

# Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"I don't want you to follow me or anyone else . . . I would not lead you into the promised land if I could, because if I could lead you in, someone else would lead you out."

—EUGENE DEBS.

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Threepence

## THE FRIENDLY BOMB

IF the atomic bomb has done nothing else, it has succeeded in blowing sky high certain illusions about international relations. The camouflage of diplomatic language, still employed in this country like an echo from a former age, gives the simple newspaper reader the impression that the relations between friendly nations could not be closer or more open, while even "unfriendly" States must be treated "in a spirit of friendship" until the last hope of co-operation is exhausted. Such is, or was, the picture as painted by the national press.

In this way the State (at any rate "our own" State) was made to seem actuated by noble motives of friendship, honesty, eagerness to help and so on, and to be hurt by the double-dealing or lapse from truthfulness of another member of the "comity of nations". It will be seen that it is impossible to speak about the official view of international relations without making use of these derisively meaningless phrases.

A puff of atomic energy has now dispersed these clouds of verbiage. Almost from the beginning of the war British, Canadian and American physicists were working on the road that led to Hiroshima and Nagasaki. No attempt was made to share these secret processes with Russia, or France, or the China of Chiang-Kai-Shek. That Russia did in fact share in them was due to that skeleton in the cupboard of diplomacy, espionage.

### The McMahon Act

Realistic newspaper readers will not be worried by that. They are accustomed to the double think required by diplomatic language in the presence of spies, of wars, and the rearmament which precedes them.

But what of the Atomic Energy Act (McMahon Act) in America, which expressly forbids the sharing of information on atomic weapons, or on the production of fissionable material, or the export of uranium or plutonium? Such an Act not merely forbids "the sharing of such information with friendly powers"—meaning Britain—but actually brought to an end what sharing had existed before this.

The McMahon Act is now generally criticized—but not because it so plainly calls the bluff of "international co-operation". It is because of the absurdities it creates in the effective maintenance of the military alliances of America. Thus

the French Commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisations Land Forces in Central Europe, Marshal Juin, does not know (officially) what is the scope of atomic artillery or whether and in what quantities it would be available. The British Admiral Sir Patrick Brind, Commander-in-Chief, Allied Forces North Europe, is no better informed, though in recent practice operations American aircraft and aircraft carriers are said to have practised the handling of atomic bombs! It is such absurdities which have made certain American spokesmen, including General Omar Bradley, cautiously suggest that the law be modified.

### Monte Bello

Most revealing of all, however, is the speculation about the British Atomic explosion in the Monte Bello Islands. "There have been suggestions by scientists in several parts of the world," declared the *Times*, "that it may have been technically superior to any of the 30-odd atomic bombs which have been exploded by the Americans. If this is so, it may be regarded in America as an argument for the modification of the Atomic Energy Act."

The implication is clear. If the British explosion had not been a "success" in the sense of showing new features there would be no incentive to the Americans to relax the secrecy. But as soon as it appears that they have anything to gain from it, then they are willing to consider a *quid pro quo*. In other words, they would never give help out of mere friendliness or co-operation, but only when there is adequate reward.

Meanwhile, of course, the British Government, seeing that the American certain information will start to put the screw on so that they do not give it away without some concrete return. Even with friendly

nations, such bargains are driven as hard as possible.

### Enigmatic Comment

The atomic secrecy business so far undermines the bland assumptions of diplomatic language that even so practised a hand as the *Times* gives the show away. If the McMahon Act is modified, writes the *Times*, "such a decision might create new problems. A return to the old system of sole American production, with the help of British research, would presumably mean that the Monte Bello experiment, and much of the preliminary work attached to it, was very largely wasted effort. On the other hand, the prospect of both Britain and America turning out atomic bombs, knowing each other's secrets all the time, would seem, to say the least, unenlightened."

The italics are ours, and we make no comment on this enigmatic utterance.

## Is the Human Body Obscene?

AN interesting case has been reported recently in that valuable collector of social data, the *News of the World*. The customs had seized nine packets of books of nudist magazines which, they said, contained "indecent articles and figures".

The interpretation of the law in such a case is almost exclusively a personal matter for the magistrate—Sir Frederick Wells—and is illustrated by his remark, "I have looked at two or three of these books. Some I don't like, but one or two here I think are absolutely indecent." It is entirely a subjective matter of what the magistrates like or doesn't like and of his opinion.

One is reminded of that League of Nations Congress on Obscene Publications, about 1928, in which the French delegate, with Gallic logic, suggested that the first thing to do was to define the term

"obscene". But Sir Archibald Bodkin, the British delegate, jumped to his feet to protest that in England we have no definition of obscenity. He carried his point and the congress proceeded, having at any rate established one thing—that it did not know what it was talking about!

In this present case, counsel for the defence declared that the essence of the nudist movement is "that the human body is neither obscene nor indecent. On the contrary it is the very reverse."

Reading between the decorous lines of the *News of the World*, it seems that part of the indecency issue turned on the question of "retouching" photographs of naked bodies presumably to expurgate pubic hair. Official Grundyism likes to insist on this (though not in every case, seemingly), but to most normal people the practise is much more obscene than its omission.

The magistrate announced that he would have to make his decision in a week's time and meanwhile would study the publications in question. One is reminded of Henry, the film censor in "But Gentlemen Marry Brunettes," who joined the excised passages together and ran them through on Thursdays—"Henry seems to live for Thursdays."

After a week's study, Sir Frederick Wells decided that the books "offended against modesty and decency" and ordered their destruction.

Oh, deary me.

### THE TEST

THE daughter of a Jersey farmer with whom I was friendly sang the praises of her young husband on one of my visits: how good he was to her old mother, how nice he was to the children, how kind he was to the animals—and having run through the whole gamut of such virtues, she finally burst out in supreme praise. "And he matures his land as well as any man on the island!" To a townsman this must sound charmingly naïve, but to her it was a vital test, the great devotion which for five hundred years had kept her family in freedom and prosperity on the same piece of land.

## El Campesino

EX-COMMUNISTS command a ready public through the non-communist press. Douglas Hyde, a former editor of the *Daily Worker*, who was converted to Roman Catholicism, writes regularly in the Catholic press, while *Picture Post* acquired the services of another ex-Communist, Bill Darke, for a series of articles on the inner history of the British C.P.'s post-war manoeuvres.

The biggest scoop of all, however, is that of the *Evening Standard*, in which the former Spanish Communist, General "El Campesino" (The Peasant), writes about his experiences in Russia after the Spanish War was ended.

The Communist Generals in Spain have so much to answer for that it is nearly impossible to envisage their rehabilitation. The brutality of Communist control, the way in which Party interests were regularly placed before the interests of the war: the whole-

sale assassination or imprisonment of militant workers: the deliberate use of the International Brigades as a military power to crush and break up the peasant collectives: all these things were done with their connivance and active support. El Campesino was one of them.

He belongs therefore to that group of Communist renegades like Valtin or Krivitsky or Kravchenko who only abandoned the Soviet cause when self-interest prompted them from a disinterested concern for the working-class.

