

ARMY TRAINED GUNMEN!

No Solution without Amnesty for Deserters

IT is not difficult, if one goes about it rationally (rather than with the shallow emotionalism of so-called "dispassionate" judges) to put two and two together on this gunman business. The war trained thousands of men to accept acts of violence without stirrings of conscience—indeed as laudable behaviour. At the same time the silly inelasticity of red tape drove 20 thousand odd soldiers to desert—with the inevitable consequence which we have pointed out so often in *Freedom*: that, debarred from legal means of earning a living, they have been driven into a life of crime.

Deliberate psychological conditioning in brutality plus deliberate exclusion from legal existence, practically speaking, equals gunmen. It could hardly be otherwise. What is surprising, perhaps, is that there are not more of them and more desperate crimes of violence. It seems that despite psychological conditioning, and the practice of "praiseworthy" violence, the human material is still sufficiently recalcitrant to retain a natural distaste for such acts. That the gunman is the exception rather than the rule in a post-war world is something of a tribute to the sociable habits of men.

Official Hysteria

When the sequence of cause and effect is as clear as in this case of the contemporary crime wave, remedies are proportionately easier. It is not possible to undo the fact of the war and its methods; but it is at least open to everyone to recognise the immediate evils which result from it, and which may therefore be reckoned up as part of the inevitable cost of any future venture of the same kind.

Moreover, the gunman is still the exception which proves the rule of human sociability; it requires the exceptional circumstances created by the outlawing of deserters to bring out these exceptions. Hence the outlawing of deserters must be ended. The government have already admitted that they know this root cause of the crime wave, and they have tried to remedy it by their appeal for deserters to give themselves up. This remedy has proved a complete failure—only about three thousand out of the twenty responded (and the "lenient treatment they received was quite severe enough to scare off any others from giving themselves up!) The obvious indication, therefore, is to declare an amnesty for all deserters, and thereby cut the base from under the crime wave.

It might be added that the need for all this is all the more urgent since

the psychological effects of living outside legal society are such as make it increasingly difficult for a man to return to normal social life. Criminals are made by the circumstances of their position. Hence the longer an amnesty is deferred, the more difficulty in rehabilitation will be experienced.

But does the official mind show any sign of grasping these obvious and common sense facts? Not in the least. Instead, we see the police using the public alarm as a cover for inconvenient cordoning-off and round-ups and check-ups which cause immense dislocation, create a condition of police-mindedness which is extremely undesirable (to put it no more strongly),—and have as their result the arrest of a mere handful of deserters.

Meanwhile, members of the government have used the occasion to demand "more powers" to put down gunmen—that is, a permanent increase in the powers of the executive in order to deal with an essentially transitory problem. Judges have been ordering flogging, and the yellow newspapers printing articles supporting corporal punishment. Instead of an elementary use of reason, the official reaction is one of hysteria—but with a shrewd eye to the main chance of getting some increase in official powers out of the situation. One suspects that the hysteria is a simulated one just in order to make something out of it.

EQUAL PAY PROBLEM

A Comrade writes :

The slogan of "Equal Pay for Equal Work" has always been a good vote-catcher among the women, and the Labour Party made full use of it during election-time. Recently, an investigation committee explored the desirability of introducing this method of payment into industry. The result was a luke-warm agreement to the principle, with a minority report by some of the women on the committee advocating full support of the method.

Now that the time for a decision has come, the members of the Labour Cabinet have decided that "the time is not ripe for the introduction of equal pay". They have accepted the idea "in principle" but contend that at present it would be impracticable, would have an inflationary tendency, and would lead to a rise in wages. This, it is argued, would not be accompanied by an equivalent increase in productivity, as the industries where further productivity is essential are those employing mainly male labour,

such as mining. The rise in pay for women would therefore not bring them recruits.

This is the significant truth of the whole matter—the "equal pay for equal work" idea is not to be granted as an elementary justice under the wage system, but only as an economic incentive to attract female labour, as and when desired. That women should be entitled to an equal wage of a man doing the same work simply does not enter into the picture at all.

Those workers who are campaigning for equal pay for women should therefore beware that they are not moving along another reformist blind alley, thus wasting so much valuable time and energy in something which will not alter the fundamental condition of the workers under the wage system. Better that they should fight for the abolition of the wage system and so release man and woman from one of the shackles that hold them bound to the capitalist method of production for profit, rather than social production for use.

Nothing Can Justify Flogging

The position regarding flogging is perfectly clear. A Royal Commission has investigated it to see if it is effective either as a deterrent or as a reformatory measure. They enquired whether the fact that a man could be flogged for certain crimes had any effect in preventing such crimes from being committed. As a result of their investigations they came to the perfectly unequivocal conclusion that it did not have the slightest effect on the commission of such crimes.

They also enquired whether flogging discouraged men from committing the same crimes again. Result: it has no such effect.

They also found that flogging had an actively deleterious effect on the criminal who experienced it—it made him worse.

These results are perfectly clear and no one has been able to overturn them. Yet judges go on ordering flogging, and presumably will continue until they are themselves restrained by law from doing so.

So far we have only looked at the practical aspect of flogging. But there is also the other side, the moral aspect. The government and the law may accept a morality which seeks to justify the infliction of violence on an individual as a remedy for the infliction of violence by that individual; but such an Old Testament procedure hardly commends itself to normally intelligent men and women to-day. And since it is becoming increasingly evident that anti-social behaviour towards one's fellows is a sign of psychic sickness, retributive measures become even more out of date. There are undoubted difficulties in the way of persuading such individuals to seek the appropriate treatment for their psychic ill-health; but that should not prevent a recognition of the general causes—war training and refusal of legal status to deserters—and steps suitable for their removal. At the present moment there is no sign whatever of any such recognition in official circles. On the contrary, war training and conscription are to be made even more general, while the law continues its idiotic circle of punishment and the manufacture of criminals.

Renault Workers Back BUT MORE TROUBLE BREWING

THE Renault factory strikers as a result of a vote taken (12,075 in favour of returning to work, 6,866 against) resumed work on Monday morning, exactly two weeks after coming out on strike for a wage increase of 10 francs (5d.) an hour. They have accepted the Government's offer of a production bonus of 3 francs (1½d.) per hour. The Paris paper *Combat* in explaining the reasons which prompted the men's capitulation refers to the fact that on the small wages paid at the factory (between £13 and £15 a month) it was obvious that the men could not draw on any savings with which to keep their families during the strike and that during the second week of the strike no relief money was paid out.

But the men in workshops 6 and 18 (to which reference is made in our French correspondent's letter) who were very largely responsible for the strike taking place, voted against returning to work by a two-thirds majority, and in fact, as we go to Press the information received is that after resuming work on Monday, the workers in shops 6 and 18 have again come out.

Combat provides an effective answer to those bitter critics of "unofficial strikes" (for the Renault strike was unofficial) when it points out that in order to make up the money lost during the two weeks stoppage the men will have to work 1,000 hours at the new rate. Obviously therefore, men are not so stupid as to come out on strike just for the sake of cussedness, or because they have so much money they don't know what to do with it.

(A report of the Renault strike by our French correspondent appears on page 4).

50,000 Spanish Workers Strike

Encouraging news comes from Spain where in Bilbao, industrial town of the North, nearly 50,000 industrial workers came out on strike on May 5th. This demonstration of resistance to the Franco regime will have a far-reaching effect on the rest of the country where already arrests of workers seeking to rebuild their organizations are taking place daily.

The strike began when the Civil Governor of Bilbao ordered 14,000 men who had absented themselves from work on May Day to be dismissed, and that they re-apply individually for jobs. Troops were ordered to the area but the fact that Franco's spokesmen promised that no reprisals would be taken, is an indication of the strength of the opposition to the regime after nearly eight years of Fascist brutality and attempted intimidation.

The strike ended on Monday, having lasted a week. It is reported that some 4,000 strikers have now been arrested and imprisoned in Bilbao alone.

The Spanish workers are fast realising that so-called democratic Governments will not free them from the Franco regime, but that it must be through their own concerted efforts. The strike of 50,000 workers in Bilbao is the first step in the realization of their dreams of freedom from dictatorship.

BEHIND THE CITY STRIKE

The yellow press excelled itself during the recent dispute in the City of London when (as reported in *Freedom* last issue) 1,000 Corporation workers in the General and Municipal Workers' Union came out on strike against the promotion of George Turner, of Billingsgate Market police, from constable to sergeant.

Making no attempt to analyse the causes of the strike and present fairly the reasons why 1,000 men voluntarily deprived themselves of their incomes for an unspecified period, the British press—that bastion of democracy—chose only to whip up public opinion against the strikers by painting lurid pictures of the chaos and danger from unswept streets, unemptied dustbins and a bridge closed to road traffic.

Yet the facts were not difficult to obtain. With no more effort than it takes to stop and ask a question of a cleaner in the street, I got the whole story behind the strike, and a whole lot more very interesting information throwing sidelights on the lives of the men who help to keep clean and maintain some essential services in the wealthy City of London.

THE FACTS

Briefly, the facts are these. George Turner's fellow workers had nothing against him personally. He is a non-union man, but the G. & M.W.U. is one of the few remaining unions to reject the closed shop principle. The union men naturally like all their fellow workers to belong also but make no attempt to put pressure to bear on any worker outside the union. No, the first and foremost reason for the strike was the wilful breaking of an agreement by the Corporation, who had an understanding with the City branch that all jobs falling vacant

or being newly created would be notified to all depots so that any worker would have equal opportunity to apply for them. George Turner was appointed to the newly created job of second sergeant by the Billingsgate foreman, without any of the agreed notification or application being given. The men came out on strike, not against Turner, but against the Corporation for backing up this ill-considered action by the foreman.

But this on its own was not all. This was just the culmination of a long series of pin-pricking grievances under which the men had been labouring, gradually getting more exasperated and bitter until they would stand no more. For instance, there was the unfair treatment of a few temporary workers. The Corporation has a full permanent staff, over and above which they employ other men on a temporary basis. The permanent staff receive, over and above their wages, 6/- per week clothing allowance, two weeks' holidays with pay, superannuation, etc. The temporary men get 3/6 per week clothing allowance, no paid holidays, and no superannuation and must stay at this level for 12 months after starting with the Corporation. After that time they rise to full clothing allowance and holidays, but no superannuation until a vacancy occurs on the permanent staff which they are capable of filling. But that 12 months "probationary" period must be uninterrupted service. So it has been known

for a man to work well and conscientiously for 11 months and a few days, and then be surprised with his cards on pay day and be told to "pack up". When he remonstrates, or wants to know why he is being sacked he is told to report again the next week to "see what can be done". He does so; is taken on again, and then has to serve another full twelve months at beginner's rate because his time has been interrupted!

DIRTY WORK

Many other instances could be recorded, together with several the men have observed of the usual corruption among officials. (How did those City Corporation garden seats find their way to a suburban bowling green, by the way?) But let one more suffice. During the strike the Corporation agreed to meet a deputation of strikers at the Guildhall, but just before the time the men were due to arrive, police appeared on the scene from the local station, having had instructions from the Corporation to prevent the strikers from entering the Guildhall. This, obviously, so that it could be said that the Corporation offered to meet the strikers, waited for them, but they did not arrive! When the deputation arrived they were turned back by the police and threatened with arrest if they did not move right away. Unfortunately for the police, the strikers knew their way about better than that! Slipping round to a side door, they passed through the boiler house of the Guildhall, and up into the chambers where the dignified councillors were just beginning to pride themselves on their dirty trick having worked!

(Continued on page 8)

ANARCHISM: PAST & FUTURE

WHAT I have to say on this occasion is addressed to anarchists—to all those who feel an intellectual or emotional sympathy for the political tradition denoted by the word 'anarchism'. I am not concerned for the moment with propaganda or persuasion—rather, with self-criticism and what might be described as "a call to order".

I begin with this challenge: no fundamental thought has been devoted to the principles of anarchism for half a century. The last important contribution to anarchism was Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid*, written fifty years ago.

It might be argued that Kropotkin, and others before his time, Tolstoy, Bakunin, Proudhon or Godwin—had formulated a political philosophy which was good for all time—a sacred text which only needed the exegesis of later commentators to bring it up-to-date. Apart from the fact that deep contradictions exist between the writers I have mentioned, whose reconciliation would call for a synthesising work of genius, there are certain historical events of the past fifty years which have fundamentally affected all systems of thought. There have been two world wars—symptomatic of some deep social disorder; there has been a revolution in Russia which has undergone some very significant transformations; there has been a drift in the distribution of world power which has brought the United States into the periphery of our affairs; there have been changes in methods of production and means of communication which have transformed the economic basis of society; and finally, a new weapon, the atom bomb, has been invented which has decisive implications for revolutionary strategy. These are but the most dramatic of the changes which have affected our life since the writing of *Mutual Aid*: there are many advances in scientific research and philosophical thought which are no less significant for the future of anarchism.

Naturally, I believe that there are certain universal truths which determine our anarchist attitude, and which will always differentiate us from the socialist, the liberal, the capitalist or the fascist. But these so-called universal truths are few in number and very general in expression; they are abstractions, intellectual concepts, emotional attitudes. We are probably compelled to adopt them, not so much by reason, as by temperamental disposition. They are beliefs which have to be translated into acts.

Three Fundamentals.

The fundamental beliefs or attitudes underlying anarchism can, in my opinion, be reduced to three—three principles which we must accept if we are to continue to call ourselves anarchists.

The first is the belief in *personal freedom*—not merely a belief in individual liberty, but in a state of mental equilibrium in which thought is calm and life is harmonious—it is no good being politically free if we remain psychologically obsessed.

The second belief is in the social principle of *mutual aid*. We anarchists do not accept either the individualistic philosophy of the liberals and capitalists, or the totalitarian philosophy of the socialists and communists—we believe that society can be organised on a co-operative and federal basis, free from exploitation and from dictation.

About the third belief we may not be so unanimous, but I personally think that it follows originally from the first and second beliefs, and that it is now forced on us by the logic of events. It is the belief in *non-violence*—in non-violent resistance to oppression, and in non-violent methods of attaining our ends.

These beliefs are not self-evident to the majority

We are reproducing Herbert Read's recent lecture at the London Anarchists' group Sunday night meeting because it raises many challenging questions of interest to a much larger public than was able to be present at his lecture. Indeed it is the editors' opinion that the lecturer has put forward arguments which should be discussed by the International Anarchist movement, and we ask our comrade editors abroad to consider publishing translations of this lecture in their respective publications as a basis for discussion on an International scale. Freedom Press are willing to undertake to collect the different opinions and publish them in pamphlet form.

