

'Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison.'

H. D. THOREAU

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LITERATURE AND THE LEFT

INCREDIBLE?

CORRESPONDENCE

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY - 4d.

The Price of freedom is eternal vigilance'

IT IS over seventy years since the famous battle of "Bloody Sunday" in Trafalgar Square established the rights of the people of London to hold assemblies there, and out of that grew the freedom of speech which—subject to the regulations covering obscenity, sedition and obstruction—has been "allowed" to flourish on speakers' pitches throughout the country.

On that famous occasion it was estimated that 100,000 people assembled and there was a pitched battle with the police. Among those present were such notables as William Morris, Bernard Shaw, Cunningham Graham and many others.

Last Sunday, September 17th, 1961, the people of London were called upon once again to defend their right of assembly—and it is to their credit that they were not found wanting. Not that it could be said that any stretch of the imagination that 100,000 turned up, but in these days of telly, Bingo, affluence, HP commitments, political apathy and law-abiding respectability, the quiet and calm determination of the thousands in the Square was a shot in the arm.

The Committee of 100, whose announcement of a march and sit-down in Parliament Square started the whole business, could hardly have hoped that the authorities would have behaved as they did. For what would have been just another demonstration against the bomb by a few hundred developed into a slap in the face for the Home Secretary and the police and a demonstration of such proportions that only the fact that most of those present had not come to actually take part in the anti-bomb demonstration prevented control from passing right out of the hands of the police altogether.

A week before the demonstration was due the Commissioner of Police persuaded the Home Secretary—Franco's friend Mr. R. A. Butler—that public order was endangered by

the possibility of a few hundred pacifists sitting down in Parliament Square, and he invoked the Public Order Act of 1936, under which he is empowered to ban public assemblies if it is thought that they might give rise to disorder and a breach of the peace. This Act was brought in in 1936 because of the pitched battles that were then being fought in the streets between Mosley's uniformed fascists and their then many Communist opponents. Disorder and fighting followed a Mosley march as the night of the day—indeed he deliberately went into neighbourhoods where he could expect most opposition in order to provoke disorder, demonstrate his courage (when protected by a thousand drilled and disciplined thugs), and thus get publicity while at the same time giving his morons something to do to keep them happy.

How different all this is from the committed calm and non-violence of

QUOTES:

"I have come here because they have gaoled Russell. It is an outrage that must bring the Government into contempt."

—The Rev. Canon Stanley Evans, Chancellor of Southwark Cathedral, on his way to the Holy Loch sit-down.

"When men believe that events are too big for them, there is no hope."

—C. P. Snow.

"It will be a sad thing for this country when there is nobody prepared to take the last resort of the frustrated democrat—non-violent civil disobedience."

—Fyfe Robertson, on "Tonight", BBC Television.

"Eichmann was expected to protest against his government's policy. When are we expected to protest against ours?"

—Defendant at Clerkenwell Court.

"I would do it all over again. I intend to contact the Committee of 100 and carry on the work."

—Lord Russell.

the anti-bomb movement doesn't need stressing here, but the interesting feature is that the same law that was brought in to cope with fascist-communist violence can be used to prevent pacific assembly.

For it was not only the march down Whitehall and the sit-down outside the Houses of Parliament, in Parliament Square, that was banned by the Home Secretary, it was the initial meeting in Trafalgar Square, from whence the organisers intended to march, as well.

Once the ban had been announced, anyone advocating its being defied was breaking the law, and inciting others to do the same. This, of course, included the whole of the Committee of 100, and so the police issued warrants to a selected half of these, calling them to court to give assurances that they would not go ahead with the plans. This attempt at deterrance failed miserably. In fact it was a boomerang; it brought just the publicity the Committee wanted in just the right kind of way. Especially with the imprisonment of Bertrand Russell.

Of the fifty for whom warrants had been issued, some thirty-three ended up in jail. Some warrants had not been served (Lord Boyd Orr, for example, was out of the country) and a very few individuals had, for personal reasons, to accept being bound over. Most outstanding, of course, of those jailed was Bertrand Russell. Originally awarded two months by the magistrate, Mr. Bertram Reece, this was reduced to one week after a medical certificate had been produced on behalf of the 89-year-old earl.

Now the English dearly love their eccentrics. For a member of the nobility to turn out to have a first-

class brain is eccentric enough, but when to that is added a long lifetime of rationalist and radical opposition, three wives, prison as a conchie during the first world war and now, at an age when most men are in their dotage if not dead, to be as sharp as a tack and with bags of courage and hope—this is a character that even our Press cannot belittle.

So the imprisonment of Bertrand Russell was a blunder of the first order by the authorities. Thousands who would not otherwise have cared began to sit up and take notice, moved by the image of this frail, dignified, white-haired old man and his wife (for she too is a member of the Committee) being carted off to Brixton and Holloway.

Trapped in the Square

THIS, then was the successful part of the day's work. The police attempt to prevent free assembly was frustrated. Certainly no meeting, was held in the sense that speeches were not made (except by individuals among the sitters) but then such meeting had not been planned by the Committee. The plan was to assemble in Trafalgar Square at 5 o'clock, then at 5.30 to move out of the Square, down Whitehall to Parliament Square and there make a protest sit-down.

The initial mistake in this plan was to make Trafalgar Square the

Support began to pour in. Financially to the tune, it was said, of about £600 a day, and by Saturday the Committee was claiming that 5,000 persons had pledged themselves to come and sit down on Sunday. Basing calculations upon their previous experience, of sitters doubling the number of pledges, the organisers expected 10,000 supporters.

In the event they got many more. Next morning's *Daily Telegraph*, anything but sympathetic, estimated 15,000 demonstrators, and all the banned area was packed with thousands more than that who, without sitting down, hampered the police, shouted their solidarity, obstructed the traffic and destroyed completely the attempt by the authorities to prevent "public assembly".

gathering point in the first place. And the only sensible thing the police did was to allow the demonstrators to peacefully enter the Square.

At 5 o'clock the Square was already nearly full and thousands more were converging on it from all directions. At first the police tried to prevent any more from entering after 5 o'clock, but when those wishing to enter proceeded to sit down in the roads surrounding the Square, they thought better of it and began to let them through.

