

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"A peasant between two
lawyers is like a fish be-
tween two cats."

—Spanish Proverb

FOREIGN COMMENTARY

FASCISM IN S. AFRICA

AS each week passes, the South African Government takes further steps in consolidating its racial policy and in strengthening its political stranglehold on the country. According to Dr. Malan, the former ("the policy of apartheid for which the Government has been given a mandate") justifies the latter since in his opinion, "the African National Congress and the South African Indian Congress have always been Communist, and planned to combine to paralyse the country". And so, as is the fashion today, every kind of attack on civil liberties is justified by the threat of "Communism".

As a first step in implementing the Suppression of Communism Act, Mr. Swart, the Minister of Justice last week ordered Mr. Solomon Sachs general secretary of the Garment Workers' Union to resign and followed this by ordering the resignation of three more European trade union leaders. Besides having to resign their trade union offices, the men must remain for two years within the provinces in which they are now living and are forbidden to attend gatherings other than those of a social, religious, or recreational nature.

Mr. Sachs has defied the order and on Saturday spoke at a public meeting in Johannesburg attended by more than 2,000 people of all races and colour. The Government replied by ordering his arrest on the steps of the City Hall where he was addressing the meeting. More than 50 people, including many women were injured when police used a baton charge. Later, Mr. Sachs was released and appeared in court on Monday on a charge under the Suppression of Communism Act. At the same time a protest strike has been called by the Garment Workers' Union (40,000 members) and according to reports it was believed that many other unions would come out in sympathy.

Simultaneously with the arrest of Mr. Sachs, an order was issued by the Minister of Justice expelling Mr. Sam Kahn, M.P., who is the natives' representative for the Cape Western constituency from Parliament, and Mr. Fred Carneson from the Cape Provincial Council. In South African political circles there is a feeling that the Government has committed its "biggest blunder". One political observer has remarked that, "The Government has walked right into a trap and by making a martyr of Solly Sachs—which he wanted—it has brought out labour solidly against it."

During the past fortnight, the Malan Government has also banned the Cape-town weekly newspaper, the *Guardian*, which began publication in 1937 and is widely read by the workers. An official notice justifying the ban stated that the *Guardian* was published under the direction or guidance of the South African Communist Party before the party was declared unlawful and dissolved in June 1950. Whatever the leanings of the *Guardian*, the suppression has been rightly described by the political correspondent of the Johannesburg *Star*, S. Africa's biggest daily newspaper, as "the first direct interference with freedom of the press by any South African Government."

To summarise the steps taken by Malan's Government during the past three weeks, in making South Africa safe for the white man, he has stripped the Supreme Court of its constitutional

powers; he has attacked the independence of the trade unions by ordering the expulsion of four of its elected leaders; he has expelled elected Members of Parliament without the consent of the electorate; he has interfered with freedom of the press by banning a newspaper. Such actions unresisted lead inevitably to Fascism of the most blatant kind.

IN a comment on these actions, the London *Observer* (25/5/52) refers to the appeal to international trade unions by the South African T.U. movement and non-European organisations, and adds: "This appeal should not go unheard, for Dr. Malan has always shown himself to be extremely sensitive to serious-minded criticism from Britain and the United States."

On what grounds is this opinion based? Surely "serious-minded criticism" can only come from people with clean hands, and who can say that the record of British and American Governments justifies them in protesting against the actions of Dr. Malan? Can the Government which bans Seretse Khama from his own country against the wishes of the members of his tribe; which pursues a military campaign in Malaya, the extent of which is itself an indication of the large opposition to British rule in the country, apart from many other indications to this effect—can such a Government put moral pressure on Dr. Malan? And the American Government, which, if only on the grounds of expediency, is prepared to acknowledge and finance Franco's régime in Spain; which is in the throws of an anti-Communist witch hunt at the expense of civil liberties; which withholds passports from its citizens because their views are unpopular or alleged to be; which questions people as to their political views before admitting them even as visitors to the United States. And the list could be indefinitely extended.

That Dr. Malan is not concerned with American or British official opinion is clearly shown by his actions. And what is particularly important is that whereas precise details of what happens behind the Iron Curtain or in Franco's Spain are difficult to obtain, and in the case of South Africa the world's press publishes detailed reports from their correspondents on the spot, thereby indicating, we think, that Malan is *not* concerned with suppressing publicity on the fascist

measures he is introducing in South Africa, and is *not* concerned with what world opinion thinks about his actions. We repeat, he knows that the "democracies" are themselves in no position to criticise, that they have on their hands too many crimes against the right of the individual. And what is more tragic is that this can be said not only of governments but of the trade union movements and the people as a whole who by their apathy and their acquiescence in the actions of their governments, themselves become tainted with those governments' crimes.

TO-DAY in the world there is only one kind of "serious-minded opinion", and it is to be found among those men and women who think for themselves and who have the moral courage to refuse to support policies and actions which they judge to be morally wrong. To-day, to support the Stalinist régime is to acquiesce to the concentration camp, forced labour and thought control. But in political terms the alternative is to support the Western Powers: the political trials in Spain, Yugoslavia, and the suppression of free speech; the suppression of Communism Act in South Africa and the House Un-American Activities Committee in America; the "anti-Communist" wars in Malaya, Indo-China and Korea; the re-settlement or house arrest of "undesirable elements" in Tunisia, Malaya, America and Bechuanaland; it means the Napalm bomb and the atom gun; it means conformism and ultimately the concentration camp of the mind as well as of the person.

Everybody is conscious of the drift to totalitarianism throughout the world. But so few seem to realise that there can be no solution along political lines, and in spite of the growing body of evidence to this effect. "Public opinion" to-day is manufactured by the gutter press, or by Governments in order to further their own ends. Governments will only respect "public opinion" when they realise that the public is doing its own thinking. When that happens the job of governing will be an onerous, if not an unnecessary one. And for that reason perish the thought that there are "good" and "bad" governments. It is in the interests of neither to encourage independent thinking!

LIBERTARIAN.

THE ITALIANS

A Defeat for the Working Class

THE Anarchists have always stressed the tremendous strength that lies in the hands of the workers, if they want to use it. We drew attention, shortly after last year's election, to an article in the *News Chronicle* in which its industrial correspondent, Margaret Stewart, pointed out that the real power in the country lies in the hands of the organised workers.

1951, she reminded us, was not 1926, and whereas then the coal owners could shut down the mines for six months with no ill effect to any except the miners, now, if the pits closed for six days the result would be disastrous for the precariously balanced economy of this country.

In other words, this nation of 50 millions is resting on the shoulders of 700,000 grimy workers who could make practically any demand they wished, and could not be denied.

But what has been the outstanding demand recently from any section of the miners? The demand for direct action (from South Wales) against the Tories' cuts in social services? No; that was soon talked out of existence by the union leaders. The most determined and stubborn action we have seen by any section of the miners since the war has been that against the Italians employed at Bullcroft in Yorkshire.

We have already dealt with this incident more than once, and pointed out that it began with the resentment by young haulage hands at the fact that Italian workers were getting the full rate for the job whilst they were not old enough to qualify for it.