All this, however, does not rob such writings of interest though it does preclude sympathy of an un-mixed kind. El Campesino was sufficient of a Spanish worker to notice that the living conditions of the workers in the Soviet Union were very poor even though commercial buildings were on a grand scale. Which is more than can be said of the many liberals and intellectuals who have visited Russia from this country.

## UNUSUAL RAILWAY STRIKE IN BRAZIL

RIO DE JANEIRO.

RAILROAD workers at Divinópolis, Brazil, were victims of a lockout the other day—their wives wouldn't let them in their houses.

Three hundred men had walked out in a demand for the payment of overdue wages and for better commissary supply service but local police persuaded them to return to work.

The wives, however, took matters into their own hands and continued the strike which their husbands had abandoned. The women marched from the town square, where they had gathered, to the railroad station and the workshops. Using shoes as weapons, they routed the police and occupied the premises.

The women, it is reported, laid themselves across the tracks to force the trains to stop. Some twelve trains were tied up in this manner. The women also chased the crews from the locomotives and dumped the fire boxes.

Once the movement was well under way, the husbands rejoined their wives in the strike. The chief of the workshops, who did not understand the futility of arguing with organised women, tried to halt the strike, and almost got himself lynched. He had to be locked

in the city jail for his own protection.

The strike is symptomatic of the discontent in many parts of Brazil over the high cost of living, which is increasing with every day.

Other violent demonstrations occurred last month in the relatively prosperous south Brazilian State of Rio Grande do Sul, also as a result of the problem of making wages cover living expenses.

In the Brazilian town of Divinópolis, police reinforcements were brought in to cope with the striking women. They promised to see that part of the back wages were paid to the workers.

Violence in the strike is reported to have occurred when the police fired into the crowd of militant women, injuring nine persons and critically wounding one other.

In addition to making-up the back wages, the workers were also promised that no retaliation would be made against the strikers, no investigation of the strike leaders, and that an immediate study would be made of the other demands of the workers.

K. KARMINOFF.  
(From the *Industrial Worker*, Chicago, 11/9/52.)

FOR the smug professional democrats, the political problems of our time are quite simple: who is not with us is against us; who does not declare himself a democrat must be a communist; to doubt or to question is to play the enemy's game. Everything is so crystal clear for these crusaders of the democratic ideal that they cannot understand the stupidity of these "backward" people of Africa and Asia who show no loyalty to the upholders of democracy in their midst, or who are actively hostile to all invaders of their land and of their rights.

We have so often pointed out that so far as the depressed people of the world are concerned it matters little to them whether they starve under Democracy or under Marxist-Stalinism; what interests them principally is that they are starving. Freedom of speech and of the Press, are unnecessary luxuries for starving people. And to understand to what depths the poor can be dragged and without going outside Europe, one would only have to attend the Benevento Child Market, held twice a year on August 15th and September 18th, in Cathedral Square. Benevento is only 50 miles from Naples, and for hundreds of years boys have been taken to the Square for public auction on these days.

An *Associated Press* report on the Child Market points out that though it has been severely criticised, "carabinieri and city officials say there is nothing illegal about it."

## The Child Market

This year there were only a few boys—ranging from 12 to 16—brought to the market by their parents.

Farmers who took over the boys for a year handed the parents between 5,000 and 6,000 lire. In addition, some were promised several bushels of grain from time to time during the year.

Some boys were eager to go. "We are five children," said 15-year-old Rolando Mustaccioli, "I must work."

Some were reluctant. "But Luigi," a farmer said to 13-year-old Luigi Possimate, a goat-watcher from San Leucio, "you recognise me. You know I am good to those who work for me."

The boy refused to reply. He stood silent while agreement was reached. When the farmer paid the mother 5,000 lire (about £3) he handed the boy 16 lire (about 2d.) and said: "See, that's for you to enjoy yourself."

Col. Martini, commander of the local carabinieri, said: "This market has nothing to do with slavery. It is a time-accepted form of hiring farm labour for lower work such as stable-cleaning and goat-watching. The money paid by the farmers helps relieve the poverty of these children's families. The boys are fed and cared for as though they were a part of the farmer's own family. Representatives of the Ministry of Labour have investigated and found that these boys are well treated."

Parents are allowed to visit the boys

during the year, and when the year is up the boy is free to return to his home.

"This is not slavery" but "tradition". And no one is very much concerned since the children are "well fed and well treated". That the financial negotiations take place between the parents and the farmers, and the children have to go whether they like it or not, that is not slavery, it's necessity; or as the practical lad among the auctioned boys put it, "We are five children. I must work." And what of the parents who for a cash payment of £3 will hire out their children to work for one year with a farmer? What do they care about the political struggle when they are still living in a feudal era, and obsessed by one idea: where their next meal will come from.

If the political struggle raging at present were to be viewed in its proper perspective, objectively and dispassionately, one would be obliged to draw only one conclusion: that for the majority of the world's inhabitants it would not make the slightest difference to their social and economic conditions whoever dominated the world: Stalinists or Americans. It is only the privileged people of the world who are affected by these issues, and some of them are quite prepared to see the world plunged into war in order to defend their stake in society, whether economic, social or professional.

R.

# SYNDICALISM & ANARCHISM by Errico Malatesta

THE question of the relation between the labour movement and the progressive parties is an old and everlasting one. The question still is, however, and will remain, of interest as long as there exists, on the one hand, a large portion of the masses tormented by unsatisfied needs and incited by sometimes fiery, but always vague and indefinite, aspirations to a better life and, on the other hand, men and political parties who, having a particular conception of a better form of society and of the best means of establishing same, endeavour to obtain the consent of the masses, whose support is necessary for the realisation of their projects. This question is of still greater importance now that, after the catastrophes brought about by the war and its aftermath, everyone is preparing, even if only spiritually, for a revival of activity which (is) to be followed by the fall of the still pugnacious though already tottering tyrannies.

This is why I shall endeavour to show clearly what, in my opinion, the attitude of anarchists should be towards Labour organisations.

I do not think that, to-day, there still exists among us anyone who would deny the usefulness or necessity of the organisation of labour as a means of the material and moral betterment of the masses, as a fertile field for propaganda and as a force indispensable to the social transformation we are aiming at. No one any longer doubts the importance of the organisation of labour, which matters more to us anarchists than to anyone else, for we believe that the new social order must not and cannot be forcibly imposed by a new government, but must of needs result from the free and concerted efforts of all. Moreover, the labour movement is now a powerfully and universally established fact; fighting against it would be joining hands with the oppressors, ignoring it would be remaining outside of the people's life and for ever being condemned to impotency.

Still, although we all, or almost all, agree as to the usefulness and necessity of anarchists taking an active part in the labour movement, acting as its initiators and supporters, we, nevertheless, disagree as to the form, the conditions and the limits of such participation.

Many comrades aspire to fuse into one the labour and anarchist movements; and, wherever they are able to do, as for instance in Spain and Argentina, and also to a certain extent, in Italy, France, Germany, etc., they do their utmost to give the labour organisations a purely anarchistic programme. These are the comrades who call themselves "anarcho-syndicalists", or they who, uniting with others who in reality are not anarchists, take the name of "revolutionary syndicalists".