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Voting Discrimination in the Deep South

FOR two years the United States Civil Rights Commission has been conducting a nation-wide investigation into voting discrimination. Last week by 70 votes to 19 (the opposition came from Southern Senators) the Senate extended for another two years the powers of the Commission.

The six-member commission issued a "massive report" in which it concluded that:

In some 100 counties in eight Southern States there was reason to believe that negro citizens are prevented by outright discrimination or by fear of physical violence or economic reprisal from exercising the right to vote.

The following examples show some of the methods used to deprive the Negro of the elementary right to express an opinion through the ballot box which is supposed to be the symbol of democratic freedom denied to black and white alike in communist countries only.

Liberty County, Fla., has 240 voting-age Negroes, but none are now registered. In 1956 some Negroes did register. There was an immediate outbreak of cross-burnings, fire bombs, abusive night-time telephone calls. When all the Negroes except one had removed their names from voting lists, said the commission, the "troubles ended". The one defiant Negro "was forced to leave the county."

In McCormick County, S.C., which is 62.6% Negro, 48 Negroes registered in 1960. Some immediately lost their jobs. As a consequence, only one was courageous enough to vote.

In East Carroll Parish, La., Negro Farmer Joseph Atlas complained to the commission that he had not been allowed to register. Soon after, he discovered that white merchants would not gin his cotton, market his soybeans, or deliver fuel oil to his farm.

In Haywood County, Tenn., Negroes who registered had insurance policies cancelled, were refused credit at local

banks, were not allowed to buy at local stores, or were evicted.

In Webster Parish, La., Negro Joe Kirk tried unsuccessfully four times to register. On his fourth try, the registrar invoked a proposed Louisiana law—which was not really passed until five months later—disqualifying parents of illegitimate children. Testified Kirk at a commission hearing: "She asked did I have any illegitimate children. I said, 'Not as I know of. If I has, I hasn't been accused of.' She says, 'You are a damned liar.' I just smiled; I could still give the smile. Then she said, 'I know you were going to tell a lie at the first place.' Then she asked the question, 'What were "disfranchise" mean?' I said, 'Just like I am now. This is disfranchise from voting.'"

Let it be noted that while the majority of Southern political leaders aim at preserving white supremacy their white voters with few exceptions are right behind them, if not ahead of them, in their determination to keep the South segregated.

It is the ordinary citizen who carries out the lynchings, the violence and the social discrimination. It is their attitude that has to change before any satisfactory form of integration can take place.

UN OFFENSIVE IN KATANGA

THE United Nations military offensive in Katanga will in due course achieve its objectives in spite of the much-publicised set-backs concerning the ambushed Irish troops and the solitary jet plane which has so far unsuccessfully tried to bomb the headquarters of the UN representative, Dr. O'Brien, in Katanga. The objectives are to remove the Belgian and other European or White African military personnel who have been responsible for maintaining Katanga "independence" on behalf of Union Minière, British shareholders and other white and black interests. It is worth noting that the "independence" of Katanga has attracted the support of some of the most unsavoury elements, from Sir Roy Welensky to a group of French officers concerned in the recent revolt in Algeria and who dare not show their faces in France. The Belgian authorities in Katanga while ostensibly agreeable to co-operation with the UN representatives in repatriating Belgian officers still operating there have in fact played a double game. The UN's chief representative in the Congo in his report points out that because of the promises made by the Belgian authorities, the UN refrained from continuing to search for and apprehend foreign military person-

nel but adds that "The foreign officers and mercenaries, profiting from this relaxation of evacuation measures, re-infiltrated into the gendarmerie, and there were indications that they began distributing arms to certain political or ethnic groupings. The foreign elements also began exercising pressure on some Katangese Ministers to dissuade them from moving towards political reconciliation to the authority of the Central Government. "Finally the foreign military personnel, together with the so-called 'ultras' among the non-African residents, exercised an adverse influence on the Katangese Government, inciting them to terroristic actions and violations of fundamental liberties."

On September 12 UN representatives in Elisabethville had "attempted to persuade the Katanga Government to reconcile their political differences with the Central Government by Constitutional means and gave assurances concerning M. Tshombe's safety if he wished to travel to Leopoldville for discussions. "On all these points the answer of the Katangese Government was a negative one. They refused emphatically to per-

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CREATIVE writers never work in a vacuum, though some wish they could. They have always had to worry about their relations with the Establishments in their societies, as well as those with their patrons and readers. In the past they have received praise or blame from the point of view of religion or patriotism; in this age of ideology they have also been judged from that of politics, particularly left-wing politics, and in Communist countries we have seen writers subjected to conformist pressure as strong as any applied by popes and kings. "Socialist realism", the doctrine enforced by inquisitors like Zhdanov, has led to the curious situation in which the only Russian writers worth reading are those who have either refused to conform or have refused to stay in Russia at all.

But behind the Iron Curtain left-wing commitment has become an orthodoxy, an obligation to do what you are told; in the West it is a heresy, a protest against doing what you are told. Or it should be—but unfortunately there are many left-wing critics about who pose as critics but behave like commissars, trying to turn their heresy into an orthodoxy, demanding that writers in a capitalist society should be committed to the working-class, the Communist Party, the Welfare State, or some brand or other of socialism; fortunately they cannot enforce their version of socialist realism, though no doubt some would if they could. Two recently published books, one good and one bad, show how a

Literature and the Left-1

Western left-wing critic should and should not approach the problem of politics in literature.

The bad book is *The Writer & Commitment* by John Mander (Secker & Warburg, 25s.). To begin with, it is too expensive and it has a misleading title. It is neither a theoretical study nor a general survey of literary commitment, but an attempt "to arrive at a critical estimate of Left-wing writing in the past three decades that would be relevant to the activity of the New Left in the 1960s"—left-wing writing in English only, by the way. After an irritating introduction, it examines some of the work of one American and nine English writers, starting with Auden and Orwell and going on to Angus Wilson, Arthur Miller, Thom Gunn, John Osborne, Shelagh Delaney, John Braine, Kingsley Amis and Arnold Wesker. You can see at once how narrow it is, dealing with a few books by a few writers since 1930. It is also doubly ignorant and doubly impertinent—doubly ignorant because Mander seems not to know many things he should know and ignores many other things he must know, and doubly impertinent because much of it is irrelevant to the subject of commitment and most of it is insolent to the writers he has chosen to discuss. He is the Assistant Literary Editor of the *New Statesman*, in his twenties, and it isn't too much to say that he combines all the excesses of periodical criticism, intellectual socialism, and youth. This is certainly one of the most inept books I have ever come across.