Instead, however, of fighting to get the full rate at an earlier age than 23—the age agreed between the unions and the N.C.B.—the haulage hands went on strike to take the Italians' jobs away from them.

We believe the whole stupid business has been motivated by the Communist Party, who have campaigned, in this country and in Italy, against the Italian miners coming here.

Well, they have succeeded. The N.C.B. has now bowed to the inevitable and accepted the Bullcroft decision. The Italians have been suspended on full pay all through the dispute, but now the N.C.B., through the Ministry of Labour, is looking for other jobs for them, or

giving them the right to end their contracts and return home.

Fortunately, Bullcroft is not typical of Britain in general. Among offers made to give them jobs, comes some from the tin mines of Cornwall, which are being opened up more fully than for many years.

The Cornish tin mines were idle and derelict for years until the war created a demand for tin produced in this country and they were opened up again. The end of the war saw again a falling off of production, but, presumably because of the insecurity of British tenure in Malaya, chief source of tin in the Empire, they are now being developed once again.

From sources in Cornwall we learn that South Crofty, the Redruth mine, has agreement in principle with the trade unions for the employment of Italian miners underground, and a hostel is being erected to house an intake of 50 with the proposal later to double that number.

The arrangement was that officials of the mine should travel to Italy to vet volunteers, and on their report the first 50 would be brought to England. Men only would come, but it is understood that when they had shown they were of the necessary calibre (whatever that means!) and there was accommodation available, they would be permitted to send for their families at their own expense.

More underground workers are necessary at South Crofty to help the development work, which is essential to successful continued production, and as new British labour for underground work in Cornwall is almost non-existent, the Ministry of Labour was approached and agreed to the importation of Italians.

Union officials were also consulted and consented to important conditions as to wages and terms of employment and the reservation of the right to re-open the question if it were considered desirable.

It is now understood that negotiations are proceeding regarding the employment of 30 Italians from Doncaster. If agreement can be reached it will mean the almost immediate use of trained men and will obviate the waiting period of the visit to Italy of the Crofty officials and the journey of the men they select to England.

Mr. W. E. Cavill, of the Transport & General Workers' Union, said that he could see no reason for obstacles being placed in the way of the Doncaster men coming to Cornwall. Men were badly needed for underground work, and the more men working under the surface the more work there would be for men over-ground.

We have always been given to understand that Cornish folk regard anyone from anywhere East of Plymouth to be a "furriner". We sincerely hope, however, that they will show more hospitality to the Italians than the Yorkshiremen showed.

Interviews are also being held at Mexborough and Doncaster, between M.O.L. officials and the Italians, to discover if any are interested in work in the Western Australian goldfields. A number have expressed willingness to go there, some more can be offered employment in Midland works; only about a dozen have chosen to go home.

So the Bullcroft boys can save their consciences—if any—in the knowledge that most of their victims are being fixed up with jobs elsewhere. But they should not preen themselves on having won a victory. They have not. The Bullcroft incident will remain forever a shameful page in the history of the workers of Britain. A victory, not for working-class interests but for the bosses (who must be laughing up their sleeves) and the slimy agents of Stalin. A mis-use of their power as gross as that of governments themselves, for it strikes at the very roots of the solidarity the workers themselves need—and will need even more in the not too distant future—if they are not to remain forever victims of prejudice and division. P.S.

Western German Rearmament Ratified

LESS than ten years have passed since the Allied politicians solemnly declared that Germany would be disarmed and occupied for fifty years so that never again would she threaten world peace, etc. . . . Last Monday, in Bonn the Foreign Secretaries of Britain, France and the United States, and the Federal German Chancellor took part in a solemn ceremony lasting an hour, during which they signed a number of documents, referred to in Germany as "The Treaty for Germany," and made short speeches uttered with that sincerity which only professional politicians know how. There were references to the occasion being "historic", to the fact that Germany now would "work in a spirit of partnership and mutual trust" and of this understanding being "a basis on

which a free and united Europe can be built."

The text of the "Convention on Relations between the Three Powers and the Federal Republic of Germany" as the document signed last Monday is officially called, revokes the Occupation Statute and abolishes the Allied High Commission and the offices of the Land Commissioners and relations will henceforth be conducted through Ambassadors. But—

"(1) The Three Powers retain, in view of the international situation, the rights, heretofore exercised or held by them, relating to (a) the stationing of armed forces in Germany, and the protection of their security, (b) Berlin, and (c) Germany as a whole, including the unification of Germany and a peace settlement.

"(2) The Federal Republic, on its part, will refrain from any action prejudicial to these rights and will co-operate with the Three Powers to facilitate their exercise."

On Defence, it is agreed that "The mission of the armed forces stationed by the Three Powers in the Federal territory will be the defence of the free world, of which the Federal Republic and Berlin form part."

Particularly significant is Article 5 dealing with "security". "In case the Federal Republic and the European Defence Community are unable to deal with a situation which is created by an attack on the Federal Republic or Berlin, subversion of the liberal democratic basic order, a serious disturbance of public order, or a grave threat of any of these events, and which in the opinion of the Three Powers, endangers the security of their forces, the Three Powers may, after consultation with the fullest extent possible with the Federal Government, proclaim a state of emergency in the whole or any part of the Federal Republic.

"Upon the proclamation of a state of emergency the Three Powers may take

such measures as are necessary to maintain or restore order and to ensure the security of the forces.

"The proclamation will specify the area to which it applies. The state of emergency will not be maintained any longer than necessary to deal with the emergency."

Whilst it can be argued that such clauses are intended to deal with any attempts by Communists from the Eastern Zone to stage a *coup d'état*, it means also that any genuine revolutionary movement within Western Germany will be suppressed as subversive to the "liberal democratic basic order" since the Three Powers whose "opinion" counts in deciding what constitutes "subversive" action are concerned in maintaining the *status quo*.

The agreements have still to be ratified by the Parliaments concerned. Once this formality has been completed, Germany will start rearming, that is, at the beginning of November. During the first six months £50 million of Western Germany's £80 million monthly budget on rearmament will be spent on Allied forces already in Germany. Thereafter for the first three months the contribution will be reduced to £30 million a month and the balance on the German army, and from July 1953 Germany will be able to spend millions of marks every month in building up a brand new army to take its place alongside the other freedom-loving armies of the world.

Meanwhile in the Eastern Zone, the Russians are obviously not wasting time in ensuring that the Germans in their zone shall play their part in the defence of the "people's democracies".

Poor Germany! If it is any consolation to the German people it is that in the next war only half the country will be considered enemies of freedom and war criminals and at least half of the Reich will be on the winning side. Which is a better gamble than putting all one's bombs in one basket! R.

Training Judges in Eastern Germany

INTERESTING light is shed on the administration of "justice" in the Soviet Zone of Germany by the following report which appeared in the *Times* on 20th May, on the training of judges in the Russian sector:

"Dr. T. Friedenau, who is chairman of a committee of lawyers investigating the working of the courts of the Soviet Zone of Germany, said in London yesterday that only 7 per cent. of the judges and public prosecutors in the courts there were legally trained.

