

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

IN WHOSE INTEREST WAS IT?

Dalton's Boycott Call

It is not often that a Government spokesman of Ministerial rank urges people to take direct action in their interests.

Therefore it was with some suspicion we read that Mr. Hugh Dalton, Minister of Local Government and Planning (an office of wide scope, which has recently urged housewives to buy clothing and textiles until the shops reflect the present prices of raw materials.

As discussed earlier in the year the price increases that took place in the wool markets of the world as a result of the stock-piling policy of America, and, to a lesser extent, of Britain, are presently satiated, for the time being, by two gluttons are now buying more quantities of wool, and the price is rapidly falling.

Readers are usually pretty quick in raising prices up when they have such a good excuse—as well, to be fair, as the iron reason—as a rise in the cost of raw materials. They are not always quick in bringing them down, however, when prices warrant that, but some manufacturers and retailers have lowered prices of carpets, knitting-wools and socks—in some cases by nearly 50 per cent. But Mr. Dalton thinks the process should be hurried up by a consumers' boycott.

Now, we have often supported such measures in these columns and have brought forward examples—in fruit and vegetables and fish, for examples—where prices have been forced down by housewives refusing to buy. But we were not surprised when angry opposition to Mr. Dalton was soon making itself felt from traders, who in some cases were denouncing his suggestion as "criminal" or "callous and uneconomic". One discern-

ing retailer of carpets thought that "the suggestion is nothing but a vote-catching dodge", while they all pointed out that the public were already so uncertain about prices that they were not buying, and that further falls in sales would result in severe unemployment in the textile manufacturing trades.

Now, Mr. Dalton is an economist; he was for a time Chancellor of the Exchequer, and although he was foolish enough to lose that job through giving away Budget secrets a few minutes early to a friendly reporter, he is no fool on economic matters—from a capitalist point of view, of course. Nor is he fool enough to try a stunt like that merely for a vote-catching reason.

As a politician, Mr. Dalton is not above vote-catching, but I should think that he, and his colleagues in the government must know by now that as far as the housewife's vote is concerned—they've had it!

No, I may be crediting Dalton with a deeper game than he is actually playing, but it seems that there is more to this than meets the eye. After all, if the Government were really so concerned about high prices as he said, they could reduce the crippling purchase tax which raises prices on so many goods right out of the reach of so many of us. But that, of course, they cannot do because they need the revenue for armaments.

Similarly, the Government needs the workers for armaments. Both Mr. Bevan, while Minister of Labour, and the present Minister, Alfred Robens, have declared their dislike of direction of labour, as applied during the war. Instead of that, they are directing raw materials. Steel is not going to cycle manufacturers, but to arms manufacturers, so that cycle workers are being

sacked (see FREEDOM, 14/7/51) and, naturally, the only work they will be able to get will be in armaments works.

Therefore, the present Government policy is clearly one of deliberately creating unemployment in the "unessential" industries—i.e., unessential for war preparation—and Mr. Dalton's "boycott" call to housewives may have been deliberately calculated to achieve that end.

If that is so, and things worked out as Dalton wanted, the eventual result may be a further rise in prices instead of a fall. It might work like this: prices are high, so housewives don't buy. Shops are over-stocked so they don't order from the manufacturers; the manufacturers stand off their workers who find jobs in armaments, where they are probably better paid; meanwhile prices in the shops have fallen and the housewives are buying again, but stocks cannot be renewed because raw materials are not available for home consumption, neither are workers (now in armaments), so goods become scarce. And when goods are scarce, the prices go up—this time for good.

But by then, Mr. Dalton will have forgotten all about it. Indeed, if there to be an election this autumn it may not matter what Mr. Dalton says or does as he may be out in the cold once again. In fact, it may well be that the Labour Party will have no real desire to be re-elected for another term of office. They are in such a mess at the moment, with nothing ahead but tougher times and even more unpopularity for the Government that they may be perfectly happy to hand over to the Tories, hoping to come back at a later date—perhaps after the next war.

P.S.

FOREIGN COMMENTARY

British Fifth Column at Work in Persia?

WE wrote in last week's *Foreign Commentary* on the Persian Oil talks that Mr. Mossadig's announcement that a note would be sent to Britain had misfired and we suggested that it would probably never be sent. In fact it was sent, but is not the "ultimatum" which Mr. Mossadig had announced, but instead, according to a statement by a Persian Government official, a new formula for a resumption of talks.

The time factor has now entered into the struggle, and time is on the side of British interests. The Persian Government has already announced the floating of a national loan of more than £22 millions to help them over the economic crisis caused by the standstill at the oil wells and refinery. Meanwhile, the Persians are busily looking around for customers. The first contract for 300,000 tons of petrol has been signed with Afghanistan, and offers are reported from Czechoslovakia and Poland.

But the most sinister development in this dirty business has been the formation of a new political party calling itself the "National Will", consisting of elements who oppose the Mossadig Government. It is led by a former Prime Minister, Mr. Tabatabai, who is said to be pro-British. The *Associated Press* reporting this adds that the "new party will organise scattered groups to the Right of Centre into a solid opposition. It is reported to have its own protection units in order to prevent attacks by Government supporters."

The new party will undoubtedly make good use of the statement made by Mr. Atlee when he opened the new refinery at Fawley, Southampton (which is the largest in Europe and cost £25 million plus \$34 million to build, though only a third of the size of Abadan) in which he said that Britain's supplies for 1951 were already assured and that the pros-

"Liberty is for everybody—for the individual to make up his his own mind and to express his opinions, however much people may dislike them or be shocked by them."

—A. J. P. TAYLOR.

pect for 1952 "was well assured". He suggested that those Persians who did not want to see their country ruined should take notice of this statement and consider the danger of a permanent loss of markets for Persian oil. The British Government, he added, was most anxious to come to an agreement.

Britain is obviously anxious to come to an agreement, because much capital and profits are at stake. Persia has all along been aware of this and started by making maximum demands. The present deadlock is to our minds a purely business one and is caused by both sides not wanting to give away more than is necessary. Hence the bluff, which each side exposes by counter-bluff and so on. But we have no doubt that a settlement will eventually be agreed, and that British interests will be very well represented in the new set-up and who knows, when Mr. Stokes again goes to Teheran, that he will not be received by Mr. Tabatabai instead of Mr. Mossadig!

KAESONG POSTSCRIPT

THE deadlock in the truce talks in Korea continues, though it appears that both sides have now stated their conditions for a resumption and observers say "prospects seem brighter". The Americans are feeling virtuous about the promptness with which they owned-up to the Communists that one of their planes had fired on the Kaesong area in error on September 10th, and assured the enemy that disciplinary action had been taken against the unfortunate pilot. But that is a small concession to the Communists charges that United Nations' aircraft had violated the Kaesong zone neutrality 139 times by flying over it. The United Nations dispute the charges because, they say, there was never an agreement that the air above Kaesong was part of the neutral zone!

How much longer will the people go on acquiescing, by their silence, to such childish, irresponsible behaviour?

Obviously, morality has touched the depths when a General can say, and get away with it, as did Lieut.-General Van Fleet, Eighth Army commander, when he visited the central front recently, that he hoped the Communists would launch another offensive "to give us a chance to slaughter them!"

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Politicians meet and Africans wonder... and fear...

A STERILE CONFERENCE

A CONFERENCE opened this week at the Victoria Falls to discuss the possibility of creating a Central African federation. We reported this proposal at length when the London conference of officials on Closer Association in Central Africa was held last March (*Rhodesia: Setting the Scene for the Race War*, FREEDOM, 31/3/51) and when its report was issued (*A Central African Dominion*, FREEDOM, 23/6/51). In the second of these articles we described the elaborate systems of compromises designed to find a method of uniting the self-governing colony of Southern Rhodesia, and the protectorates of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, which reconciled the irreconcilable—the conflicting interests of the indigenous peoples and the White settlers.