The great danger of left-wing commitment in criticism, as George Orwell pointed out a long time ago, is that instead of saying "this book is good although it is wrong" or "this book is bad although it is right" one is tempted to say "this book is bad because it is wrong" or "this book is good because it is right"—the tendency is to subordinate aesthetics to ethics, or in this case to politics. The end of this tendency is the *Zhdanovshchina*, the persecution of Zamyatin, Babel, Zoshchenko, Dudintsev, and Pasternak, or the more gruesome fate of Alexei Tolstoy, Sholokhov and Ehrenburg. Mander is no Zhdanov, but I think he is far too willing to invoke a sort of intellectual *raison d'état* when he doesn't like a writer—perhaps I should say *Staatsrecht*, since he prefers German words to the French ones fashionable in this country—and far too unwilling to see that a writer must write as he pleases.

Like many socialists today, he dislikes Auden and Orwell (whom he assigns to something he calls the "Old Left"—odd bed-fellows!), and has a lot of fun at their expense, or so he thinks. But he lacks the passion of Edward Thompson, and just makes himself ridiculous. "Must we burn Auden?" he asks, only half in jest, and concludes that Auden's failure to be a "major poet" is due not to "lack of talent" but to "lack of commitment". If you argue with him that it is going a bit far to expect a clever poet to swallow commitment whole, he changes his ground: he didn't mean Auden wasn't committed to socialism (or whatever), but suspects "Auden is somehow not quite committed to what he is saying"—which is using the word in a different sense. Mander is either very ingenuous or very disingenuous. I agree that "Auden's poetic personality lacks integrity," but I cannot agree that "one could wish that Auden had to put to himself, more often and more consistently, the question: which side am I supposed to be on?" On the contrary, the truth is surely that he has put that question far too often and too insistently for the good of his work—hence all the regrettable alterations he keeps making in it, hence the slickness and insincerity of so much of it.

But the real objection to Mander's analysis of Auden, which he himself regards as "crucial" to his argument, is that it ignores a large part of Auden's work. He compares *Spain 1937* unfavourably with some of the poems in *Look, Stranger!*, but he forgets a dozen late poems at least—including Part III of *In Memory of W. B. Yeats*, the unexpurgated version of *1st September, 1939*, *Another Time* and *Danse Macabre*, *Refugee Blues* and *James Honeyman*, *Epitaph on a Tyrant* and *The Unknown Citizen*—whose commitment is open and surely beyond any intelligent reproach. A serious defect in Auden is that he often seems serious about nothing outside himself, but this is no excuse for not taking him seriously, especially if you intend to demolish him. Apart from anything else, it is worth remembering that Auden himself once said: time "will pardon Paul Claudel, pardons him for writing well". I suspect it will pardon Auden similarly, pardon him for writing cleverly.

Mander then turns on Orwell, and once again misses his target; he really must learn that great writers aren't fools and don't talk nonsense. He fails to come to grips with Part II of *The Road*

to *Wigan Pier* and *Inside the Whale*, altogether, because he refuses to understand that it is possible to approve of socialism and yet disapprove of socialists (or Christianity or anarchism or anything). As we know, Orwell denied the possibility of a non-political book but praised non-political writers like Henry Miller, he denied the possibility of classlessness but tried to become classless; he loved England but wanted an English revolution; he distrusted progress but knew it was necessary and inevitable; and so on. Mander therefore tells us about his "extraordinary volte-face", his "apparent schizophrenia" (nasty psychiatric howler there!), his "irrational and contradictory" opinions. But can't he see that all Orwell's "contradictions" make sense? It is right to try to be non-political, classless, patriotic, honest, and the rest, even if you can't make it, just as it is right for the historian and scientist to seek truth, knowing they will never find it, for the anarchist and socialist to seek utopia, with the same result.

There are more elementary mistakes than this. Orwell was "quite capable of saying that propaganda is the ruin of art one day, and on the next that all art must have a political purpose"; nonsense—he said art would have a political significance even if the artist tried to be non-political, which is quite different. Orwell, like Burnham, followed "Trotsky's Marxist Libertarianism"; well, well—Orwell attacked Burnham violently, wasn't a Trotskyist or any kind of Marxist, and wouldn't have been such a fool as to suppose that Trotsky was a little better than Stalin. "The strategy of the POUM and the Anarchists was almost certainly wrong . . . the Communists were right"; too good to be true—but the Editor of *New Left Review*, in a polite but hostile notice, has answered it already by pointing to "the betrayal of socialism by itself" in Spain. "For Orwell there was no difference between the Stalins and the Churchills and the Roosevelts"; and to think how often Orwell pointed out the difference! Don't people even bother to read writers before attacking them?

This sort of thing palls, but I must mention Mander's remarks about 1984. It "must be judged as a political tract"; in it "the human being is no longer in the centre of the picture"; and "we are, after all, pretty sure that 1984 is not going to happen"; since "it is not easy to imagine a recurrence of Stalin's Great

Purge". What a way to deal with one of the most important books written in England in this century! What utter poverty of criticism!

Mander then moves on to Angus Wilson and Arthur Miller, condemning them both for the dichotomy in their work between psychological and social factors, their reliance on both Marx and Freud—"a jealous god demands a total commitment: you cannot serve both God and Mammon". What sort of nonsense is this? Surely a writer can use ideas derived from more than one thinker without having biblical rhetoric thrown at him, and surely Marx and Freud actually mix rather well when mixed with skill, as they are by Wilson and Miller? The former is also criticised for his preoccupation with neurotics, and the latter for denying that *Death of a Salesman* is "a play about the American Way of Life"; no comment. Incidentally, Wilson's novels and all Miller's other plays are pretty well ignored—I suppose it means less homework.

The next victim is Thom Gunn. The only reason for his presence in such unsuitable company I can think of is that Mander likes his poverty and is incapable of liking anything without assuming it is somehow committed. He puts Gunn in a state of "pre-commitment" because he "has attempted to re-examine the very basis of commitment", but doesn't sound very convinced himself; it would be kinder to ignore this small chapter.

