune from retaliation when they attempt a comparable work? The answer must be, yes, if one is right so is the other, even if the liberals feel uneasy about turning against their neighbours (and yesterdays' political allies) the wrath they more easily release against anonymous foreigners (though yesterday's military allies). For irrational or irrelevant reasons, the government may sometimes be over-enthusiastic, but these are the proceedings of war.

But the matter does not stop here. The liberal—and not merely liberal—error is to ask: what is desirable? and then to prepare to pay the price (grudgingly when the price involves conflict with moral values). But a true calculation must be broader, and must include the discovered cost as part of the "desirability" (or otherwise) of the objective. We may rightly ask these people: when they realise that the imprisonment of Americans, the slaughter of foreigners, and the deterioration of the liberties of Americans (we have not even referred to such matters as the vast powers of the F.B.I., mutual espionage, conscriptions for war service of those who do not believe in it, etc.)—what will they say of a policy, afterwards, such matters as these are thrown into the scales?

Or, to put it another way, when we see what the nature of a process is, we are required to make a judgment about it, even if we can see that the revolutionary changes needed to establish new alternatives cannot be put into effect just yet. We are required to decide whether the direction of these tendencies is, in its totality, desirable, and we will therefore support it; or whether we should oppose and try to weaken it. It is, of course, possible to understand those who consider the necessary revolutionary changes too remote and try to hold consistently to a position of "war but civil liberties". It is not a contemptible position; it is merely an effort to stop up with one hand the barrier that one is beating away at with the other.

D.T.W.

'We of Nagasaki'

ONE looks in vain, and with a growing amazement as one reads, for any hint of anger, or even resentment, against those who, as Japan's enemies in war, were directly responsible for the disaster, the terror, the bereavement which have thus fallen upon the writers. They seem at times to regard the bomb, from that aspect, as though it had been a natural, inevitable catastrophe. "The sympathy of the whole world," wrote Dr. Nagai, "and in particular the material aid and spiritual comfort which have been forthcoming from the American people, are enabling us gradually to cover up the marks of the atomic cataclysm and to convert our ruins into a new metropolis." Each reader, I think, must form his own judgment as to the respective parts played, in this gentle and submissive attitude, by native Japanese sentiment and by the Christianity in which all these authors believed.

Dr. Nagai himself was a comparatively recent convert; and it is permissible, perhaps, in parenthesis, to hope that, by the time of his recent death from leukaemia, he had not yet heard of the official prayer, addressed to the God of Mercy in whom he too believed, on behalf of the bearers of the first atomic bomb: "Armed with Thy might, may they bring this war to a rapid end" (Dawn Over Zero, W. H. Laurence, 2nd edition, p. 209). All of the writers here, who are old enough to take notice of such things, including Dr. Nagai himself in the opening and closing chapters, seem rather to find matter for their chief concern in the psychological and moral wounds—the feeling of guilt and cowardice, the suspicions and resentments, the collapse of moral standards—which they detect in themselves and the other survivors, forming what Dr. Nagai describes as "our society of spiritual bankrupts, now striving lamely to function as a community."

Dr. Nagai was anxious to emphasise these moral scars, the failure of those who survived to "escape the heart-rending, remorseful memories", the "stubborn, unhealing wounds" of mind and conscience, because he feared that, with the failure of attempts to reach any agreement which might free the world from its menace, the forces which form general opinion were beginning to cry down the atomic bomb as "just another weapon, with greater physical effects than those which preceded it". I do not think that he was mistaken. From various quarters we now hear pleas in mitigation of the terrible consequences which, when the first news of them broke upon an astonished world, we had been ready to attribute to any further production or exploitation of these atomic bombs, or of the much more powerful ones which research and invention seemed almost certain to produce.

—Sir Henry Dale, reviewing *We of Nagasaki: the Story of Survivors in an Atomic Wasteland*, by Takashi Nagai (Gollancz, 10/6d.)