"There were 1,133 judges, of whom 793 were 'people's judges', having had six months' training. It was interesting to note, he said, that after a short time in office the Communist people's judges moved away from the Communists' ideology. Of the first three groups of people's judges, 70 per cent. had been dismissed, had fled, or had been arrested.

"Dr. Friedenau said that in the last three years the committee had interviewed 64,000 citizens of the Soviet zone and had thousands of documents proving that the laws and constitution of the Soviet zone were being broken. The Communists did not mind laws being broken so long as the people and other countries were silent about it and publicity was not given to it. The cloak of law was necessary in order to have the Communist ideology penetrating into the west.

"An extension of the work of this committee would be made at the international congress of lawyers which the committee had called and which would be held in Berlin in July."

Such a system and such an attitude is the usual Communist theory and practice. But it also differs in no essential way from the Nazis' "People's Courts". Red Fascism is just as appalling as Black.

MUSHROOM GROWTH!

The imprisoned President and Vice-President of the Sudan Workers' Federation will no doubt be pleased to learn that their membership increased from 100 (*News Chronicle*, 26/4/52) to 100,000 (*Manchester Guardian*, 28/4/52).

THE INDUSTRIAL WORKER

THE BRITISH WORKER, by
Ferdinand Zweig. (Penguin
Books, 2/6)

I WAS discussing, as many readers of FREEDOM have probably been doing, the new paper, THE SYNDICALIST, which advocates workers' control of industry and aims at a circulation amongst industrial workers. A "professional" man told me it was first-rate, another one told me that it underestimated the intelligence of its potential readers. A building craftsman said it was "above the head of the average worker," but a man I know who would be classified as an unskilled labourer, said that ("like FREEDOM") it was "soap-box stuff".

These four people were giving their opinion of the new paper, as a paper addressed to industrial workers, but their views about the non-existent average worker were evidently very different. But there is no doubt that, even allowing for the infinite differences between individuals, you can, once you have made sub-divisions into ages, trades and districts, make certain generalisations about the habits and attitudes of people, and that is what this new Pelican book seeks to do.

The author is an exiled Pole who says modestly, "I am only a beginner in the study of human nature, a novice won over to it from intellectual pursuits, chiefly the study of economics." He has, all the same, written several very good books about working life in Britain, including *Labour, Life and Poverty*, *Men in the Pits*, and the newly-published *Women's Life & Labour*. His method is apparently, simply to go round talking to people and writing down the results with a few tentative conclusions. I say "apparently", because obviously his background of economic and psychological knowledge, and human understanding make him more than a reporter. Also he is evidently the sort of person that people enjoy talking to, while being a foreigner, he is free from the brand of the public-school accent which must handicap many social investigators and hinder them from getting friendly confidences from their subjects.

Dr. Zweig examines first the grades of labour, the great variety of labourers, semi-skilled men and craftsmen, and then industrial types, since, "every industry breeds its own types of men. A coal miner is altogether different from a mechanic, a builder has little in common with a steel-worker, a painter with a cotton worker."

He describes the characteristics of these six industries and turns to regional types. "There are many regions which breed their own types of men. These men are moulded by the natural environment, the location of industries, their conditions of work and industrial relations, the facilities for hobbies, the density of population, the standard of living, their history, their customs and their habits. In every region the pressure of the past influences the people living there and does something to mould their present way of living."

Age is the next factor: "The attitude to work, spending and saving habits, hobbies and pastimes, a man's opinions, and his outlook on life—all these depend on age," and the four main stages in the worker's life which he describes are adolescence, later youth, middle age, and old age. "The time between 15 and 17 is a most critical age and decides the young man's whole future. The decisive point is whether he is apprenticed to a craft or supervisory grade or not. If he fails to be apprenticed, he is left, in the great majority of cases in the labourers' or at best in the semi-skilled men's ranks for life." Dr. Zweig gives a picture of the contrast between George, a man in his twenties, and Peter, a man in his

fifties. George is less interested in saving, he does not care about security as much as Peter, he is more interested in his welfare rights, spends twice as much on clothes. "George will take out his girl or his wife, but Peter will move almost exclusively among his mates," George is an active sportsman, Peter watches. "In the workshop George for various reasons shows much less interest in the job."

"His dissatisfaction with the job comes primarily from the high hopes he started with, which have not so far been fulfilled. Will they be in the future? George will complain about the monotony of his work. His habits of work are not yet as firmly established as Peter's. . . . Peter is completely used to his job, even if it is dissatisfying in itself, and he has even developed a liking for it; while George has not yet been broken in to it. But George is not scared of losing his job, as Peter is. . . ."

"The times have gone when men were ten a penny, although no one knows how permanent this is, in spite of hopes of continuous full employment. But the fact remains that Peter has been brought up in an altogether different atmosphere from, and in a social status lower than, George's. Peter has never expected to be treated as an equal, and when the boss came along he longed for the pat on the back and stood at attention when he was spoken to. That sense of submission is still in him and he cannot help feeling it, while George knows his own status and expects better treatment."

"George likes machines and wants never and better ones, which mean less sweat for him; but Peter dislikes and distrusts machines, and all the time keeps wondering how he can avoid them. For will they not put him out of his job or demote him by making his skill useless? Peter takes a much greater interest in his trade union than George does. When he was young, Peter struggled for the defence and development of his union, but George takes it for granted. . . ."

Older than George and Peter is Richard. "His strength and speed are gradually giving way, his limbs and senses are beginning to fail him." He gets lighter and lighter jobs with less and less money. If he loses his job, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find another one, and the feeling of insecurity is beginning to prey on his mind.

"We are born poor and we die poor"—that is more or less what Richard would think about the people of his class. . . . "Look at them," exclaimed a former labourer and now a night-watchman sitting in his hut on the road,

"the foreman and the craftsman I worked for are doing the same now, sitting in the road like me. We are equal when we die, but our equality really starts earlier, when we are ready to go to an institution—whatever they call it now—or to get our old-age pension."

Dr. Zweig has many very interesting observations on family life. He notes the frequency of what the psychologists call the Oedipus situation among working families and the effect of poverty upon family relationships.

"Many children have seen their mother's pathetic struggle against adversity, her constant, unappreciated round of work, her sacrifices and the tears she weeps in secret, although she smiles in public. Women know that to hold their men they must be attractive, and so they try not to show them their deep sense of tragedy and frustration, and this effort makes their life still more pathetic."

"On the whole," says Dr. Zweig, "the manual worker does not cut a romantic figure. Anyway, he is much less so than the sedentary clerical worker. I believe that, by and large, he has little surplus energy left from his work and sport."

"The worker's family is a functional unit of great value to him. The joining of forces in the struggle of life has nowhere greater meaning than in workers' families. 'Bad as a woman can be, it is still worse without her,' is a statement you may hear from a disillusioned family man. . . . In reviewing the differences in the position of married and single men, I would emphasise as the strongest factor in happiness: *Purposefulness in Life*. If man has a purpose in life, he feels steadier, while without it he drifts and grows restless. A single man has more freedom but less purpose, and we often overrate the blessings of freedom and underrate those of purpose. A man gains happiness from his self-imposed duties and responsibilities."