It is necessary clearly to explain what is meant by "syndicalism".

If it is the "future society" we desire, i.e., if by "syndicalism" we mean the form of social organisation which is to take the place of capitalist society and of the state, then, either "syndicalism" is the same as "anarchy" and is nothing but a confusing word, or it is something different from "anarchy" and, for this very reason, it cannot be accepted by anarchists. As a matter of fact, among the various ideas and plans concerning the future society, as expounded by this or that syndicalist, some are genuine

anarchistic ideas and plans, but others are only duplicating, under different names and under different modalities, the same authoritarian structure, which is, to-day, causing the evils we deplore; they have, consequently, nothing whatever in common with "anarchy".

But I am not going to deal here with syndicalism as a social system, for, as such, it cannot be of any value in determining the present action of anarchists with regard to the labour movement.

What we are concerned with here, is the labour movement under a state and capitalist régime; and, under the name of "syndicalism", are included all labour organisations, all unions which were created in order to resist oppression by the employers and to lessen or, if possible, bring to an end the exploitation of human labour by those who have taken hold of the raw materials and the instruments of labour.

Now, my contention is that these organisations cannot be anarchistic and that it is not right to want them to be such, for if they were, they would not any longer fulfil their aims and could not be used for the ends anarchists have in view when taking part in them. Unions are created with a view to defend, to-day, the present interests of their toilers, and to better their conditions as much as possible until they are in a position to make the social revolution, which will change the present wage slaves into free workers, freely associated for the benefit of all.

In order for the union to accomplish its aim and to be, at the same time, a means of education and a field for propaganda tending to cause a future and radical social transformation, it must include all the workers or, at least, all those who aspire to better their conditions and enable them to offer some kind of resistance to their exploiters. Are we to wait until all workers have become anarchists before we invite them to organise themselves, and before we accept them as members of organisations, thus inverting the natural course of propaganda and of the psychological development of individuals—organising the resistance when resistance is no longer needed, the masses already being able to accomplish the revolution? In this case the union would be the very same thing as an anarchist group and would be unable either to obtain better conditions or to bring about the revolution. Or, do we want to have the anarchistic programme written on paper and be satisfied with a formal, unconscious recognition of its principles, and thus gather together a flock sheepishly following their organisers and ready to scatter or go to the enemy when the first opportunity arises to prove that they are anarchists in earnest?

Syndicalism (I mean "practised syndicalism", no "theoretical syndicalism",

of which each one has a different conception) is reformist by its very nature. All we can expect of it is that the reforms it aims at and obtains be such and be obtained in such a way as to help education and revolutionary preparation and leave the door open for always greater demands.

Each fusion or confusion between the anarchist and revolutionary movement and that of syndicalism results either in rendering the union powerless to attain its specific aim, or in attenuating, falsifying and extinguishing the spirit of anarchism.

A union may be founded with a socialistic, revolutionary or anarchistic programme and, in fact, the various labour organisations generally were born with such programmes. But they remain true to their programme only so long as they are weak and powerless, that is, so long as they are still groups of propaganda, initiated and animated by a few enthusiastic and convinced individuals rather than organisers capable of any efficient action. Then, as they succeed in attracting the masses into their midst and in acquiring sufficient strength to demand and command ameliorations, their original programme becomes nothing but an empty formula to which nobody pays any more attention; the tactics adapt themselves to the necessities as they arise and the enthusiasts of the first hour must either adapt themselves or give up their place to "practised" men, who pay attention to the present only, without giving any thought to the future.

Certainly, there are comrades, who, though they stand at the very head of the syndicalist movement, remain sincere and enthusiastic anarchists. Just so are there labour organisations inspired by anarchist thoughts. But bringing forth the thousands of cases in which these men and their organisations act in contradiction to anarchist principles, in everyday practice, would be too easy a criticism. A pitiful necessity, we admit! One cannot act purely as an anarchist when one is compelled to bargain with employers and the authorities; one cannot make the masses do things for themselves when the masses refuse to do them and request, nay, insist on having leaders. But why confuse anarchism with what is not anarchism; and why assume, as anarchists, responsibility for compromises made necessary by the very fact that the mass is not anarchistic even if it has written an anarchist programme into the constitutions of its organisations!

In my opinion, anarchists should not want the unions to be anarchistic; they should only work in them for anarchistic purposes as individuals, as groups and as federations of groups. Just as there are, or there should be, groups for study and discussion, groups for written or spoken propaganda among

the masses, co-operative groups, groups working in offices, in the fields, in the barracks, in the schools, etc.; special groups should also be created in the various organisations interested in the class struggle.

Naturally, the ideal would be that everyone be an anarchist and that the organisations function in an anarchistic manner; but then it is obvious that if this would be the case it would no longer be necessary to organise for the struggle against exploiters, as there would be no more exploiters. Present conditions being what they are, the development of the masses in which we are working being as it is, anarchist groups should not demand of the organisations that they act as if they were anarchistic; they should only endeavour to make these organisations use tactics as near anarchist tactics as possible. If, for the sake of the organisation's life and needs, they find it truly necessary to come to terms, give in and come in full contact with the authorities and with the exploiters, so be it; but let the others and not the anarchists do it, for their mission is to demonstrate the insufficiency and the precarious character of all ameliorations that can be obtained under the capitalist régime, and to steer

the struggle towards ever-more radical solutions.

In the unions, anarchists should fight so that these remain open to all the workers, whatever opinions they may hold and to whatever party they may belong, the only provision being that they agree to unite with others in the struggle against exploitation. Anarchists should oppose the narrow trade union spirit and all pretents to monopolise the organisation and the work. They should prevent the members of the union from becoming mere tools in the hands of politicians for electoral or otherwise authoritarian ends; they should preach and practice direct action, decentralisation, autonomy, free initiative; they should endeavour to make the members of the union directly take part in the life of the organisations without the need of leaders and permanent functionaries.

They should, in a word, remain anarchists, always keep in contact with other anarchists, and remember that the labour organisations do not contribute the end but only one of the various means, no matter how important it may be, of preparing the advent of anarchy.

[*Pensiero e Volonta*, April-May, 1925. The above English translation first appeared in the *Road to Freedom*, New York anarchist monthly, for October, 1925.]

## Anarchism through Soviet Eyes

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and personalism which reflect the rotting bourgeois culture. . . . The anarcho-syndicalists carry their treacherous activities under the banner of the 'protection of the rights of the individual and his free development'. . . . To the struggle of the Communist Parties in Italy and France for the defence of national sovereignty the anarchistic groups of these countries endeavour to oppose the reactionary slogans of the Congress for Cultural Freedom and similar cosmopolitan nonsense under which the imperialist robbers of the U.S.A. try to hide the aspirations of the subjected peoples of all countries. . . .