READERS' VIEWPOINTS

LEADERSHIP AND MISERY

ONE would think that of all Movements devoted to genuine, humanitarian progress, the Anarchist movement would be the most flourishing and successful. The reason? Well, if one looks around at the lunatic antics of political and economic leadership throughout the world to-day, if one looks honestly at the murder of Korea, the tragedy of Europe and the increasing famine in China, India and adjoining areas; if one sees, without prejudice, the immensity of human misery and suffering due to aggressive, political power-seeking, then one would expect, reasonably, that the majority of human beings would reject the present policy of leadership through politicians and all the clap-trap of bureaucracy in the Modern State. One would hope, if not expect, that a decided majority of ordinary folk would support a free association of *all* men, based on libertarian principles.

In that sense one would not expect normal individuals to support policies designed for their own destruction, particularly by blatant, power-hunting leadership.

That great libertarian, Errico Malatesta, wrote: "If in order to win, we must raise the gallows in the square, I would prefer to be defeated." Can you identify such a statement with the actions of our politicians and military leaders to-day? It is certainly a point worth considering. The Western Democracies, at their best, have still managed to keep ahead on atomic death, and have this prize in store for other suffering folk within the Iron Curtain—just as, of course, Soviet leadership may set in motion similar barbarities against us.

The question before the State, whether left or right, democratic or totalitarian, is a question not so much of human beings needing help in distress or protection from tyranny, but rather preserving the institutions of legality and the property formed out of economic privilege and exploitation. The same would apply to the Soviet bloc. There is no basic communism here, no communal well-being, no association of free ideas, no seeking the truth and humanity; instead, a ruthless drive towards expansion of a class ideology, and the introduction of methods to attain it, not fit for the animals who inhabit the earth, let alone men and women, who are murdered to suit the leadership and the policy and the party-line.

We should oppose, vigorously, all attempts to hunt down the ordinary folk of the world and to enslave them physically and spiritually to systems of rigid and oppressive legality. We should say emphatically: "A plague upon both your houses!" And as libertarians we should go even further, and add: "A plague upon *all* your houses!"

If one asks to be led, to be "taken for a ride" in the American sense of that phrase, to kiss the feet of the pseudo-prophets, then assuredly one can enjoy the privilege of a little extra cake thrown from the master's table. Loyalty and obedience to the hunters and plunderers is an important part of conditioning; conditioning to accept leadership and all the necessary misery that must follow. You take your choice and you pay.

In the case of Korea, you pay with blood and with sweat and with indignities not deemed fit to be borne by the animal. In Europe, you pay with fears of insecurity, of unemployment, poverty, starvation, dispossession, exile, loneliness and tyranny. In England, you pay by marking time while the stew burns, hoping against hope itself that the people will awake soon enough to know their enemies; knowing that this country could give such a tremendous burst of encouragement to mankind by its *inaction* in all the situations where war and aggression and government were concerned. If we, here, could stand firm against all the calls to duty, against all the blackmail by politicians, against all slander by loyal supporters of "our country right or wrong", against all nationalistic and racial jingoism, against the whole paraphernalia of military and bureaucratic caste-society—if we could give some real libertarian and syndicalist answers to this whole chaotic business, then our future might indeed be a little more secure and a great deal more worthwhile.

The position of leadership in the world to-day is closely allied to the misery we see spreading from one area to another. Politicians may be decent in themselves, *as individuals*, but once the jiggery pokery of State Machinery and Party Policy is in action, the individual either works according to rule, or just plainly, gets out. There may be more scope in Western democratic methods—and, of course, the form of punishment is not death—but it would be very naïve to think that the heavy legality of the State is merely reserved for dressing funny men in funny wigs—comic as that may seem in British period films.

The "give and take" of our so-called democratic society is quite a fact if one is obedient to the *rules* as presented by the controlling class, or caste, of the moment. It may be Labour or less Labour, more Tory or less Tory, but it adds up finally to being a good boy and voting within the framework of State regulations and commands.