Since then Mr. James Griffiths, the Colonial Secretary, and Mr. Patrick Gordon-Walker, the Secretary for Commonwealth Relations, have visited the three territories to gather opinions in readiness for this week's conference, which everyone is at pains to emphasise, is exploratory and not binding upon anybody. The attitudes which have been expressed are, not unexpectedly, support from the majority of the White inhabitants and solid opposition from the Africans.

In Northern Rhodesia, European business men told Mr. Griffiths that "federation would greatly increase the three territories' bargaining power, particularly in negotiating for an outlet to the sea. It would also offer a much more attractive field for overseas investors than at present, and would stimulate European immigration. Representatives of the White settlers urged

Mr. Griffiths not to attach too much weight to African opposition to the federation proposals. They declared that this opposition came only from a small educated minority of Africans: the great majority knew nothing about the matter." (*Manchester Guardian*, 6/9/51).

Mr. Godwin Lewanika, a former president of the Northern Rhodesian African Congress in a speech to the Congress analysed the June Report in great detail from the African point of view, concluded, "The report points to Federation as the means to greater material progress and wealth. We can see that these will be brought at the cost of the disintegration of our whole way of life, and of our complete dependence on European industrial economies with all its uncertainties and perils."

The African Protectorate Council in Nyasaland told the Colonial Secretary that "if Federation were accepted, promises made by the British Government would not be fulfilled, and the Africans would not realise their hopes of self-government". The Council consequently rejected the proposals, and refused to send delegates to the Victoria Falls conference.

Thus, as Mr. Colin Legum, the *Observer's* correspondent wrote from Kitwe, Mr. Griffiths, in his tour, "has not heard a single African organisation which is prepared to support the federation proposals; nor has he found a single European organisation opposed to them."

In Southern Rhodesia, where the touring visitor was Mr. Gordon-Walker, White opinion is divided. The Prime Minister, Sir Godfrey Huggins, arguing for the federation, declares that the country must choose between joining with the

South Africa. (Both his government and Dr. Malan's are preparing their claims for annexing the protectorate of Bechuanaland, which lies between their territories.) The opposition Rhodesian Party (formerly the Liberal Party) opposes federation since it would "interfere unduly with Southern Rhodesia's native policy". The Afrikaners in Southern Rhodesia announced on September 9th that their cultural organisation *Genooskap van Afrikaners* would become a political party on the lines of Dr. Malan's Nationalist Party with the aim of Dominion status in which "natives shall under no circumstances enjoy political rights with Europeans."

On September 13th, Mr. Gordon-Walker met 150 delegates representing three-quarters of Southern Rhodesia's African population and told them that "federation would make possible the development of schools, universities, hospitals, and other schemes for the welfare and progress of the people. British Government policy in the Northern territories was not that the Africans should rule but that there should be partnership between all races; and that was also Southern Rhodesia's policy". Nevertheless, only one of the delegates favoured federation. According to the

MORE TROUBLE IN THE DOCKS

WE were beginning to think that London's Port Workers had been quiet for an unusually long time (the holiday period?) when news came of strikes in Tilbury and East India Docks.

As so often, the cause at Tilbury was a decision by employers to institute a measure on which the workers had already registered their firm opposition. Last July there was a strike against the decision of Scruttons Ltd., a stevedore company, to put 200 men on their permanent register. They dropped the idea then, but returned to it this week, only to be met by another strike, in which at the moment of writing, over 3,000 men are involved.

In East India Dock the dispute concerns the number of men working to a

News Chronicle (13/9/51). "The Southern Rhodesian Native Affairs Minister, Mr. Patrick Fletcher, said on the previous day, that African opinion on the proposed federation of the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland did not count, because it was already represented by the Southern Rhodesian Government.

"Federation negotiations are negotiations between governments," he told reporters.

On the following day, however, he told the *Manchester Guardian's* correspondent, "I never suggested that African opinion did not count. I have publicly maintained that, in spite of the common roll, we should always be at pains to ascertain African opinion, I pointed out that in this country African opinion is represented through our normal channels of government." And the Prime Minister, interviewed on the incident, expressed his government's resentment at Mr. Gordon-Walker's direct meetings with the Africans since, "here we have a properly constituted Parliament appointed by election by British subjects who qualify to get on the common voters' roll. Africans are British subjects in Southern Rhodesia."

What Sir Godfrey Huggins did not say was that out of an African population of 1,898,000, the number of voters, through the financial and property qualification, and the education qualification, is . . . three hundred. (See FREEDOM, 31/3/51 and 23/6/51).

Thus the Victoria Falls conference is unlikely to reach any further conclusion than the last conference held there, when as Miss Rita Hinden recalls, "the European unofficials of the three territories met in 1949 and concocted their own thoroughly unpalatable federation scheme with no single African present".

The *Times Review of the British Colonies* says unctuously: "To make the right choice will require in many instances the sacrifice of short-term sectional interests. History, however, is full of examples where such self-abnegation has brought rewards out of proportion to the sacrifice, and there are grounds for hope that Central Africa will not be behind in this respect."

But the sacrifices would come, not from the settlers, but from the Africans, and what history shows, as the Northern Rhodesian African Congress said earlier this year, is that "colonial countries which have been granted Dominion status have either exterminated the indigenous peoples or turned them into

THANK YOU, Mr. FIGGINS!

RAILWAYMEN will be interested to know that they may soon have their union leader's permission to go on strike. At a meeting at Oswestry last Sunday, Mr. J. B. Figgins, general-secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, attacked the "misérable increases" which the Rail Executive had offered the workers in reply to the union's wage claim.

The day had gone, he declared, when they could not declare a strike. "The union can declare a strike," he said, "and declare it officially. If these people are sufficiently foolhardy theirs is the responsibility, but we are no longer going to see our men treated with contempt." The union had asked for a 10 per cent. increase all round; the Executive had offered what amounts to a 5 per cent. increase—which, on the lowest grades, amounted to only 4s. 6d.—and in some of the higher grades, less than 5 per cent. was offered.

It is a refreshing change to hear some militant talk from a union boss—but we wonder how much of it is due to the pressure from below? If we are not mistaken, the railmen are prepared to strike anyway to get their very justified increase—probably Mr. Figgins thinks it is better for him to lead the strike than for it to be yet another unofficial one—for railmen have shown that they don't have to wait for union permission before taking action.

TUGMEN WORK TO RULE

IN defence of a wage claim, tugmen and lightermen on the Thames are staging a "work-to-rule" which will eventually mean a gradual slow-down of the turn-round of ships.

This dispute concerns an application for a £1 a week incentive bonus, and for 1s. 6d. a day as "contingency pay"—

A LAST WORD ON THE BIG FIGHT

A REUTER report from Cape Town, quoted in *The Times* on 13/9/51, stated that pictures of Randolph Turpin, the boxer, with his white mother, and of him shaking hands with Mme. Auriol, wife of the French President, had been banned in the Union of South Africa.

LITERARY notes—what place have they in a journal devoted to social criticism? The grimmer puritans of the revolution and the extreme aesthetes will probably agree in saying that they have no place at all, and, indeed, their presence seems to be only justified if one takes a wider view of both the struggle for freedom and of the functions of the arts than is expressed in either of these extremes. Some day, before this series is much older, I intend to devote an article to consider the question of the relationship of writing—as distinct from propaganda—to a social philosophy and in particular to one like anarchism which, if it is to live up to its name, inevitably presupposes a much wider field of interest than is encompassed in the narrow outlooks of rigid political parties, an outlook, indeed, that is only limited by the boundaries of thought itself.