Two remarks made to him stand out in his chapters on "Habits of Mind and Behaviour" and "The Past in the Worker's Mind." Of habits, someone said to him:

"Some of my friends present a pathetic picture. They move in the same three circles, everybody making the same small moves, from their homes in the slums to their workplaces, from their workplaces to the pub, and from the pub to their homes, starting next day on the same circuit, always keeping the same times, doing the same things, often saying the same things. I am not better myself. Life is repetitive, and

thank God it is. It would be unbearable otherwise."

And of the past, a miner said:

"The funny thing is that when Britain had its large Empire and was the richest country in the world, we workers were worse off than now when Britain is poor and has lost a large part of its Empire. And we hadn't much freedom either in the golden age of freedom. Can you explain that to me?"

The attitude to work, says Dr. Zweig, "is a reflection of the man's whole personality as much as of all the social forces operating in a community. It is both an individual and a social affair."

"My worker friends often discussed with me whether a man works because he is compelled to by the necessity to make a living, or whether he works because work itself fulfils a deep urge in him, satisfies his desire for self-expression and self-assertion, and gives him a sense of dignity and self-esteem, as having a share in the community life. These discussions never had an entirely conclusive outcome. Most were inclined to think that the first proposition was truer to life, or that it was true of themselves; but they did not deny that the second would be true if they had to choose between work and total idleness. Only men with absorbing hobbies had no doubt at all. A cheerful man with much common sense, who heard the discussion, once butted in: 'Thank God we'll never know, because we have to work for a living anyhow, so the whole question is pointless!'"

On the question of monotony in industry, he reminds us that actual factory work gives employment to rather less than a third of the industrial population and that only parts of that are affected by monotony on account of the repetitive and mechanical performances in it. He hints, too, at something that we have often thought. Very many of the writers and intellectuals who hold forth about the monotony of assembly-line production, and so on, exaggerate the extent of it and project their own feelings about it on to the workers concerned. "The most repetitive and mechanical work gives you food for thought, and you can learn a lot by applying your brains to it, one man told him. If you concentrate on one small point, in time you see more and more your powers of observation are so sharpened that you see everything more clearly and you notice more and more things which you never

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MASS MOVEMENTS

THE pleasure that a man finds in belonging to a mass movement arises, always, according to Mr. Hoffer, from a feeling of inadequacy on the part of the disciple. It may be a sense of sin, or a sense of failure, or mere timidity, that makes a man unable to stand alone.

Of these, the sense of sin, is perhaps the most potent. When a man joins in a mass movement he is persuaded that the movement is wholly good and that his virtue is reflected upon himself. His load of sin, on the other hand, is ejected on to an opponent's movement. In this way he is able at the same time to love his co-religionists, to hate the infidels, and to feel that sense of personal worth which, as an individual, he had lost.

Fear of the outer world and hatred of self are thus essential ingredients in the psychology of those who become converts to mass movements in their active phase. These undesirable emotions are multiplied and externalised as the movement spreads, and thus become sources of persecutions and ruthless wars.

If Mr. Hoffer's analysis is right, as I am convinced that it is, the cure for fanaticism lies in the respect, and in preventing the growth of that sort of morbid humility which is regarded by some as the highest virtue. In view, for example, of Dostoevsky's preaching of humility, it is not surprising that he was an intimate friend of the Procurator of the Holy Synod, whose persecutions he supported, a collection of abject individuals who be turned into a cruelly fanatical society; but only a community of self-respecting individuals can possess freedom and tolerance.

—BERTRAND RUSSELL (discussing
The True Believer, by E. E. Schattschneider
Holler (Secker & Warburg, 10/6)

REMINISCENCES OF MEXICO--2

THE REVOLUTION

IT is very difficult for anybody to tell the whole story of the revolution in Mexico, because of the several factions which developed during the revolution. Even if a man was with one of these from start to finish, he would know very little of the other factors. The best he can do is to give a general report of all of them. Each of these factions occupied a certain district of Mexico and had no relations with the other factions, except fighting. With one or two exceptions every one of them claimed to represent the true revolutionary front in Mexico. Every faction followed a certain leader who had a certain aim and programme different, and even directly contradictory, to those of the other factions.

When the revolution started, the Federal army was quickly beaten, the soldiers had not much interest anyway, in fighting for the institutions of Mexico. They had almost all been conscripted into the army after being arrested for transgressions of the common law. When the judge sentenced them he had given them the choice of ten years in prison or ten years in the army, and they had chosen the army.

The revolutionary front in Mexico split after the reactionary forces were beaten, and Francisco Madero was killed in El Paso, Texas, by gangsters in the pay of Wall Street. This split was caused partly by ideological and partly by personal reasons. There was Emiliano Zapata with his primitive libertarian ideas—primitive only in so far as he was not a student of modern anarchism. There was the anarchist Ricardo Flores Magón. There was Pancho Villa, a sort of State socialist, but who knew nothing of socialist theories. There was Carranza, a liberal whose aim was Mexico for the Mexicans and not for the U.S.A. There was Diaz (not the dictator Diaz) who wanted to have a part of Mexico to exploit it for himself. There was Cantu, who wanted a part of Mexico to exploit it for the benefit of U.S. capitalism and his own pockets. There was Maytorena, who wanted to rule a part of Mexico for the benefit of the copper trust in the U.S.A. and his own pockets. There was another individual (whose name I have forgotten) in the oil district of Tampico, who wanted to rule the district for the benefit of the Standard Oil Company and his own pockets. The districts of the last named three "rulers" were in the North of Mexico and bordered on U.S.A. territory, so these "rulers" could flee to the U.S.A. in case things became too "hot".

Cantu was sacked by the U.S. Government after he had become useless to

them. Maytorena was shot by Mexicans for being a traitor in the first years of the revolution. That individual who "ruled" the oil district did a great service to the Standard Oil Company in later years by killing Carranza by mistake. Carranza had become president of Mexico, as far as his power went in the country because the chiefs of the other factions took no notice of him, but his district was the biggest in Mexico. And his government passed laws which reduced the property rights and profits of the Standard Oil Company on its oil wells in Mexico, and let the Mexican Government have part of the profit of the oil wells. Therefore the Standard Oil Company started a revolution against the government of Carranza, who had to flee from Mexico. On his way to a foreign country he was overtaken by the above-mentioned individual who shot Carranza. That was against the wish of the Standard Oil Company, which only wanted to overthrow the government and get rid of the profit-reducing laws. This was in 1919 when the revolution was about ended.

Carranza was a typical liberal politician and by profession a lawyer. His aim was to pass laws to bring all the property which was owned by foreign capitalists into the hands of the Mexican State, with or without indemnities according to the case. For the big land estates he had a similar programme: to divide the land between the peons so that every one of them would own a little farm, and to indemnify, more or less the landowners. This aim has not been achieved in Mexico to-day. Over this issue he split with Pancho Villa, with whom he had started his revolutionary career by fighting against Huerta. Later he had, with Pancho Villa, pushed Zapata out of the capital, Mexico City, which the Zapatistas had occupied in 1914.