Finally we come to the "angry young men", the appearance of "working-class" literature associated by Mander with John Osborne, Kingsley Amis and

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AN OFFENSIVE 'LUMUMBISM WITHOUT LUMUMBA'

Continued from page 1
mit the evacuation of the foreign officers serving in the Katangese Surete.

"In the early hours of September 13, the UN therefore, took security precautions similar to those applied on August 28, and deemed necessary to prevent inflammatory broadcasts or other threats to the maintenance of law and order while the UN resumed its task of apprehending and evacuating foreign military and para-military personnel."

We hasten to add that we have not suddenly been converted into ardent supporters of the United Nations. On the contrary, the present action by the UN simply underlines our criticisms of its actions in the Congo during these past sixteen months. The gradual resolution of the struggle for power among the Congo leaders could have been achieved much sooner but for the interference in Congolese affairs by the UN, which was aimed at breaking down the authority of the legally constituted government. Again, we must add that we held no brief for Lumumba; but neither did we fall for Tshombe's claim to independence which was so obviously "independence for the Mining interests in Katanga to continue to exploit the natural resources for their profit.

But at that time the UN was denouncing Lumumba and supporting the Katanga independence demands. In fact what is happening politically in the Congo today has been described by an American sociologist as "Lumumbism without Lumumba". In a most interesting article in the American "New Leader" (August 28) Mr. Wallerstein reviews the political development in the Congo since Lumumba's murder and shows how the prospects of the new Government's programme are along the lines advocated by Lumumba himself. In the course of this survey Mr. Wallerstein also shows how the UN line has virtually been reversed during this period. We reproduce here the last part of this important article.

● Lumumba stood for the territorial integrity of the Congo. Adoula's initial move after the investiture was to begin the reintegration of Katanga, and he indicated that he would brook no nonsense and was ready to use force if necessary. The UN command has said privately that it will back this up. Thus the UN has finally come around to the position which the nationalists have been asking it to take from the start.

● Lumumba stood for effective civilian control of the army. This is clearly

the intention of Adoula and the nationalists. In a pre-investiture statement to the press on July 15, Adoula called for a "profound metamorphosis" in the spirit of the army and a "return to discipline." This will not be easy to accomplish, but the existence of a single national government, if followed by the effective reintegration of Katanga, will limit the army's freedom of action.

● Lumumba stood for a neutralist, Pan-African foreign policy. In his July 15 message, Adoula advocated positive neutrality. There will probably be no immediate, dramatic shift in Congo policy, although early resumption of normal diplomatic relations with Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Morocco and the United Arab Republic is to be expected, followed by the establishment of relations with the Communist countries. Slowly but surely, the new Government will probably move nearer the old Lumumba position, especially as the East African states gain their independence.

● Lumumba stood for the creation of a single national, non-ethnic party. In the near future, the various nationalist parties will probably merge into a single new party. If they can convince Adoula to join with them, then the Congo will rather rapidly become a one-party state. Even if Adoula refuses to go along, the new nationalist party will be a formidable force.

● Lumumba stood for a strong central state. Here his opponents have made the greatest headway, but far less than it seemed they would only several months ago. The most probable outcome of the future constitutional reversions is a rather strong federal state replacing a decentralized unitary one. The number of provinces may well be increased somewhat by three.

● Lumumba insisted the proper role of the UN was that of agent of the Congolese government and not that of political tutor. While the UN has never played and probably will never play either extreme role, it is now far closer to the original Lumumbist conception than it was a year ago. This is especially striking in terms of the UN's attitude on Katanga, the basic cause of disension between Lumumba and the UN.

All these difficulties will undoubtedly continue to plague the new Government. Nevertheless, if the outside world refrains from further direct interference in their affairs, the Congolese people have a good chance of coming to grips with their own problems. They have learned a lot in the year since independence. It would be a serious error for the other nations to continue to count on the juvenile character of this country's politics. What happened between July and December of 1960 in the Congo will fortunately never be possible again.

TRAPPED IN THE SQUARE

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This was a splendid tactic on their part, for when, at 5.30 the demonstrators began to move towards the exits from the Square, they found themselves neatly hemmed in by banks of policemen.

Now what do pacifist demonstrators do when faced with solid rows of police? Instructions had been for the demonstrators to march as far as possible, and then, when prevented from going further, to sit down wherever they were. This was what they did. But they were not in Parliament Square. They were not in Whitehall. They were still in Trafalgar Square, half a mile from their objective and tightly ringed by the law.

Now had it not been for the thousands of supporters and sightseers around the Square there would have been no serious obstruction and the police would have been able to move in quickly and mop up the sitters without bother, driving their wagons and hired buses up to the sides of

Decentralise!

THE final score, as we see it, came out fairly even. It was certainly not, as the *Guardian* strangely claimed it, a "Victory for the Law", unless you think only in terms of the sit-down having to be in Parliament Square. But tens of thousands of people calmly and non-violently occupied an area which had been specifically proscribed by law, and in doing so attracted more publicity for the anti-bomb cause—and for civil liberties—than the Committee of 100 could have dared to hope for.

The calmness and quietness of the crowd were most impressive. Although most of those present were not pacifists, apart from a few unhelpful elements the crowd respected the organisers' desire for a dignified and non-violent protest. The police controlling the crowd around the Square were outnumbered by perhaps ten to one, and could have been swept aside if the crowd had wanted to exert its strength. But that, of course, would have meant reinforcements being called up with horses and—it was rumoured—dogs, and would have led to violence which would have destroyed completely the Committee's aim.

The Committee's aim, after all, in all these demonstrations, is to get publicity for the anti-bomb movement and to get people talking on that issue. They claim that they are driven to civil disobedience because there is no other way for the people to express themselves—Press and Parliament being what they are.

In this limited aim, the Committee can claim a complete success for last Sunday. The fact that so many well-known people, for example, were associated with this operation and with the Committee's work is bound

to impress many who would otherwise dismiss the anti-bomb movement as a bunch of no-goodniks. The list of supporters sounds like a theatrical who's who. John Osborne, Sheila Delaney, Vanessa Redgrave, Alan Sillitoe—these were among the arrested on Sunday, while Arnold Wesker was already jailed for two months on Tuesday along with Lord Russell, and Herbert Read was also sitting down. Also picked up on Sunday was George Melly, the jazz singer, who, incidentally, is waiving his fee for singing at our "Anarchistic Ball" on October 20th and who has already had property—to wit one silver teapot—distrained upon to pay taxes he has withheld as an anti-bomb protest.