However, for the moment I seem to be rather skirting this issue, since the books I am concerned with at present are a couple of volumes which have recently appeared in America* and which throw some new and, I think, very important light on the nature of totalitarian movements, their real aims, and the kind of conditions in which they arise and people from whom they are formed. Neither book is by an anarchist, yet I think that in a number of respects both of the authors run parallel with anarchist thought and give a more definite expression to ideas which have already been touched on in libertarian literature.

The Origins of Totalitarianism, the first of these books, is a weighty analysis by Hannah Arendt—I used the word *weighty* advisedly, since the book is both solid in content and written in a rather heavy academic style, derived from the German universities, which the average English reader will often find indigestible, but which should not deter him from carrying on to the end, since almost every chapter contains really sound and valuable material on various aspects of the subject.

So far as I can tell, Hannah Arendt writes from no partisan viewpoint, and has no axe to grind—unless one can so term a desire to see humanity retain its freedom and dignity and achieve eventually some new insight into the essentials of communal living which will enable the errors of the past to be amended and the dangers of the present to be overcome. But the very detachment of her attitude is an advantage in the task she has undertaken, since it has become steadily more clear that the party propagandists have failed to find, not only a way out of the present world situation, but even its very nature. We are faced with problems which are as much spiritual (or psychological if you prefer the word) as political, as much individual as social, and which those whose concern is for the quotidian details of political life are therefore completely unable to comprehend. Thus the most impressive warnings of the dangers around us have come from imaginative writers like George Orwell, Arthur Koestler and Aldous Huxley, men not concerned with the need to defend limited viewpoints and not afraid to give full rein to their insights into the destructive potentialities of men who regard their fellows as masses to be

manipulated instead of as individual human beings united in a social community of free men. It is therefore not inappropriate that this writer who gives a really adequate attention outside fiction to these same problems should be, not a propagandist of any kind, but a philosophical scholar with a strongly existentialist background.

The book she has written is divided into three sections, showing how the totalitarianism which has afflicted the world since Lenin's day has developed out of the political tendencies which were already inherent in nineteenth-century Europe. Her main thesis is that totalitarianism is not a logical doctrine of self-interest or humanitarian idealism (or the two things mingled unhappily together) like the political doctrines or tendencies of the past. She claims that Nazism and Stalinism, the really developed totalitarian régimes, differ from the earlier tyrannies and despotisms, even including Mussolini's Fascism, since their aims are not merely to create and maintain power, to crush opposition and convert all men to submission to their doctrines. Indeed, according to Hannah Arendt, the true totalitarian begins his most terrible work after power has been attained and all opposition is crushed, for it is only then that he can at last commence the task of remodelling humanity according to the entirely fictional world view, the perverted Utopian vision, which inspires him.

The totalitarian wishes to reduce mankind into characterless and atomised masses which can be manipulated at will by the ruling group. In order to do this he must not only crush all disagreement within his realm; he must equally destroy all those people who, by any difference from the norm, can be regarded as "potential" dissidents, and by this means he not only gets rid of those who might stand in his way, but he also creates a terror of unparalleled intensity which dehumanises the survivors, makes them lose all loyalty to their fellows and unites them with their rulers in the bond of

complicity and guilt. The totalitarian does not merely desire to change his own people; unlike the old-fashioned nationalists, he has aims which are world-wide, for the simple reason that while there is even one man in the world who cannot be controlled, his dominion is not complete. Finally, he is willing to sacrifice himself if it is judged necessary for the good of the cause, and in discussing this last point Miss Arendt gives an explanation which seems to account rather more adequately than most others for the confessions of the Old Bolsheviks and the self-destructive phase which Nazism assumed during the last days of the war.

This vision of political movements in which an unreal and abstract plan has become the dominant determining factor seems at first somewhat obsessional and unbelievable. What we accepted in the fiction of *1984* or *Darkness at Noon* still appears fantastic when it is reduced to the non-fictional terms of a political treatise. Yet it is an explanation that really seems to fit the more monstrous features of totalitarian life—the features which were so appalling to any ordinary mind that at first, during the war, we were inclined to attribute them to atrocity propaganda. How else can one explain such incidents as the extermination of whole racial groups and whole classes, like the Jews and the Kulaks, except by assuming that the people who did these things were governed by some political vision which dominated them beyond the ordinary degrees of sanity? Indeed, if there is an obsessional quality about this book, it is because it deals with men who are obsessed with their completely paranoiac plans of domination to such an extent that their actions completely defy common logic.

Hannah Arendt traces the rise of totalitarian thought through the breakdown of traditional social patterns during the nineteenth century and the disintegration of society into shapeless masses rather than co-ordinated communities. She sees an early symptom in

the anti-Semitism which reached its peak during the Dreyfus affair, she detects the growth of the totalitarian attitude through nineteenth century imperial expansion, with its leaders like Cecil Rhodes, who declared: "I would annex the planets if I could." In these two movements she sees the tendency to regard men as divided between desirable and undesirable groups which has become a major factor in modern totalitarian action. She also devotes some interesting passages to the way in which certain aspects of evolutionary thought and of ideas on eugenics during the past century have played their part in fostering racist doctrines. But she has neglected almost completely the succession of authoritarian Utopias, from the beginning of the sixteenth century, in which the fictional and arbitrary visions now realised in totalitarian practice first began to assume their nightmare quality and their urge towards uniformity and the crushing of individual freedom (in this respect Marie Louise Berneri's book on Utopias* might very well be read in connection with the present work, for under the bland mask of Sir Thomas More one can see already the shadowy anticipation of modern reality and a study of the Utopian mentality through the centuries will do a great deal to explain our own times).

The Origins of Totalitarianism is a bold and original book. Here and there the author has been led by her exploratory zest into some wild and unjustifiable statements, but these do not detract from the philosophical or historical importance of her book. And not least among its valuable attributes is the fact that Miss Arendt refuses to accept any determinist solution; she believes neither in the inevitability of progress nor in that of doom, and she sees the solution to our ills, not in any ordained historical process, but in our free determination to seek a new personal and social basis for our relationships, which will serve as the

* *Journey Through Utopia* (Routledge & Kegan Paul).

most effective barrier to totalitarianism. I am afraid I have been led by my interest in Hannah Arendt's book to such an extent that I have left little space for the other book, *The Trial* by Eric Hoffer. Yet in its own way it is just as provocative a study, and ten in a crisp epigrammatic style. *The Trial* is in itself a delight to read. The author is concerned with mass movements and particularly with the kind of people who enter them; it is not so much a treatise as a collection of briskly pounded thoughts on this subject, but what it lacks in solidity it makes up in the sharpness and shrewdness of the author's insights.

Eric Hoffer analyses the appeal which mass movements make to frustrated and lonely people, and sketches with a pointed economy the kind of people who find their place in such movements—they are brilliant portraits in which one recognises many types one has oneself seen. The second part of the book discusses the way in which mass movements unify their supporters and, finally, means by which they rise to power and consolidate their positions. In this aphoristic book there are many things with which one may not agree, but the "faithful" can be annoyed by candour and Voltairian irony. For an anarchist it has much to say of the important, particularly as one of the problems that may face a libertarian group in some future situation may be that of appealing to the masses without falling into the trap of creating a movement of the kind which he criticises. Beware of the fanatic, beware of the professional martyr, beware of the hero and the hero-worshipper—these are some of Eric Hoffer's warnings, which we shall all do well to keep constantly in mind.

GEORGE WOODCOCK

WHAT IS FASCISM?