Herbert Read's lecture was controversial and since its subject matter was not previously discussed with the editors its publication does not necessarily imply that it expresses *Freedom's* point of view. The editors welcome comments from comrades, and will endeavour to print as large a selection as possible of the contributions received.

of people, and it follows that we have to use our powers of reasoning and persuasion to secure the agreement of our fellowmen. My contention is that we are not at present doing this in any scientific or consistent manner. We are divided among ourselves, open to accusations of vague idealism and muddle-headedness, and of being fundamentally lazy or reactionary.

Fields Of Knowledge

I shall now indicate some of the specific fields of knowledge which call for interpretation in the light of our fundamental principles.

There is first of all the field of *history*. We are advocating a certain form of social organization—the co-operative community. Such communities have been tried as experiments in the past, and are being tried as experiments in various parts of the world to-day. Some of these experiments date back to the Roman Empire; others begin in the Middle Ages; other are of recent origin. It is true that Kropotkin has devoted a brilliant chapter or two to the most significant of these historical types; and Rudolf Rocker has given us a general survey of the history of civilization which brings out clearly the values of the federal principle. But a much more detailed examination of the historical evidence is needed; and apart from specific research into the history of co-operative communities, there is need for an analysis of history in general in the light of our principles. The history of law and criminology, for example, should provide evidence of immense value; the history of land tenure, or of trade organisations are other examples. I am not suggesting a tendentious interpretation of history: I think we have everything to gain from the objective truth. But let us get at the facts which support our beliefs, and weigh them against the facts which are held to support other beliefs.

The next field of necessary research is *anthropological*. Kropotkin, again, was a pioneer in this field, but since his day an immense amount of fresh material has been published, and from my own superficial and incomplete knowledge of this subject, I know that much of the evidence collected and published by anthropologists like Margaret Mead, Malinowski, Verrier Elwin, and scores of obscurer field-workers, has direct bearing on the co-operative organisation of production and the subtler problems of collective integrity.

Anthropology would soon lead us to the wider field of *sociology*. Sociology is a very wide and indeed amorphous subject, but almost every aspect of it has some bearing on the issues raised by anarchism. It sometimes seems to me that the many problems investigated by the sociologist converge on the discussion of one point—the nature of the incentives which maintain the vitality and well-being of societies. Certainly, unless the structure of a society includes what might quite simply be called "a stimulus to work", that society will decay. The formidable attack on totalitarian forms of socialism delivered by economists like Von Mises, Röpke and Hayek concentrates on this weak spot in the socialist state. It is an attack which is supported from day to day by events. Not only in this country, but in France and Scandinavia, but by their own confessions in the U.S.S.R. also, and perhaps there most decisively, the incentives to work have declined. Almost everywhere—in spite of increased wages and an improved standard of living—the rate of production per man-hour has declined catastrophically during the past fifty years.

There is evidence which shows that this is not entirely an economic question. When all due weight has been given to factors like wages and housing, standard of living and conditions of work, an unknown factor remains which we can only call *zeal*: a certain positive attitude towards society and the future which shows itself, not only in rates of production, but also in the birth-rate. The same factors seem to govern the two processes of production. These factors are *psychological*, and psychology is the next sphere which demands our patient investigation.

Psychology may be either individual or social. That individual psychology has some bearing on our problems should be obvious enough, but to show how nearly it touches them, let me quote a few sentences from a forthcoming work by C. G. Jung: "The psychologist firmly believes in the individual as the sole carrier of mind and life. Society or the state derive their quality from the individual's mental condition, for they are constituted by individuals and their organizations. No matter how obvious this fact is, it has not yet permeated collective opinion sufficiently for people to refrain from using the term 'State' as if it referred to a sort of super-individual endowed with inexhaustible power and resourcefulness. The State is expected

nowadays to accomplish easily what nobody would expect from an individual. The dangerous incline leading down to mass psychology begins with this plausible thinking in big numbers and powerful organizations, where the individual dwindles away to mere nothingness. Yet everything that exceeds a certain human size evokes equally inhuman powers in Man's unconsciousness, totalitarian demons are called forth, instead of the realization that all which can really be accomplished is an infinitesimal step forward in the individual's moral nature."

[*Essays on Contemporary Events*, p. xvii.]

"When people are thrown together in huge masses and considered only as a herd, it has the most devastating moral and psychical effect upon the individual. The foundation for collective crime is laid by just such a state of things; and then it is really a miracle if the crime is not actually committed. Do we seriously believe that we would have been proof against it? We, who have so many traitors and political psychopaths in our midst? It has filled us with horror to realize all that man is capable of, and of which we are consequently also capable; and since then a terrible doubt regarding humanity—in which we also are included—nags at us.

Nevertheless—and there should be no mistake about this—such a state of degradation can only be brought about by certain conditions. First and foremost among these is the accumulation of urban, industrialized masses; i.e. of people whose abilities are only partially mobilized, owing to the unnatural, one-sided character of employment in factories, shops, and so on. They have been uprooted from their natural soil and have lost every kind of healthy instinct, even that of *self-preservation*. For dependence on the state can be measured in terms of loss of the instinct of self-preservation, which is a deplorable symptom. Dependence on the state means that one relies on everybody else (= state) instead of on oneself. Every person hangs on to the next, with a false feeling of security; for one is still swinging in the air even when hanging in the company of 10,000 other people—the only difference being that one is no longer aware of one's own insecurity. The increasing dependence on the state is anything but a healthy symptom, for it means that the people are on a fair way to become a herd of sheep, always relying on a shepherd to drive them on to good pastures. The shepherd's staff soon becomes a rod of iron, and the shepherds turn into wolves."

[*Essays on Contemporary Events*, pp. 52-3.]

But it is in the wider field of social psychology that the most pertinent work remains to be done. Social psychology, which is sometimes called group-psychology or phyllo-analysis, is, properly understood, the foundation of our whole attitude. We might say that all other political attitudes—capitalist, labour, communist—are attitudes without a sound psychological basis. Some Marxists, aware of this deficiency in their own philosophy, attack psychology as a pseudo-science, or as a bourgeois science, but that is only an indication of their own limitations. Psychology has its charlatans, like every other science, but its scientific achievements, particularly in the field of mental therapy, cannot be disputed.

The main problems of social psychology revolve round the relationships which exist, or should exist, between the individuals and the group. Most mental illnesses, unless due to constitutional defects, are the result of maladjustment, and can often be cured by the "integration of the personality"—by which phrase we mean the effective restoration to the individual of a sense of community with others. Repressions which result in an unconscious

(Continued on page 6)

ANARCHISM —Interpretations

"It is evident that . . . Anarchism cannot let itself be seduced by a programme that offers as its aim: 'The conquest of the power now in the hands of the State'.

We know that this conquest is not possible by peaceful means. The middle class will not give up its power without a struggle. It will resist. And in proportion as Socialists will become part of the Government, and share power with the middle class, their Socialism will grow paler and paler. This is, indeed, what Socialism is rapidly doing. Were this not so, the middle classes, who are very much more powerful numerically and intellectually than most Socialists imagine them to be, would not share their power with the Socialists.

On the other hand, we also know that if an insurrection succeeded in giving to France, to England, or to Germany a provisional Socialist Government, such a Government, without the spontaneous constructive activity of the people, would be absolutely powerless; and it would soon become a hindrance and a check to the revolution."

Peter KROPOTKIN.

Psychology & Freedom

Some short time ago I was subject to a crucial philosophic test in which the questioner asked for the Anarchist attitude to Modern Psychology, and indeed to all psychological problems. In the short space at my disposal I could not attempt to give a detailed thesis on the matter. However, feeling the question an important one it is my wish here to show the strong link between intelligent psychology and sincere anarchism.

Naturally, the attitude would be centred around the age-old problem of Freedom—Freedom for the few, or Freedom for ALL. The authoritarian idea of Freedom suggests full Freedom as being the goal of political struggle, but that the process must be controlled and governed by discipline, moral persuasion and State manipulations. Not much difference here from the early Christian Fundamentalists compelling their children to worship one day in the week, and then schooling them to competitively destroy their fellows the other six days.

Now the Modern Psychologist would easily interpret that as a frustration complex passing from individual to group and back again from group to individual. If he was honest he would admit environment and social distinctions, but he would not accept these as conditioning the *Frustration*. If he did, he would be approaching the Anarchist attitude and would be seeing no isolation of psychology from sociology, or from the day-to-day issues of industrial and domestic struggles.

Corrupt Use of Psychology

First of all, why is this subject of Psychology "plugged" so remorselessly from morn to night on the medical, commercial and industrial fronts? Granted, there is a genuine background to sincere

psychological research; also there have been definite achievements in the medical branch known professionally as Psychiatry. Of course, it is because one believes there is a real need for the right type of psychological approach that the subject is worth considering in relation to Anarchism: free from the quackery and the "super-selling" sales patter of commercial schools of thought.

Since we cannot elaborate at length it would be worth while to quickly scan the psychological scene, noting the real psychopathological work of Freud's Psycho-Analysis, Jung's Analytical Psychology and Adler's Individual Psychology, in relation to the pseudo-industrial psychology of the State and Private Employers, practiced with such blasé effrontery in the factory and workshop, to-day. The attitude of the Employing Class to Psychology in Industry is interesting to the spectator, but not to the workers involved. It ranges from the Bedaux System of extracting more out of little, to pep talks in the factory lunch hours. There you can behold the miserable corruption of the best in Freud, Jung, Adler and others.

Do we then label the whole of Psychology under one heading, generally classified by the worker as "baloney" and "quackery"? In the main, yes, where applied in the commercial and industrial sense under the present Capitalist and Authoritarian System of Society.

Also, not far behind in corrupted form comes the Medical section. Here, we must be more cautious, because good psychiatric work has been, and is being done by doctors of honest and sincere motive; but these are individual cases and do not apply in the full social sense. Perhaps in the final passage of "The Distressed Mind" by J. H. C. Brown, published by Watts in the Thinkers Library, we get a

concise answer to our question:—"The frustrations and conflicts to which individuals are subject, arise, as we have seen, firstly in family life, and later in relation to the larger family of the nation. The first group can be helped by education and child guidance; but the larger problem will remain, for under-nourishment, lack of employment, thwarting of the desire for further education, and out-of-date marriage and divorce laws will continue to produce neurosis and crime. Mental illness will probably always be with us, for there will always be constitutionally inadequate people. Yet it could be vastly reduced in a society where human hopes were not continually being crushed by lack of food, or money, or knowledge, or love."

That, more or less, though an oversimplification, is the answer to those who would divorce Psychology from Economics and the Individual Struggle in Agriculture and Industry.

Alter the Environment

Briefly, what is the use of a neurotic patient being thrown back into the jungle of exploitation, even if his or her delusions have been resolved finally as myths, and have been accepted as such. Consequently, all psychological treatment is patching up. You say to a patient, "I am going to prove to you that your problems are self-made and self-imposed, that you, yourself, can liberate the ego and be the man you want to be, I say, only make your desires and wishes strong and enduring and you'll achieve just what you want to achieve". You give him Freedom of a sort until he meets another who is careering upwards, seeking the bureaucratic heights of social distinction and power. Then the "War of the Mind" is transferred to the physical plane with a vengeance!

Always the drift is away from produc-

tion, from toil, from dirt-grimed hands, from the working-class concept of society—not that we as anarchists think these things envious or commendable in themselves: we vision and work for a Society where the atomic powers will liberate ALL mankind and not a section—and in the struggle for power the neurotic individual, patched up, proceeds to spread the disease of neurosis around him.

Anarchism is the complete answer to that problem because in such a Society men are FREE to be themselves, but not to menace other individuals: there is room only for "mutual aid" and for the widest, deepest conception of Psychology at its best.

This leads us to the final point in which we see all attempts to "push" Psychology as a creed or cult or as an additional "string to one's bow", as corruption of what would otherwise be a dynamic tool in the Anarchist's hands and indeed in the hands of all libertarian workers and thinkers. He and they would proclaim the true Freedom which reveals most psychological teaching to-day as merely another weapon of the State against the People. So we see that good Psychology is only compatible with Freedom, and that Freedom as expressed in the philosophy of Anarchism.

J. H. MOORHOUSE.

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SHOP ASSISTANTS OPPOSE LONGER HOURS

The maxim, widely accepted in a "nation of shopkeepers" before the war that the customer is always right, has had a pretty bad shaking up since the days of full shelves in the shops gave way to days and years of shortage. In the columns of *Freedom* we have not said a great deal about the hardships of the housewife under rationing; the daily press has done that for us. We, on the other hand, have realised that for the working class wife shopping has always been an ordeal.

To-day, the housewife may be able to go out with a full purse and feel frustrated because she cannot buy the things she wants. But at least she is not tantalised by the sight of the things in the shops while she cannot buy them for want of a full purse. Only since rationing started has the middle class felt the pinch of shortage, but for years the workers' wives knew what it meant to leave an unemployed husband at home minding the hungry children while they went hunting for cheap food, scraping and pinching to make ends meet.

And behind the counters, shop assistants would be on their feet from 8.30 or 9 o'clock until 7, 8, 9 or 10 at night. The black-out put a fairly sharp end to that and shop assistants now work hours similar to workers in offices and factories which, of course, creates considerable problems for those workers who have to do their own shopping, and get home in time to find the shops shut.

A year ago last January, the officially appointed Gower Committee began its enquiry into shop hours and welfare, and has at last made its report, in which the chief recommendation is that shops should stay open until 7 p.m., with one late night a week until 8 p.m. This is contrary to the suggestions made to the committee by the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers, and in line with the hours recommended by the National Chamber of Trade. It's odd, is it not, how these official committees so often agree with the employers, so seldom with the workers.

The U.S.D.A.W. claims a membership of 380,000, and is making a protest against the findings of the committee. Taking account of the fact that a very large proportion of retail establishments employ only one or two assistants, the union points out that the suggestion that staff working hours should be staggered is impracticable, and maintains that a 6 o'clock closing time, with one late evening of 7 o'clock would meet the situation.

We gather there was no mention in the report of any increase in wages. The guaranteed weekly rate of pay for a skilled male assistant of 24 is 88/- in London and 86/- in the provinces, and while the union officials seem aware of the fact that this is low pay ("Shop assistants seem to be getting a rough deal" they say) they do not seem to be doing much about it. The Home Secretary has already announced in the House of Commons that the Government intend introducing legislation on shop hours on the lines of the Gowers Report, so probably the matter is already as good as settled, with the worker democratically consulted and equally democratically ignored.