This catalogue of dark misdeeds of which anarchists have been guilty for so long ends, however, with a rousing finale which is probably intended to reassure the comrades shaking with anger or trembling with fear when reading about such nasty sub-human specimens called anarchists. "Finally destroyed as an ideological-political current in the Soviet Union, anarchism is un-

masked in the capitalist countries as an extension of the bourgeois parties, endeavouring in vain to disorganise and demoralise the revolutionary movement."

Living in England one may easily dismiss this "scientific" explanation of anarchism as perhaps another product of the Oriental mind, the mysterious Slav soul or of the traditional Marxist disregard of truth and point out that similar things on the same subject appeared from time to time in the West European and American press. What, however, should not be forgotten is that in Western Europe, with the exception of the Iberian peninsula, anyone eager to find out about anarchism can, provided he takes some trouble, obtain the literature he wants through some library or by post while in the big Communist empire entire generations are brought up exclusively on such nonsense and prevented from finding out the facts they want and need in their search for truth and knowledge.

## Lessons of the Spanish Revolution - 13

# The Collectivised Industries

THE problems to be solved by the revolutionary workers in industry were more complex than those facing the peasants on the land. Too many factors were outside their control for the revolution in industry to be as thoroughgoing as that on the land.

The social upheaval that took place on July 19, 1936, was in certain respects hardly noticeable by the peasant. For him what happened was that overnight his social status had changed. The large landowners had either fled or were in any case absentee landowners. From the point of view of the peasant this did not hamper him unduly in his ability to carry on, whereas the abandonment of the factories by the managers and large numbers of technicians was a serious obstacle to the resumption of efficient production in a short space of time. In the case of the peasant, the immediate problem created by the uprising was that the harvest had to be gathered on the large estates as well as on the land which had not been deserted by the owners. From the economic point of view it was a favourable beginning to the social revolution. And so far as the future was concerned increased production, and more modern methods of cultivation were the rôles to be played by the peasant in the struggle against Franco. And with the exception of certain exportable goods, such as oranges, there was no real problem of finding markets.

How different instead was the problem in industry. Apart from the abandonment of the factories by key technicians, the problem had also to be faced that a large number of industries had become redundant because overnight important internal markets for Catalan industry had suddenly been cut off by Franco's army. Foreign markets for Spanish manufactures were not large at any time and these too were temporarily lost. Equally important, Spain's dependence on foreign raw materials to feed her industry became a serious problem when the sources of supply were temporarily cut off, and was further aggravated by the fact that when the raw materials could once more be obtained the funds were often not made available by the Central Government to the factories needing them because they were controlled by the workers. Most of Spain's war industry was located in territory occupied by Franco's forces, so that a further problem facing Catalonia was the necessity to create a war industry where none existed. This involved the importing of special machinery, the retooling of whole factories and the training of workers to handle them. It also meant the creation of a chemical industry, and the manufacture of many articles which had never before been produced in Spain. The situation also demanded that cars and lorries should be manufactured in Spain. Hitherto, only the assembly of cars was carried out, the parts being imported. Yet within the first year even this problem was successfully dealt

with. These were, however, only some of the technical problems facing the revolutionary workers of Catalonia.

Politically, too, they were faced with opposition which used every weapon in its power to gain control over industry. This, in the end, the Central Government more or less succeeded in doing by the nationalisation of the war industries which by then represented the bulk of the industrial potential. As we have already indicated, such a situation was possible because, though the workers were in complete control of the factories, the Central Government controlled the gold with which to purchase abroad the raw materials without which Spanish industry is paralysed.

In the first days of the revolution, the workers simply seized those factories which had been abandoned and which were generally the largest in the region and resumed production where possible under workers' control. In some factories all the workers drew a fixed weekly wage, but in others the profits or income were shared out among the workers, an arrangement which is more equitable than that the factory owner should put them in his pocket, but which nevertheless was not compatible with the spirit of the revolution, which was to do away with bosses and shareholders and not increase their number by a kind of collective capitalism. As a result, wages fluctuated in different factories and even within the same industries. The prosperous factories with large stocks of raw material and modern equipment had therefore an unfair advantage over the uneconomical factory struggling to keep going on small stocks. Such a system exists in Russia where in the kolkhoses the daily rate paid to the workers is fixed in relation to the previous year's profits. And this figure is arrived at "by exactly the same calculations that would settle the amount of the dividends to be distributed among the shareholders, if the kolkhose were a capitalist agricultural concern" (Gide, *Back from the U.S.S.R.*) But fortunately in Spain the injustice of this form of collectivisation was recognised and combated by the C.N.T. syndicates from the beginning.

The Collectivisation Decree of October 24, 1936, which "did no more than legalise a situation already created by the workers" according to Peirats (in *L. C.N.T. en la Revolucion Española*, Vol. 1, p. 379) has generally been hailed by the legalists among the syndicalists as one of the achievements of the revolution. The more so since the Decree was the work of the Councillor for Economy in the Generalitat, Juan Fabrgas, who was also a member of the C.N.T. The purpose of the decree may have been to legalise what was a *fait accompli*; but it was also an attempt to prevent the further development of the new revolutionary economy in Catalan industry. In October, 1936, the experiment

was still in its early stages. Each industry, each factory and workshop had its own particular problems to solve as well as the general problem of industry's responsibility to the community as a whole and the part it had to play in the struggle against Franco. In the first place, the collectivisation decree by limiting collectivisation of industry to those enterprises employing more than 100 workers excluded a very large section of the working population from participation in the experiment of workers' control. It was decreed that in all privately owned factories a Workers' Control Committee would be created to deal with the economic and social rights of the workers employed on the one hand and ensure the "strict discipline in carrying out work" on the other. They would also do all in their power to increase production by the "closest collaboration with the owner" who would be obliged each year to present to the Control Committee a Balance Sheet and Minutes, which would then be passed on to the General Councils of Industry. Thus the Workers' Control Committee had many rôles and many loyalties; and it seems that all had power except the producers! But let us examine the situation in the collectivised industries themselves, that is those employing more than 100 workers, or those employing less than 100 whose owners were "declared enemies" or had fled. Actually there was another category of industry which could come under the Collectivisation decree: "The Economic Council can also sanction the collectivisation of those other industries which, by reason of their importance to the national economy or for other reasons, it is considered desirable that they should be removed from the activities of private enterprise." We have quoted this sentence from Article 2 of the Decree because it clearly reveals that the ultimate authority in the new economy was not to be the syndicates but the Government of Catalonia; and that the direction and development of the economy was to rest in the hands of the politicians and economists. In this way workers' control would be reduced to but a shadow of the original objectives that the revolutionary workers had set for themselves when they took over the factories and workshops. But let us examine more closely how this Decree functioned.

Management of collectivised enterprises was in the hands of a Council of Enterprises nominated by the workers themselves, who would also decide the number of representatives on this Council. But the Council would also include a "controller" from the Generalitat (Catalan Government) nominated by the Economic Council "in agreement with the workers". Whereas in enterprises employing up to 500 workers or with a capital of less than a million pesetas, the manager

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## FREEDOM BOOKSHOP

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## CIVIL WARS OF SUCCESSION

THE prevailing topic of discussion after the Labour Party's annual conference at Morecambe has been the Bevanite split—an especially prominent topic in the Conservative papers. They hardly conceal their glee at the struggle between Aneurin Bevan and Herbert Morrison which they regard as a struggle as to who shall be the next Labour Prime Minister after the retirement of Clement Attlee. It is obvious that the Conservatives regard this struggle as weakening their Labour rivals, and no doubt they are right.