What is Fascism? Although so much has been written on this subject, there is no general agreement as to what it is, and no simple definition that will distinguish it from Communism on one side or simple dictatorship on the other. Perhaps the most that can be said is that it is a political technique by which an autocratic government is based on the support of the masses. Every Fascist régime begins with mass support, and although this is often discarded later its continued success depends on a skilful manipulation of public opinion. In the last resort Fascism depends less on the police or the Army than on the political skill of the leader and the existence of an efficient political machine. If this definition is accepted, the Peronista régime in Argentina can fairly be described as Fascist—certainly the only example of true Fascism in South America and perhaps the only surviving example in the world.

Times Educational Supplement, 7/9/51.

GOD HAS HIS USES

Politicians and industrialists who have no personal interest in religion make honorific references to "God" with increasing frequency, and it is doubtless some odd version of social responsibility which causes the outdoor advertising concerns to cover otherwise vacant billboards with the pious counsel, "Attend a church of your choice every Sabbath." Not longings for spiritual insight, but a practical estimate of the organisational binding power of church affiliations is behind this new appreciation of religion. *Manas* (U.S.A.), 5/9/51.

The Fiction of Natural Rights

Dyer D. Lum (1839-1893), the author of this article—which is reproduced from the October 1913 issue of *Emma Goldman's Mother Earth*, a celebrated American anarchist magazine—was a great friend of Albert Parsons, one of the Chicago 'Martyrs', and of Voltairine de Cleyre.

After the execution of Parsons in 1887, he took over the editorship of the *Alarm*. He belonged to the 'mutualist' school of anarchism, but thought the 'utopia' of anarchist communism might be realisable after considerable development under anarchist conditions. In spite of his adherence to mutualism, he was a firm advocate of social revolution and was far more friendly towards the German anarchist communist Johann Most, than towards Benjamin Tucker, whose economic ideas were much nearer his own than those of Most.—S.E.P.

THE very cornerstone of anarchistic philosophy is often supposed to be a paraphrase of Herbert Spencer's "first principle" of equal freedom, that: "Every person has a natural right to do what he wills, providing that in the doing thereof he infringes not the rights of any other person." Yet there lurks in the expression a fallacy that correct thought must repudiate, or we must carry with us a diagram explaining the meaning of the words we use.

What are "natural rights"? In the Middle Ages schoolmen believed that they had solved a problem in physics by asserting that "nature abhors a vacuum"; but a very little study sufficed to convince thinkers that "the web of events" we group as "nature" neither abhors nor likes. With the growth of the conception of law as a term descriptive of mode of being rather than a fiat imposed upon events, the term "natural" has lost much of its old theological meaning. Still it is often used in that sense and too often implies it.

Blackstone defines "the law of nature" as "the will of man's maker". Mackintosh calls it "a supreme, invariable, and uncontrollable rule of conduct to all men". Sir Henry Maine also speaks of "a determinable law of nature" for the guidance of human conduct. Kant defines it as that "which the creator has prescribed to man". F. Q. Stuart in his *Natural Rights*, says expressly: "A natural right is a privilege vouchsafed by natural law to man to exercise his faculties", and his whole work teems with expressions implying the fixity of "real law".

The correct position is, I maintain, that what we term "natural rights" are evolved, not conferred, and if so are not fixed and unalterable. Nature confers no more privilege upon us than upon dogs to exercise our faculties as functions. In fact, to my mind, the very assumption of "natural rights" is at war with evolution. Even if we no longer personalise nature as their giver, the term still carries with it the implication of rigidity, when, in fact, not even that mythical "right reason" with which we are sup-

posed to be endowed, can prove them historically so characterised. Every man is supposed to have a "natural right" to life. Is this co-eternal with man? Did it exist, though unrecognised, among our prognathous ancestors? If the savage transcended "natural right" in disposing at will of the life of a captive, where was it inscribed? It was incarnated in the semi-brute. If the Roman law was based upon "a type of perfect law" in nature, was the recognition of the "natural right" of the father over the lives of his family contrary to the "right reason" of the time? And to this query convictions founded upon nineteenth-century deductions are not pertinent.

Is woman's "natural right" as a "person" the same in all countries under polyandry, polygamy, and monogamy? Or are those relations of the sexes, so important to "well-being and good conduct", ignored by beneficent nature? It has been conclusively shown by sociologists that human progress consists in passing from the militant régime towards an industrial one. Yet the time was when *lex talionis* sanctified revenge as the highest virtue. Time was when not a human being on the face of the earth differed from Aristotle's opinion of slavery as a natural condition. Where was this "privilege vouchsafed by natural law" then inscribed? The question whether society would not have been far more conducive to happiness if such right had been recognised, is as idle as whether eyes behind our heads would not have been equally so. If the "principle" was not discoverable then, but has been now, are we to conclude that it is the final synthesis of "right reason", or that its incarnation is only now visible?

Having thus shown a few of the queries that arise to puzzle anyone who seeks for evidence of the "immutability" of "natural rights", let us examine closer into the nature of "rights" themselves. The human sphere is a province conquered from nature, and hence its relations cannot be termed "natural". It would be equally permissible to call them moral or religious, for the qualifying adjective being given to imply the highest validity, it would be so understood by all to whom either of these words conveyed such meaning. Equally permissible, but equally indefensible in evolutionary thought when implying fixity. But do there exist any such inherent predicates of human nature as "rights"? The same theological bias which characterises "rights" as being "natural" also regards their assertion as being positive. On the contrary, every assertion of a right purely human, paradoxical as it may seem, is negative. The assertion of a "right" is but a protest against iniquitous conditions. Social evolution ever tends to the equalisation of the exercise of our faculties. That is, social intercourse has slowly evolved the ideal that peace, happiness and security are best attained by equal freedom to each and all; consequently, I can lay no claim in equity to a privilege, for that which all alike may enjoy ceases to be privileged. The important deduction from social evolution

is that as militancy has weakened and industrialism widened its boundaries, liberty has ever tended towards such equalisation. Privilege finds no sanction in equity as right, because it violates the ideal of social progress—equality of opportunities.

Therefore it is that, as social relations have become more complex and integrated, the ideal of "a more perfect form of liberty" rises in a form of protest against what only then are discernible as socially wrong, though ostensibly as assertions, such as "rights of women", "rights of labour", "rights" of soldiers and children against flogging, the right to the soil, etc. They are fierce and burning assertions just so far as they emphasise a growing protest against inequitable conditions. In this sense they are anarchistic, inasmuch as only by . . . the abolition of restrictions, is the wrong righted. Our specific "rights" are thus dependent upon our ability to discern wrongs, or the violation of the ever-evolving industrial ideal—equality of opportunities—and exist but as protests. Abolish vested wrongs, and there will be no vested rights, natural or otherwise. Precisely as water flows to a level when obstructions are removed, just so will social relations flow to equitable conditions when restrictions are swept away. And precisely also as liberty comes in does the assertion of "rights" go out.

DYER D. LUM.

FILM REVIEWS

USED as we are to the glamorized Hollywood version of the upper class, it is refreshing to see them in another light through the eyes of French Director, Jacques Becker, in his excellent comedy "Edward and Caroline", showing at the Academy, Oxford Street, London. "Edward and Caroline" is a simple enough story about a young talented pianist and his wife, the daughter of a well-to-do family, who treat the young man with contempt and amusement, but who are quite prepared to exploit his talent. A social party has been arranged by the girl's uncle who hopes to further Edward's career by introducing him to the 'right people'.

The young couple quarrel before the party, and he goes alone to make an impression with his playing, but finally disgracing himself by walking out in disgust half-way through the evening.

With considerable wit, insight and a good cast, Jacques Becker shows us the pomposity and stupidity of a section of the upper class, with too much money in their pockets and nothing in their heads.