ARE SHOPS NECESSARY?

The question nobody (except the anarchist, of course) ever seems to ask is—"Are shops necessary anyway?" It is only under a system of commerce that it is necessary to have shops as we know them to-day. Trading is essentially competitive, not only between retailers, but between the retailer and the customer too, and the vast number of little establishments all competing against each other would disappear in a society where all goods produced were distributed freely where needed. "Shops" in a free society would probably be in the nature of large halls where goods would be displayed for all to come and choose and take what they wanted.

The shelves, or display stands, could be quickly and easily stocked up each day and left unwatched and unguarded, since shop-lifting could no longer be said to exist. The free choice of the community, unhampered by economic considerations, could be

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relied upon to soon make clear the type or quality of goods in demand. Only one quality—the best—would be produced in any case, but wide diversity of style would encourage, and be encouraged by, the individual taste of the consumers.

And instead of shop-keepers and shop assistants, servile when supply exceeds demand, insolent when goods are short, mere middle-men profiting from producer and consumer alike, we shall have members of the Distributive Workers'

Syndicate playing their part in the harmonious running of society for the benefit of all.

So let us, while sympathising with shopworkers in their coming fight against increased hours, realise, and try and make them realise, that their work, by and large, is only necessary in a capitalist society and that their full share of leisure will only come with that of all workers in the free society after the social revolution.

P. S.

The Press & Dockers' Strike

The dockers' strike in Glasgow, London and elsewhere has produced the usual chorus from the daily newspapers, all strong in their condemnation of the men. The *News-Chronicle* for April 30th: "Apart altogether from the influence of small but sinister sections working for non-industrial ends, there is a general and growing tendency for workers in some of the key industries to kick over the traces, defy their own elected leaders and sabotage the negotiating machinery it has taken them generations to establish. Something very like anarchy is developing in some of these industries." Yet it admits in the same column, a few lines later, "At the bottom of all this industrial unrest there is the growing feeling that the Labour Government has become far too remote from the rank and file workers who returned them to power with such high hopes, and that the big trade union leaders have their hands too full of other public work to keep their finger regularly on the pulse of their own industries."

[It seems to us that the big trade union leaders have their hands too full of other workers' money, and their fingers round the necks of the dues-payers' throats, throttling every attempt to shake themselves free from the parasitic moneysuckers!]

The *Chronicle* agrees that the situation for dock-workers in Glasgow is pretty bad. Note this extract:—"The position of a dismissed docker on Clydeside at present is really grim as there are already 100,000 out of work in the area and there is little or no likelihood of them getting work at any of the other ports.

To be declared 'redundant' therefore is in effect an industrial death sentence" (our italics). The editorial of the same issue notes:—"It is a serious thing for a docker to become redundant and it may compel him to alter his whole way of life. Yet though he may be banished from his chosen employment, he is not being abandoned to his fate. Investigation has already led to the remission of sentence for 200 men, and to mitigation for 300 more" (our italics).

Such phrases as "industrial death sentence", "remission of sentence", etc., are highly significant. They DO describe the situation without any exaggeration. Most remember the book title—"The Town That Was Murdered"—Jarrow—and of how thousands were thrown on to the scrapheap of industrial idleness. The dockers have no intention of allowing this to happen to them.

Why, then, this howl from all the press? The truth is that the dockers' strike represents direct action, and all politicians, T.U. leaders, and business men fear and hate that above all things else. They know that it represents a very powerful weapon which properly used by the workers can topple any government and put useless parasites out of business altogether. It makes quite unnecessary the coupon-clippers, investors, Parliament gas-men and all the other exploiters of man. We say: **MORE DIRECT ACTION BY MORE WORKERS!**
T. W. B.

Industrial News in Brief

A "Work to Rule" Strike

The good old Syndicalist action of "working to rule" has recently been put into operation by the French customs official, who are agitating for increased pay. The London *Evening Standard* (8/5/47) gave the following report, which needs no comment from us—

"The strike is the 'zeal strike' and it can be described as the ordinary strike in reverse.

"The new strike was tried out yesterday at all French frontiers and ports between 4 and 6 p.m.

"During that time Customs officials stripped men and women travellers, turned out every box, scrutinised every article and charged duty on all dutiable articles, including small amounts of sugar and single cakes of soap.

"The result was that travel was disorganised at most ports, and on the Swiss and Belgian frontiers cars were parked in two rows for more than a mile while Customs officials searched under seats and measured the amount of petrol in the tanks.

At some railway stations time-tables were completely disorganised."

HOTEL WORKERS' STRIKE NOTICE

Developing from the strike in March at the Savoy Hotel (*Freedom* 22/3/47), strike notice has been handed in to the Ministry of Labour by Arthur Lewis (M.P.), London district organiser of the Catering Section of the National Union of General and Municipal Workers.

The strike was caused last March by the suspension of shop steward Frank Piazza who, in spite of a recommendation for reinstatement following a London enquiry, has still not been taken back although receiving full pay and food allowance from the Savoy.

If he is not back at work by May 27th, 22,000 London hotel and catering workers will stop work in one of those rare phenomena—an official strike.

The Catering Action Movement

Meanwhile, we have to hand a bulletin from a newly formed organisation of catering workers under the above title. Pledging itself to direct action with workers' control as its aim, it appears to be organised on sound syndicalist lines.

Their aims and principles are as follows:—

- To organise effective action in the Catering Industry.
- The ultimate Workers' Control of the Catering Industry.
- To expose (inside or outside the union) the Unions' inefficiency and collaboration with the employers contrary to the workers' interests.
- To combat the centralist tendencies within the Union which give men power and standing over others which makes them dictators and not representatives; to promote decentralisation and the principle of delegation whereby delegates who do not carry out their mandates may be instantly recalled.
- To study, develop and organise strike action, sabotage and boycott, calculated to ensure the highest gain at the minimum cost.
- To protect the rights of all Catering Workers to organise, to assist the struggle physically, morally, financially, sympathetically and by all propaganda methods: to defend those victimised by union, state, employers politicians.
- To spread the struggle against the scourge of capitalism, with the aim of its final elimination and the control of industry by the workers.

Which seems all right to us. Copies of the bulletin, giving organisational basis, may be obtained free from *Freedom Press*, or from the Secretary, C.A.M., R. Upton, 159 Ledbury Road, W.11.

AGRICULTURE AND THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION—3

Russia: Agriculture & Politics

In the last two articles, we have considered the broad issues surrounding agriculture in a revolutionary situation. The limitations which capitalist economy places on farming are seen to be the main obstacle in Britain to the feeding of the population without relying on imports. Once it is seen that there is no physical impossibility in the way of supplying the revolution with bread, there still remains the problem of how such a supply can be organized. This may be termed the political aspect of the question, and it will be helpful to try and learn the lessons which the revolutions of the recent past have to teach us. We shall find that these lessons are chiefly concerned with mistakes which the revolution will have to avoid, but they are none the less important for that.

The Bread War in Russia

In Czarist days Russia exported agricultural products. The peasants lived at a very low level, and famines were not unknown when crops failed or were unduly low. But very large amounts were usually available to send abroad. During the war of 1914, however, production fell very markedly on account of the draining away of manpower into the armies—composed mainly of peasants. Bureaucratic incompetence also contributed to reduce the output.

During the years after the October Revolution in 1917 agricultural production continued to fall, and, moreover, at an even greater rate than under the Czarist and Kerensky regimes. "The agricultural crisis," wrote Michael Farbman, an observer favourable to the Bolshevik regime, "first of all affected the area under cultivation. Already in 1916 this had decreased by 7 per cent. as compared with what it was in the previous five years. In 1920 it decreased by over 28 per cent., in 1921 by over 37 per cent., and in 1922 by nearly 50 per cent."

This 50 per cent. decrease in the area under cultivation was all the more serious since it involved the most fertile parts of the country. And not only did the cultivation area diminish. The yields per dessiatine also fell. Thus for wheat the average yield for the ten years before the revolution was 61 poods per dessiatine. In 1916 this figure had fallen to 47.4; in 1920, to 34.1; and in 1921, to 32.7. (Farbman: *Bolshevism in Retreat*, p.234).

Forced Requisitioning

Much of this decline was due to the physical conditions brought about by the war. But revolution should have created conditions which favoured recovery by removing the restrictions which a market economy imposes on any form of production. Instead, the new political administration attempted to force agriculture into new channels by purely political measures. The inauguration of the "Bread War" during the period of War Communism was carried out under the slogan of "carrying the class war into the villages", for the peasants were looked upon as a reactionary element, only the diminutive proletariat being regarded as the true messianic bearers of the revolution.

Although the peasants needed agricultural instruments from the industrial areas, these were so scarce as to be obtainable only at high prices far beyond their reach. Meanwhile, they were offered in exchange for their own products a paper money which was turned out in an absolute spate as fast as the government could requisition presses to print it on. This inflated currency could not buy for them the products they needed and they soon refused it.

Since the peasants could not be paid for their corn, the Bolshevik government organized a so-called "Food Army" to requisition the food in the villages by force. Such forced requisitioning was met with sharp resistance by the peasants, and completely defeated any schemes of co-operation between town and country. Left to themselves after the February revolution, the peasants had sent food into the towns, asking for textiles, etc., in return. But it is important to note that they did not make their deliveries to the towns dependent on an equivalent return in industrial goods being made for them. Spontaneously they had applied the principle of 'to each according to his needs, from each according to his ability' which completely overthrows the exchange conceptions of market economy.

Slaughter of Stock

The Bolsheviks also sought to regulate peasant economy by new laws. In the face of the forced requisitioning, peasants would slaughter their stock, partly because

there was no prospect of feeding them, and partly in order to defeat the hated requisitioning measure. But there was a relatively slight diminution in the number of cows because the law allowed every household to keep a cow, so that large households simply divided up into small ones so as to retain as many cows as possible. Sheep and pigs on the other hand were requisitioned for the army, and the peasants slaughtered them to avoid their being commandeered. Later on they were consumed because, in addition, there were no feeding stuffs for them, and a terrible shortage of human food. Probably the peasants did not kill the beasts "for spite", although they had plenty of reason to feel hostile to the new government. Where money is retained, it is obvious that stock is going to be requisitioned without adequate compensation—otherwise it would be "bought", not requisitioned. Hence the peasant will endeavour to save money spent on raising the stock by slaughtering it, for it would be uneconomic (by money exchange standards) to do otherwise. It is no use lamenting these things; they are the inevitable consequence of such political coercion as forced requisitioning.

In addition, with no prospect of receiving either their harvest or an adequate compensation for it, the peasants reduced the area of sowing. (They also found it very difficult to get seed, which contributed to produce the same result.) Finally, the Bolshevik requisitioning was extremely inefficient, the peasants frequently having the mortification of seeing the grain which had been forcibly taken from them left to go rotten in the trucks in the railway sidings.

Meanwhile any attempt to remedy the state of affairs by direct initiatives between town and country was firmly repressed, the government placing military cordons round the towns to prevent direct exchanges between workers and peasants. The Soviets were thus unable to contribute any local initiative. The government was determined to control economy solely in its own hands, and it could not therefore brook any dual system of control by sharing it with the soviets. When "war communism" produced the famine of 1920, the only course open to the Bolsheviks consistent with their retention of power was to make economic concessions in a capitalist direction by re-opening markets and restoring production for profit. This course was inaugurated

by the NEP (New Economic Policy) and produced a gradual recovery.

The Five Year Plans

With the First Five Year Plan of 1928 the Russian government sought to bring the peasants under control by making them wage workers on the collective farms. Again there was tremendous opposition on the part of the peasants, thousands of whom were transported to the labour camps of Siberia, where they were later to build the White Sea canal and double track the Trans-Siberian Railway. The peasants, on their side, retaliated by once more slaughtering their stock, this time on a formidable scale. Horses fell from 34 millions in 1929 to 19 millions in 1932; cows from 68 to 40 millions; sheep from 147 to 52 millions; and pigs from 21 to 11 millions. (Warriner: *Economics of Peasant Farming*, p. 174.) The result was the famine of 1933 and 1934, now officially admitted.

Once again the government resorted to the reintroduction of capitalist methods to restore production, a limited degree of private ownership being allowed.

The Lessons

I have treated the Russian experience very broadly. But I hope I have been able to show that the failures were not due to the ignorance and treachery of the Stalinist clique, but were the inevitable result of the discouraging of initiative and the centralization of all planning activity in the hands of the State. Similar results would inevitably follow from the centralizing theory of all governmental socialists.

The other clear lesson of the Russian experience is that with such a centralized power, which must retain a money economy in order to maintain its power, recovery from the disasters of doctrinaire control of farming was only possible by economic retreats, by partial reintroduction of the profit motive. In this country, it is the profit motive which strangles agriculture, so such a "remedy" could have only the most limited effect.

By contrast with such authoritarian measures as war communism and the five-year plans, both of which produced the most ghastly famines, the voluntary collectivizations of the Spanish Revolution of 1936 produced a startling increase in agricultural production. The Spanish experience will be the subject of the next article.

J. H.

NOTE.—1 Dessiatine = 2.7 English acres. 1 Pood = 36 lbs.

Letter from **France****WILL THE C. G. T. SPLIT ?**

The majority of the May Day demonstrations organized by the French Trade Unions had Unity as their watchword. The orators meekly followed the Communist slogans, praising the results of the battle of production, clamouring for better piece-work rates and attacking the Gaullist movement.

But the speeches lacked enthusiasm, and the audience showed even less enthusiasm than the speakers. For the watchwords no longer corresponded to the situation. They have not for months, but it was the strike in the Renault factories that brought out quite sharply this split. In a communist stronghold, in a nationalised factory, in that parisiennes suburb where municipalities are rigidly controlled by Stalinists, the official instructions of the C.G.T., the C.P. and the Government had been disavowed by the metal workers.

More effective than philosophic or political arguments, reality had enlightened the large mass of workers who had been betrayed and frightened.

Conditions at Renault

There are about 32,000 workers in the Renault motor car factory. Nationalised immediately after the Liberation, this factory turns out light vehicles, lorries, tractors and war material.

As a result of the disappearance of its former proprietor, Louis Renault, and the eviction of a number of his collaborators, a large new management was introduced, which was composed of specialists from the "private enterprise" period, former associates who have rallied to the new system of control and stooges from the C.G.T. and C.P. milieux.

Communist propaganda has on many occasions used the Renault experiment as an example to illustrate its theses on working productivity, on workers' output, on the "production battle". It was in a way a model for others to copy from.