Pancho Villa's aim was the expropriation of the foreign capitalists and the landowners, without compensation. The property of the foreign capitalists should fall to the Mexican State, and the property of the landowners to the peons, and every peon should become a farmer without having to pay debts to the former landowners. This aim was in harmony with the former occupation of Pancho Villa. (By the way, this was not his true name, he had another but, alas, I have forgotten it.) Before Pancho Villa took part in the revolution, his occupation had been that of a Robin Hood, taking from the rich without indemnity, and giving to the poor for nothing. He had made many friends amongst the peons during the reign of the dictator

Diaz by these means, and enemies too, among the rich in the States of Durango and Chihuahua in the Northern part of Mexico, where he made his "excursions". "Better be considered a robber than a slave," had been his slogan. After the split between Carranza and Pancho Villa, Carranza kept the state power, was elected president and resided in Mexico City. Pancho Villa went back to the mountains where he had been a Robin Hood, and a bitter fight commenced between these two factions which lasted for about three years, from 1915 to 1918 in the mountains of north Mexico. Carranza had the state power with about 50,000 soldiers, and Pancho Villa had at best only a few thousand friends, and the sympathy of the whole population of North Mexico. Pancho Villa was never beaten by the forces of his adversary. He gave up voluntarily, and when he had given up he was shot by a hired murderer. The man who hired him was General Obregon, who had fought against Pancho Villa in the service of Carranza. Later, this general turned against Carranza in the service of the Standard Oil Company, and led the revolution in which Carranza was killed.*

There were only three movements in the Mexican revolution which fought for an idea, and they were the movements of Pancho Villa, Zapata and Magon. These three had voluntary forces which were dependable, but all other factions depended on hired soldiers, at a peso a day. And these hired soldiers gave up quickly when things got hot in a fight. They threw up their arms and went over to the other side. Or most of them did; there were, of course, exceptions.

The revolution staged by the Standard Oil Company and other U.S. trusts which had interests in Mexico, cleared away all the minor chiefs who held sway over large or small parts of Mexico. Because the new government was in good grace with the U.S. finance interests, it had sufficient means to buy war materials and hire soldiers to fight the little chiefs. Of course, the financial interests were never officially represented—they let the Mexican generals do the dirty work for them.

There was one little chief in the extreme south of Mexico, named Diaz, who held sway over a district, who was also abolished. He was a sort of military dictator with liberal inclinations who taxed his district for the benefit of his own pocket. With him the various tools of U.S. capitalism in Lower California and the oilfields of Tampico, were also abolished. The president of the new central government was Adolfo de la Huerta who before his presidency had been Mexican consul in New York. He

was not elected president but put into the presidency, whether by the wishes of Wall Street I cannot tell. Before this revolution he was an unknown person.

United States troops invaded Mexico during the revolution. There was the landing of U.S. troops in the port of Vera-Cruz which led to a bloody fight between the troops and the population. And then came the "police action" of the U.S. army against Pancho Villa in 1916. This is of a sinister significance in the light of the "police action" of the U.S. army in Korea to-day. One would be justified in calling the action of 1916 the "first Korea" of the U.S. Government. The action against Villa was made in order to prepare the army, and the minds of the people, for war. The "action" was not even finished when Wilson declared war against Germany in the First World War. The same economic, political and military conditions which started the "police action" in Korea, started the "police action" against Pancho Villa. Of course, this "police action" never did any harm to Pancho Villa. On the contrary, before he had been a revolutionary hero, but now he became a national hero, because he had braved the U.S. Government.

WILLY FULANO

(To be concluded—the final article discusses the Libertarians in Mexico.)

*The article "Zapata and History" (FREEDOM, 19/4/52), refers to Pancho Villa's "brutality". The brutality of Villa is propaganda of the United States Government and the Carranza Government in Mexico. He was loved by the people who made a whole string of songs. But it is true that he robbed civilians during the revolution, when he was fighting Carranza. That is, he held up trains. The trains were stopped, and the passengers had to step off and throw all their money and jewels on the ground. The poor were not bothered. And it happened in a few cases that a rich man tried to hide his valuables, and he was shot. That is all the brutality of Pancho Villa. After the rich people had delivered their valuables the train could go on, peacefully. And he also robbed the goods trains on the way to the U.S. border, loaded with silver from the American silver mines in Mexico. Of course, everybody who defended these trains had to take the consequences.

As for what Traven may say, I have only partly read one of his Mexican stories, and of course, what he writes about Mexico is not all nonsense. But in this book he speaks of the I.W.W. in Mexico and it was such nonsense that I threw the book away. I ought to know something of this organisation because I was one of the five persons who founded the I.W.W. in Mexico.

It was always the rich who cursed Pancho Villa and Zapata. I knew a rich German who had made ten million pesos in 30 years in Mexico. But the Zapatistas had taken away from him his luxurious country seat, and he cursed them everytime I met him. He owned about 50 houses besides a big hotel in Mexico City; he ought to have been satisfied with that.

But I have never met anybody of the common people who cursed Pancho Villa or Zapata, or spoke of their brutality.

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THE MORALITY OF AUTHORITY

IN commenting on the kidnapping of General Dodd by prisoners-of-war in the Kojé Island compounds, FREEDOM expressed the hope that the American authorities would not double-cross the prisoners. The fear expressed in that hope has turned out to be well grounded, for General Mark Clark immediately repudiated the negotiations carried on by General Colson as part of the means of securing the release of General Dodd.

Now, however, the American Army Department has reduced Brigadier-General Dodd and Brigadier-General Colson, who succeeded him as Camp Commandant, to the rank of Colonel. General Colson's superior officer, General Yount, has been reprimanded.

General Dodd was held to be at fault for parleying with the prisoners at the gates of their compounds rather than having their leaders brought to his office under guard. By army standards such conduct may be reprehensible, though it seems rather unfair to discover faults only when unfortunate results follow.

But the case of General Colson is rather different. The Army's letter to the Senate Armed Services Committee announcing these reprimands, says that General Colson "was ordered to secure the release of General Dodd, using force if necessary. General Colson faced a difficult situation. He had been directed to use force if necessary. The use of force would probably have resulted in casualties among United Nations soldiers effecting his release, widespread bloodshed among the prisoners-of-war, as well as the probable death of General Dodd. He secured the release of General Dodd without creating the dangers indicated above."

The letter goes on to censure him for making promises which the U.N. Command could not regard as binding, and to censure General Yount, his superior officer for not advising him differently.

There is something offensive about officials in the Pentagon censoring men who were faced with a difficult problem and on the Army's admission solved its practical side satisfactorily. Was General Yount to ask his superior officer and so on up to General Ridgeway or Mr. Frank Pace, U.S. Army Secretary? Obviously those on the spot had to make the decisions, and it was for the U.N. Command to back them up. Clearly the demotions serve to save the face of the United Nations Command.