For its public impact, this could hardly have been bettered. But what of the future? Will similar demonstrations be practical propositions to repeat? As we see it, a serious tactical blunder was made by the demonstrators centralising themselves in Trafalgar Square to start with. This enabled the police to surround and contain them. Future sit-downs should surely be more decentralised, more widespread, rather than concentrated. Numbers are increasing, so this becomes more practical.

Considering, however, what little experience in social struggle we have in this country, the events of last Sunday are tremendously encouraging. The Committee of 100 is to be congratulated and encouraged. In gathering the strength of the people outside Parliament, it is not only rallying the forces of sanity against the lunatics in power, it is fostering responsibility among the people—the most important task of all.

to impress many who would otherwise dismiss the anti-bomb movement as a bunch of no-goodniks. The list of supporters sounds like a theatrical who's who. John Osborne, Sheila Delaney, Vanessa Redgrave, Alan Sillitoe—these were among the arrested on Sunday, while Arnold Wesker was already jailed for two months on Tuesday along with Lord Russell, and Herbert Read was also sitting down. Also picked up on Sunday was George Melly, the jazz singer, who, incidentally, is waiving his fee for singing at our "Anarchistic Ball" on October 20th and who has already had property—to wit one silver teapot—distrained upon to pay taxes he has withheld as an anti-bomb protest.

For its public impact, this could hardly have been bettered. But what of the future? Will similar demonstrations be practical propositions to repeat? As we see it, a serious tactical blunder was made by the demonstrators centralising themselves in Trafalgar Square to start with. This enabled the police to surround and contain them. Future sit-downs should surely be more decentralised, more widespread, rather than concentrated. Numbers are increasing, so this becomes more practical.

Considering, however, what little experience in social struggle we have in this country, the events of last Sunday are tremendously encouraging. The Committee of 100 is to be congratulated and encouraged. In gathering the strength of the people outside Parliament, it is not only rallying the forces of sanity against the lunatics in power, it is fostering responsibility among the people—the most important task of all.

THE claim of the Catholic Church that the essence of its doctrine has not changed throughout the centuries could only be substantiated if "essence" had been defined as the "reality underlying phenomena". But the keen observer can see that the hidden permanent reality of the Church is power and domination.

Being the only one true Church it aims at the only one true domination, the only one true absolutism on the universal level because the Catholic Church—as the name suggests—is all embracing, universal.

The difficulty of grasping the essence of the catholic doctrine arises from the fact that the "essence" is very carefully concealed behind the various phenomena. It is not always immediately obvious just what is happening, or what the aim is. At one and the same time the Church may be fascist, socialist or democratic depending on which policy is likely to be most profitable. On the one side it preaches brotherly love, it appears as a forgiving mother, as a protector of human rights, etc.; on the other side it preaches hate and is an organ of vengeance; it builds inquisitions and liquidates the human being in a merciless way.

However, behind so many various manifestations there is no contradiction; on the contrary, there is unity—the unity of a highly organized political body faithful to the jesuit postulate that the ends justify the means.

The contemporary Church is a powerful organization due not to religious inclinations but to its shrewd policy, and the fact that the Western governments in general and United States in particular think catholicism a positive faith and factor in their fight against Communist danger.

This situation makes of the Church a less vulnerable organism because she controls the means, and gives her vast opportunity for political manoeuvre. So, even if it is very disappointing for many free-thinking persons, the Church appears—though it is an appearance only—as the champion of freedom, as the only one force capable of saving men and the values of the civilization. All this is but an appearance and not the essence of the Church. The real nature "the mysterious body of Christ" is revealed to a few and from their mouth we can acquire some knowledge about the true nature of that mysterious body. So it is not daily demagoguery we can look for an explanation and understanding of the mystery but in some utterances aside.

It is always these utterances that can be historically verified, that give us the

Incredible?

key to understand the meaning of catholicism. Or in other words make it possible to see the naked nature of the Church.

To help the reader to judge for himself and to make his own finding, I think it would be of interest to mention the appearance in anno domini 1961 in Italy of the neo-guelphs.

What is important for us is their catholic religious spirit expressed very sincerely and directly without any concealment in the leaflets they published to commemorate the centenary of Italian Unity. These leaflets contain the following message:—

Italians,
We are celebrating the hundred years of Italian unity and independence. The Italy of our times is squalid in every way. Immorality, corruption and pornography are spreading everywhere suffocating the protests of those few who are still fundamentally sane. The liberal arts and sciences are withering away for want of an heroic ideal.

Italians,
The fate of our country, her future and her fortune depend upon you alone. Remember, you are the heirs of that Italy which carried civilisation, law and religion to all corners of the earth. Remember that as long as Rome was the throne of the Papacy, she stood for centuries "caput mundi".

Italians,
We affirm and can demonstrate that the secular state is the cause of our present misery. We shall fight courageously and firmly for the restoration of temporal power to the popes.

The secular state must be merely an interval in the history of Italy.

Purposes and conclusions.

Give unto God that which is Caesar's.
(1) Having come back to life we guelphs aim at fighting the ideals of the Renaissance*, with which, after all, the secular state has only succeeded in disrupting the order.

Long live the priests of iron!
(2) We want absolute pontifical sovereignty.

Long live the gibbet and the axe!
(3) We wish to confide to incorruptible jesuits a police capable of pitiless courage for the persecution and suppression of all democracy.

Down with the light of reason! Long live the sacred inquisition!

(4) Our dear Nemesis will accompany to the sacred stake the bards of this chaos of political schisms, the epigoni of those who wishing to make Italy have instead abased the latin genius and broken its conquering vitality. They shall not succeed!

(5) We shall put the "Pillars of Hercules" beyond the confines of this world. *Defende nos in proelio; contra bequitian diaboli esto praesidium.*

(6) We are against materialism. Long live the abstract symbols which bring us closer to God.