Let us remember that behind the façade of Party government there is a permanent class of officials carrying the orders of the State into the innermost places of our personal lives. They operate the system, no matter what politician of this or that party is in power, and they operate it in spite of all the blah and profuse regrets of the opposition. Occasionally, the workers feel benefits from a more progressive group of individuals: a little more cake and even a little more space and time to eat it in, will often fool the most intelligent worker at some period in his slavery.

Yet let the economic system fall about their ears, as fall it must in a cut-throat nationalism — or internationalism — then the picture becomes rather different. A little unemployment can calm many a would-be revolutionary. As one writer put it: "Withhold the bread and they (the masses) come running." Callous? Yes, indeed, but we do well to see the real truths behind the scenes of kid glove democracy and the even bigger leg-pull of the no-unemployment-in-our-soviet-heaven attitude. Whether it's kid glove or mailed fist, it is merely the time factor that fixes the date for the worker's enslavement and consequent extinction. The ordinary bloke is always at the receiving end; if he waits for it, there is merely a prolonging of his agony, not a lessening. He must end it himself because no politician, however well-meaning or determined can put this catastrophic situation right.

In a recent copy of *Freedom*, the quotation on the front page, from Ignazio Silone's novel *Bread and Wine*, read: "Liberty is something you have to take for yourself. It's no use begging it from others." This applies to every phase in one's life. No lasting, genuine help can come from the leadership of politicians and the Brass Hats who serve them. There may be better political actions than others, a little less evil here and there, but in the end the future of it all will be misery and death—and not for us alone.

It seems that anarchism is just commonsense, and the whole world of human beings never needed it more than they do to-day. A free, happy society of human beings throughout the earth: how they would solve the so-called unsolvable problems of the hour, and how they'd enjoy doing it! But we should be doing it soon before political leadership decides our final atomic destruction.

J. H. MOORHOUSE.

"Only a Scrap of Paper"?

THE subject of identity cards has been brought into the news by Mr. Willcocks' case. It is now seven years since I did twenty-one days on a similar identity card "offence" (which I do not say in any boastful spirit, for it would be indeed interesting to know how many people have been in jail for one thing or another in connection with identity cards) but I have nothing really to add to the very comprehensive analyses that have recently appeared in *Freedom*.

Only . . .

I was arguing with some Labour friends the other day. Now quite recently one of the leaders of the Labour movement defended identity cards, asking what after all was the encroachment on individual liberty by just carrying a piece of paper. My friends asked me what after all was the encroachment on individual liberty by just carrying a piece of paper.

It was a nice sunny afternoon, but I felt quite a chill. I suddenly remembered . . .

You see, once during the war I had the opportunity of taking part in a heated discussion some German P.O.W.s were having. A couple of them were definitely pro Nazi and the rest weren't. It was the first time I had really met Nazis. Of course, I had seen them swaggering along in jackboots, but this was off duty, these two young Germans were ordinary, quite decent people who had formed allegiance to a party and were sticking to it. (They were quite like my Labour friends with whom I was arguing and I say this without any sneer).

Well, the two pro-Nazis were denying that atrocities had occurred under Hitler. One of them even denied that the Jewish people had suffered anything untoward except during what he called the "first excesses" and he challenged the others to prove him wrong. They were all scornful and impatient with him and one of them asked him if he had never even seen people going through the streets wearing the yellow star with which the Nazis marked out the non-Aryans.

He even had an answer for that. He asked, "Isn't the six-pointed star the Jewish symbol (the Star of David). Why should the Jews object to wearing it then? We wear the Hakenkreuz, what harm is there in their wearing the star?"

Of course, there was no real answer that would convince him, any more than there is any real answer that will convince them. The identity card is only a scrap of paper, and everybody knows that when we elected to fight the first world war "over a scrap of paper", as the famous saying was, it was all really newspaper boloney . . . There is nothing really that will convince anyone who pins their faith to a party what freedom really means, and that is why in order to be an anarchist you have to forget about bourgeois pacifism and defend yourself against all these nice people even if the people who are respectable and so middle-class will tell you that that means "confronting authority with greater gunpowder" but it doesn't mean that at all, it means being able to do something about it when they have the jackboots on or when they have exhausted everything else and then tell you that your internal passport is not in order . . .