The comic figures of ageing women gyrating before their decadent men folk is exceedingly humorous.

The young pianist is delicately played by Daniel Gélin, and Anne Vernon as his silly but devoted wife is charming. Jean Gallant gives a masterly perform-

ance of the rich dilettanté.

In circulation at the moment is another film which gives us a slightly different angle on the upper class, showing how ferocious and cunning they can be when their interests are attacked.

"The Man in the White Suit" (Gaumont Circuit) is the story of an idealistic scientist whose chief ambition is to invent an everlasting cloth. When he finally achieves this and presents himself to a collection of textile monopolists, he is told that if he releases the story of his discovery to the press it will upset the delicate balance of the market. Inevitably before the offer of a large money bribe to suppress his invention, he is locked up by the gentlemen of the business world. He escapes, to be pursued through the streets, not only by the bosses but also by the textile workers, who, learning of the everlasting cloth, think of it as a threat to their employment.

This film gives a wonderful example of the anti-social nature of capitalism, and the blindness of some workers, who through their ignorance do not realise where their real interests lie.

"The Man in the White Suit" skilfully portrayed by Alec Guinness as the scientist, is presented as a comedy, perhaps because of this its message is the more pungent.

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"SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN . . ."

MR. TRUMAN recently told a group of press men that Mr. Dean Acheson would remain his Secretary-of-State while he was President. And he then added, in the manner of an afterthought, that that might be for a long time. But when the reporters pressed him to say what he meant by that he refused to be drawn and told them they would have to work that one out for themselves.

There is not something childish in this little scene? The great decisions whose decisions sway millions of people, and whose every word is weighed and pondered over and over for significant meaning, this man drops hints like a playful father to his children before Christmas.

The politicians are the grown-ups and the electorate the children cowering (or sometimes, perhaps often, cowering) about their fathers, and accepting what father says to permit them. Childish—also more than a little revolting.

That is in America where as we know politics is not merely a game but is also very often a dirty game. Does the same thing happen elsewhere?

Now, we know that politics in England is not rigged by the same dishonest means that from time to time slightly scandalise America. It is rigged by the governmental rigging which is a stock-in-trade of the present Government and its trainees. As to the childishness, the use of superficial inducements and blandishments which adults ought to be ashamed to have offered to them—do we not have these in plenty?

The daily papers are mainly busy at the game of blandishments, "moulding electoral opinion" is a polite description: but if one looks at the political reviews, especially those of the left, one finds that speculation on whether Mr. Attlee will "go to the country" or not this autumn occupies a great deal of space.

The problem is, is it opportune? And this means is "public opinion" flowing with Labour or Tory. Gallup polls are resorted to to test this opinion. Now, without going any further, what sort of a conception of democracy is this, that one does not ask "the country" its opinion at any time, but waits until elaborate enquiry leads one to think that they will give the answer one wants? Democracy claims to respect the opinion of the people, but what kind of respect is evinced here? Need we elaborate on the stunts which range from popularity seeking disguised as "national policy" down to the baby-kissing of election time itself?

Such tricks are inherent in the whole conception of vote-catching as the prerequisite of holding power. But they do not apply to the whole electorate. A rather different childish emotion is mainly relied upon—group loyalty. The great bulk of votes for both Tory and Labour come from people who will never change their loyalty. These people have permanently abdicated their own free opinion and vested it in the party of their choice. The tricks and the stunts are directed towards what are called the "floating votes". It is this not very numerous section of the community whose votes (one can scarcely dignify them by saying decisions) sway the whole issues of elections. Shakespeare makes a politician of Imperial Rome describe them slightly:

" . . . Like to a vagrant flag upon the stream
Lackeying the varying tide . . ."

The *New Statesman* reader may scan the editorial speculations on choosing the right moment for going

to the people much in the same way as other no less serious readers scan the advice (not usually editorial) available in the press before any big race meeting. The politicians may posture and the electorate clap—but is this the whole story? Children are childish when they are given no responsibility and when no weight is attached to their opinion when their co-operation is desired they are bribed with sweets or promises. The electorate is in the same position and its behaviour is childish in part for the same reasons.

But some children grow up. Is it not possible that the electorate may one day do the same? Some children become adults who are able to take their own decisions in a responsible way and build up a body of experience valuable to the community. Furthermore we are beginning to gain some insight into the reasons why all do not develop fully. Anarchists urge little more than that the electorate should take its own decisions and replace a system where they delegate their responsibility to a government by one in which they themselves administer their own lives in the community.

UNBRITISH ACTIVITIES

The Governor of Honduras has dissolved the Belize City Council because of its "disloyal attitude" toward Britain. When it was proposed last week to display the picture of the British king in the City Hall the Council, which wants independence from England, voted against it. The Governor said, "After my God comes my King!"

Industrial Worker (U.S.A., 17/8/51).

Peasants and the State in E. Europe

ALL impartial observers agree that the fear of Nazi Germany and of Stalin's Russia largely prevented the peoples of Eastern Europe from taking more active steps to build a freer society in the thirties. Most were aware, and the events proved them right, that the two dictators would use every opportunity to extend their empires and that even if the people were united in their struggle, as was not the case, they could count on little practical support from the West.

Few, however, saw all that was coming and that the fate of over a hundred million human beings would be decided between banquets at Munich, Moscow (1939), Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam. A stroke of the pen, a handshake in front of photographers, a toast to the host, would enable one maniac to wipe out most of the European Jews, another to kill hundreds of thousands of persons because they were Serb Orthodox and not Catholics and allow Generalissimo Stalin, that great "internationalist", to ship millions of people like cattle across hundreds of kilometres, just because they are Poles and not Ukrainians, and later Germans to make room for Poles.

The end of the war in 1945 left the U.S.S.R. master of Eastern Europe with two problems: to find a reliable ruling class and to dragoon the largest part of the population, i.e., peasants.

Before 1939, the Communist Parties in Eastern Europe had never been, with the possible exception of Czechoslovakia, mass parties. Police action and frequent party purges kept their membership to no more than four figures. Apart from Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, where pro-Slav feeling existed, the other Communist Parties had, very little influence because they were rightly considered as tools of Soviet imperialism. Their members were chiefly young intellectuals and workers; the peasants were an exception rather than a rule.

The predominant position which the C.P.s quickly achieved in these countries in 1944-45 and the large number of posts

to be filled in order to maintain full control of the State machinery forced the Communists to accept hundreds of thousands of members. Like other classes of society the peasantry contributed its recruits though proportionally less than the intelligentsia. The governments succeeded however in finding everywhere their own nominees in the villages for key posts like the president and secretary of their political, co-operative, women's and youth organisations. It is through them as well as the punitive organs of the State that the present régimes maintain their hold in the countryside. Conversely they are often the first to get beaten-up or even murdered by dissatisfied peasants.

The widespread unpopularity of the Communist dictatorships all over Eastern Europe is due to many causes beginning with the behaviour of Soviet units in 1944-45 to the present forced collectivisation.

The second land reform carried immediately after the war was followed by the announcement of various "Plans" whose aim was to change the entire structure of East European economy. A large number of industrial plants were to be built within a short period together with power stations, railways and harbour installations. In that way the Communist planners hoped to achieve economic independence as regards the West and to lay the basis of Socialist States ready to fight alongside the U.S.S.R. in what they consider the inevitable conflict with the U.S.A.

Such ambitious plans called for a very large labour force drawn from the villages. Badly housed in the bombed towns, ill-fed, lacking material incentives and without technical skill, their output is necessarily low. When one adds to the above causes the incompetence of an enormous bureaucracy, the cold war which prevents the import of machinery from Western Europe and the vast sums of money spent on military purposes, it is plain why the plans have failed, why the standard of living is going down except for the privileged class and why there is so much bitterness.