In reality, the management of these factories is catastrophic. An excessive bureaucratization has caused the concern to be run at a loss. Furthermore, the plant is wearing out rapidly and is not being replaced. Finally, light vehicles, on which the factory specialises are having to be sold at a low price in the foreign market. According to the statements by the director, M. Lefrancœur, every car that leaves the works increases the deficit by 24,000 francs.

Furthermore, the salaries are the lowest in the region. They have, on numerous occasions, been revised but always in relation to output. Piece-work has been approved and encouraged by the workers' organizations, contrary to all syndicalist doctrines, and in spite of the workers' traditional opposition to this practice.

From the workers' point of view, the factory is in the hands of the C.G.T. The staffs and the employees are also members of the C.G.T. The exception is only a small Christian minority—affecting a few hundred workers.

A Tradition of Militancy

But the Renault factory has a tradition of militancy and propaganda has always been directed to it from all working class organizations. In 1936, it was amongst the first factories to strike, immediately after the Sauter and Harlet factory entered the struggle as a result of the initiative of anarcho-syndicalist militants. In 1938, the Renault factory was one of the few to apply the watchword of a general strike and the workers there clashed with the police and the mobile guard.

Still to-day there are to be found active groups of propagandists representing all the working class factions. Within the C.G.T. itself the different tendencies clash. The extreme discipline imposed by the communist cells within the syndical machine prevents the different currents from frankly expressing themselves but the struggle is carried on in the workshops and at the workbench.

During the autumn of 1946, a group of libertarian militants, disgusted at not being able to express themselves freely at the Union meetings, broke away from the C.G.T. and formed a branch of the new revolutionary syndicalist organisation.

The minority in the C.G.T., known under the name of "ex-confederate" and belonging to the Jouhaux-Botheran tendency, and enjoying the support of the Socialists, publishes regularly its paper *Force Ouvrière*.

Anarchists, Trotskyists and Socialist Youth (belonging to the Marceau Pivert grouping) have many active militants.

Revolutionary Workshops

Two workshops—No. 6 and 18—are very largely composed of revolutionary elements. It was the delegates from these shops who in February, 1947, presented a list of demands including an increase in wages of 10 francs an hour. Discussions dragged on and the Union did nothing to support

these demands. At the time it was above all a question of reduction in prices and the winning of the battle of production. After further interviews between the representatives of workshops 6 and 18 and the management, a strike was called and on April 25th a section of the workers downed tools.

The Renault factory syndicate of the C.G.T., the Union of Metal workers of the Paris region, the Federation of Metal workers, all opposed the strike. Henaff, secretary of the departmental Union of the Syndicates of the Parisian region and Costes, secretary of the Metal workers, addressed meetings in order to put the workers on their guard "against the provocateurs".

The strike Committee answered by holding other meetings and appealing for the extension of the struggle to the whole factory. Other workshops came out in support. Within the factory and outside the gates incidents occurred: sellers of revolutionary newspapers were beaten up by the "strong men" of the Communist cells. Strike pickets came to blows with those who wanted to clear the workshops. Henaff was booed.

Workers everywhere anxiously watched the development in this conflict. From neighbouring factories come delegates (Gnome and Rhone—Unic—Alsthm—Salmson—Citroen). Subscription lists are passed round. Minority groups give their support to the strikers. Printing workers give their services to prepare leaflets.

In political circles, the moment is apparently ripe to strike a decisive blow at Stalinist influence. *Le Populaire*, organ of the Socialist Party, interviews the strike Committee. The Christians support the strike. *Force Ouvrière* defends it. Meanwhile all these tendencies are in fact in favour of the "blocking" of wages and their representatives in the Government have always voted in support of this policy.

Communist About-Turn

Feeling itself left behind, the Departmental Union starts manœuvring. It gives instructions to its members to participate in the strike, causes strike committees to be elected who will receive orders from the Union, takes up the demands modified to three francs bonus on production. Beaten on a vote taken by all the workers it decides to struggle for the ten francs, but always on a bonus based on production.

The Communist leaders, finding themselves in a difficult position from the point of view of their participation in the Ministry and without definite instructions after the Moscow conference, do a right-about-turn, abandon their most recent slogans and demand an increase in wages "proportionate to the increase in production".

In the Chamber, the Communist deputies assume the leadership and take the credit for the struggle at Renault.

The leadership of the C.G.T. is almost entirely in the hands of the Communists. Thanks to the Communist propaganda supporting economic recovery, fear of inflation and price control it has been possible for them to put a brake on workers' discontent. But France's move towards the anglo-saxon bloc forces them to choose a new battleground and to move to the opposition. Their final decision will depend on the state of relations between Washington and Moscow, and of the interest shown by these two capitals for the bridgehead constituted by France.

The Socialists who favour the freezing of wages have, in part, supported the strikes, through their rank and file militants, but officially the party and its ministers have vigorously opposed them.

These are facts which the workers are noticing with ever increasing interest. The Renault experience is not the first. The printers' strike has opened the eyes of many trade unionists. The postal workers' move-

ment has enlightened a great number more.

The Existence of Two C.G.T.'s

The existence of two C.G.T.'s is becoming clearer every day; on the one hand the official, bureaucratic C.G.T. tide hand and foot to the communist machine, on the other the living active C.G.T. composed of rank and file trade unionists.

The official strength of the C.G.T.—six and half million members—is no longer a reality. A large number of workers have not been paying their dues for a long time, and have lost faith in the organisation.

The minority syndicates, in particular the printers', carry on their struggle in spite of and often contrary to the directives from above. Autonomous syndicates spring up. In the Parisian region, that of the underground railway workers and of the cooks are the best known. Among the postal workers and employees, a new federation inspired by the former strike Committee is being constituted.

The National Confederation of Labour, in spite of its ridiculously limited means, is gaining ground in numerous workers' associations.

The Christian organisation C.F.T.C. is making headway, more as a result of the workers' disgust for the C.G.T. than by reason of the value of its militants.

The split is an accomplished fact. It has happened and continues in spite of all the calls to unity, because there is an ever growing feeling among the workers that there no longer exists anything in common between them and the C.G.T. officials, and that even their own delegates spoke in the name of Thorez and Jouhaux, or Ramadier and Ducloux rather than in the name of their mates in the workshops and yards. The moral scission and the desertion of the syndicates precedes the actual scission.

But the practical impossibility of living on present wages throws the workers back into the struggle. And the question is raised as to whether the C.G.T. syndicates can still serve as fighting bodies or whether new organisations must be created.

The deeprooted instinct of the working class makes them realise that strikes must be directed by the strikers themselves. The C.G.T. will once more become a tremendous force if it is transformed in the course of the coming struggles. It will decay or split if it remains the instrument of a political party, of a government or of an Embassy.

S. PARANE.

Middle East Notes**PALESTINE HYPOCRISY**

The decision of the Egyptian Government to create a fund for the purchase of land for Palestine Arab peasants has been welcomed by the Egyptian press. Other Arab states are following suit, and no doubt it is quite a good idea. But why in the name of Allah are the Palestinian Arabs singled out for such signal favour, when tens of thousands of dispossessed Egyptian Arabs cry out for bread and land as do peasants in all the Arab states?

Peasants As Pawns

Of course the answer is that they care nothing about the peasants except when they can be used as pawns in the diplomatic game; and the Palestinian Arabs are being helped only because it is hoped thereby to hinder the Zionists. From that point of view, peasants in other Arab States would (if they could read the news) be wishing they were the victims of 'foreign aggression' also!

"Displacement" and Russia

However, as regards this habit of seeing next door's ashcans more clearly than

one's own, the majority of Jewish people have nothing to learn from the Arabs. Indignation at the treatment of "displaced persons" fleeing from Europe and finding themselves behind barbed wire in Cyprus, after years of torment in Hitler's concentration camps, has been fully justified. But it is undoubtedly the case, as all refugees admit, that they are not fleeing from Germany, still less from Austria (countries to which Jews are even returning), but from Russian-controlled territory from which, once escaped, no one willingly returns. It is from pogroms in Poland, Rumania, etc., that Jews seek to escape, and they make for Palestine, which has taken the place of America as the "promised land", the myth that persecuted people build up for themselves, just as lost travellers in the desert see images of green oases. These are the journeys that too often finish at Cyprus. Yet how is it that in a district of London (Mile End) where working class Jews predominate and where criticism of Bevin's policy is naturally most audible, that Mr. Piratin should be the Communist M.P., that Communist councillors should represent it in Stepney, and the following of

C.P. and influence of the *Daily Worker* not be least considerable? It is as if, when protests against Chamberlain's kowtowing to Hitler were evident, they should have plumped for a full-blooded fascist.

Humanitarian Pretence

Stalin's tolerance of anti-semitism behind the iron curtain leads to 'displacement' and the tragic procession that wends its weary way to barbed wire compounds, thus causing the trouble in Palestine that embarrasses Russia's Mid-East rival, Britain, in the same way that Britain's support of Syrian nationalism knocked France out of the game.

If those who support this policy stated that they did not care two damns about the human aspect of the displaced Jews in question, and those who support settling landless Arabs in Palestine explained that it was only another counter move and they that they didn't care two damns about the fellaheen in question, it would not inconvenience them by causing any positive merit to humanity and would at least save a certain amount of hypocrisy.

A. M.

Foreign Commentary**"God's Bloc" Wins in Sicily!**

THE electoral battle in Sicily is over, and the new Sicilian Parliament will start its deliberations in the Palazzo Reale in Palermo on May 20th. The People's Bloc which Communist posters also referred to as "God's Bloc" (*Freedom*, 3rd May) has obtained the largest number of votes—591,000 or 30% of the votes cast and will be represented by 29 deputies. The Christian Democrats were second with 400,000 votes and 19 seats, the neo-fascist Common Man Bloc were next with 287,000 votes and 15 seats, the National Monarchist Party polled 185,000 votes and won 9 seats, the Republicans, Independent Socialists, etc., share the remaining 18 seats.

Comparing the figures with the elections of last year certain facts do stand out fairly clearly.

Firstly: that the Christian Democratic poll has fallen from 643,000 last June to 400,000, that is a drop of nearly 40%.

Secondly: the neo-fascist bloc's poll has fallen by 24,000 votes.

Thirdly: the people's bloc votes have increased by about 170,000. This figure is arrived at by adding up the June votes of the different parties which now form the people's Bloc. As these "People's Blocs" in any country are always suspect, and invariably Communist inspired, its composition may be of interest to readers. The figures in brackets are the votes cast (in thousands) at the 1946 elections: Socialists (233), Communists (151), Action Party (26), Unionist Party (18), Democratic Republican

concentration (15), Ex-Servicemen's Party (13), Independent Workers' Party (10), Pacifists (4), Independent Workers (4).

Fourthly: 200,000 less votes were cast than last June. This accounts in part for the Christian Democrats' losses. The Common Man poll suffered by the participation in these elections of the National Monarchists' Party whose votes went to the Common Man last June.

ANARCHIST CONGRESS IN ITALY

The second Anarchist Congress since the "liberation" was held this year at Bologna. It had less glamour about it than the Carrara Congress where mass public demonstrations were held, where posters greeting the delegates were posted over the whole town and official greeting were received from the different Left parties. It was a congress determined to study the problems of organization and policy, and their conclusions are of interest to all anarchists. At the congress were present the delegates of 33 regional and provincial federations, representatives of 36 groups as well as the editors of the movement's 11 journals. On the question of organization, the National Committee of the F.A.I. (Italian Anarchist Federation) was dissolved and in its place a Correspondence Commission of 3 comrades was nominated whose sole function would be to act as a coordinating and contacting body for the movement. The commission is also responsible for the editing of the

Internal Bulletin of the Movement.

The decision to abandon the National Committee is an effective answer to those who would have wished to see the Italian Anarchist movement more centralized and more "disciplined". By disciplined they meant, of course, that the National Committee should issue orders and the groups should obey. But fortunately the Fascist and Communist conceptions of discipline have not swamped the Anarchist movement.

On the religious question the Lombardy Federation accepted the task of coordinating all the local efforts to combat the increasing political domination of the Catholic Church and those Parties which support it, while the Florentine Federation accepted to coordinate all the possibilities of local activity against war preparations, with a view to building up a strong and homogenous agitation based on the slogan: "Not a single man, not a single penny, not a single hour's work, for War."

WAR CASUALTIES

The casualties of war are not only the dead and maimed but the future generation, and these casualties can only be counted when the thunder of war has receded and the people begin sorting out their lives. And then the problem of the abandoned children has to be faced and the real cost of war is realised. In Italy, the length and breadth of which was invaded by the German, American, British, Polish, etc., armies, the problem of abandoned children is a disastrous one. The French magazine *Point de Vue* published recently an article with pictures dealing with child prostitution, begging and black marketeering in Naples, and the

figures quoted are staggering.

According to the official sources, some 50,000 children between the ages of 8 and 16 are involved. They describe, for instance, the activities of a boy of 14, known as the "general" because of the American army cap he wears, who plays like other boys of his age during the day and lives on the "immoral earnings" of young girls at night. During 1946, 27,809 children were arrested on the public highways for vagrancy, begging and prostitution. Such are the ravages of war experienced by starving Naples.

As a contrast to this tragedy—which, by the way, is not limited to Naples alone—and about which the Government has taken no radical measures, one learns that this same Government, on April 29th, ordered the suppression of D. L. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, published by Italy's biggest publishing firm, Arnoldo Mondadori, of Milan! The ban was on the grounds that the book was considered "indecent and immoral"! In an interview with Reuter's correspondent, Signor Mondadori said that, "The motive for the suppression cannot be other than a desire to act in a high-handed and oppressive manner under a cloak of morality and order and a presumption of justice."

It's a question of not seeing the wood for trees!

CIVILIZATION

Three Hungarians were recently found guilty of plotting a rightist coup against the coalition government and were sentenced "to a hanging à la Hongroise" to quote from *Time* (28/4/47). In this procedure—according to this magazine—"the condemned man stands on a stool before a high post topped by a hook. A thin rope is put about the victim's neck and pulled taut about the hook. Then the stool is kicked from under the victim. His neck is not broken by the drop. As a measure of mercy, the executioner sharply twists the victim's head while a couple of assistants pull his legs down."

LIBERTARIAN.

THROUGHOUT the centuries the slogan of "Liberty" has been used by various groups and sects to gull the peoples into fighting for the aims and objectives of whichever group, sect, faith, nation or what-have-you, was assuming the role of liberator at that particular time. Yet in almost every case . . . if not, in fact, in every case . . . the people who fought and suffered to obtain their liberty, sooner or later awoke to the fact that they had merely exchanged one set of chains for another.