The United Kingdom of the World under the Roman Pontiff!

(7) Twenty centuries of divine and hierarchical absolutism have taught that to rule is to stand over others and to smash the herd of equals.

We are with God, woe to those who touch us!

The vicar of the:
Confraternita pesarese
Vittorio Mitriaco
Johannes Francosus
Pesaro, xiii Febrario MCMLXI.

Incredible? One would like to think so. Unfortunately this leaflet was published in all seriousness. It may be the voice of a fanatical minority—the lunatic fringe as it were—but even if this is so it must be taken seriously, because it is the voice of such small groups that sounds above all others when the power of the Church gains precedence over the state and other ruling institutions.

To the neo-guelphs and similar groups we have to be grateful for their enlightenment on the basic premises of catholicism and the unchanged permanent essence of its doctrine. J.G.

*Italian National Renaissance.

FINANCE!

FINANCIAL STATEMENT AT	
16th SEPTEMBER, 1961, WEEK No. 37	
Expenses: 36 weeks at £70	£2,590
Income from Sales & Subs:	
Weeks 1—36	£1,163
Week 37	£15
	£1,178
DEFICIT £1,412	

DEFICIT FUND
September 8th to September 16th

Hitchin: L.A. 10/-; Slough: E.C.* 2/6;
London: P.H. £2; London: B.L. £2/7/6;
Hastings, N.Z.: D.S.T. 8/8; Wolverhampton:
J.G.L.* 2/6; Wolverhampton: J.K.W.* 2/-;
London: A.T. £1/1/-; Glasgow: J.H.* 1/6;
London: D.R. 7/7; London: T.K. 4/-; London:
Anon. 11d.; York: A.M. £2/5/-; N. York:
S.G. £1/8/6; Shoreham: M. & D.* 2/6;
Cardiff: M.G. 10/-; Lincoln: A.R.B. 5/-;
Swansea: R.R. £5; Los Angeles: p. proceeds
picnic, Labour Day (per A.S.) £14; Arizona:
E.B. £2; Menlo Park: I.U. £1/1/-; Mile End:
P.M. 5/-; London: P. & G.T.* 5/-; Surrey:
F.B.* 5/-.

Total 35 15 2
Previously acknowledged 676 2 3
1961 TOTAL TO DATE £711 17 5

Literature and the Left-1

Continued from page 2

John Braine (none of whom is recognisably working-class, but never mind). *Look Back in Anger* is inferior to *A Taste of Honey* because Jimmy Porter is too like John Osborne and is so vehement that he is non-committal; similarly *Room at the Top* is inferior to *Lucky Jim* because Joe Lampton is too like John Braine and his ambivalence is due to "lack of commitment". All the time we are warned against the "Biographical Fallacy"—the idea that an author's life is relevant to his work; true, this can be taken too far, but I suspect Maugham prefers to avoid biographical references because they would mean a lot of work and might upset his theories.

He ends the book by praising *Roots* (with reference to Wesker's life!) and saying how good it is to see socialist commitment undefiled by psychological analysis. But he carefully avoids the awkward facts that *Roots* would be just as good if Wesker (and his Ronnie) weren't socialists at all, that Wesker's neglect of psychology is a vice rather than a virtue, that *Roots* is his only satisfactory play, and that his talent (like Osborne's) is based on a three-pronged use of comedy, rhetoric and sentimentality—the old formula of laughter, shouting and tears that has been inducing catharsis in theatres for centuries and has nothing to do with commitment.

But all these are minor objections. I have two major objections to this book. The first is that it never really says anything. "What is commitment?" Mander asks on the first page, adding pat-

ronisingly that "the term commitment has been too freely bandied about, without much reflection or attempt at definition". He refuses to stay for an answer, and does too much bandying about on his own account. He denies that commitment is "a political assault on the integrity of the artist . . . a Left-wing plot to deprive him of his freedom". This idea, he says "can be easily disposed of: it is not the business of the critic to tell the artist how to live." This completely misses the point—rather like arguing that English policemen aren't the instruments of oppression because they don't carry guns. The point is that it isn't the business of the critics to tell the artist how to do anything; it is to judge his work when it is done. Doesn't Mander see that telling a writer what to write or not to write involves telling him how to live? Add power to that sort of literary criticism, and you have the ingredients of totalitarian censorship.

We are then told that commitment is "a moral rather than a political question", that "all art is committed . . . to something beyond itself, to a statement of value not purely aesthetic", and we hear much about "the basic moral concern, the implied valuation of human attitudes and activities" and "the basic cast of mind, the fundamental conviction of a man, still perhaps in a pre-philosophical, pre-conceptual form"—well, you get the idea. But we never hear about political commitment in the age of Hitler and Stalin, the Welfare State and the Cold War, and we are not told that ultimately commitment means taking sides, which is one of the most

dangerous things a writer can do. Critical work is unlikely to suffer from partisanship, but creative work is all too likely to do so. This is the awful problem of political commitment, and Mander shirks it. He explains that politics is "the sum total of man's life in society", which is nonsense; he should examine the dozens of non-political writers who are nevertheless committed to decency, freedom, humanity and the rest, and then he might see the appalling narrowness and shallowness of his attitude.

My second major objection is that Mander is aggressive, hectoring, patronising, tendentious, complacent, condescending, long-winded, repetitive, argumentative, to nausea. Even all this would be forgivable if he had anything original or valuable to say, but I have failed to find anything of the kind. He is also utterly insular, in both space and time—commitment was apparently invented by Sartre, the only other foreigners worth referring to are Brecht and Lukacs (Marx and Freud aren't referred to—they are simply named)—and doesn't seem to have read his predecessors in England, such as Stephen Spender and "Christopher Caudwell" (let alone Kropotkin and Emma Goldman). The awful thing is that a lot of people will presumably take his book seriously as the literary testament of the younger left-wing generation in general and the New Left in particular. I think I prefer Colin Wilson.

The good book I mentioned at the end of my second paragraph is *Politics & the Novel* by Irvine Howe (Stevens, 12s. 6d.), and I hope to discuss it in a later issue of FREEDOM.

N.W.