Just as in the towns, the power of the State grew in the countryside. The destruction of the old order and of the rival political parties as well as the compromise which the Catholic Church was forced to seek with the régime left the

Communists as the only real organisation and allowed them to crush the peasants by forcing them into collective farms only a few years after the land had been distributed.

The excuse given was that the small-holdings were inefficient and that with the aid of machinery supplied by the State the kolkhozes would enable their members to lead a happier and easier life.

Theoretically it is not compulsory to enter a collective farm but the State by devious ways forces the peasants to join them sooner or later. Those who remain outside find difficulties in obtaining seeds, implements, permits, clothing coupons, salt, etc. They have to join a "voluntary labour brigade" far from their homes and their children do not find it easy to gain access to higher education. Above all, they have to pay high taxes and deliver to the State a large part of their crops at ridiculous prices or in exchange for coupons entitling them to non-existent consumer goods. Sometimes when they have not the required quantity, they must buy the products in a "free" market in order to surrender them to the State at the trifling prices fixed by the latter! Their only other alternative is to go to prison for a few months or years.

In consequence, they join the collective farm where an even drearier life awaits them. They watch the waste accompanying Marxist "planning" and see that the kolkhozes are run by men chosen primarily for their loyalty to the régime and that the task of these bureaucrats is to extract as much work and food as possible for the State. Their earnings, often based on piecework, are calculated by a host of officials and do not buy the goods they want. Agricultural machinery is slow to arrive because the armaments industry is too busy, and overtime is expected both on the farm and on the public works in the neighbourhood.

The peasant becomes taciturn and distrustful of both men and ideas. He no longer believes the written word for he has been stultified by too much propaganda in the past fifteen years. But he wants to get out of the collective farm with all that it implies and be master of his own fate. How it is to be done he does not know. In this he is not alone, for millions all over the world are asking how. I.A.

Pathological Politics

WHAT is coming to the top in America to-day (writes Alex Comfort in a letter to the *New Statesman*) is not the need for self-defence, or even the need for imperialist expansion, but the need for an enemy, a need arising from psychopathology, not politics. If there were no Soviet Union, no Communism, it would have been necessary to invent them. In such an enemy there can be no "evidence of a change of heart", because to admit any change would be to destroy the enemy's emotional function.

The determinants of this intensely dangerous pattern go deep in American culture, though in the past they have generally been under the control of saner and more liberal traditions. The repressed revulsion and guilt over the violence of the last war, and the atomic bomb in particular, have shaken that control. To a public traditionally pacific such contradictions of upbringing must be rationalised at almost any cost. If this is so, and I believe the detailed analysis of American society and literature uphold the idea, every new act of violence, every new Syngman Rhee, aggravates the position. It explains the disproportionate savagery of the methods of war which the Pentagon advocates. The last time a great nation became the prey of forces of this kind, the outcome was written in Belsen. Nobody suggests that other nations and other governments are immune to such forces. Russian internal politics have suffered much from

them. But the United States is *par excellence* the emotionally-driven Power of the post-war scene. And in its policies, forced, through its social system, upon saner administrators by the certifiable fringe, we are still dumbly acquiescent. Paranoia is contagious. When a man of Eisenhower's calibre can talk of a crusade against Communism with atom bombs as a practicable reality, we begin to realise how contagious. The forces of sanity in America are both strong and culturally deep-rooted. We are doing nothing to uphold them, and they may go by default, or be stamped by a calculated device. Other forces than the ordinary pressures of profit and prestige will ensure that, if Russia is combative, she is denounced as a warmonger, and, if conciliatory, as a hypocrite. Will the delegates at the Japanese Treaty Conference remember the gibbering hysteria which followed Pearl Harbour? Will they remember that if the "little yellow bastards" who were yesterday attempting to "rape civilisation" are gallant allies to-day, the "diabolical forces of evil" which have replaced them in the imagination of Senator McCarthy may, in a depopulated world ten years hence, prove in retrospect to have been ordinarily misguided human beings? Will we in this country, drawing on a sense of historical balance which is rare in the political record, allow our fate to be sealed by a small but vocal minority of mental patients playing upon the endemic neurosis of a sick nation?

Foreign Commentary

Continued from p. 1

How the other Americans Live

TO those people in Europe who think of America as a land of milk and honey, central heating and refrigerators, motor cars for everyone, and equal opportunities for all to "make good", the Economic Report issued by the Congressional Joint Committee in Washington giving a survey on how millions of families are obliged, and manage, to live on incomes of less than \$2,000 a year will perhaps come as a shock to them.

There were 10,500,000 families with incomes of \$2,000 or less in 1949. They include truck drivers for small retail organisations, ash collectors, hotel workers, clerks, laundry workers and domestic servants. The report said: "The most frequent method used to cut down the food budget was to eliminate meat and milk except for babies. The habit was to economise by eating starchy diets that are filling—bread, potatoes, macaroni, spaghetti, rice. Many families reserved meat for Sundays and holidays. Few ate fruit unless the family lived in a region where certain kinds are plentiful and cheap".

Old bread was widely used, the committee found, to cut costs.

"A new suit, dress or overcoat was found mentioned as a rarity for grown-ups," it said. "Most clothing purchases were made on the credit plan or second-hand, and there were many families who depended entirely on gifts of clothing from relatives and charitable agencies."

"The housing shortage since World War II added something inexorable to the life of low-income families which has been devastating to those of us who have seen it at first hand."

"We still wrangle in towns, cities and capitals state and national, about the housing shortage while countless children are being brought up in squalor. But health is the point of highest vulnerability."

"The defences of low-income families are really down when sickness strikes and our common barriers against its onslaughts on health and livelihood are as yet painfully inadequate."

Also from Washington comes the estimate that the total cost of Government for the coming year will be over \$500 for every man, woman and child in the United States.

To appreciate what this means, let us take the case of a Providence truck-driver mentioned in the Report. He has a wife and ten children. Now the total "cost of Government" for these twelve persons is more than \$6,000. Yet the Report informs us that this man's earning for the year were \$1,924!

And listen to what the report has to say about this family: "To us their struggles and makeshifts, their ingenuity and grit, as well as failures and unwise choices are part of . . . American life," the committee said. "So, too, is the spirit that keeps them going and spurs them on."

At the other end of the scale is somebody like Mr. Dudley J. Le Blanc. But he is not included in the Report. He has made good, and is news and is featured in a recent issue of *Time*. Mr. Le Blanc is the concocter of a patent medicine called *Hada-col*, which is a cure-all. "In four years—and on an investment of only \$2,500—Le Blanc's sales have jumped from \$75,000 to an estimated \$25 million this year." Now Mr. Le Blanc has sold out for more than \$8 million but will stay on as sales chief for 15 years at a salary of \$100,000 a year! What the Report says of the Providence truck-driver could well be applied to Mr. Blanc. Who can deny his "ingenuity" and "grit"; and as to the "spirit" that keeps him going—why, *Hada-col*, that cure-all mixture contains, among other things, a liberal dose of "24-proof alcohol".

LIBERTARIAN.

Trade Unions v. Govt. in W. Germany

THE German Trade Unions in the Western zones have announced that they will cease to co-operate in all organisations set up by the Federal Government or the Occupying Powers for the purpose of reorganising the German economy or of influencing its development. Their statement says:

"There are Federal Government committees for the discussion of wage and price problems, for the allocation of raw materials, for import and export, and so on, but all these committees are only in a position to make recommendations and have no executive authority, and the trade union representatives are in most of them only in a minority."

