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# Freedom

AN ANARCHIST FORTNIGHTLY

"Without unlimited freedom of the press and of association, without the free discussion of opinions, life ceases or becomes a fictitious life in which bureaucracy alone is the active element."  
ROSA LUXEMBURG.

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## TWO CAMPS IN EUROPE

Freedom is sometimes accused of being a pessimistic paper, unwilling to detect any good intentions in the policies of the various governments. We are used to that; but our general analysis of contemporary political moves is founded on the lessons of history, and before, during, and after the war we have seen our analysis justified in the event—however gloomy. But it is seldom that the truth underlying our "sour" view of political motives is so rapidly vindicated as in the case of the Marshall plan. Every point made in Freedom's editorial article on the plan in the last issue has since been made manifest and underlined by subsequent events.

Briefly, we look upon the Marshall plan as a clear return to power politics, a recognition of Anglo-American and Russian spheres of influence in Europe, and a move in the manoeuvring for position in the conflict of two power groups. It is not "idealism" which lies behind the Marshall offer, but an open use of the economic lever to place certain states firmly within the American ambit, and strike division into the more economically shaky among Russian satellites. Such action is not to be regarded by workers as something in which they have to make a choice. The choice between Russia and the U.S.A. is, for the workers of the world—including Russia and the U.S.A.—a choice of two evils. It is, moreover, a choice of war. For the workers there is only one sound course: to line up with their fellow workers in all countries against the ruling class in all countries. It is to join with the ruled, the oppressed, the exploited against the rulers and exploiters, whatever national label they bear, whatever slogans of "freedom" they may mouth.

### Molotov as champion of Freedom

The move to call the foreign ministers to Paris was an adroit stroke of Anglo-American diplomacy: Molotov could only make gestures on behalf of Russia—and gestures whose patent insincerity bid fair to put the traditional hypocrisy of "Perfidious Albion" in the shade. The Marshall plan, said Molotov, was merely a cloak for American interference in the internal affairs of smaller states. And he is quite right; that is what it is. But when the Foreign Minister of the U.S.S.R. says that his country cannot be a party to such plots, because Russia stands for the absolute freedom of every nation, etc., etc., one can only marvel at the brazen face of a government which has made blatant and brutal political interference its main instrument of foreign policy. For not even Britain or America maintains a political police of its own in countries nominally "independent", nor carries off political opponents to be "questioned" at home till confessions are wrung out of them . . . As the Communist Dimitrov said in Bulgaria a few days ago, "Whoever stands in our way . . . will go behind bars."

### Consolidating the Anglo-U.S. Bloc

The mere announcement of the Marshall plan was sufficient to give new life to the non-Communist governments of Italy and France. The diplomatic

### Railmen's New Award

The new Court of Inquiry award to railwaymen of 7s. 6d. per week is exactly in line with their general expectations (see Freedom, 28/6/47). The claims before the court were for an increase of £1 and a 40-hour week: they awarded 7s. 6d. and 44 hours "on a short term basis and as an interim measure."

Strike action is likely. Paddington No. 3 branch of the N.U.R. sent in a protest to headquarters immediately the award was known, viewing the award "with disgust" and urging the national executive committee to reject it and give immediate strike notice.

The matter was tabled for consideration at the N.U.R. general meeting in Ayr this week.

showdown among the foreign ministers in Paris has resulted in still further strengthening of the hands of the anti-Communist forces. The Italian Communists' attempt to bring down the De Gasperi government (in which they hold no office) and secure general elections in the autumn has failed, the Constituent Assembly having postponed elections for at least six months. Similarly, the French Communists have failed to oust the Ramadier government.

### Problem for Soviet Vassals

Eire and Italy, Holland, Belgium and Greece have all indicated that they will accept the Anglo-French offer to the European Conference on the Marshall offer. The Scandinavian countries have called a conference in Oslo to discuss it, but it is understood that Norway, Sweden, and Denmark are willing to attend, but that the decision is more ticklish for the Soviet-dominated Finland.

Some of the other Soviet vassal states have already refused. Thus the Rumanian government has announced that their policy will be "found in Mr. Molotov's conception of the reconstruction of Europe". But for some of the Russian border states the problem is more difficult. Thus, Polish and Czecho-Slovak economy would be materially assisted by a loan from America. But such a loan signifies concessions to the U.S.A., and that conflicts with dependence on the U.S.S.R. The Czecho-Slovak Prime Minister, Gottwald, Foreign Minister Masaryk, and Minister for Foreign Trade Ripka have gone to Moscow to discuss economic matters.