(To be concluded)

TO CELEBRATE 75 YEARS OF 'FREEDOM',
FREEDOM PRESS & THE LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP
WILL HOLD

An Anarchistic Ball

ON FRIDAY 20 OCTOBER at 7.30 pm
at FULHAM TOWN HALL LONDON SW6

MICK MULLIGAN & HIS BAND with GEORGE MELLY
and GUEST ARTISTS

Admission 6/-

Write now for tickets to sell among your friends.

The Impact on Ordinary People

To the Editors of FREEDOM,

In the few minutes left before I go out to join the sit-down, I should like to protest against your comment on the clash between the Committee of 100 and the State. You rightly criticise the regrettable egotism the Committee has shown during the last few weeks (which is surely paranoid rather than opportunistic, and is understandable enough in the circumstances); but you persist in regarding the present international crisis as an essentially imaginary one. Isn't the point not so much the truth about the crisis, as its appearance? If it is thought to be serious, it becomes serious.

Clearly the authorities take it seriously, and for some reason they also seem to take the Committee seriously. I share your opinion about the impact of sit-downs on the chances of war and the policy of our government, but I think you forget their impact on ordinary people (strange omission in FREEDOM!) and on other governments. Again, it is the appearance that matters, not the truth. If the Committee seems to be defying the government with impunity, the Committee goes up in the esteem of the common people and the government goes down in that of its allies—and its enemies. No wonder the authorities have decided to act, not because they are afraid of the Committee but because they are afraid of the disloyal millions who refused to back the Suez War and of Mr. K and Mr. K who are waiting to see just how tough Britain is.

As usual, fortunately, they have made fools of themselves, so that whether we are chiefly concerned with nuclear disarmament or with the social struggle things seem to be going our way. But don't let's snipe at each other—it is after all reasonable enough to be equally concerned with you.

Hampstead, Sept. 17

N.W.

War by Accident?

DEAR COMRADES,

The vital point in your editorial "War by Accident?" is that if the men with fingers on the buttons could unleash a nuclear war, then it would seem that they "are truly the most powerful individuals in the world today." But let me remind you that their power, if used, would be suicidal. Any threats from a "man at the button" would soon lead to his removal. In actual fact we see that their power consists in their ability to deal a death-blow to the world, it does not consist of ordering anyone around.

As for the dangers of accidental war, a study group from Ohio State University concludes in their report "Accidental War: Some dangers of the 1960's" that: "Taking together all the dangers, there is a significant chance that a major accidental war may occur at some time in the 1960's." They may be wrong, but so may you be.

Readers can see for themselves the extent of your incorrect reading of events in your rather outdated question: "Do the Committee (of 100) honestly believe the 'British authorities' are unduly worried or influenced by the sit-downs?" It really does not require fifteen years of editorial experience to notice that the authorities are very worried indeed.

Fraternally,

J.W.

Correspondence

Syndicalism and Collective Contract

FREEDOM,

Colin Ward wonders why no Anarcho-Syndicalist wrote in to query his editorial comments on Revisionism & Workers' Control. May I suggest that this was because these showed an insufficient grasp of classical Syndicalism.

Lagardelle, Vincent St. John and others, unlike De Leon, always believed in piecemeal change, in each strike action gaining a partial measure of control, each building on the last and facilitating the next, which in my book is encroaching control. (It is perhaps amusing that the revolutionary Syndicalists were as Socialists reformist and vice versa). As it happens, I am here a revisionist in that I believe that De Leon was right in saying that Capitalism—Managerialism or what you will—must be displaced rather than overthrown; displaced by conscious Industrial Unionist Socialists in a general stay-in strike—(I would add other forms of Civil Disobedience)—and displaced with the definite intention of replacing it by the Industrial Unionist Commonwealth. However I cannot see how enough people can be brought to a sufficient level of revolutionary consciousness without first crippling the State through strikes and other forms of Direct Action. Nor can I believe that anyone who is consciously revolutionary can happily wait as the De Leonists and the SPGB dictate until Der Tag when the conditions are ripe.

Again Colin Ward has no reason to be surprised that Syndicalists now turn to collective Contracts; for just as piecemeal reform is no departure from classical anarcho-syndicalist thought, nor is the replacement of the Workers' Council as the basic unit of Industrial Unionism by the Workers' gang. From the beginning it was held that effective Workers' Control demanded the smallest

Workers are the basis of Production!

COVENTRY'S "Nature-boy gang workers" much the same as other people—some are unconscious anarchists, a few are as aware of the snags in present day life as anyone. Their concern is mainly with immediate things, production, good pay and good conditions of work, building a home, kids and careers for kids, sport, hobbies and so on.

Scholarship and intellectual disputation is looked upon as someone else's job. Having therefore little historical sense (except for occasional outbursts of Lady Godiva and Peeping Tom), they fail to appreciate the social significance of their own gang system. Their purely practical mind says "If it is good, if we can do it, why the hell can't you?" I always add, "Why not? Why not make it universal? Why not develop it as a contribution to the many-sided moves that are even now by-passing capitalism? Creative moves."

Any fool can be a rebel, but continuous creation over a lifetime is hard work. A large amount of idealism goes into safeguarding our gang system—in negotiation, in consolidating gains, in resisting wreckers at all levels. All this is local, domestic. We have no responsi-

possible viable basic unit; in those days since it was and is necessary that all workers involved in the same form of production should be united in the basic unit, such a smallest viable unit was the Council of all the workers in a factory. Today such an idea is often an absurdity, how many work at Dagenham? Where then is one's smallest unit, in some factories, wings thereof yield viable units, but where the Collective Contracts are possible the gangs are obviously preferable to all other basic forms.

However even if these were radical departures from classical revolutionary syndicalist thought it would hardly prove C.W.'s case that there is no longer a respectable intellectual case for revolutionary Anarchism. It would merely prove that the old case has been rejected, and the fact C.W. in admitting that Permanent Protest without a vision of a new society is sterile, throws out the Molnar school of P.P., alright who doubts that we are very unlikely to achieve Anarchism—we are not particularly likely to survive anyway; but one can only effectively attack what exists if one can paint some concept of what one wants; and protest action without direction often does more harm than good.

Yours sincerely,
London, W.11. LAURENS OTTER.

A Five Bob Fund!

DEAR COMRADES,

As I have often foretold, the tendency of the Government to increase its control over all our actions is rapidly increasing to a point which would have been called Fascism when I was younger. Evidently the Government feels strong enough to disregard free public opinion in its policy of fortifying the "Establishment" in the face of many increasing attacks.