(Sorry about the words "internal passport", I'll be calling a finance corporation a money-lender next . . .)

A.M.

Correction

An unfortunate error crept into the first of George Woodcock's three articles on the "Pacific Coast Indians" (Freedom, 30/6/51, *page 2). In paragraph five, line ten, please read* "economic inequality" *for* "economic equality".

The Legacy of Imperialism

Imagine you know an African well enough to have his confidence, and that he is able to speak freely to you: this is what he might say, and say with conviction, even with heat:

"You British came to my country to get and to exploit. You did not come until it suited you. Why did you not come before, if you wanted to help us? You knew of our country, and of us, and of our needs; why did you not come then with your Christianity, and your hospitals and your schools? No: you came when it suited you, when you wanted to get, when your new machines needed our raw materials, and your goods needed us as new markets; you came to get—by force; you still need our oils and minerals and food, so you say—by force; and to keep your consciences quiet you have given us a few schools and hospitals and a lot of small churches.

"But what have you taken from us? You have taken our freedom. And yet no race in the world talks more of freedom than you British do. You sing 'Britons never shall be slaves'. What about us? Do you think we enjoy being ruled by others? From London? Why won't you give us freedom? Why can't we be allowed to govern ourselves, to have our own country back? If you had no force, you could not stay—you know that. You talk of the benefits you bring us. We grant all that. But what are all those things if we have not freedom? We'd rather lose all those things, and make our own mistakes, if only we had freedom, if only we had our own country back."

—Rev. James Welch, B.B.C. Home Service, 16/9/1950.

THEY BUILT THEIR OWN HOMES

Working at week-ends, evenings and during their annual holidays, 20 Brighton ex-servicemen have built their own houses.

They have got a £1,000 loan from Brighton Corporation and an 80-year lease on land. They averaged a house every 30 days.

Last night a plaque was unveiled on the last completed house.

News Chronicle, 27/5/51.

AND *THEY* WILL PULL 16 DOWN

Sixteen houses built in 1935 are to be pulled down because they are "not in accordance with town-planning proposals". Fifty-three men, women and children will lose their homes. The tenants of the houses—in Dynes Road, Kemsing, near Sevenoaks, Kent—have received a week's notice to quit. The owner, Mr. Fred Jarvis, says he will have the houses demolished as soon as weather permits. Sevenoaks Rural Council ordered the demolition within five years because "layout and design are detrimental to the amenities of the locality." But Mr. Jarvis says he has to do the work at his own expense and it might cost three times as much in five years. He said last night: "I'm terribly sorry, but this has been forced on me by the council." The houses are let at 11s. a week, including rates and water. They are flat-roofed. Each has two bedrooms, living-room, kitchen, and bathroom. All are in good condition. On the other side of the road are council houses, with sloping roofs. An official of Sevenoaks council said: "We will do what we can to find other accommodation for these people. But the council is under no obligation to rehouse persons displaced by action taken by the planning authority."

FOOTNOTE.—There is a housing waiting list of 3,000 in the Sevenoaks area.

Daily Express, 14/7/51.

(Continued from page 1)

iems of Africa and other "undeveloped territories". The social tensions resulting from the decline of British imperialism; the growth of small educated professional classes who imbibe European ideas of democracy and self-determination and find that practice contradicts principle; the impact of machine culture upon impoverished largely illiterate and semi-literate agricultural workers, sometimes peasants, sometimes plantation labour providing European industries with raw materials; these tensions are not to be resolved by political panaceas, nor by belated and relatively niggardly economic aid which is bound to be received with justifiable suspicion. Here is the dilemma—we have neither the right to assume that "the benefits of European civilization" are what the colonial people need, —they don't make us very happy—nor have we the right to deny them the right to advance to European standards because we happen to think *they* will be happier with " a simple life". And while we may correctly say that the British should withdraw from the colonies and let the people work out their own salvation, we know at the same time that the immediate result of such a withdrawal is the "Burma-isation" of these countries.