Of course, they fail to do this. General Clark's repudiation is immoral, the attack on the lesser generals is ungenerous and dishonest, the whole incident as shabby as could be.

Having said all this, however, it does not do to sentimentalize about the prisoners-of-war. The practice of taking hostages is a vile one and should not be countenanced on any grounds of expediency. And the conditions in the compounds where Communist or anti-Communist gangs terrorize the other prisoners, where beatings and torturings are everyday occurrences; where "trials" take place and nightly hangings are common—all these are not conducive to negotiations on strictly moral principles.

Nevertheless, these men are prisoners-of-war. And much of the

responsibility for conditions in the Kojé camp must rest with the U.N. Command. FREEDOM quoted a commandant several months ago as saying that they welcomed hostility between groups of prisoners as it made controlling them easier. In effect, they encouraged the rival terrorist gangs on the principle of "Divide and Rule". These are the United Nations commanders who now stand on moral principles and censure their juniors.

It is well to reflect that this kind of conduct is not new or unusual: it is the morality of Authority.

THEY SHALL NOT BE COUNTED

"In seeking the numbers of the people of the Commonwealth or of a State or other part of the Commonwealth, aboriginal natives shall not be counted."—Article 127, Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia.

THE conditions under which the majority of the Australian aborigines are compelled to live to-day are an affront to humanity. The legal and economic restrictions which surround them are destroying this entire race of people as the Tasmanian aborigines were exterminated within seventy-five years.

When the whites first settled in Australia, the native people were a happy and vigorous race. The tribal hunting grounds, abounding in game and natural supplies of vegetable foods, made life secure. Left alone, their social organisation and culture would have meant continued security and progress, although the lack of animals such as were domesticated by peoples elsewhere and the limited prospects for developing agriculture, precluded any rapid social changes.

The aborigine has evolved a social code so complicated that few white men ever understood it, and yet when it is studied it must be recognised, in its workings, as a morality far superior to that of the "civilised" races, and fully safeguards the eugenic welfare of the tribes.

The land was the property of the clans, which are linked together into tribes. The aborigines have no kings or tribal chiefs, tribal behaviour being regulated by customs exercised by the clan elders.

Into this continent, peopled by hundreds of thousands of natives isolated from the rest of humanity for thousands of years and yet developed into a complex social organisation based on blood relationship and classificatory groups, strode the European invaders. The contact with the whites brought and still brings death and ruin to the aborigines.

Robbed of their hunting lands, their natural food supplies destroyed, the aborigines, inspired by centuries of totemic traditions and customs, tenaciously clung to their home territories, dying of malnutrition, debilitation and the diseases of the white men against which their isolation had left them defenceless.

Where these remnants of tribal groups continued to haunt their ancestral lands and, of necessity, infringe on white

CONQUERING ILLITERACY IN SOUTHERN ITALY

DISCUSSING the intimate connection between illiteracy and poverty, the Italian writer, Carlo Levi (author of *Christ Stopped at Eboli*), in a recent issue of the *Unesco Courier*, wrote: "A map illustrative of its distribution would show that it goes hand in hand with barren land, bad sanitary conditions, malaria, and the lack of industries, communications and public works."

He went on to describe the voluntary campaign against illiteracy in Southern Italy in these words:

Immediately after the war, circumstances were propitious. A group of somewhat romantically idealistic young men of Calabria and Lucania were inspired by the ferment of popular feeling to start a large-scale drive for person-to-person teaching, such as was carried out so effectively in Mexico. Soon they had joined their efforts with those of the National League for the Struggle Against Illiteracy in Rome, an organisation of women volunteers.

Lack of funds somewhat curtailed this group's efforts, but at the same time gave them a more definite and practical character.

In May, 1947, an investigation was conducted by young social workers in Lucania in order to get an exact picture of what should be done. As we have seen, there were no up-to-date statistics on illiteracy, and those of almost twenty years ago could not be considered reliable. This investigation proved that the problem was indeed a serious one. In

Bulgarian Currency Reform

THE Bulgarian Communist Government has just carried through a "reform of the currency". The declared aim of such a manoeuvre is to do away with inflation by "liquidating all accumulations of cash by speculative elements".

The Rumanian Government carried out a similar drastic "reform" in January, and in both cases the apparently economic manoeuvre is in effect a political blow against the peasants.

In Bulgaria, an entirely new currency has been issued and the old currency has to be exchanged for the new. But not all at the same rate. The basic rate is 25 old leva to one new leva, and this rate applies to all wages, salaries, and prices, to the funds of State and Co-operative enterprises, including co-operative farms. It also applies to the savings of workers, children and students up to a certain figure.

But much less favourable rates apply to other sections with the obvious intention of extinguishing them. Ready cash, for example, exchanges at 100 old leva to one new leva, while the funds of such private industry and trade as remain at 200 to one. As one commentator puts it: "The effect of these differential rates must be to benefit industrial workers and State employees and to damage those peasants who have saved considerable amounts by selling produce either on the black or the "free" market. Peasants are notoriously given to keeping their savings in cash; these will now lose, in effect, three-quarters of their value, and many peasants may even have to forgo exchanging their savings at all for fear of disclosing their "speculative" activities. The Bulgarian Communist paper has admitted that "working farmers" (not merely "kulaks") will have to bear "certain temporary losses . . . (Bulgarian) currency reform seems therefore to

be mainly a political measure directed against the peasants—the class which European Communists have found most refractory."

Of course, saving is not mere "speculation" for independent farmers: it is the kind of thrift which holds profits made in good seasons in order to be able to carry on agriculture during bad seasons. Such currency reforms makes it almost impossible for independent farmers to carry on, and their only remedy is to enter the collective farms. Such manoeuvres can thus be seen as part of the Communist campaign to proletarianize the peasant—to turn the huge peasant population (they are a majority) into wage slaves.

That the Rumanian and Bulgarian "reform" is only part of a general policy is shown by the fact that Stalin carried out a similar reform in Russia in 1947. Its effects were analysed in an article by Mario Louise Berneri, entitled "Stalin's Christmas Box," now reprinted in her book *Neither East nor West* (pp. 154-156).

Anarchists are not worried about speculators or black marketeers as these terms are understood in this country. But it would be a great mistake to stand indifferent to these manoeuvres which Stalinists cloak under these derogatory terms, but which are in fact directed against the peasants as a class.

The Industrial Worker

Continued from p. 2

saw before. Soon everything becomes of interest to you."

The real soul-destroying factor in industry is brought out in his chapter on "The Neglected Human Side in Industry."

"My employer never looks at me," a cotton spinner said to me, "he just sees the U. S. I. I represent. For him I am manpower, not a man."

"There is something in factory work which is soul-destroying. You don't feel like a man, but just a number shifted here and there as the laws of profit dictate," another factory man told me.

There are also chapters on Sport ("Sport has an indescribable fascination for the British worker. It captivates his imagination, refreshes and comforts him; it gives him courage and amusement, excitement and beauty.") The Pub. Gambling and the Belief in Luck. Hobbies ("A lack of hobbies is a very dangerous sign, and a man who loses all his hobbies should see a doctor about it.") Clothing, Saving, and Religion. But the three sections of Dr. Zweig's enquiry which I should like to describe in our next issue are those on the trade unions, socialism and class-consciousness. C.W.