Marshal Josip—Broz—Tito held out to the long repressed peasants and workers of the Balkans, and eastern Europe, the tempting bait of "Smrt Faszizmu, Sloboda Narodu" (Death to Fascism, Liberty to the Peoples). This was the slogan that rallied the toughest fighting men, and women, of the Balkans to the red banner raised by the turner's son. From Serbia and Bulgaria, from the wild hills of Montenegro, and from the ranks of the Chetniks, from the Fascist controlled army of Italy, whole units deserted to fight against a common enemy, repression.

The Tactics Of Liberty

Tito's men had learned their lessons well. For they received their schooling at Moscow, and it's syllabus was a comprehensive one. They learned how an armed and organised minority could impose its will on an entire people . . . and how the unrestrained use of terrorism could enable them to uphold the imposition.

Tito and his comrades lost no time in applying these lessons; in all essentials they remained the same tactics that Stalin had used in the early days of the Soviets, and that Hitler and Mussolini had used with great success. So the peoples of the Balkans have been presented with the same liberty that the Russian proletariat laboured under. It is well worth while studying some of the tactics for the application of this "Liberty", and its effects on the people.

The main tactic is an old acquaintance, one that has appeared under a variety of guises . . . but whatever the guise, the result has always been the same . . . transfer of all wealth to the State bosses! In the application of this Tito copied the examples set by both Hitler and Stalin, and conducted this transfer with a fine regard to legality every step of the way.

Blanket Legislation

The transfer of the country's commercial and industrial wealth is founded on confiscation without payment. It is all embracing, covering factories, mines, shops, stores, hotels, banks, and the all important land. The confiscation is carried out under two new laws . . . one of which provides for the punishment of everyone in the country who had collaborated with the Nazi and Fascist invaders, or with the short-lived and ill-famed independent state of Croatia run by Ante Pavelich and his murderous greenshirts. The other law called for the punishment of all businessmen who had made a profit from the war while their fellow citizens were out fighting the invaders.

In a country that was occupied for four years by the Italians, Germans, Hungarians, and Bulgarians, every businessman who kept running was technically a collaborator, and may be punished as such, if the new "People's Courts", who dispense what passes for justice in Yugoslavia, so decree. Every worker who worked, every peasant who grew crops was, technically speaking a collaborator, for no attention is paid to the fact that if the peasant did not grow crops he and his family would starve to death, and if a workman refused to work when ordered to or a businessman refused to run his plant the way he was ordered to, then he would be shot out of hand, for the invaders did not use any kid glove methods.

In one of the confiscation cases, Tomislav Bulat, general director of the Bata shoe factory, and eleven of his executives were accused of having made 100,000 pairs of rubber boots and 5,000 pairs of shoes for the German army. The plant was confiscated.

The directors of the First Croat Savings Bank were tried for having given banking facilities to the Pavelich regime. Two directors were sentenced to death, two to twenty years hard labour and the confiscation of all their personal property. The bank and several affiliates were confiscated.

Freedom Of The Press

There is another law that the government uses to legally suppress any criticisms by the press. In its preamble the Press law states that the press may print whatever it likes . . . with eleven exceptions. One of these covers "false rumours" which is a convenient sort of title. The way that this is used to sup-

press criticism is clearly demonstrated in the case of the paper called *Democracy*.

LIBERTY TO THE PEOPLE

ularly in the area to the north of the Quieto River . . . now occupied by the Tito forces but soon to be incorporated in the Free Territory of Trieste. For as the end of their period of occupation draws near the Titoites are ruthlessly plundering the whole zone.

Further Manifestations Of Liberty

At Capodistria, the "Liberators" have looted the plant, machinery, motors, tools, completed and partly completed vessels from the "Istria" dockyards. The losses have been estimated at 83 million lire. In the same town, the "Dephanger" dockyards have lost tools and machinery valued at over 12 million lire. Another society, the "C.G. Libertas" lost its plant and materials, and like the other two yards mentioned above, has had to close down.

The material looted was deposited at Fiume . . . and as it was left in the open it can now be written off as a dead loss, thanks to the action of the inclement weather.

On Feb. 12th, the elementary schools were looted, the benches, tables, desks, wash basins, cupboards and other furniture were removed. Then the Hospital of Saint Marino was visited, the place was stripped, even the doors, electric light fittings, the metal signs that marked the wards and departments and the floor tiles, were removed.

From Isola D'Istria comes the news of the economic ruin caused by the confiscation of the plant, machinery and fishing fleet from the "Ampelea" and "Arrigoni" fish canning and conservation plants. The accusation used to legalise the theft was the usual one of "collaboration". Most of the machines were dismantled by the use of picks and sledgehammers, ruining most of the machinery. The major part of this equipment was

then deposited on the piers at Rovigno and Parenzo, where much of it still lies, rusted and ruined. The wide-spread unemployment caused by this large-scale robbery can be easily imagined.

The salt flats at S. Bortolo were stripped of the cranes used to load the

local co-operative at the usual low prices, the grain was then loaded on to lorries and transported to the south of the Quieto river. Now malnutrition is rife in Cittanova . . . a rise in the incidence of tuberculosis and an epidemic of inflammation of the pulmonary glands

salt into the magazines. But when the Titoites removed the pumps, this was too much for the workers, and their determined resistance enabled them to save the valuable pumping machinery.

Then the workers of Padena repelled three attempts made by Titoites to remove the electrical transformers from the "Selveg" works.

Militant Action By The Workers

At Verteneglio the Titoites "confiscated" a threshing machine, but the peasant farmers, and their women, pursued them along the road, and took back the threshing machine which they then drew back in triumph to the fields. The next day they decided that only militant action was of any use, so once again they went out en masse, and recaptured a tractor that had been confiscated a few days before.

The news travelled round fast, and when the authorities made an attempt to confiscate the pumps and hydraulic equipment of the Bonifacio di Quieto, they were met by the determined resistance of the workers and had to retire, minus the loot.

Land

The new decree that says "the land must belong to those that till it" is not quite what the phrase conveys. For most of the confiscated land has been handed as private property to party members, who have never done any farm work in their lives.

But the old peasants are finding out that crop raising in this new state of Liberty is not such a profitable game, for one spends months growing and harvesting food and then starve for the lack of it.

At Cittanova, for example, the peasants were forced to sell their grain to the

among children. At Rovigno the peasants declared a crop of 500 hectolitres of olive oil . . . the mainstay of the Italian diet . . . which they were forced to sell to the co-operative. The co-ops then shipped the oil to Yugoslavia.

So we have people suffering from malnutrition following an exceptionally abundant harvest . . . workers desiring to work having the tools and machinery looted, children unable to go to school, and the sick unable to go to hospital. Yet the communists swear that these are "the inherent contradictions of the capitalist system." Or are the communists developing a few marxist contradictions themselves?

This, then, is the "Liberty" that the communists have presented to the peoples, and already the people are showing their opinion of it. For not only have the workers begun to take militant action, but also hundreds of workers have already applied for permission to leave the country. At Rovigno 1500, at Pisino 1600, at Parenzo 1500, to quote three examples from the long list that lays on the table before me. But if this permission is eventually granted to them, they will not be allowed to take with them the following articles, bicycles, wireless sets, binoculars, cloth, food, cigarettes, typewriters, sewing machines, gas stoves, coal and electric stoves, pianofortes or other musical instruments. Before they leave they must also pay the entire taxes for the current year. Many of these people have voluntarily chosen the road into exile, which means that all their property and furniture, land and house is confiscated by the State, and sold by auction.

Is it then to be wondered at that the people have re-written the slogan of "Death to Fascism, Liberty to the Peoples" and substituted "Death to the People, Liberty to the Robbers"?
B. M.

Living Standards in Russia

(The following article is reproduced from the Swiss social-democratic paper, *Basler Arbeiter Zeitung*. It gives important factual evidence of the actual standard of living of the Russian people early this year.)

Stockholm, February, 1947.

After the conclusion of the Swedish-Russian trade agreement, five journalists from Stockholm newspapers had the rare opportunity to spend 19 days in Russia and to study on the spot the life of the Russian people. Among them were two social-democrats, the chief editor of the main organ of Swiss social-democracy, *Morgon-Tidningen*, G. Elfving, and Y. Lungberg, the foreign editor of the trade-unionist evening paper, *Afton-Tidningen*. Although foreigners who do not speak Russian can only make general observations during such a short stay—even if they can move about freely, the Swedish journalists were nevertheless successful in collecting much important and objective data about the living conditions of the Russian people.

The Soviet is healing the dreadful wounds it received in the four years of war. Seven million people, mostly in the prime of life, died or were killed during these gruesome years. This period has lowered the standard of living, already low before the war, of the hard-tested Russian people. Reconstruction work, which is being pursued by drastic means, suffers from lack of labour, and makes little progress at present. In addition, the Russian economy received a heavy blow from last year's bad harvest. It was one of the worst for many years and, according to the Russian reports, can be compared to that of 1921, when several millions died of hunger. This harvest is supposed to have had less catastrophic consequences, yet the lack of foodstuffs is great. Bread rationing could not be abolished during last autumn, nor could the ration be increased considerably. But bread is still

the main diet of the Russian people. The food situation has therefore not improved since the end of the war.

Two Standards Of Life

In the Soviet Union exist two completely different systems of food sale and prices. The rationed goods consist of those products which are absolutely essential to life. These can be obtained at fixed and "comparatively" payable prices in the ration depots. So bread costs from 1 to 2.80 rouble a kilo (2.2 English pounds), meat 34 roubles a kilo, fats 36 to 60 roubles a kilo, 2.60 a piece of ordinary soap. These prices are high, when one considers that the rouble, according to the official exchange, is 1/6. Besides, the quantity of these rationed goods is very limited, and the fixed amounts are often not available. The great mass of the Russian workers and employees, who have to live on rationed goods, find themselves in great want.

On the other hand, there exist "commercial" undertakings, where one can buy food and other goods for daily use without ration cards, but at many times higher prices. In these "gastronomic" undertakings a kilo of white bread costs 30 roubles, a kilo of butter 200 roubles, a kilo of meat 70 to 90 roubles, a kilo of sugar 60 roubles, toilet soap 40 to 50 roubles a piece. These are, according to Western European conceptions, purely fantastic prices. For the wide masses of the Russian people these prices of the "free" market are unpayable. The goods in the commercial shops are therefore only available for high income groups of the population.

The salaries in the Soviet Union also correspond to the two price systems and two groups of inhabitants in Russia. The great majority of workers earn approximately 200 to 250 rouble per month. most women are forced to take part in

the wage earning. Soviet women are occupied in all branches of industrial life, even in the heaviest branches, such as building work. Even the youngest members of the family work. So the average income of a working family amounts to 600 or 650 roubles a month. Such a worker's family can only buy the rationed goods. It has to be content with the minimum for existence, which is low indeed.

How The Rich Live

But there is another group of inhabitants, who have a high income, that is to say, they receive between 2,000 and 10,000 roubles a month. These are the higher civil servants, artists, scientists, and generals, as well as the elite workers (the stakhanovites), who surpass their given amount of work and are paid considerably more than ordinary workers. Some of them receive up to 20,000 roubles monthly. The highest chiefs of party, state and army (members of the Central Committee of the Party, ministers, viceministers, marshals, etc.) in Moscow and the 16 republics have even larger incomes and special shops for buying their goods. These are the people who can afford the high prices in the commercial undertakings. And, besides, they not only buy food in addition to the meagre rations. For these salaries they can afford Soviet luxury goods: a chocolate cake for 60 roubles, which in Switzerland costs ninepence, a tie for 50 roubles, a blouse for 450 roubles, a pair of good boots with leather soles and felt for 2,000 roubles, a wireless for 3,000 roubles and a suit for 3,500 roubles. It is these high earners who overcrowd the numerous restaurants, the Hotels Metropole, National and Aurora, and other better places in Moscow. The Swedish journalists report that a modest meal in the Moscow restaurants costs between 150 and 200 roubles. But those who order stronger

drinks have to pay three or four times as much. Half a bottle of cognac costs about 250 roubles. This is the equivalent of a month's wages for a simple Russian worker. For a somewhat ampler evening meal for two people one has to pay approximately 1,000 roubles. The people of the better situated upper strata have even the possibility, with a certain economy, to buy a car or rent a piece of land to build themselves a villa. This will be inherited by their children. And such a man can put his money into a bank, which will give him from four to six per cent interest. All this means that in the Soviet Union a wide differentiation in the prosperity of different classes has developed.

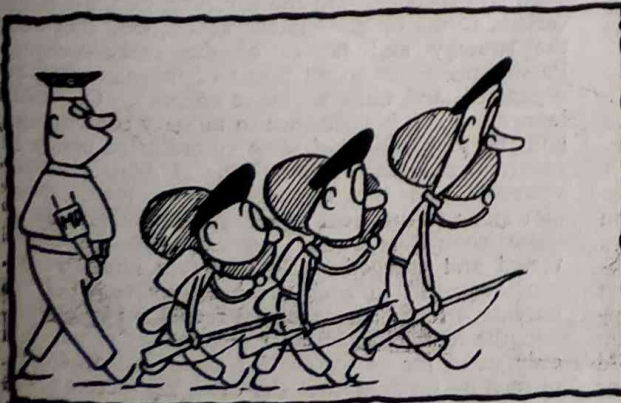
The Housing Shortage

The housing shortage in Moscow, Leningrad and other large towns is supposed to be great, the overcrowding of rooms incredible. But living accommodation is very cheap: one pays for a square metre of room surface from 0.43 to 1.25 roubles. For instance, a two-roomed flat with kitchen costs only 85 roubles a month. Fares are also cheap: a tram journey in the overcrowded cars cost only 15 kopeks, and a railway ticket for a long journey is not expensive. But to make a railway journey one has to get a special permit from the police. The price of a theatre ticket varies between 2 and 25 rouble, but to obtain it one has to stand in a long queue. The workers' meals (soup with bread) in the canteens of the large factories cost 3.50 to 4 roubles. For a child in a kindergarten one has to pay 20 to 40 roubles monthly, including the food. Nursing is free, but for medicines the full price has to be paid. The number of doctors is insufficient, and they can hardly be obtained for house visits.