In Poland the Socialist Press made guarded approval of the Marshall Plan, while the Communist papers fell in behind Molotov. But the latter have now ceased to mention the question, and it seems that the Polish government's urgent economic needs may make intransigence an impractical policy. It is clear therefore that the Marshall plan has thrown a spanner into the Soviet foreign policy works, and "refusal of American aid" may well weaken Russian influence in the more economically depressed among the Eastern states.

### War Clouds Ahead

Meanwhile, the decisive nature of the Marshall plan in defining spheres of influence—a necessary prelude to any war—is openly recognized in some sections of the American press. The Paris debacle, remarked the Washington Star, "could lead to anything, including an eventual war with Russia." And it goes on with significant hints of the ideological preparation for such a war: "The Marshall plan must not be allowed to fail as our one hope. The long impending open clash between East and West has begun. It will be a hard and costly struggle for us. But we must strive to understand its implications: to comprehend the fact that defeat in this contest means the loss of all the things which we have held to be worth while in life." We have heard that line of talk before—day and night for six years between 1939 and 1945!

During the recent war, Freedom constantly distinguished between the Nazi government and the oppressed and tortured German working class. We pointed on the one hand to the anti-Nazi struggle of the workers which anarchists have supported before and since 1933; and on the other the friendship of British ruling class circles for the Hitler regime between 1933 and 1939, the loans to Schacht and the Reichbank made by Montague Norman and the Bank of England, the very tardy recognition by the British Government in 1939 that concentration camps existed and that the Jews were murdered and persecuted.

We now see the same dangers. Once again the circles which were friendly towards Stalin and turned a blind eye on Siberia and the torture chambers of the G.P.U. are now suddenly loud in the praises of "democratic ways of life". Once again they are beginning to say that the Kremlin only reflects what the Russian workers want, that a people gets the government it deserves and all the old Vansittartist stuff dressed up for the new conflict.

But anarchists know too well the dreadful cleavage between the workers and the dictatorship. Our struggle against oppression at home and in the British colonies, is also the struggle on behalf of the Russian workers and peasants who have shed the chains of Tsarism only to have clamped onto them the more heavy tyranny of the Bolsheviks. For nearly thirty years anarchists have exposed the new rulers of Russia; but we are not going to fall in behind our own rulers and those of America when they borrow our truths for the lying cause of a new war in which workers blood will again be shed for the sake of keeping the wheels of government controlled industry turning for the profit of the few.

### Double Day Shifts Coming? Committee's Recommendation

We have often noticed how prepared the government always is to change an act or a constitution when it suits itself. The next casualty is going to be the Factory Act—that wonderful Act that protects the workers conditions so carefully.

A committee recently set up to discover means of getting more production has at last laid its egg, and extensive adoption of double day-shifts is apparently the only way they can think of to "maintain our standard of living without widespread increases in working hours."

This, however, would entail alterations in the Factory Acts, which were framed in the days when workers were more plentiful than jobs and production was something to be kept down in the interests of market economy. But Mr. Isaacs is not afraid of a little fiddling with laws. True, the report says that workers are reluctant to change over to the system, but it hastens to add that once they get used to it they often prefer it.

As a gallant concession, the report suggests that a factory ballot should be taken before double day-shift working is allowed for women or young persons.

### Co-op Workers Strike

We have often shown how workers in the various Co-operative Societies are no better off than those who work for employers who make no pretence to be out for anything but their own profit. Under capitalism and competitive circumstances the Co-ops have to obey the same profit-making principles as the other employers, and the lot of the rank and file workers is precisely the same—wage slavery.

Now workers in the Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society are claiming that their wages are below those paid to employees of neighbouring private stores, and are staging a strike until their demands for substantial increases in pay are granted. The Union—Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers—are not only playing their usual game of trying to get the workers back as soon as possible, but are actually claiming and negotiating for increases far below what the workers demand.

This unofficial strike is organised by a strike committee, which has been refused recognition by the management, and whose formation is the outcome of long delays by the union in dealing satisfactorily with the workers' grievances.

### THE CLAIMS

The strikers are making claims through their committee for increases of 25s. weekly for employees over 21, 15s. for those under 21. The union is proudly negotiating for 11s. 6d. for those over 18 and 8s. for those under. Small wonder the workers are taking action into their own hands!