But the struggle for succession is by no means a new phenomenon in political parties. Indeed, it is widely said that a similar struggle is now in progress within the Tory ranks between Anthony Eden and R. A. Butler for the succession to the ageing Churchill.

And if we look still further afield we see at this moment that the struggle for power within the party is a perennial part of the life of political parties. There seems no doubt that the purging of Marty and Tillon from the French Communist Party is due, as reported, to their own struggles against the leadership of Duclos and the figure-head Thorez. The periodical purges of all the European Communist Parties is no doubt partly, or even mainly, explicable in terms of factional struggle for the leadership. Few ordinary people doubt that personal ambition is a powerful incentive in politics, and it is, of course, one of the factors that make politics such a disagreeable, such a dirty and demoralising game.

Nor need we end our survey with Marty and Tillon. The 19th Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is widely regarded as indicating a victory for Georgi Malenkov over Lavrenti Beria in the competition as Stalin's successor. At the same time such a victory is not yet a permanent one. Zhdanov was widely regarded as Stalin's successor, but he died—rather young and not without speculation on the fact that policies within the Cominform with which he was associated were dropped at about the same time.

Are such struggles weakening to the party in question? Clearly, the Tories think so on the Bevanite issue. A recent dispatch from Tokyo reads: "After winning a majority of seven over all other parties in the Japanese elections, the Liberal Party is now torn by disagreement that could deny it effective power. This disagreement is between Yoshida, the ex-premier, and Hatoyama the founder of the party who was purged by the Occupation, and has been intensified by Yoshida's expulsion of two of Hatoyama's most important men just before the election."

In the recent discussions about H. H. Asquith, the Liberal Party leader (on the centenary of his birth), most commentators recognised that the scheming and party strife whereby Lloyd George ousted him from the leadership contributed the death blow to the Liberal Party after the First World War.

All in all, there can be little doubt that these struggles are weakening to all parties. For the public at large, perhaps this hardly matters where there is the shadow boxing of competing political parties—the Liberals disappear, the Labour Party pops in. But in the monolithic parties of the dictatorships, the struggle is more nakedly between the ruling party in power and the mass of the population who are ruled. Weakness on top may roll down the whole edifice of power leaving as little behind as the case of the collapse of the Fascist and Nazi régimes.

It does seem certain therefore that these struggles for power are part of the stuff of politics and that they plainly weaken the power of the governing organisation. What is more important they make it impossible ever to set up a stable organisation of government. The verdict of history is that tyranny is short-lived. When one tends towards despair while observing the trend towards dictatorship—looking at Spain, at Russia or China—one should not forget this corruption of power that, mining all within, infects unseen.

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## Anarchism Through Soviet Eyes

(From an East European correspondent)

AS most readers of FREEDOM are well aware, anarchists have often suffered from misrepresentation, yet even when anarchists seemed a major menace to the existing society and the budding Marxists considered them as their most serious rivals, leading anarchists like Peter Kropotkin were given full freedom to expound the essence of anarchism as well as its history in such learned bourgeois compilations as the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, which was rightly considered a standard work for all those eager to acquire more knowledge. Today, however, the Western world with all its virtues and vices, is slowly but definitely in retreat before Soviet Communism which claims to be far superior in every field including that of culture.

The latest edition of the *Great Soviet Encyclopaedia*, which is now in course of publication, provides to a certain extent at least, an answer as to how far this boast is justified. After all, the Soviet State has existed for almost 35 years and the vaunted educational progress must have produced the required number of scholars for the "socialist" equivalent of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. That the editors received State help and guidance is no secret nor is their desire to follow as closely as possible the current party line. They know the fate of their unfortunate predecessors who in some cases paid with their lives for their failure to divine in time the changing views of the sage in the Kremlin. They drew their conclusions and provided us with the views held by the present rulers of a series of States ranging from Berlin to Canton and who ruthlessly impose their interpretation of history and current events to over 700 million human beings.

The second volume of the *Great Soviet Encyclopaedia* published in 1950, contains an article on anarchism which is defined as a "petty bourgeois, reactionary, social-political current, hostile to the proletarian scientific socialism". The article is strewn, of course, with extracts from Lenin's and Stalin's works as to what anarchism is really supposed to stand for. Thus, for example, Generalissimo Stalin's masterpiece *Socialism or Anarchism* gets six pages while William Godwin, one of the most perceptive thinkers of his day, is dismissed with 12 lines. Among them the reader will find a quotation from the inevitable Engels who asserts that Godwin was "decidedly anti-social" in his deductions! The rest

of the article follows the same line as may be seen from a long paragraph dealing with events which took place in our own lifetime and can thus be checked more easily than the bitter controversies between Marx and Bakunin eighty years ago.

"In Spain, the anarchists (F.A.I.) and the anarcho-syndicalists strengthened in the C.N.T. during the revolutionary activities of the Spanish proletariat in 1918-1920, revealed themselves as provocateurs and strike breakers, and broke the struggle against the counter-revolutionary dictatorship of Primo de Rivera. In October 1934 the anarchists sabotaged the general strike and co-operated in the crushing of the heroic revolt of the Asturian miners. During the struggle of the Spanish Republic against fascism and the Italo-German intervention in 1936-1939, the anarchists . . . originally joined the Popular Front . . . sapped it from the inside. They undermined its unity with 'left wing' demands for the immediate

socialisation of all enterprises and the forced collectivisation of peasants. Anarchist elements busied themselves, together with the Trotskyists, in espionage and sabotage, taking part in the counter-revolutionary Trotskyist putsch in Barcelona in May 1937. . . . Together with the other traitors and capitulators they helped the Fascists to strangle the Spanish Republic and to create Franco's bloody régime. Losing their influence over the working class, the anarcho-syndicalists in Italy and France retained a part of the intelligentsia and of the petty bourgeoisie, and resisted their joining in a single democratic front under the leadership of the Communist Party. The anarcho-syndicalists made an alliance with the Catholic Church, her political organisations and the Right-Wing Socialists, becoming the striking force of Anglo-American imperialism. They took up such 'fashionable' ideas as existentialism

Continued on p. 2

## COMMENT

### FROM THE TOP DOWN, OR FROM THE BOTTOM UP?

THE Italian industrialist, Adriano Olivetti is an "enlightened capitalist" of a type more common in this country than in Italy. His factory has welfare facilities, workers' housing, and so on, reminiscent of, though better designed, than those of the big Quaker chocolate manufacturers. He is also the principal inspiration of a body called the "Movimento Comunità," which publishes four handsomely printed magazines: *Comunità*, a political and cultural review; *Urbanistica*, a very good town-planning magazine; *Metron*, an architectural magazine; and *Tecnica ed Organizzazione*, a review of production, administration, sociology and industrial relations. But what is Olivetti after? At the lowest you could describe his motives as an attempt at insurance against Communism, and at the highest as an attempt to develop the sense of active and informed citizenship and of common social purpose, while retaining the present industrial structure. A friend of ours got a job in the Olivetti factory and was disappointed to find that the atmosphere was no different from that of any other factory. But how could he expect anything else? Even if Olivetti aimed at changing the control of his factory, he would be unable to do so in the face of the opposition of his fellow dictators and shareholders.