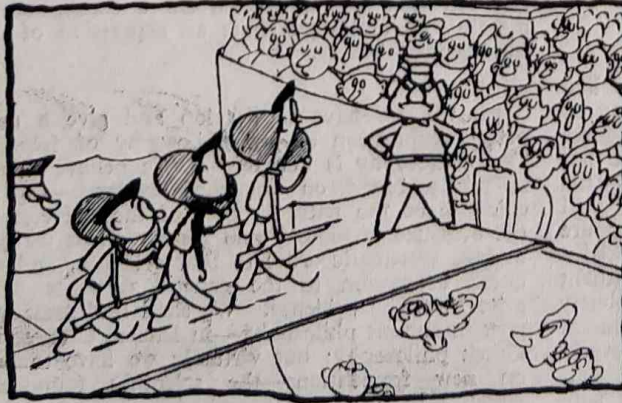
In their external appearance Moscow and Leningrad leave a dark, cold and unfriendly impression. Illumination is sparse, no electric advertisements, no decorated shop windows. The trams, trolley buses and the modern Metro are continually overcrowded. Often long queues of people stand waiting to buy food, or cinema or theatre tickets. People are dressed very simply and often very badly, the majority wearing grey clothes, former army overcoats and caps, great sackcloth gloves and felt shoes. The Soviet citizens work much and hard. Their facial expression is very severe, and mostly sad. Russian everyday life in the post war years is drab.

It is therefore understandable, according to the Swedish reports, that the Soviet people are tired of war. They want peace, more food, new clothes, better shoes, their own homes and a generally higher standard of prosperity.

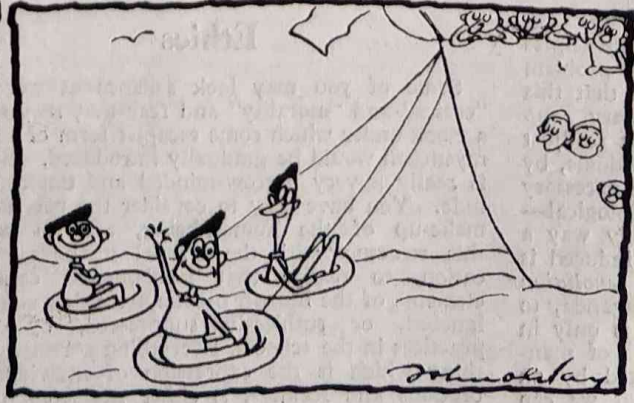
THE THREE MUSKETEERS—7



OFF TO GERMANY



By JOHN OLDAY



"Travel in comfort"

POETRY AND THE PEOPLE by
KENNETH RICHMOND. Routledge, 10/6.

The problem of the divorce of poetry and the other arts from the people in general and their absorption into small cults of upper or middle class practitioners and appreciators is one which is of great interest and concern to the student of social problems. Why has

Poetry and the People

folk poetry, which formed so rich an element in the lives of the mediaeval peasants and which survived as an important art until the end of the eighteenth century, have declined so far in our own day that the jazz lyric and the bawdy limerick are its only miserable and adulterated survivors? Why has the main stream of poetry swerved away from popular feeling and become dispersed in the tiny streams and trickles of an individual art that becomes steadily more private and esoteric? Why is it that even when there appears a poet who is conscious of social factors and who tries to reach the people, he finds the gulf already so wide that there seems no means of bringing poetry back to popular consciousness?

gained by praising bad verse because it is popular—one might just as well praise the yellow press because it has a wide circulation. The nineteenth century ballads, in all their badness, represent the last fever of folk poetry before it finally died out in the plague of the industrial revolution.

Nor is it any use, as Mr. Richmond does, calling for an effort on the part of poets to reunite themselves to popular feeling. Poets do make this effort, and they will continue to do so, but they will not succeed until social circumstances allow them to do so.

The real situation is that neither the poet nor the people are to blame if they cannot understand each other. We are living in a society where human contacts

All these questions are important. For poetry they are important because, if we could answer them we should be able to say why the poet has lost those necessary roots in popular life which made a man like Lorca so much greater and fuller a poet than his English or American contemporaries. For the people they are important, because if we could answer them we might be able to indicate the way back to a richer communal and individual life when the workers would once again find themselves moved to a natural poetic expression which their ancestors had but which they have lost.

But such matters can only be approached thoroughly by a consideration of the social causes that underlie them. It is because he has no adequate knowledge of social movements that Mr. Richmond's book fails so signally to live up to the hopes engendered by its title and the publisher's blurb.

Mr. Richmond has a vast and uncritical enthusiasm for folk poetry. For him it is the real thing, and with the few exceptions of Shakespeare, Burns, Clare, etc., he throws overboard lock, stock and barrel, the whole of English poetry since the fifteenth century. Milton, Dryden, Pope, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Byron—all to be discarded because they departed from the tradition of popular writing. On the other hand, the really inferior verses of the Seven Dials ballad makers of the early nineteenth century are to be approved, not because of their quality, but because they sold in millions.

Such lapses from literary judgment just will not take us any nearer to solving the problem. The poets Richmond attacks remain good poets—it was not their fault but that of the social evolution of their time that their world was divorced from the people. Nor is there anything to be



have been broken down, and can only take place on either a limited or a superficial level. A centralised society does not provide the local centres of integration where a vital popular culture can arise. Consequently, the only cultures we have are, a superficial sham culture of films and "popular songs", with no real depth in any part of society, and a tiny personal culture which is conserved and rarefied among groups of middle class individuals. Under our present society this is all that can be expected, and no amount of self-conscious efforts can change it.

We shall only have a real popular culture—and therefore a real re-integration of poetry with the people, when society has changed from the present centralised state capitalism, into a federation of free co-operative communes, where cultures will be able to find their own centres of development and their real roots among the people. The industrial revolution, with its breaking down of local communities, destroyed popular culture in England. Only a change back to humanised social relationships can give the circumstances for a new popular culture to arise. And that change can come only through a changeover from the present totalitarian tendencies to a strictly libertarian and decentralist tendency. But Mr. Richmond fails completely to bring out this fact in his book, which thus misses the whole core of its problem. G. W.

Aldous Huxley on Decentralisation

SCIENCE, LIBERTY AND PEACE by
ALDOUS HUXLEY. (Chatto & Windus, 3/6.)

The latest production of Aldous Huxley is always something to be anticipated with hope, and to be put down with disappointment. I am not, of course, talking of his earlier works, since I continue to read *Point Counter Point* and *Antic Hay* with enjoyment, although even these books show his failure to grasp any positive or social vision. But it is in his more recent books that his peculiar lack of purpose has become most evident.

This is all the more unfortunate, since Huxley is all the time struggling to find some positive direction. Nothing could be more earnest than his attempt to give pacifism a sound philosophical and social basis in *Ends and Means*. But he failed in this from apparent inability to grasp concrete social realities or to feel, in spite of his distrust for politicians, any real faith in the human individual.

It is this failure to realise the true significance of the individual man as the basis of any sound social change—including the abolition of war, that leads Huxley into his rather ersatz mysticism. He distrusts the human personality in itself, and has to set up some vague supporting presence from which man draws his power, and with which he must establish connection before he can attain any worthwhile development. This lack of reliance on man himself makes him, after detailing man's elementary needs, talk of his "... spiritual need—the need, in theological language, to achieve his Final End, which is the unitive knowledge of ultimate Reality, the realization that Atman and Brahman are one, that the body is a temple of the Holy Ghost, that Tao or the Logos is at once transcendent and immanent." What a strange jumble of abstractions torn from their contexts in mystic literature to intrude into a book on concrete social problems!

But it would be very unjust to Huxley to suggest that all this latest little book is of this character. There is much sound perception in the relationship between war and the centralised state, and Huxley points quite acutely to the way in which the governing classes of the various states find it necessary for their continued existence to preserve a state of permanent war, when even the intervals between open hostilities are characterised by war-preparation and the suppression of individual liberties. He shows, moreover, that far from the atomic bomb having made war less likely, it has in fact intensified the conditions in which wars are produced.

His main solution to this problem is decentralisation—the breaking down of administration and industry into localised self-governing units. But his decentralisation is hardly anarchistic, since he seems to envisage at least some measure of government, and fails to see that only a total abolition of government will prevent a gradual return to larger centralised units of political power. Nor does he give any positive suggestion as to how these changes are to take place. He evidently envisages the possibility of large-scale passive resistance, but he also seems to think in terms of decentralisation by legislation, which means the impossible task of trying to persuade our present ruling class to decree the destruction of their own power. He does not grasp or is too disillusioned to admit that only a revolutionary movement of the working class can bring any fundamental social change, because only the workers can hold the means of production on which power is based.

This is a well-meant book, but it contains little that Huxley has not already said, and says almost nothing new on the subject of radical social change. Huxley is limping a long way behind anarchism in the attack on the centralised state. G. W.

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(Continued from page 2)

sense of frustration are the root cause of individual maladaptations and of most aggressive impulses. But obviously the problem is not entirely an affair of the individual: there are two terms to the process of integration, and most maladjusted individuals might complain with some justification that it is not themselves, but the group which needs readjustment. And any psychologist who has worked outside his consulting-room is bound to admit the justice of this complaint. From the family to the state, the group in modern society is a flabby, inchoate, uneasy organism, and until we have discovered what is wrong with these organisms, we shall fail to effect any widespread readjustment of individual neurosis.

I believe, myself, that the pioneer work in this field has already been done by a group of American psychologists under the leadership of Dr. Trigant Burrow, but until the final results of their research have been published, it is difficult to substantiate this belief. We can already see from works like "The Biology of Human Conflict" and "The Social Basis of Consciousness", that a new level of psychological research has been reached and that it has a direct bearing on the problems of social organisation. I believe myself that the conclusions will be a direct and powerful vindication of the political philosophy of anarchism. I am prepared to admit that other psychological theories, particularly those of Wilhelm Reich, are equally relevant. I am not insisting that any particular system of psychology should be adopted by anarchists: I am only suggesting that psychology has a direct bearing on all social issues, and that our political philosophy must be grounded in psychological truth.

Education

When we have got hold of the right principles of social relations, there will then be the problem of putting them into practice. The idea that this can be done by some kind of revolutionary *coup d'état* is really very childish. You cannot readjust individuals to society, or society to individuals, by purely external measures of control. The necessary changes are not so much political as biological—not structural, but organismic. The only way a biological or organismic change can be induced is by training or education. The word *revolution* should largely disappear from our propaganda, to be replaced by the word *education*. It is only in so far as we liberate the growing shoots of mankind, shoots not yet stunted or distorted by an environment of hatred and injustice, that we can

Anarchism: Past & Future

The Humane Revolution

expect to make any enduring change in society. Revolutions fail because they are built on the bogs and volcanoes of vast social neuroses; the few sane and enlightened pioneers who may lead a revolution are almost immediately swamped by the forces of the collective unconscious which the violence of the revolutionary event releases. It is not the enemy confronting the barricades which defeats a revolution, but the forces coming up from the rear.

We may have to act in a revolutionary spirit in a given situation—I shall discuss revolutionary tactics presently—but a new order of society such as we desire can only be given a firm and enduring foundation within the physique and disposition of the human being, and education in its widest sense is the only means we have of securing such fundamental changes in the whole social group.

About the type of education likely to bring about such fundamental changes, there may be legitimate differences of opinion. I have my own ideas about it which I call "education through art", and I have given a summary of them in the Freedom Press pamphlet called "The Education of Free Men." In general, what is necessary is some form of moral or ethical education. The declining influence of the churches has left an enormous gap in the process of education. The education given in primary and secondary schools, in universities and in technical colleges, is an almost exclusively intellectual education: it trains the mind and memory of the growing child, but neglects the emotions and sensibility.

Ethics

Some of you may look askance at words like "ethics" and "morality" and fear that they may be a cloak under which some escapist form of religious mysticism would be gradually introduced. But that is really a very narrow-minded and timorous attitude. You have only to consider the psychological make-up of the human-being, and to compare this structure with the normal methods of education, to realize that fundamental constituent elements of the human psyche are either completely ignored, or ruthlessly suppressed, by present practices in the schools. Everything personal, everything which is the expression of individual perceptions and feelings, is either neglected, or sub-

ordinated to some conception of normality, of social convention, of correctness. I am not suggesting that we should educate for a world of eccentrics, of wilful egoists. Far from it. I am really suggesting that these forces which we call feelings, instincts and emotions, should be used creatively, and communally—that we should substitute, for our neurotic separateness and discordant relationships, disciplines of harmony and of art. The end of moral education is the creation of group discipline, of group unity or unanimity, a living-together in brotherhood. Brotherhood is an instinctive social unity—a unity in love. But it does not grow without care, without a united will and a discipline. Just as the family can be an epitome of hell if it is based on discordant wills, on parental disharmony, on ignorant suppression of natural instincts, so society is hell let loose when it is one vast neurosis due to social inequalities and social disintegration. Moral education is simply education for social unity, and as such it hardly exists to-day. But it is the only guarantee of the endurance, of the lastingness, of the social revolution. It is for this reason that towards the end of his life Kropotkin turned his attention to the subject of ethics. He lived to publish only the first part of his work, which was a clearing made in the tangle which has grown up round the subject. But he intended to build in the clearing he had made, and was working on a positive system of ethics when he died in Russia. I always hope that this last work of his may have survived, and will in some happier time be published. But we cannot wait for that chance. We have to go on from the point where Kropotkin left off, and give to the world a conception of morality or ethics which is an expression of our fundamental beliefs.

Finally, we have to develop and give a more perfect expression to our philosophy of freedom. Our philosophy is our faith. We believe that it is firmly based on empirical evidence—on the evidence of the natural order of the universe, on the evidence of biology and history. But we have to give systematic order to that evidence, and eloquent expression to the general concepts which arise from the evidence. We shall find some support in ancient philosophy—in Indian, Chinese and Greek philosophy; but virtually we have to build on new foundations—the scientific foundations which I have already described.

What I have outlined is a coherent plan of research and work—a sevenfold system of study and creative activity, leading step by step from the facts as we find them in history and existing societies, through the basic facts of human psychology and social economy, to the methods of education and the philosophical formulation of our ideals. Perhaps it sounds all too systematic to you, but it is far from my intention to suggest the rigid structure of a universal philosophy on the lines of Comte or Herbert Spencer. Humanity is diverse; evolution is creative. A philosophy of freedom is a philosophy which allows for growth, for variation, for the possibility of new dimensions of personal development and social consciousness. How does this programme which I have sketched for the future of anarchism differ from our previous conceptions of anarchism? Well, obviously, it is less political. I will not admit for a moment that it is less revolutionary. But the revolution envisaged is a humane one, and not a political one. But if we can secure a revolution in the mental and emotional attitudes of men, the rest follows. This is fundamental anarchism—anarchist fundamentalism. It discards for ever the romantic conception of anarchism—conspiracy, assassination, citizen armies, the barricades. All that kind of futile agitation has long been obsolete: but it was finally blown into oblivion by the atomic bomb. The power of the state, of our enemy, is now absolute. We cannot struggle against it on the plane of force, on the material plane. Our action must be piece-meal, non-violent, insidious and universally pervasive.