LEGAL SOLUTION

IT is almost uncanny the capacity of the legal mind to get hold of the wrong end of the stick. In a plea to punish parents here is Sir Hartley Shawcross, former Labour Attorney-General:

"More parents should be punished for the sins of their children," said Sir Hartley Shawcross, Q.C., M.P., in London yesterday. "Bad children more often than not, are the fault of bad parents," he said.—*Observer*, 19/5/52.

When at last the legal mind gets around to the idea that "badness" in children perhaps has causes, its only remedy is to look around for someone else to punish. How punishment helps parents to be more understanding, more affectionate and more tender towards their children is not immediately clear to us.

were lodged in a strange variety of quarters. There were so many applications that courses were swamped. Where three classes had been announced, they had to be increased to five the next day and ten the day after, until there was no place to hold them.

At Muro Lucano a *carabiniere* had to preserve order among those who were turned away; and at Tricarico they sat silently outside the improvised school-room while their more fortunate fellows attended the lesson. The village of Bernalda, which is subject to frequent electric power failures, decided that private houses could remain dark while the lights were on for night classes in the school-house. The peasants themselves strung wires and installed the lighting. Now it shines out over the mountain-top village.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Seasonal Work & the New Society

IN Canada, a vast country only sparsely populated (some 14 million souls), it seems inconceivable that, for several months each year, there should be an unemployment problem. The reason attributed to this is seasonal work.

Throughout the spring and summer months there is abundant work in agriculture, logging and fishing, to name just three of Canada's principal industries, and a measure of full employment exists throughout the land. Then comes the fall, and vast numbers of these workers, deprived of their livelihood during the winter months, flock to the big cities in search of work to sustain them until the spring.

A fortunate few (those who hit town first) are absorbed in industry but for many thousands there is nothing to do but wait for the weather to break. The small amount of cash they have been able to save is soon swallowed up by the high cost of living in town and then the breadlines are swollen as the men go on "relief" (agriculture, fishing and forestry work are not insurable under the Canadian social security scheme so that workers in those industries are not entitled to unemployment benefit.)

A few of the more enterprising elements get organised and make a more lucrative but rather dangerous living by robbing the banks. For the majority of seasonal workers though, the winter months are lean, hungry months of enforced idleness.

These then are the conditions under which men are living in the present society. Now let us try and visualise for a moment how these same people would live in the new, free society which we are endeavouring to bring about.

Science, as yet, being unable to do very much about altering the seasons in any way, we should still have seasonal work, but with the abolition of capital and the wage system it would cease to be a problem. The fishing, agricultural and timber workers, having toiled long hours during the summer months to provide for the benefit of all, would be able to relax through the winter without fear of want, as at present. As it is necessary to work mostly from dawn to

dusk, six to seven days a week to reap the full harvest of each of these industries in the season, they will have contributed their full share for the common good of the society in which they live and thus be able to devote the idle months to cultural activities or to whatever purpose they wish.

For, in the new society, when profit and exploitation of man's labour has been replaced by co-operation of man with his fellow men for the common good of all, these seasonal workers having played their part in the common effort will be fully entitled to share in the material wealth which their endeavours have helped to create. No longer, as at present, will it be necessary for them to have to patronise soup kitchens, seek shelter in common lodging houses and generally rely on charity to see them through the winter months.

Vancouver.

H.G.B.

THE GOOD EARTH

IN John Turner's review of *Soil and Civilization* (17/5/52), a mystical attitude is evident (farmer as Earth-Lover, Soil-community comparable with human community). Man is distinguished from the rest of the natural world by consciousness, which allows him to intervene in the balance of nature for his own ends: as Tony Gibson has remarked (FREEDOM, 24/11/51) "farming is an essentially unnatural occupation". Technology, which increases man's power over his environment managed to create deserts and dustbowls without the aid of chemicals and tractors, and it is the ends, rather than the means, of production, which must be changed to-day. This, admittedly requires an inner, mental change, but not a retrogression to the intuitive, soil-in-good-heart, era; rather an increase in conscious control, an abandonment of outworn ideas.

London, May 19.

R.H.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WAR

AGREEING as I do with Colin Quayle's remarks (FREEDOM, 17/5/52) on the necessity for individual rejection of violence, I feel we should not blink the fact that there are many and valid reasons why some members of our society, consciously or unconsciously, welcome a "state of emergency".

I myself, at odds at eighteen with my woman's rôle and with the expectations of my class, found in the last war escape from my family and my first opportunity for responsible constructive activity; and there are thousands more to whom it must have meant the cutting of a Gordian knot.

Others again (supreme irony), knew for the first time decent living conditions, security of employment, and the approval of their fellows. Modern war is the health, not only of the State, but often of the individual also.

At a deeper level, war and the submission to authority that war imposes satisfy our childhood's guilty need for punishment. (To all who are interested in the connection between the Oedipus complex and the growth of totalitarianism, I recommend Peter Nathan's book, *The Psychology of Fascism*.)

The problems of cruelty and the desire for pain, so deeply rooted in even the most enlightened natures and so intimately connected with sex and religion, are shirked, not solved, by pre-supposing that man is a being wholly amenable to reason. Nobody wants war? We are dreamers if we believe it. Millions "never had it so good".

London, May 19.

S.D.S.

ANARCHISM—WHAT IS IT?

AFTER reading the clear definitions of Anarchy and Anarchism in your issue of May 10th, I am writing to say how I hail these as a unique effort of initiative, perception and indeed of the individual anarchy suggested by the writer. We wander so often in a blurred fog of meaningless phrases, that it is refreshing to find words such as: authority, social revolution, reform (to which might have been added 'revolt' and 'rebellion'), clearly interpreted for us. The central point to be stressed, in my view, is that of the "one-man revolution", the answer to the oft-repeated parrot-cry: "What can I do?" and to the objection: "It can't happen under the present Government!" The warning to those who are content with the compromise of apparently revolutionary groups is the best-timed warning of all.

"The development of ourselves as conscious revolutionary individuals" (see Max Stirner) is the most unanswerable challenge possible, and "freedom in our personal relationships" is in this country so far untrammelled.

Anyone who has read the Dutch philosopher, Van Eeden, cannot but be struck by the almost identical similarity in his language and that of your contributor. He speaks of a "conscious unity through equal consciousness, fellowship in each individual", concluding: "The culmination of this tendency would be the ideal anarchy."

London, May 19.

E.A.

ANTI-MALARIAL CAMPAIGNS IN DANGER

Re-arming Cuts D.D.T. Supplies

THE general public does not know the effects which follow from a re-arming policy for the daily press does not mention many of them. Still less do responsible people present in summary form, an over-all picture of the kind of sacrifices which have to be made for the sake of the euphemism "defence".

When minority papers like FREEDOM attempt such a summary, it is always open to supporters of "defensive re-arming" to claim that the anarchists simplify the picture in order to suit their anti-militarism. Until the national press begins to print news objectively (and that is likely to be a very long time), there is no answer to such claims.