It would be interesting to compare the *Movimento Comunità* with the French *Mouvement Communiste* whose origins were described in FREEDOM in January on the "Community of Work Boimondau." The one, inspired from above, is despite its excellent publications, a nebulous body, the other is the tentative and experimental result of the activities of workers themselves to develop a new way of living and working.

One day Mr. Olivetti will wonder why the organisation on which he has spent his time and money has not in fact grown into a movement, however suc-

cessful it may have been as a publishing house. The answer is, of course, that you cannot plant an organisation and expect it to grow and function. It will either spring up of its own accord when the time is ripe, or will remain a hot-house plant.

How much effort would be spared to organisation-minded people if they would recognise this. But does this fatalistic conclusion mean that if we want to change society we have to wait until society catches up with us, that we are to subscribe to the doctrine of historical determinism? I think not. But it does mean that as propagandists, we have, like the sower in the New Testament parable, to recognise that while we can sow the seed, it will germinate only where conditions are favourable. In Kropotkin's words, "All we can do is to give advice. And again while giving it we add, 'This advice will be valueless if your own experience and observation do not lead you to recognise that it is worth following'."

I think it is in the book *A Home of their Own* that Dr. Kenneth Barlow describes the way in which even an unborn child selects and rejects from the nutriment available to it, that which meets its own individual and changing needs for growth and development. It is the function of teachers, or of town-planners or of propagandists for freedom to make available the material, the information, the advice or the physical environment which similarly will provide for free growth and development.

It is the fate of the community movement of Mr. Olivetti to remain still-born because the basis of community is shared human activity and the most socially important human activity is work, and it is precisely in work and at the place of work that the individual is least free to choose, to select or reject, for himself. C.W.

## Lessons of the Spanish Revolution - 13

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is nominated by the Council of Enterprises, in larger factories and in those engaged on national defence the nomination of the manager must be approved by the Economic Council. Furthermore, the Councils of Enterprises can be removed from office by the workers at a general meeting as well as by the General Council for Industry, in cases of manifest incompetence or resistance to the instructions given by the General Council (Art. 20).

We must now explain the rôle of the General Council for Industry which has twice appeared in this bureaucratic maze, through which we are attempting to lead the reader. The General Council was composed of four representatives of the Council of Enterprises, eight representatives of the workers' organisations (C.N.T., U.G.T., etc.) and four technicians named by the Economic Council. The chairman at these Council meetings was a spokesman for the Economic Council of Catalonia. Article 25, deals with the rôle of the General Council which includes the formulation of a general programme of work for the industry, orientating the Council of Enterprises in its tasks, and furthermore will undertake to regulate the total output of the industry, and unify production costs as far as possible to avoid competition; to study the general needs of industry, and of internal and foreign markets; to propose changes in methods of production, to negotiate banking and credit facilities, organise research laboratories, prepare statistics, etc. . . . In a word, the General Council determined and carried out everything . . . except the actual work, which as is usual in all centralised systems was left to the workers! The powers of the General Council are revealed in Art. 26 of the Decree which reads: "The decisions taken by the General Councils for Industry will be of an executive

nature, having an obligatory character, and no Council of Enterprises or private enterprise will be able to refuse to carry them out under any pretext which shall not be fully justified. They will be able to appeal against these decisions only to the Concillor for Economy against whose ruling there can be no further appeal."

The picture of industrial organisation in Catalonia as contained in the Collectivisation Decree is now complete. Apart from the greater degree of control by the workers over their working conditions than exists in nationalised industries, all the initiative and control has been transferred from the individual factories and workshops to the government offices in Barcelona. The fact of workers' representatives taking a prominent part both in the Council of Enterprises, in the General Council of Industry and even in the Government does not make the structure of control any more democratic or less authoritarian. So long as the "representatives" have executive powers, then they cease to be representatives in the true sense of the word. And what is more when the economics of industry and the control of production and distribution are in the hands of the Executive, then effective workers' control is as impossible and illusory as the concept of governments being controlled by the governed, which so many Spanish syndicalists fondly cherished against all the evidence to the contrary.

Government interference from Barcelona and from Madrid succeeded in preventing the experiment of collectivisation of industry to develop to its limits. Nevertheless, there is enough evidence to show that given a free hand, that is by controlling the finances as well as occupying the factories, the Spanish workers, who showed a spirit of initiative and inventiveness and a deep sense of social responsibility, could have produced quite unexpected results. As it was, their achievements in the

social services—in which they did not so depend on government finances and raw materials and were much freer than industry from government blackmail—have been acknowledged by all observers of the Spanish scene in its earliest phases.

It speaks highly of their organising capacities and intelligence that the Catalan workers were able to take over the railways and resume services with a minimum of delay; that all transport services in Barcelona and its suburbs were reorganised under workers' control and functioned more efficiently than before; that public services under workers' control, such as telephones, gas and light, were functioning normally within 48 hours of the defeat of General Goded's attempted rising; that the bakers' collective of Barcelona saw to it that so long as they had the flour (and Barcelona's needs were an average of 3,000 sacks a day) the population would have the bread. And to this list could be added such examples as the Health Services created by the Syndicates which functioned throughout Spain; the schools started by the syndicalists in town and village in an effort to blot out the age-long scourge of illiteracy (47% of the total population); the radical steps taken to solve the problems of the aged and the infirm. The Spanish people were giving concrete proof that not only were they capable of taking responsibilities but that they also had a vision of society which was more humane, more equitable, more civilised than anything that politicians and governments anywhere could conceive or devise.

(To be continued)

V.R.

<sup>26</sup> "Aug. 5, 1936 . . . In many respects, however, life [in Barcelona] was much less disturbed than I expected it to be after newspaper reports abroad. Tramways and buses were running, water and light functioning. . . ."—Franz Borkenau, *The Spanish Cockpit* (London, 1937).