But this does not mean that we should retire to some sort of monastic life and lead a purely spiritual existence. On the contrary, we must study various forms of non-violent action, and above all the strategy and tactics of the strike weapon. Passive resistance to all forms of injustice must be organized, and must be made effective. Our most immediate aim is resistance to military conscription, and the preparation of some co-ordinated policy of universal resistance to all forms of military action, wherever and for whatever reason used. That aim alone is sufficient to absorb the energies of all those comrades whose temperaments are extraverted and energetic. But however much we become engaged in such revolutionary activities, do not let us forget that the real revolution is internal, that the most effective action is molecular, and that only in so far as we change the actual disposition of men do we guarantee the enduring success of the social revolution we all desire.

TO START AN ARGUMENT— IS THE PRESS SO SACRED ?

Some time ago, Oswald Mosley brought an action against employees of W. H. Smiths', wholesale distributors. These men had effectively prevented the distribution by Smiths' of one of Mosley's publications, by threatening to strike rather than handle it. The reaction of most people to this incident was one of mildly cynical amusement, that such a man as Mosley, whose fascist aims involve a complete censorship of opinion, should be paid in his own coin.

There is a deeper issue involved in this incident, however, which is somewhat disturbing to many thinking people who value the freedom of expression of opinion. The sanction might equally well have been applied by fascist-minded workers against publications of a libertarian trend. It may be argued that although Mosley's opinions are utterly obnoxious, he has the right to express them, and the action of the workers in Smiths' was just a form of censorship, a means of preventing a wider public reading Mosley's point of view. In this particular case, moreover, there seems to be some indication that the workers in question were actually inspired in their action by a political organization as hostile to freedom of expression as is Mosley's, and the incident was one of factional strife.

It is the general principle which concerns us however. Should not a firm like W. H. Smiths', although privately and commercially managed, be regarded as a public utility through which all literature may be distributed without any consideration of the political views expressed in the text? Very few democratically-minded people would have condoned the action of the anti-fascist workers if they had been post office employees tampering with the mails in order to sabotage the transmission of Mosley's views. Yet there is in fact, very little difference between such wholesale distributors as Smiths' and the post office. If both of these organizations were to refuse to transmit a certain periodical, its circulation would be seriously impaired. We anarchists can easily envisage such a contingency of discrimination against our literature, and we differ from socialists in advocating an absolute freedom of the press from all censorship.

What is Censorship ?

The foregoing leads us to enquire into the exact nature of censorship. Can the workers in Smiths' truly be said to have

exercised a *censorship* on Mosley's publication? Censorship implies a positive action of restraint and inhibition, and the meaning of the word clearly cannot embrace acts of non-cooperation. When a publication is censored, it means that the material will never reach the public because of its actual suppression by force. This is very different from a mere withdrawal of assistance to it. If distributors refuse to handle a periodical, the publishers cannot truthfully complain of *censorship*; it is open to them to find other means of distributing their matter. It would be a matter of censorship only if some outside agency (such as the State) were to physically prevent publication by smashing the press or by intimidating those engaged on its production and distribution. The only element of censorship which might exist in the Mosley case, is if the workers in question were actually *intimidated* by some organization so that they dared not handle the periodical. It seems evident, however, that no such intimidation existed, and they acted with some satisfaction.

The Freedom Of The Individual Will

If a 'true blue' postman were to refuse to deliver copies of *Freedom* to their addressee, and threw them back at the P.O. clerk, remarking that he was damned if he would assist in furthering anarchist ideas, we might deplore his prejudices but the spirit of his action would be something for anarchists to applaud.

The idea that each individual worker has a contract with society which he must fulfil in moral duty, is plainly absurd, as the worker is not in a position to choose to enter contracts *freely*. Workers are forced to enter into certain contracts out of sheer economic necessity or actual coercion by the State, and therefore they have no real responsibility for seeing that their allotted tasks are fulfilled.

In present-day society, those with long purses are in a position to spread their opinions far and wide, because they can actually force men to provide paper, printing and all facilities for mass distribution. If we envisage a truly free society, however, although there would be no sort of censorship of printed matter, the mass publication of any man's writings would obviously depend on whether a sufficiently large number of his fellows agreed that what he had to say

was worth printing. Papermakers, printers and distributors are simply not going to waste their energies on what they consider to be trash when they can employ their time more usefully, *if they are free from economic and political coercion*. We may therefore deduce that there will be less freedom of the press for *some* writers with the advent of a free society; many writers whose outpourings are read by millions to-day, will be reduced to the use of a hand-press if they wish to achieve publicity after the revolution. If this may seem a reactionary prediction to some, let them reflect that no one has the right to command the service of the common machinery of production merely to inflate his ego by the million-fold printing of his opinions. And, what is more to the point, his fellow men simply will not stand for it.

Few people would really blame a Roman Catholic bookshop for refusing to handle *Freedom*, or the Freedom Bookshops for refusing to handle the *Universe*. These concerns are acknowledged to be partisan outfits and people grant them the right to their prejudices. But every individual is his own partisan outfit, and has a perfect right to refuse to give support to whatever goes against his prejudices. No ideas of abstract "duty" can over-ride this plain fact.

It would be refreshing indeed if printers and newsvendors used their independence of judgement in deciding what trash was too vile to handle. Such action would be decryd by some as a violation of the sacredness of the press, but does that sacredness rest on any other foundation than capitalist ethics? Under capitalism such actions are necessarily rare, as workers are generally forced to act as feelingless automatons, governed by their wage-packets. Where discrimination exists it is generally against minority opinions which do not command the backing of mighty financial power.

In advocating freedom for the individual, we must not be deterred by many such paradoxes that occur under capitalism. The press is no more sacred than any of the other mass-producing processes in a technical society. Every man has the right to declare his opinions from the housetops, but if others will not assist him by acting as his criers, who shall blame them?

G.

Letters to the Editors

PRICE OF A SNOOK

DEAR COMRADE,

The thoroughness with which the law governs every aspect of an individual's behaviour was shown by a case which was heard in the magistrate's court at Ipswich recently. A man was fined £2 under the Public Order Act, 1936, for "insulting behaviour whereby a breach of the peace was likely to be occasioned." His crime?—he cocked a snook at a policeman! For those of our readers who were so well brought up that they do not know what a snook is, it is defined in Eric Partridge's *Dictionary of Slang* as "a gesture of derision—the thumb on the nose-tip and the fingers spread fan-wise." He even defines the double-snook as "the joining of the tip of the little finger (already in position) to the thumb of the other hand, the fingers being similarly extended. Emphasis is given by moving the fingers of both hands, as if playing a piano."

This dastardy "crime" of the Ipswich man in shewing his disrespect for "lor-an-order" was dealt with comparatively lightly. The two pounds fine was by no means the maximum that could have been inflicted—for a good double snook, with fingers playing a full-length concerto, he could have been fined £50, plus three months in prison!

T. W. B.

London.

A.M.G. CLOSES TRIESTE UNIVERSITY

DEAR COMRADES,

In these days Trieste is burning because of many facts that I am now going to tell you. Last week—for unknown reasons—Allied Military Government "invited" the University College President to resign. You know that every University in any nation is perfectly free and nobody can interfere in its business. But AMG—giving the world a good lesson in democracy—appointed a strange professor to the post of President of the University. Because of this the professors and students are on strike.

Bad things have happened last Wednesday.

day. As soon as they knew the order of AMG, they closed the University down. The professors went home and the students stayed inside in order to defend the building in case of an eventual attack. And the assault came in the morning at about 11 o'clock. AMG sent some VG police to occupy the University, but they were unable to achieve this. Only one got inside, but he was hit and kicked out. This man fired once, but fortunately without hitting anyone. The University is still occupied by students and no one can get in.

For solidarity, the Universities in Italy have proclaimed a strike. AMG, in the persons of Col. Bowman and Capt. Simon have created a heavy atmosphere. For the second time in the history of the world, a University has been attacked by soldiers. The first time, at Prague, the University was assaulted by Nazi SS. The second time, it is Trieste University. What shame that AMG should behave the same way as the Nazis!

Another trouble may arise on the 1st of May. The Italian parties in order to avoid trouble, suggested that the demonstrations should take place without national flags, Italian or Yugoslav, but only with the Red flag, as the international symbol of the working class. The Sindacati Unici [that is, the Tito-controlled Yugoslav trade unions—Eds.] however, refused. They wanted to demonstrate with a white-red-blue flag with a horrible red star in the middle of it.

R.

Trieste, 27/4/47.

Freedom's Press Fund.

DEAR COMRADES,

Please accept a P.O. for *Freedom* subscription. I really think our paper should be published at 3d. However, it is up to us who are convinced that Anarchism should be available or all to see that the Press Fund should always be healthy.

I intend to send my tiny share whenever the opportunity arrives—at present we are preparing to strike at my place of work, and of late I've been sending food parcels to Germany.

G.L.

Leeds.

DIRECT (COURT) ACTION

Italy has had a strike of magistrates. The whole magistrature is indignant about a new draft Statute to regulate the status and conditions of the local dispensers of justice, and some have advocated a general strike.

In several areas magistrates have actually "come out", refusing to sit on the bench and hear cases. Criminals don't care.

Leader, 3/5/47.

FREE AND EQUAL

Paul Robeson claimed in New York last night that he had only just escaped lynching, says B.U.P.

Speaking of his planned appearance in Peoria, he said: "The atmosphere was tense in anticipation of lynching. I escaped only because my departure was a carefully guarded secret. The city had been subject to terroristic control."

Reynold's News, 27/4/47.

ILLUSIONS

This picture of "Farmer Hayseed 1947 type", was given by Mr. J. J. Gracie, general manager of the General Electric Company, at the conference of the Association of Agriculture in Birmingham to-day:—

"Instead of the typical hayseed, with side-whiskers and a straw in his mouth, I met men running farms from well-equipped offices, with electric clocks and fluorescent lighting, with accounting machines and wall charts.

"They were men whose vision, organising ability, administration and production outlook, would have fitted them for the highest executive positions in industry."

Evening Standard, 3/5/47.

Knowing farmers, we know "Hayseed" is not typical, but if we are told that farming is done with accounting machines and fluorescent lighting we want to know—who does the muck-spreading?

THE EMPEROR AND THE C.P.

Grave-faced Emperor Hirohito asked General MacArthur last week to stop the "silly propaganda of the Communist Party in Tokio."

The Emperor referred to the latest propaganda line by party secretary Toshiko Abey who stunned the Tokio press with the statement that Hirohito's ancestors were Russian immigrants.

Twelve months ago Hirohito renounced the claim that his ancestor Jimu Tenno was the son of the sun goddess Omi-terasu-oi-mikami and all his descendants were "god-like, heaven-descended and above mortal rule."

Through the Press

Japanese Communists, eager to oust Hirohito, whom they call "Far Eastern Criminal No. 1", now claim that Jimu Tenno came as a poor immigrant from Eastern Russia and offer highly debatable evidence that his proper name was Jimushvily.

This would make him a distant cousin of Stalin whose real family name is Djugushvily.

Cavalcade, 3/5/47.

Some people, of course, regard Stalin as "god-like, heaven descended and above the mortal rule", but is it good propaganda to claim his relationship with "Far Eastern War Criminal No. 1"?

BAKERS PLAN MUTUAL AID

Bakers in London and the Home Counties are meeting this week to plan a mutual aid scheme, without which they fear there will not be sufficient bread to go round in some districts in the next six-week period of the 5 per cent. cut in supplies of flour from the mills.

Evening Standard, 30/4/47.

WHO IS MAD ?

Instead of cooping up her lunatics, the Italians send them to Volterra, founded 1898, for the mentally defective. They have the whole place to themselves.

The community is self-supporting. Of the 2,954 men, only 934 do any kind of work. The men are strictly separated from the women, unless they have to work together. According to statistics, working accidents are rarer among mad workers than among the sane, for the reason that a madman concentrates upon work more easily than a normal person can and is less easily distracted.

Forty-one per cent. of the newcomers last year were afterwards released as cured, and there are actually some who leave Volterra with sorrow.

They are so content with life there!

Leader, 3/5/47.

In an insane world, contentment may be found in strange places!

THE AFTERMATH

Europe's most prevalent symptom is a racking cough. Its undernourished people, though spared (thanks to UNRRA and private relief) from the dramatic pestilences that usually follow war, are succumbing by thousands to the insidious white plague of tuberculosis. Last week

an Associated Press survey in Europe confirmed what many doctors have feared: T.B., on the rise for the first time in a century, is now Europe's No. 1 killer.

Worst plague spots:

Germany, which before Hitler had one of the world's lowest T.B. rates and now has one of the highest. Each week there are 400 new T.B. cases and 150 deaths in Berlin alone. The U.S. occupation zone has 117,983 T.B. patients.

Poland, where an estimated 18,000 people, mostly youngsters, die of T.B. each month.

Greece, where 150,000 seriously ill patients are in need of a rest cure—but there are only 5,000 T.B. hospital beds.

Rumania, of whose 16,500,000 people, 600,000 have T.B.

Yugoslavia, which at last reports had 157,000 cases. Even in comparatively well-fed Zagreb, T.B. had risen 58%.

Time, (U.S.A.), 14/4/47.

In a comparatively well-fed country like the U.S.A., T.B. comes seventh in the list of killing diseases.

SWORD OVER CROSS

To-day I was able to give Dr. G. K. A. Bell, the Bishop of Chichester, news about a doctorate which Berlin University propose to confer on him. My correspondent in Berlin tells me there is a hitch.

The Soviet military administration have forbidden the distinction, and told all theological faculties in the Russian zone, in which Berlin University is, not to bestow any such honour on Dr. Bell.

Evening Standard, 1/5/47.

SHADES OF GOERING

Bill Mauldin's sardonic, unshaven Willie once summed up his attitude to the reckless flood of U.S. decorations in World War II. Said Willie: "Just gimme a coupla aspirin. I already got a Purple Heart."

By war's end most front-line troops agreed with Willie. They had their own jeering nicknames for the even cheaper non-combat awards. The Asiatic-Pacific Theatre ribbon was the "malaria bar with atabrine clusters"; the pre-Pearl Harbour service medal was the "Lend-Lease cross."