The "reactionaries" and the progressives" have both grossly oversimplified the problems of imperialism. The former were at least honest enough to admit that our standard of life has for over a century depended upon the ruthless exploitation of colonial peoples. To recognise this and, instead of being paralysed by guilt, to agitate for radical changes in our own economic system is perhaps more helpful than merely to regret that the Africans are going to make the same political mistakes as everybody else.

W.

MISSIONARY ZEAL

Gypsies in Hungary must go to school and study Marxism by order of Communist authorities in Budapest. The tziganes [gypsies] never before have been required to attend school.

"The institute to instruct tziganes in socialism" will be under the direction of Rodolphe Turnowski. The text-books were written by Istvan Harangozo, a Rumanian. The school is the first step by the Communists to curb the gypsies' nomadic life.

Chicago Daily Tribune, 14/7/51.

HELPFUL NOTES FOR THE OFFICER CLASS

Going into the Army from a public school should not be a great shock. Life is coarser, but essentially of much the same order. Both school and the Army are ruled by hierarchies demanding unquestioning obedience to their authority. Both require adherence to codes of behaviour, many of the details of which to the close observer, the new boy and the recruit, appear to be devoid of intrinsic merit. Both offer conditions of life of varying physical discomfort, and if anything first impressions of a public school are the more disturbing.

—*Times Educational Supplement*, 27/7/51.

ARE YOU SUPPORTING OUR Special Appeal

July 22nd to July 28th:

London: C.W. 10/-; London: A.B. (per J.H.) £1/10/0; London: Anon. 2/6; Stirling: R.A.B. £1/0/0; London: J.P.B.* 2/-; London: Anon.* 5/- London: R.S. 1/-; Rochester: D.J. £5/0/0; Rochester: Anon.* 2/6; Edinburgh T.O'M.* 5/-; London: G.T. £3/0/0; Helston: Anon. 2/6; Crewe: R.C. 3/-; London: C.R. (per V.R.) 10/-.

Total	...	12	16 0
Previously acknowledged	...	271	11 5
1951 TOTAL TO DATE	...	£284	7 5

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 Gt. Newport Street, near Leicester Sq. Underground Stn.*)

These Meetings are suspended for the Sumer months. They will re-commence in SEPTEMBER.
Watch this column for future Announcements.

NORTH-EAST LONDON

DISCUSSION MEETINGS IN EAST HAM
at 7.30
AUG. 7—Desmond Mills
"A LECTURE RECITAL"
(*at Woodford*)
AUG. 21—Eric Maple
"POWER"

Enquiries c/o Freedom Press

SOUTH LONDON

Meetings suspended for the time being. Readers interested in possible future activities, please contact S. E. Parker, c/o Freedom Press.

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.*

Glasgow Anarchist Group

THE SIXTH ANNUAL ANARCHIST SUMMER SCHOOL

will be held at the

WORKERS OPEN FORUM

50, Renfrew Street, Glasgow, C.2
on August 25th and 26th

★

Saturday, 25th August:
Lectures and Discussions at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Sunday, 26th August:
Lectures and Discussions at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., and Public Meeting in the Central Halls, Bath Street, at 7 p.m. (speakers will be announced later)

Cost:
Bed and Breakfast can be arranged at 12/6 a night, and there will be charge of 12/6 for catering and lectures.

The Rest of the Week:
During the week following the Summer School, there will be camping at Garelochhead. The only equipment campers need bring is a sleeping bag or blankets. Electric and gas cooking equipment and feeding utensils laid on.

★

Intending visitors to the Summer School should write at once to *John Gaffney, 18, Finnieston Street, Glasgow, C.3.*

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