"Co-operation, however, will also cease with organisations which were set up by the Occupying Powers, as for instance, the executive of the German coal mining industry (the DKL.B), the trustees of the German steel concerns, and a similar organisation for the chemical industry. In all these committees the trade unions had, in the eyes of the occupying powers and of the German people, considerable responsibility. They do not wish to shoulder this in future, if the German economy should continue to develop along the present lines which are in direct contrast to the democratic and social aims of the trade unions."

"The relation between wages and prices in Germany has become impossible. Real wages are constantly dropping, because the Government wants to

give business a chance of building up wrecked German industry from the profits gained from high prices. Through import controls and customs, prices are in part being kept artificially high and tax reductions were also granted for undistributed profits used for self-financing. All pleas by the trade unions for a social policy within the committees have remained without success. Steadily increasing prices make life unbearable for not only pensioners but also for the lower wage groups and agricultural workers, and unskilled workers earn less than the subsistence minimum. Even the occupying powers have criticised this economic policy, for instance Mr. Catterie, the former ECA representative."

"The trade unions, however, are also very disappointed by the policy of the occupying powers. After the collapse of the Nazi Reich, all property belonging to the big concerns were confiscated and handed over to trustees for administration. The idea was to liquidate the concerns and to prevent their owners, many of whom were guilty of bringing about Nazi barbarism and the last war, from seizing power again, which in Germany is often the same thing as political influence. The trade unions wanted to help in this task and it was their duty to do so. They helped to plan decartelisation and to put it through, and their nominees were also entrusted with trusteeships. They co-operated, however, on the condition that the removal from

power of the old owners would be completed by the socialisation of their industries."

"Now, unfortunately, the occupying powers have not only taken some of the coal mines out of the trusteeship, they have also ordered that shares of the old concerns can be exchanged against the shares of the new companies. This means that former cartel shareholders would again become owners of the new workers and the whole of the work of the trade unions during the last years would be undone. The trade unions demand that the German Parliament alone shall decide the question of ownership in the coal and allied industries and that until that is done nothing shall be altered in the present state of affairs."

"Since the right of co-determination which has been won after bitter struggles is also being sabotaged and the Government coalition parties will not tolerate an extension of these rights to other branches of industry, since prices rise from day to day and the old captains of industry, even the right-wing extremists continue to increase their power and influence, the trade unions no longer want to bear the responsibility. They have not yet decided on extreme measures—up to now they have only threatened and are negotiating with the authorities, but there can be no doubt that they will apply them unless Government and occupying powers can decide to revise their policy."

A Subject Race in England

FOR the last five hundred years or more, a race of people who speak a corrupted form of Hindi and whose origins are lost in the mist of ages, have roamed the lanes and commons of England, firstly in tents and for the past hundred years in wooden caravans. A lot of romantic rot has been written about them. A lot of sadistic lies have been told of them. They are the Romany gypsies.

Until the last few decades they have never accepted the laws of England and have lived in England outside society and have flourished through the most vicious persecution.

Only since the 1914-18 war on the whole have they registered the births of their children, although a minority had done so previously in cases where property was involved. They were opposed to legal marriage, holding that it destroyed the *dook*, or spirit of the union. I have never known a case of a dissolved sexual union after they decided to "join hands".

They were against "education", claiming that the civilised education destroyed the man, and that only by being free of other men's ideas could they live a full gypsy life. Even in this generation few have been to school and these few are held by the real gypsy to be suckers—*loco-mushero*.

The abnormal in man has never bothered the gypsy. Prostitution is frowned upon, but what the *gorgio* or non-gypsy generally thinks of as perversions are considered to be a natural ebullition of nature, and not to be commented upon unless someone is being unfairly victimised. The gypsy doesn't despise the homosexual, who is called *koski-loco-mescro*—the good silly fellow.

In marriage in the gypsy tradition there was no ceremony, legal or otherwise. They merely told their *uncles* they were taking a tent together and had a feast and banned other people from their tent until they felt it safe to admit them. I don't know what this period was. Today, the gypsy is still chary of going into young people's caravans.

The modern gypsy is either a farm worker, a rag merchant, log cutter and seller, horse dealer, or a mixture of these. Scrap metal merchants are often gypsies, too, but many of them try to hide their gypsy origin as they become wealthy and buy houses.

Under the old laws, gypsies could be

moved on. Under the Public Health Act and the new Town and Country Planning Act of 1947, gypsies are moved out. Out of life, let alone society. Firstly, no Council will accept a regular gypsy on its Housing List. Secondly, no gypsy can camp on "unlicensed" ground, the penalty being £5 for the first offence and £2 a night for each subsequent offence. Thirdly, the Public Health Act demands that ground licensed for caravans shall have piped water and water-borne sewerage. Fourthly, the Councils are advised not to issue licences for gypsies in urban areas where there is sewerage and piped water to meet the P.H.A. requirements. Fifthly, owing to the P.H.A. requirements, the rural areas where "property rights" are not jeopardised by the smell of the gypsy camp-fire do not usually have the conveniences to meet these requirements and so cannot "legally" grant licences for movable dwellings. Finally, where camps have been established for a long time, the Councils bring pressure to bear on the landowners to sell out, and then refuse to issue licences for fresh ground.

When I rang up a Member of Parliament about twelve families who had been turned off White Hart Common, Ealing, and outlawed and brutally harassed and fined, he said, "Did you say they were camping on the roadside? What a place to choose. They're hopeless." I don't know what he would have done in their place. I believe it is impossible to hold a caravan suspended in mid-air.

For a while I worked in conjunction with another M.P., until I discovered that his idea was large Government camps with schools, Labour Exchanges, adult education, and baby crèches. Then I left him. He is against the "haphazard issue of licences".

The gypsies have several such false friends. They are a natural people—the greatest liars in the world in business—but among friends and relatives a lie is considered a real offence. Their philosophy is interesting. I, as a gypsy by origin can sum it up like this: "No interest in my neighbour's affairs unless he needs my help. No pandering or flattery among the people. No one is to influence another in his life, it's not merely impertinent, it's too big a responsibility."

Every week scores are being turned off from their camps, and new licences are generally being refused.

There is much in the gypsy life which would interest anarchists, also there is much that would annoy them. But they are the last people in this country who have held out against the power of the State and have lived (very largely without harming anybody) at peace with the people of the world who have so sadly rejected them and their message.

(Our correspondent is a descendant of Jasper Patulengro.)

SECRET POLICE

IN any case, it is not our job to feel superior to the Americans and to say: "It can't happen here!" It is much more important to see that it is not happening here already.

We, too, have a powerful political police, though no one mentions it. It is so powerful that it can defy the Prime Minister.

When Ramsay MacDonald was Prime Minister, he asked to see the file on himself; the secret police refused.

Do our secret police watch only Communists? We have no means of knowing. But I remember the amusement of my father, a Labour councillor in Preston, when he discovered that his telephone was being tapped during the General Strike of 1926.

And the other day, ringing up a Labour M.P. of moderately Left-wing views, I heard again the characteristic click which I used to hear on my father's telephone, and which since then I have heard only in Nazi Germany and the Communist countries of Eastern Europe. Perhaps it was only a Post Office engineer seeing that the M.P. got good service. All the same, I wonder...

There is another danger to freedom which has nothing to do with the secret police. That is the outcry which is raised when anyone gets out of step; particularly when anyone takes a line which does not fit in with that of the great political parties.

—A. J. P. Taylor in *Sunday Pictorial*, 16/9/51.

DON'T TURN YOUR NOSE UP AT DISHWASHING

Mr. S. Caton, chief sanitary inspector for Colne, said that as long as dish washing was regarded as a menial task of no importance, so long would we see lipstick on cups and the remains of a previous meal on plates.