ASSASSINATION AND COERCION

IF I return to the controversy of doubtful value resurrected by Simon Taylor, it is not with the object of vindicating a ferocious band of pacifists who so intimidate Mr. Taylor. If such a threatening, pseudo-humanistic and aggressive crew exist outside Mr. Taylor's fantasy, then surely they must be rubbing their sanctimonious hands in pleasure over so puerile an effort as his letter. The people for whom I am concerned are those who have an honest and intelligent appreciation of the rôle of violence in social revolution, and can lend conditional support to it knowing what they are doing. It is they who must be embarrassed by the implied association of the "bloodthirst" of such an enfant terrible as this Simple Simon. The anarchist movement in Britain is from time to time embarrassed by the unwanted partisanship of elements who, for neurotic or exhibitionist reasons, murder with their tongues all the "political gangsters and their henchmen" and wallow in "bloodthirst". It is they who make any discussion of violence sterile, and provide a convenient Aunt Sally for the opponents of anarchism to shy at effectively, in preference to the more sober case of intelligent militants which cannot be so easily demolished. Fontenis seemed muddle-headed in his reasoning, but now re-interpreted by Mr. Taylor he is made to seem a mere buffoon. See Fontenis à la Taylor:—

"Now, Fontenis defines quite carefully his use of the word assassination, and states explicitly that the killing of an individual, in a moment of revolutionary exigency, can be justified only when the element of coercion is absent: i.e., when there is no question of vengeance, punishment or deliberate political policy." For what then, do we kill them, these "political gangsters and their henchmen", if deliberate policy is absent—wanton sport? And how, M. Fontenis (or should I say Mr. Taylor?) do we manage to bump off a man without the element of coercion being present? Even when I have used lesser forms of violence than a firing squad against people, I had a shrewd idea that I was, in fact, coercing them.

I am interested to learn the simple secret of our linguist's method of translation. The translation was excellent, he says, for did he not translate the French word assassination by the English word "assassination"? But has nobody ever told our linguist that the best way of translating from a foreign language is not to seize upon the English words which appear to be literal equivalents and write them down and hope for the best?

My statement that "killing—is killing," appears to Mr. Taylor to resemble Gertrude Stein's statement that "a rose

is a rose". Indeed it does; it also resembles the better-known statement that "a spade is a spade", and if Mr. Taylor and M. Fontenis (whose writing I know only through the Taylor translation, I regret) would learn to call a spade a spade, the metaphysical cobwebs in their minds around the subject of killing might begin to disperse.

Mr. Taylor writes: "I am persuaded that the death of a few—or a few thousand—political gangsters and their henchmen is not necessarily too high a price to pay for the eventual liberty of the human race."

His words deserve to be engraved upon a tablet of stone and set up as a memorial—a memorial to the dead hopes of the 19th century idealists. They have now been taken over as the stock in trade of the cynical manipulators of public sentiment, and used again and again in propaganda drives to start up a war against some new batch of "political gangsters and their henchmen". (Note the stereotyped epithets of opprobrium.) Last time it was the Nazi gangsters and their henchmen, next time it will be the Communist gangsters and their henchmen who must be eliminated to ensure the eventual liberty, etc., etc. I regretfully admit that I have known some political gangsters who were anarchists (or so they said) and their followers had "henchmen" written all over stupid faces. But such bullies, neurotics and mugs, though they might gratify Mr. Taylor's vicarious interest in "blood-thirst", are in no sense part of the anarchist tradition. We have had conscious assassins in our movement, and many of them have my unqualified respect: they did claim to "eliminate" but not "assassinate", or need to apologise for their actions with long-winded sophistry. London, Oct. 4. TONY GIBSON.

... without indulging in slanging matches please!

[We must draw the attention of Simon Taylor, Tony Gibson and any other correspondents to whom it may be of interest that the columns of FREEDOM are not open to the kind of slanging match which we have been witnessing in what was intended to be a debate among readers on a subject of considerable interest. We shall in future refuse to publish letters which nullify any interesting ideas they may contain by the introduction of these cheap personal attacks, which are of no great interest to the average reader. Perhaps Tony Gibson and Simon Taylor may complete their personal summing-up of each other by private correspondence, limiting their contributions to FREEDOM to serious discussion of the subject on hand.—EDITORS.]

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Spain & the Mexican Revolution

ALTHOUGH loth to comment upon such an excellent series of articles as "Lessons of the Spanish Revolution" until they are finished, I would like, nevertheless to comment upon two statements appearing in No. 12 (FREEDOM, 4/10/52.) V.R. contends that the Spanish Revolution "is more interesting than any other social experiment of its kind . . . because it was a spontaneous movement of the people, in which politicians played no part, save that of attempting later to destroy, control or contain it."

May I point out that the same could equally be said with regard to the Mexican Revolution which was in many respects similar to that of Spain. Voltairine de Cleyre states:

"The longer we studied developments, the clearer it became that this [the Mexican Revolution of 1911.—S.E.P.] was a social phenomenon offering the greatest field for genuine anarchist propaganda that has ever been presented on this continent; for here was an immense number of oppressed people endeavouring to destroy a fundamental wrong, private property in land, not through any sort of governmental scheme, but by direct expropriation." ("Report of the Work of the Chicago Mexican Liberal Defence League", April, 1912.)

Not only was there a spontaneous uprising against Dinz on the part of the Mexican workers and peasants, which achieved in many districts (particularly in the State of Morelos with the Zapatistas and in districts of the north with the Magonistas—the Mexican Liberal Party of the anarchists Magon) results comparable to those achieved in Spain in 1936, but it had been preceded by far less preparation and propaganda than that which preceded the Spanish Revolution.

V.R. also cites Gaston Leval's description of the means by which certain Spanish collectives endeavoured to secure a more equitable distribution of wages. Leval uses the example of a childless working couple who receive 5 pesetas a day as compared with a couple with two children who receive 6 pesetas a day and so on, as an instance of one of the two ways in which the "anarchist principle" of "to each according to his needs" was applied.

It seems to me that for Leval to claim such is to give far too narrow an interpretation to "needs", since obviously it is merely a more equitable way of distributing income. It assumes that needs can be satisfied in an automatic, mathematical fashion on the basis of a certain wage for two people, three people, etc., rather like the family allowances of the so-called welfare state. For example, a childless couple may need more food than a couple with a child. Are we to deny them the satisfaction of their needs because of some arbitrary assumption that three individuals must, by virtue of being three individuals, need more than two individuals? That some, perhaps most, benefited as a result of this scheme I do not deny, but surely, just as we contend that it is impossible to determine one man's contribution to the social production of wealth, so we cannot assert that every individual's, or group of individuals', needs can be satisfied in such an arbitrary manner? One can only conclude that Leval's assertion, that a collective which pays what he terms "a family wage" is in this way practising the latter part—at least—of the principle (common to some socialist as well as anarchists) of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," arises from an erroneous conception of this principle. London, Oct. 2. S. E. PARKER.

DO WE NEED RELIGION?

AS a regular reader of FREEDOM for the past five or six years, and as one who increasingly appreciates its service to the community, I venture to point out (I hope constructively) a few things which to my mind detract from its otherwise excellent qualities. I have noted instances recently in your columns of the old game of setting up a skittle in order to knock it down. FREEDOM rightly condemns this in others; let the kettle beware before calling the pot black. I will quote one example. In your issue of Sept. 13th, on page 1 you say the Manchester Guardian "BY IMPLICATION" would be prepared to forget the morbid aspect if it were politically expedient, and then criticise this attitude.