The following extract from a trade paper (*The Glaxo Volume* No. 6, 1952, p.41) draws attention to one of these unregarded side effects of rearmament economy:—

"The most widespread and, so far, the most consistently successful of world health campaigns has been against malaria. The assault upon the anopheline mosquito has been ingenious and thorough, and there are many areas in the world where it has been completely eliminated. However, a new and adverse factor has recently been making itself

felt. Supplies of insecticides, particularly DDT, have not only been insufficient to keep pace with the ever-increasing demands—that was to be expected—but have in fact been cut as a result of world rearmament. There is good reason for health officials to be anxious over this, for the danger is not so much of mosquitoes re-infecting previously cleared areas as of populations losing the tolerance they had for the disease in the old days of constant re-infection and so being threatened with severe epidemics should the anopheles return. Indeed, the danger is wider even than that. For should the shortage prove difficult to overcome, many governments that would otherwise have sponsored large-scale anti-malarial campaigns may hold back. Better, they would say, a health situation that is stable at a low level than one that fluctuates wildly at the mercy of international shortages. Thus it could happen that what even now promises to be the most successful health campaign ever undertaken might peter out. . . .

"Less sensational than the effect on malaria, but in many respects not less important, would be the effect on food production of a continuing world shortage of DDT. Though DDT has been

HAVE we been completely wrong about the possibility of unemployment in the mines? It has for so long been taken for granted that any amount of coal could be used; that the shortage of coal was chronic and serious, that we have frequently referred (indeed, we did it in regard to the Italian miners' dispute, dealt with elsewhere in this issue) to the fact that employment was secure in the pits for as far ahead as we could see.

We remember officials who have declared that if the miners could produce another 50 million tons of coal, it could be used with ease. Householders have been kept short, winter after winter, of both coal and coke, and we were assured that we could export many times the amount of coal we were sending abroad, if only the miners would produce it.

To that end, the miners gave up their five-day week, first for the export drive, then for rearmament as well. And the recent attempts to cut out Saturday morning shifts met only with strenuous demands from union officials and politicians alike for "responsibility" and restraint in the national interest.

But now, only a few months afterwards, it is beginning to be realised that there just is not the demand for coal that everybody thought (or said) there was. There are, of course, reasons for this, and the primary one is the emergence of unemployment, the slump, in the textile trades. The mills of Lancashire and Yorkshire that are not working, are not buying coal, with the result that for the first time for many years, Lancashire is now self-supporting as far as coal is concerned. Lancashire has been dependent on coal from over the border, in Yorkshire, but now her own pits can meet her needs. Result: a surplus of coal building up in Yorkshire.

In the Midlands, the slowing down of the motor car industry, and in the North, the standing off of steel and other workers in Middlesbrough and along the Tyne, are also having their effect on coal stocks. In the West Country, for the first time since 1942, no vacancies are being advertised in the Somerset coalfields.

In a industrial economy, we have been

THE PARISH PUMP

HAVING leaned on the decaying parish pump for a decade before I realised that a world existed outside my parochial area. I cannot share C.W.'s enthusiasm for the possibilities of the local councils nor can I agree on practical grounds. I would therefore like to comment on one or two points raised by C.W. ("The Parish Pump," FREEDOM 24th May).

Although the answer given by the "smug local theoretician" to the reader who asked the difference between a Borough Council and a commune as envisaged by Anarchists, appears to be over-simplified, it is nevertheless correct in essence. I am sure the C.W. appreciates the difference between delegation and representation, but the point deserves a little more elaboration than he was obviously prepared to give it.

He then goes on to make a plea for more interest to be taken in local councils, and suggests that the reason why local affairs have become the "miniature of national politics" is because people do not take an interest in their administration. People do take an interest in them. Most areas, particularly the suburbs are teeming with energetic

reminded so often, everything depends on coal. The opposite is also true: coal depends on everything, and when other industries slow down, coal stocks mount up—and the miners know only too well what can happen then.

In view of this, the wage demand the miners have in hand just now is a little late. Six months ago it would have stood a better chance, to-day the N.C.B. have all the arguments, and a stronger bargaining weapon in the very existence of the coal stocks, to put across the wage-freeze Mr. Butler has asked for.

We have constantly attacked the giving up of the five-day week in the mines. For years the miners had fought for it, and when it was granted, with the coming of nationalisation in 1947, it should never have been relinquished. But it was, with the result that, little by little, as prices rose, it became necessary for miners to work Saturday mornings in order to make up their money to a proper wage. When workers work regular overtime, like this, they tend to think in terms of actual earnings, instead of basic wages. But an extension of hours is the equivalent of a cut in pay; it is only concealed by overtime rates.

This point of view was corroborated by the president of the South Wales miners, Will Paynter, speaking at Cardiff last Sunday. He claimed the miners had suffered a reduction in real wages of 12s. a week. He pointed out that thousands of miners were being obliged to work overtime to get a living wage, so that they were losing the social benefit of the five-day week. "The period of peaceful progress, is coming to an end, and we are now facing a situation in which we have to defend the improvements and reforms we have secured in the last four or five years".

Mr. Paynter is a little late in waking up to it. What improvements, and what reforms are there to be defended, if the miners pay is down by 12s. a week and they have lost the five-day week?

And who has done most to push the miners down, if not the unions which have accepted these retreats, time after time, against the men's own interests?

The fight now has to be started all over again, and the miners' first step

should be an immediate ban on all overtime, including Saturday morning. They will then be forced to fight for a higher wage, which they will definitely need without the overtime.

Let the miners establish a living wage for a five-day week. They will probably then find that the presence in the pits of a few hundred Italians is no threat to their employment, and if "redundancy" does threaten, the real answer is to cut working hours still further. If there is plenty of coal—let the miners work a 30-hour week—with no decrease in earnings. If they are fulfilling the nation's needs—that is their function, and if it can be done with at the same time an increase in leisure, it is no more than they deserve.

There will be, of course, many more problems than that. Unemployment is increasing in many more trades, but the answer will not be fiercer competition for jobs among the workers, but the taking over of industry by the workers themselves.

While they remain the tools of others, workers will be overworked or unemployed as the capitalist situation demands. Only by freeing themselves from capitalism by controlling their work themselves and achieving the security of responsible freedom, will they escape the ups and down (chiefly downs) that capitalism means for workers.

THE SYNDICALIST

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Every Sunday at 7.30 p.m.

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THE VALUE OF THE TRADE
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LECTURE

Albert Meltzer will be lecturing to the Central London Group (P.P.U.) on Friday, 6th June at 7.30 p.m.

Subject: Anarcho-Syndicalism and War Resistance.

Place: Dick Sheppard House,
6 Endsleigh Gardens, W.C.

FREEDOM readers invited.

In the end, of course, this issue of taking part in Borough Council affairs will be decided by individual choice. C.W. will continue to prod his local officials and kow-tow with the local gentry, while I close my windows to keep out the sound of my neighbours and absorb myself in the sex life of the Trobrianders.

London.

R.M.