Recent events convince me that the Anarchist cause is more urgent than ever. In this age of mass enlightenment some

employers' spokesmen are cagey—Trade Union officials are "official"—shop stewards (who really do deal with realities) are suspect. The middle class are deeply infected with morbid pessimism, and all the professional inspirers seem to be on the telly.

We in Coventry know only too well that we produce too many cars and not enough houses. We have a vastly expensive new cathedral, and many old men and women still rotting in slums. Our new shopping centre is so costly that only big business can operate the—local traders have been planned out of their own town.

Mr. D. Harper asks "Where is the idealism?" In fact massive informal welfare takes place—anonymous. This is done without brass plates or rake-offs. Every sick man or woman is taken care of financially—except (and here we may be reproached) when they leave industry. And even there much good is done by stealth to outwit the snoopers from "public assistance". In families I don't think we are much worse than anyone else—parents are visited and cared for "taken out in the car", looked after when ill. I know this when men "explain" to me their absence from work. Good turns by industrial workers are mostly done by stealth—being "good" openly is considered sloppy! We have eliminated much sordidness from work which allows the better qualities to emerge. It has been a deadly slow process and there are many people who take everything they can without thought but those of us who see the process whole are not deterred.

The man, now very old, who gave me my first ideas of workers' control, was once asked by a university professor "How long would it take to bring the workers to the level you indicate?" (He was obviously thinking in terms of centuries). The reply was shattering, "Twenty-four hours!" I could "hear" all the brains in that room working like mad. Every idea they had, had been challenged, in three words. Our kind of social engineering is in preparation for such a possible situation, and in the meantime we build the maximum possible co-operation at all levels, deliberately, and in complete disregard of all opposition and disruption.

Coventry, Sept. 10. REG WRIGHT.

of our most original thinkers are clapped into jail by the convenient invocation of an ancient Act, which is, in the words of *The Times*: "... a remarkable survival from mediaeval times when in 1361 the Justices of the Peace Act was passed at the close of the long war with France to prevent armed men from wandering about England committing disorders."

What on earth the 600 year-old ghosts of those wandering demobbed bowmen have to do with Bertrand Russell and Dr. Alex Comfort only the cynical old Government politicians' tortuous minds could imagine! Or perhaps those ancient ex-archers were suspected of a mediaeval plot to protest against the devastating power of the new gunpowder bombs. Perhaps this speculation makes the 1361 Act relevant in 1961!

In the interests of "police peace", an 89-year-old sage has had to be put away to prevent his acting for a greater peace. Is this a sign that the Government, like all totalitarian governments, is afraid of free speech and thought? Is it a sign that the Government fears that too many of us have not been drugged into acquiescence by the Telly, the Fridge, the Car and the Sunday Press?

As I was writing this, I heard the news that that great guardian of democracy, R. A. Butler, had invoked the 1936 Public Order Act to clamp down further on the Committee of 100. Something was mumbled about a possible clash with Battle of Britain celebrations as an excuse. We must not let the fear of a terrible future war interfere with the anniversary of a war that our children do not remember, must we?

I wonder, comrades, how many more out-of-date Acts this Government has up its sleeve to prevent the spreading of free and independent thought. It reminds me of my old Army days when any totalitarian officer could find some section of the Army Act to put one on a charge for anything under the sun.

Comrades, I am not dismayed by all this reactionary activity. To me it is a symptom caused by the recent encouraging rise in the "New Wave" of original and independent thought which has begun to threaten the "Establishment". We have made ourselves noticed.

Progress, as History shows, has often been hindered by reaction, but never stopped. And all this police-court mumbo-jumbo has been used before, and ultimately in vain, in the early history

of the Trade Union and the Suffragette Movement.

Things are slowly coming to a head, comrades. The more publicity is given to the Government encroachment on freedom, the more people will begin to realise how far they have been led astray by the politicians' Ignis Fatuus of parliamentary democracy. Objective as he strove to be, even the *Times* "Legal Correspondent" sounded a little uneasy about the interpretation of the statute "34 Edward III Chapter 1". Perhaps he doubted, really, if the Committee of 100 were "pillors and robbers", within the meaning of the Act.

The struggle for freedom is starting and we are in the van. I suggest that all comrades subscribe a "Five Bob Fund", not merely for the comparatively passive purpose of supporting FREEDOM, but to spread much further its ideals before the hungry eyes of thousands now disillusioned by the politicians' cynical manoeuvring and bluff.

Herewith my Five Bob.

Yours fraternally,

ALBERT R. BRIMCOMBE.

Lincoln, Sept. 13.

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP CENTRAL MEETINGS AGAIN!

meetings to be held at
The Two Brewers,
40 Monmouth Street, WC2
(Leicester Square Tube)
Sundays at 7.30 p.m.

SEPT 24 Ian Celnick:
Are Anarchists Against Organisation?

OCT 1 Arthur Uloth:
Reich Revisited

OCT 8 Philip Sansom:
Freedom and Progress

OCT 15 Max Patrick:
Communist Policy: Left, Right and Turn About.

OCT 22 Ted Kavanagh:
Anarchism and Violence

Hyde Park Meetings

Every Sunday at 3.30 (if fine)

OFF-CENTRE DISCUSSION MEETINGS

1st Thursday of each month at 8 p.m. at Jack and Mary Stevenson's, 6 Stainton Road, Enfield, Middx.

Last Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m. at Dorothy Barasi's, 45 Twyford Avenue, Fortis Green, N.2.

1st Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m. at Colin Ward's, 33 Ellerby Street, Fulham, S.W.6.

3rd Thursday of each month at 8 p.m. at Donald Room's, 148a Fellows Road, Swiss Cottage, N.W.3.

Last Friday of each month at 8 p.m. at Laurens and Celia Otter's, 57 Ladbroke Road, W.11.

JAZZ CLUB

New season's meetings will be held at 4 Albert Street Mornington Crescent NW1 at approximately monthly intervals.
FRIDAY SEPT. 15: Ian Celnick:
Small Groups in the 30's and 40's.
FRIDAY OCT. 13: Jack Stephenson:
The Trumpet.

Freedom

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