Because the M.G. refers to the moral and political sides of the issue, surely it's illogical to deduce what you did merely on that alone. Elsewhere on the same page, it is stated "Religion, like other political structures, exploits ignorance and hence must obstruct science. Surely it ill behoves a periodical claiming fair-mindedness and objectivity to make such a sweeping assertion. Pure and True Religion is a Way of Life, intensely personal, which should express itself in a person's behaviour and social relationships and responsibilities. What you say is true of spurious religion, but you failed to qualify the statement at all. It would appear that this failure on the part of FREEDOM is not unconnected with the materialistic view of life held

by its sponsors. I should think the regular readers of FREEDOM cannot fail to detect an anti-religious bias. Repeatedly, in one way and another, there is the inference that anarchism and religion are incompatible. Now if all authority and compulsion outside a person is to be removed—quite rightly, I agree, as an anarchist, inward personal discipline and moral courage are all the more necessary to ensure altruistic conduct and sound social behaviour. Surely this is where religion comes in. All these criticisms are made in a very friendly way by one who is concerned for the high standard and reputation of your paper. Chagford, Sept. 25. C.R.W.S.

P.S.—I am an anarchist and pacifist because I am a Christian. [We appreciate constructive criticism, the more so when it is offered in the fraternal way shown by our correspondent. We realise that we are not always objective and that our articles are not always free from the shortcomings of compression. But it seems unnecessary for us to set up skittles in order to knock them down; the world is too full of injustice and politics too charged with opportunism for it to be necessary, should he so dishonest as to want to. And the example given by our correspondent is, to our minds, not a good one. By saying that the Manchester Guardian refers to the "moral and political sides" of an issue, our correspondent right away admits that

morality and politics are diametrically opposed, at least on this issue. But the Manchester Guardian supports political action and, in particular, on the Malayan issue, it has supported British military intervention in that country, joining those who refer to the "terrorists", the "bandits" and the "communists". In any case, we did not deduce what we did from that single remark. As a regular reader of FREEDOM our correspondent may remember a number of occasions on which we have attacked the opportunism of the M.G.'s editorial policy on Malaya. We have, however, always made it clear that as a source of unbiased news, we consider it as perhaps the best newspaper published in this country.

As to religion, our attacks are always directed towards organised religion which obstructs progress and interferes in the political and economic life of a country. To say that once all governmental authority is removed religion is necessary to provide the self-discipline and moral courage required to take its place, may be necessary for our correspondent, but in general this does not seem to be the case. We believe his view is based on the idea that man needs an outside authority to make him behave decently. Without referring him to certain primitive tribes, we think the example of the peasants' collectives in Spain—dealt with in this issue of FREEDOM—an excellent example of the way people can behave without religion and without government.—EDITORS.]

ONCE again we witness Comrade Green airing that bee in his bonnet—absolute freedom in love without the emotions. Again we have the comparison with other societies—what a wide interpretation one can put on contemporary. Again the refusal to see the gypsy, a study in freedom amongst us.

Here we have a self-confessed "imperfect being" doing his best to think of some system whereby we can condition other imperfections to this state of "social behaviour". The anti-social no doubt to be treated accordingly if there happens to be any that the psychologists have overlooked. It appears he agrees with the psychologist that our own behaviour is entirely learned; would he attempt to explain the manifestation of Art in this way? Is a work of art created from some behaviour pattern? It may be pointed out that the children's art shows a definite pattern and progress through their early years but where is this learned? Surely not another instance of conditioning. If everything is learned then of course it implies a progress in learning but where do we find such a progress in Art. Do we take a painting of a bull by Picasso and put it against a cave painting of 20,000 years ago and see any progress; is there any trace of those 20,000 years between them? I see none except that of tools and materials and if Picasso learned from those paintings, which is very unlikely, how did prehistoric man get his knowledge? Occasionally we see mentioned a soul but where it fits in this Utopia is difficult to see.—For a woman to have any particular affection for any particular baby that she may happen to have passed through her womb from any particular man is pure emotion and irrational—the nurse might as well give her a duck. But by some strange twist man clears his emotional self of the industrial machine leaving his physical self in it, of course, for how else will he enjoy all the advantages of a technological society? Only to find it has no meaning and very irrational of him to wonder why.

Shall we enjoy such a society I wonder when Man is free. Will the Community as an incentive be so much greater than money for making the industrial system work? For some time maybe at the beginning as was shown in Spain, but given freedom Man will kill the factory system because his needs are simpler than we realise—unless, of course, society conditions him otherwise. Not for one moment do I believe that a highly organised technological system is compatible with freedom.

I am completely in sympathy with Comrade Green on many things but there are times when he reminds me of Huxley's Brave New World. I feel sure that is not what he intended. Newport, Sept. 30. MILWARD CASEY.

THE general standard of articles in FREEDOM is even higher than usual these last few weeks, and I was especially interested by the latter half of the article by Bob Green in the last issue.

I am still a little unsatisfied with his (and Tony Gibson's) attitude to the relation between parents and children. Putting aside for the moment the fact that children depending on the love of society in general, rather than that of its parents in particular, are bound to have a pretty rough time in the present state of things, let us consider a more healthy society. No actual facts (and

THE GOAL OF WESTERN CIVILISATION

IN the London Times (17/8/49), an article on "The Wastage of Raw Materials" drew attention to the urgent need for their conservation, and quoted Dr. R. P. Linstead, F.R.S., at a meeting of the British Association as follows:

"Man is now making vast raids upon capital resources. It has been stated that more minerals have been taken out of the ground in the U.S. since 1900 than from the whole world during the whole of previous history."

The article also stated that the American Association was told the year before that, "By the end of 1947 the cumulative production of coal during all past human history amounted to approximately 81,000 million metric tons. Of this, 62,000 millions has been mined and consumed since 1900."

The U.S. uses more iron and steel, more petrol, more newsprint, and more rubber, than all the rest of the world put together. She now imports all these raw materials and over eighty others, having largely exhausted her own supplies. Indeed Time (31/12/51) declared: "In many ways the U.S., once the owner of seemingly inexhaustible natural treasure, was in danger of becoming a have-not nation."

And what is the goal of Western civilisation? It is to reach America's standards of living! —WILFRED WELLOCK: The Supreme Crisis of our Civilisation.

those are the important things) have been advanced to show that there is no scientific basis for the idea that children need to be cared for by their own parents.

Excellent as comrade Green's article is, his remark "Why should we adopt a particular emotional attitude towards a particular child just because it entered this world via a particular womb?" is from the scientific point of view not rhetorical (as he evidently intended it to be) but a subject for scientific investigation. Some such investigation has already been carried out. Perhaps Mr. Green has heard of heredity.

Some very relevant information is contained in Chapter II of The Peckham Experiment by Pearse and Crocker.

They end the chapter with this sentence, "It is with no uncertainty that Nature has indicated to us that not only is it parenthood which creates the new and unique individuality, but that the father and the mother are specialists for the specific nurture of their child. Parenthood is in fact the biological process evolved by Nature for the rearing of the young as well as for their initial creation."

Much as we anarchists would like to be completely free, of children as of everything else, it is one of our principles to seek the truth wherever that may lead us. To speak of "private ownership" of children is an excellent criticism of the bad family, but it gets us no further in a search for the facts, which is the essential thing. Abercarn, Sept. 30. H.R.L.

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