Further, we would continue to find the water in which dish-washing was done heavily contaminated.

"The ideal place for adult education is at the sink, with everybody employed gathered round," he said.

News Chronicle, 13/9/51.

ANARCHISM AND PACIFISM

IT appears from FREEDOM correspondence that readers belong to two utterly opposed camps: those who believe that our aims can be achieved by violence—that is, with the aid of a militia—or by non-violent methods. The Danes practised non-violent resistance during the occupation of their country by the Germans. They had no army to fall back on but by their own unaided efforts the enemy was compelled to give way; the Danes refused to co-operate or to obey and by their free and fearless bearing they showed what any people can do in their circumstances. The Germans were made to look foolish in spite of their superiority as to weapons, and partly, no doubt, because of this.

I believe that it is in this sphere of personality there lies the means of dispelling violence wherever it is met, and whether the enemy is numerous or composed of one or two persons. Non-violent resistance depends on a higher or a different sort of courage than is needed in meeting violence with violence, and it raises the conflict to another plane or level than the merely physical.

In closing I would like to mention one or two books on the subject if I

may: *The Power of Non-Violence*, by R. Gregg, is the "text-book", published 20 years ago, and it contains scores of instances of the triumph of personality over superior force. To the point also, is *Ends and Means* by Aldous Huxley (1938), and finally, there are the published writings of Gandhi, almost any of which will furnish evidence of the importance of this sort of pacifism. *Preston*, Sept. 13. W. ARTHUR LEMIN.

MAY I thank S. E. Parker for his contribution last week in the argument? Perhaps the distinction between revolutionary pacifists and those who accept law-and-order could be developed in some future contributions on non-violent means of revolution. I should sincerely welcome discussion of these means, for I find that the defence of the revolution is one of the thorniest points we have to deal with.

I must say, however, that I think our pacifist comrades have rather betrayed the bees in their bonnets when they have pounced upon the one factor in my argument on which they see red, and have completely ignored the arguments with which I surrounded it.

REWARDS OF LABOUR

YOUR article on "The Rewards of Labour" is significant because it touches the pockets and therefore the more sensitive parts of the Body Political.

From general considerations of the present economic structure of society, what you have quoted is sound, but I think the picture is not complete without the view of the University graduate who finds himself having to earn a living.

The average student aims at a higher education because he knows there is a financial reward at the end, and regards it as compensation for the period spent on studies when his counterpart in industry is already earning. If there were no great profit to be made from a degree on a long-term basis the Universities would lose a section of their population overnight.

It is this which causes men in their middle thirties to go back to the colleges and stake their savings or what they can get from a grudging State on some three-year course, and the motive that moves a number of apprentices to take evening classes.

The tragedy is not that these people expect more, it is that they are driven into study not for love of science, that being the line which pays most, but to

make a decent standard of living, which if available to all would enable an overall rise in our educational standards possible.

It is one thing to see no disgrace in a clerk being able to discourse on Political Economy or the Classics, it is another to see none in the case of a man wishing to undertake a more intellectually satisfying task being compelled by the anomalies of capitalist society to waste his talents or blunt his imagination in a cul se sac.

In the sense of values which are inculcated by the wage system it is only natural that the graduate should expect more, and until the present is replaced by a radically new society it is hardly fair to blame mathematicians for wanting their slice of the postulated cake.

The problem of graduate unemployment seems to have been somehow missed. It is surely ridiculous to waste years of training in techniques, laboriously acquired knowledge of cultures, and the like in some futile routine post. Street cleaning is not only beneath the person with higher education, it is a task which offers no reward in human dignity to any man, and the present state of technology is quite sufficient to abolish this type of work, if Governments were not more preoccupied with squandering our rapidly diminishing natural resources on weapons.

ROBERT A. GREGSON.

RAILMEN'S SUGGESTIONS

IT is reported that 10,497 suggestions for improving the Railways have been submitted to the Railway Executive from all grades of workers throughout the industry. Over 900 of these ideas have already been adopted. These include the retiming of trains to afford better service or provide connections with other trains, the fabrication of engine sand boxes in mild steel instead of casting them, improvements to the anthracite stoves used in kitchen cars, the renaming of a halt so as to indicate clearly its location, the provision of direction signs to refreshment rooms, amendments to rules, and a device for shaping rail ends before welding.

Perhaps this is one answer to the critics of Anarchism, who say that anarchists have too much faith in the workers' ability to take over and control industry and that we must wait until they are 'educated' to do so.

But we never claim that workers could manipulate capitalism (who would want them to?) only the practical business of running industry. And these suggestions show, even in a small way, their capabilities for that.

Special Appeal

September 8th—17th :

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†Previously acknowledged ... 370 0 6

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†The total in last week's list of the Special Appeal was given as £12/17/0, whereas it was in fact £16/17/0. The gross total should have read £370/0/6 which corrected figure is now included in this week's total.

*Readers who have undertaken to send regular monthly contributions.

VICTIMS OF EXPEDIENCY

Those of your correspondents who so airily condone the slavery of the Spaniards for the sake of their bases and harbours are digging the grave of their own liberty. Let them see that they do not deserve to become slaves themselves.

Salvador de Madariaga, in the *Manchester Guardian*, 14/9/51.

I have been accused of wanting violent revolution, and of wanting to destroy those who disagreed with me—as though I wanted to set myself up as a dictator leading a militaristic putsch!

Could I ask them to re-read my article with as open minds as they can, when I think they will find most of the points they raise have been anticipated and answered, even if briefly.

To return to S. E. Parker's contribution, may I also suggest that his point about workers' militia not being separate from the masses and also his quote from Voltairine de Cleyre's book (which I have not read) were also explained in my article, when I wrote: "... there is no intention of making [workers' militias] a permanent institution" and also "The conscious worker-in-arms has only two aims: to prevent the means of production falling back into the hands of the ruling class, and to get back to his constructive life as soon as possible." (new italics.)

The main point surely is that anarchists are fully aware of the danger of all forms of organisation—which is the ideas of anarchism and syndicalism have developed as they have, and we can say to-day that if we were those ideas the danger of corruption reduced to the very minimum possible when dealing with fallible human beings. *London*. PHILIP SARSON.

Editor's Note :

We hope that Philip Sarson's note will allow him the last word in this controversy, which we must now close.

The article which has been referred to ("The Defence of the Revolution") appeared in FREEDOM, 7/7/51 and is still available, price 5d. post free will, however, appear as a chapter in the reprint of the series "Syndicalism—Workers' Next Step" which will be published during October.

We hope also to return to the subject of Pacifism versus Anarchism with statements of our position later, further discussion will be welcomed.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

OPEN-AIR MEETINGS at HYDE PARK
Every Sunday at 3.30 p.m.
INDOOR MEETINGS
Recommence:
SUNDAY, 23rd SEPTEMBER
NOTE: New Meeting Place:
BIRD IN HAND,
Long Acre, W.C.
(2 mins. Leicester Sq. Underground Station)
Every Sunday at 7.30 p.m.
Admission Free—Free Discussion
SEPT. 23—Mat Kavanagh on WHAT IS ANARCHISM?
SEPT. 30—Tony Gibson on WORK IN A FREE SOCIETY

NORTH-EAST LONDON DISCUSSION MEETINGS IN EAST HAM

at 7.30
SEPT. 19—Edgar Priddy THE ABC OF ANARCHISM
OCT. 3—Round Table IN MY OPINION
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

BRADFORD

At the MECHANICS INSTITUTE (Saloon)
Monday, Nov. 19th, at 7.30
Eddie Shaw on THE APATHETIC THROG

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