It became an overseas gag that a WAC who had done nothing more than commute to and from the Pentagon could hardly miss at least three awards: the American Theatre Campaign Ribbon, the Victory Medal, the Good Conduct Ribbon. Totals ran so high that the wartime U.S. could not afford the metal to strike the

medals themselves, issued ribbons instead.

But this week the War Department began to catch up with itself, and made an already ridiculous situation more ridiculous. It began issuing the first medals to match the American Defence Service, Victory and Occupation Ribbons. Distribution would run into the millions.

Time (U.S.A.), 14/4/47.

BOOMERANG

Twenty-three years ago next month, a deputation appeared before the Minister for Justice in New South Wales to plead for the life of Edward Williams, a music teacher sentenced to death for murdering his three young children. They pleaded that it was a case of "mercy-killing". Williams having feared that his children might follow their mother into an asylum.

Said the Minister: "It is murder, and there can be no circumstances in which it can be justified." One of the deputation replied: "In that case, the hangman's noose overhangs the heads of us all, including you..." The Minister was Thomas John Ley, now in the condemned cell at Wandsworth.

News of the World, 20/3/47.

THE LAW—FUNNY...

Detectives at Bath, Somerset, have this problem to solve: Is a man in the local prison hospital Ronald Mander Lyelm, a Swede, or is he Jack Beckitt, a Yorkshireman?

Detective-Inspector Tom Coles told the Bath magistrates yesterday:

"We have been trying to prove he is an alien, and the funny thing now is that we have to try to prove that he is English."

Daily Mirror, 24/4/47.

... AND NOT SO FUNNY

Wearing a blue jumper suit, a nine-year-old boy was sent for trial charged with murdering Glyndwr Parfitt, aged four, of Nantybar, Glamorgan. He sobbed as he signed a document.

The boy Parfitt was found dead in seven inches of water, his hands and ankles tied with shoe laces.

Mr. A. Davis, defending, said children of eight were incapable of crime in the eyes of the law and the accused boy was just beyond that border-line age. The reply he made when charged, "I won't do it again," proved he did not realise what he had done.

Daily Herald, 30/4/47.

Man enough to vote at 21; man

enough to be conscripted at 18; man enough to be charged with murder at 9!

MIDDLE CLASS MENTALITY

It is time something was done about unofficial strikers—they are becoming insane with power. We should deprive them of their ration books. The only way to keep them under control is to have a pool of unemployed to draw upon.

★

Portugal had a series of dock strikes recently. Now 200 of the strike leaders have been deported to the Cape Verde Islands. Well, off the coast of Scotland we have a group of islands called the Hebrides.

Letters in Evening Standard, 29/4/47.

SIGN OF WEALTH

As he was chipping a granite tombstone in an Aberdeen yard, Willie Melville, a 60-year-old stonemason, was told by a stranger that he had won £64,000 in a football pool.

"Now I shall be able to increase my cigarettes, which I had to cut from 16 a day to nine," he said last night.

Daily Herald, 30/4/47.

COLD FEET

The Rev. W. Hargrave Thomas, vicar of Needham Market, near Ipswich, who recently stated that "those thousands of women for whom there is no possible chance of a husband should be able to assert their right to have a family if they wish," wants to withdraw the remark unreservedly.

In a statement issued yesterday he said the remark had caused many people considerable distress, "which I deeply regret." "I am sorry that I said it," he added.

News-Chronicle, 29/4/47.

Did he receive a sharp note from the Bishop?

WONDERFUL RESPONSE

Mr. Alexander (Minister of Defence) said number of deserters who surrendered between January 22 and March 31 were: Royal Navy 378, Army 1,664, R.A.F. 299.

Evening Standard, 30/4/47.

Total 2,341—just over 10% of deserters trusted Alexander's idea of clemency. And we know the result.

PHONEY PEACE IN DOCKLAND

One of the outstanding aspects of the Glasgow Dockers' Strike has been the action of Transport House and the Union big shots, Deakin and Donavan.

At the cost of a fortune, thousands of leaflets, loud speaker vans and scores of agents were sent out from Transport House to the dock areas of England in a campaign of abuse and unfounded invective against the Clydeside dockers and their free trade union.

In a matter of six weeks this David and Goliath struggle has shaken the very foundations of the National Socialist Labour Front in Britain, and come very close to bringing down the fantastic structure of pseudo unionism of Transport House.

The first round has ended in a patched-up peace with the Glasgow men having gained a victory. The dockers are returning to work and taking their 500 sacked comrades back with them. But it is evident that unless industrial relations undergo a drastic change in the very near future, the dispute will flare up again with an intensity which will pale the present strike.

Broken Promises

The workers were promised the earth and the heavens too when they were ordered to spill their blood in war. Ernest Bevin tottered to the South Coast ports just before some of these now redundant dockers were pitchforked into the mud and murder of D. Day and after. He swore that those men would not return to the dole after the war.

Some of the men came back, placed their trust in another bunch of politicians. The Labour bosses have proved themselves to be as reactionary and vicious as any who preceded them, and have betrayed the workers as all politicians have always done, and always will.

While the Labour Government fawns on the Royal Family and sends them in lavish luxury on world tours, hand out hundreds of millions of pounds to the belted earls and aristocrats and industrial barons, and impose on the people a nazified uniformed system of slavery, 100,000 drag their half-starved bodies to the Unemployment Bureaux in Scotland—27,000 of them in Glasgow.

Did Bevin and his colleagues expect the Clydeside dockers to stand idly by

while 500 of their comrades were stripped from their sides and thrown on to the streets, sacked because of the betrayal and incompetence of politicians?

What sort of men do the Government think they are dealing with?

Port Parasites

The Government has not proved its case for redundancy, and cannot prove it, even by the trickery of diverting normal port traffic away from Glasgow. The dockers, with all the relevant facts, have refuted the Government's arguments.

The Ministry of Transport argue that the Port of Glasgow is uneconomical in working. This may well be so—the Clyde Trust do not display an interest in the docks for the love of the thing, they are there to exploit the dockers, to make a profit from his sweat and toil.

While the dockers are condemned to an existence of living hell, the shareholders live in a paradise of guaranteed dividends, with the Government, T.U.C. and a conscript army to protect their parasitic existences.

Add the army of highly-paid officials who are pulling scores of thousands of pounds from the money pool and putting nothing in, and this is where the case for redundancy could be very well applied.

If the Bank of England and the mines are a guide, the profiteers and note book dictators of the ports will do very well when they are nationalised by the Labour Government. Indeed, the Government will increase the number of superfluous at the docks. It takes something over 50,000 striped trousered bureaucrats and Sir Ben Smith to run

the mines, and it will take about 10,000 uncivil servants with another ministerial failure to run the ports.

The Whitehall method of paying these 10,000 is fairly simple. Sack 14,000 dock workers, make 84 men do the same work that 100 did before, and effect a saving of over £70,000 a week in wages; thus will the port budget be balanced. The Government pays a planner £10,000 a year to work that oracle.

The first blow was to be struck at the Clyde mainly because the authorities want to smash the free trade union of the Glasgow dockers, which has always been a thorn in the side of the unholy trinity of bosses at Transport House, Whitehall and the Stock Exchange.

While Transport House agreed to this mass sacking, Glasgow dockers refused to jump at the crack of the whip, and downed tools. For six weeks through their own union they have put up a magnificent fight against colossal forces, to gain most, but not all, that they are fighting for.

Sharp Practice

The real battle lies ahead for the port workers, and the next round will be fought out in July. The Government will then attempt to force a savage discipline and operate navy conditions in all British ports. The Glasgow dockers believe that if the politicians persist with the totalitarian measure, then there will be a nation-wide strike in a few weeks.

The Glasgow dockers have given the lead to their fellow workers in other ports by organising themselves into their own trade union; a democratic union for dockers, with no permanent fatted-up officials to stab them in the back at the first sign of a fight against tyranny. The Union bosses of Transport House do not believe in democratic unions. They refuse to march in step with the rank and file, although they draw their salaries from the workers' union contributions.

If the grocer or baker adopted the same sharp practice of taking the cash and refusing to deliver the goods, the



police would drag them off to gaol, but when the union bosses do it, the police are there to protect them.

Workers are generally becoming dissatisfied with the continual betrayal by their so-called leaders, and are beginning to see that organisations which were originally workers' organisations have become institutions in the new streamlined capitalist society. The speeches of the Labour leaders to-day are barely distinguishable from the howlings of Rothermere, MacDonald and Baldwin in the past.

Workers' Control

It is not surprising that the Tories cheered Isaacs to the echo when he said in Parliament that he would intervene in the Glasgow strike. Transport House stands to-day side by side with the Law Courts, royal palaces and stock exchanges as part of an old and unwanted order of society. No doubt all the politicians will unite to fight to the last conscript to preserve their own narrow interests.

While those at the top have their heads in the swill, they have overlooked the one important fact that they are dealing with human beings with a spark of self-respect and a desire for liberty. People who are ready to fight against the dictators and parasites. These workers are banding themselves into independent organisations and are

offering a serious threat to the artificial positions of the Labour bosses.

Deakin and Donovan see this growth of free unions with no little apprehension. The Glasgow dockers' union is attracting sympathy from other workers and proving an inspiration. In London, amongst the lightermen and stevedores, in Liverpool amongst the dockers, in Scotland in and out of dockland other workers are taking the cue from the Clyde dockers and forming their own democratic trades unions.

The writing is on the wall and in the fight ahead the workers will put an end to the betrayal and mockery of Transport House, and the Deakins and Donavans will be cast into the wilderness.

The end of the fight for the Clyde dockers is nothing short of workers' control of the port industry, and they already have the framework for the organisation which will eventually replace the present fantastic Port Authority.

The immediate task ahead is seen by the secretary of the Glasgow Dockers' Union, Michael Byrne, who says: "The small unions must get together, federate to preserve their identities and freedom already won. This Government with a huge majority, and the octopus trade unions, will not relish the fact that the small unions will survive and operate in a democratic fashion".

PRESTON CLEMENTS.

Meetings and Announcements

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

Every Sunday at 7.30 p.m. at 8 Endsleigh Gardens, W.C.1

MAY 18th Philip Sansom

The Means of Revolution

MAY 25th

No Meeting

JUNE 1st Albert Meltzer

"Palestine"

JUNE 8th Colin Ward

Sidelights on 19th Cent. Anarchists

Admission Free. Questions invited

GLASGOW

Anarchist Group

Open Air

MEETINGS

at MAXWELL STREET

(Argyll St.)

on

SUNDAYS at 7 p.m.

Speakers:

Eddie Shaw

Frank Leech

Preston Clements

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There was somebody I worked with who was very scornful of suggestions that he should combine with others for mutual achievement. He had no time to bother with any "ism"—as most believers in Conservatism say—and his motto was the familiar 'devil take the hindmost', "Damn you, Jack, I'm alright! "Why worry about the working class?" Naturally, in order to look after himself, he launched into business, became one of the "small men" Lord Beaverbrook admires, and was swept out of existence by a combine of big business men very similar to Lord Beaverbrook. Needless to say, there was no one for him to turn to for support, and his complaint was that the middle classes are 'bad-done-by'.

Of course, when he had gone into business he had visions of working up to a chain-store multiple himself. Plenty of people believe in the Utopian dreamworld where the local boy makes good and becomes a millionaire. Lord Nuffield is cited as an example. But these men are very few; they have the luck of being in on the ground floor of a new industry, which isn't something that happens every day. They are the industrial equivalents of the lottery, sweepstake and pools winner. Nice work, if you can get it, no doubt, but the reason the millionaire multiple-owner flourishes is because of the "small men" he has put out of business, and more and more the power in industry goes to the few at the top who by nationalization can afford to be more efficient than the "shop around the corner".

Individualism True or False

My colleague liked to call himself an "individualist"—that was why he enslaved himself to his customers. Individualism—like Socialism—is a term that has lost its meaning since so many different people have used it. Anarchists and Tories both use the term with different meanings, and

"Why Worry About Them?"

perhaps Anarchists are mistaken in not using the more explicit term "egoism", for what they mean by the phrase is the fullest individual liberty to each "ego". So far from conflicting with other people's liberty, it is only guaranteed by the liberty of all others. The Tories also believe in individual liberty, but they want the individual to be free to exploit others. This "individual Freedom" sounds all right on paper, at least for the top dog, who theoretically has liberty even if the others haven't, but in actual fact it makes him a slave of his cheque book, tied to his office desk with his happiness dependent on the rise or fall of the market. This "being miserable in comfort" is not our idea of freedom, any more than the spending of our lives toiling for the top dog is. Nor does the life of the spoil

children of fortune, slaves of fashion or duty, appeal to us.

Our idea of freedom is freedom from all dictators and dictates, including those of the State and the accepted laws of society. We do not thereby reject co-operation, because only in free co-operation and communal living—mutual aid—can the individual maintain his individuality. Our liberties are all bound up together. While one man is in prison, the prison gates may open to admit us too, and only the abolition of imprisonment can safeguard us. (Haven't we seen recalcitrant British soldiers thrown into cages previously used for the German PoW's they were guarding?)

Anarchists believe in the absolute liberty of the individual, and this is only guaranteed by the liberty of any

other individual—hence the need for co-operation and mutual aid.

For What?

Did I finish the story of my acquaintance? In the last century one would have described it as an "ironic jest of Fate" but in the present stage of development it was just the usual thing. He was always—needless to say—very scornful of people who were concerned with such remote events as a revolution in Spain and reaction in Germany—"why worry about other countries" was another motto of his—and he died in some unpronounceable place in the Far East which I don't suppose he had previously heard of, for some reason I don't suppose he ever had time to find out.

A. M.

Behind the City Strike

(Continued from page 1)

So this is what these "irresponsibles" in their "criminal folly" have had the manhood to stand up against. These are the men who beat the officials' little habit of suspending workers for trivial offences by creating a "suspension fund" to which they all paid one penny a week for the support of victimised fellow workers. And why did they call off the strike this time? Because they had received pledges from corporation workers in all the 27 other boroughs of London that if the strike was not settled the way they wanted it all London's municipal workers would join them on strike. And rather than subject the public to all that inconvenience the men went back to work—these irresponsible, selfish blackmailers of a long-suffering public!

And one other point. Right at the very beginning of the dispute, George Turner offered to revert back to the rank of constable. But the Corporation refused. Who do you think was irresponsible now? P. S.

THAT PRINTED CARD

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