At a stormy meeting at Woolwich called by the union, the directors sat on the platform with the union officials, and attempted to calm the angry workers—without conspicuous success! On being asked by the union's area secretary to remain at work for nearly another week until the Wages Board decision was known, the workers began to take control of the meeting. "How much longer must we wait for action?" cried one. "How long did it take the directors to give them-

selves an increase from £400 to £600 a year?" asked another.

The meeting ended with the secretary of the strike committee, J. P. Connor, reasserting the workers' decision to strike.

### WORKERS WELL-ORGANISED

The Royal Arsenal Co-op employs about 4,000 workers. At the beginning of the strike (Saturday, July 5th), Reynolds's News, the Co-op Movement newspaper, proudly announced that 2,000 of these had stayed at work. By the Monday, however, 90 per cent. of them were out.

The strike committee had efficiently organised pickets, who entered all those shops still operating with a full staff, and urged the assistants to leave. This they did in most cases, and the managers did their best to carry on alone, but soon had to shut up shop.

### "ANARCHY"

The position of socialists and trade unionists is very clearly shown in incidents of this kind. The determination and vigour of the strikers show how strongly they feel their case to be a just one, but the trade unions are so bound now to officialdom that independent, militant action by the rank and file can only earn the disapproval of their supposed representatives.

Reynolds's News, for instance, the socialist, trade unionist, Co-operative Sunday paper is forced by its slavish adherence to the Government and the T.U.C. to make such statements as:

"The employees of the Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society are striking against a union which has never been backward in pressing the claims of its members." How true this is we can judge by the union's claims in this case.

Referring to the London bus strike, Reynolds's News states:

"London busmen are defying their own delegate conference. These strikes point the road to anarchy."

We quite agree!

## "An Embargo on the Import of oil, rubber and cotton into Spain would bring down Franco's regime in a few weeks or months"—Samuel Hoare

THERE have been several reports about conditions in Spain recently. These all show the same picture: grinding poverty, hunger and disease for the workers, shameless luxury for the Spanish idle classes. The vulgar splendour of the banquets given for Mme. Peron serve to offset the misery of Spain's starving workers.

At the same time, foreign loans to Spain from England and America show up the hollowness of the "detestation" for the Franco regime which Labour's Hector McNeill so frequently avows in the Commons. When the United Nations severed diplomatic connections with Spain, and were greeted with a chorus of approval from Communists and Liberals in Britain and America, Freedom declared that such a move would only strengthen Franco's regime. And so it turned out. Lord Templewood (Samuel Hoare, the former British Ambassador in Madrid) in a significant broadcast recently on the Third Programme, declared that "we should . . . take into account the new facts in the situation, the fact, for instance, that the United Nations' threats, unaccompanied by action, have strengthened Franco . . ."

In this connection it will be interesting to see if the British Government take any effective protest against the shooting by Franco's police, in broad daylight, of Alfredo Martinez Nadal, the brother of a

prominent Spanish political commentator, Rafael Martinez Nadal, resident in this country. The latter has been an outspoken critic of the Franco regime as Special Correspondent for the Observer. It will be remembered that he was dismissed from the BBC's overseas broadcasting service to Spain, because his broadcasts were unacceptable to the Franco government.

The United Nations, for all their protests, have done nothing to strengthen the hands of the underground resistance movement in Spain, and have not even encouraged Spanish "Democrats" even though such inaction tends to increase the influence of the Spanish Communists. Once again such action only makes the workers suspicious for they do not care to play into the hands of foreign governments, knowing them to be just as unconcerned about human values as the dictatorship itself. Time's correspondent reports a U.S. consular official as saying that his contacts among Spanish Republicans no longer come around—"I think they've lost interest in us", and Time takes this as meaning that the opposition to Franco is not strong. Fortunately, the opposition to Franco does not base its strength in furtive visits to the back doors of the "democratic" consulates, but in the workers and peasants in the hills and in the strikers, who demonstrated in the Basque country on May Day.

Lord Templewood went on to say that "an embargo on the import of oil, rubber and cotton into Spain would, I am convinced, bring down the Franco regime in a few weeks or months. The very threat, indeed, might turn the army against him on the ground that our intention was clear proof of Anglo-American hostility to his regime."

But what likelihood is there of such action, unless the British and American governments were sure that there was some authority ready to take over from Franco the task of keeping the Spanish workers in subjection? Such suggestions are made from time to time in order to make the workers in Britain and America think that their governments intend some action against Franco. But such ideas are delusions.

The Franco regime (or its successor as oppressors of the Spanish workers) can only be brought down from outside by direct economic action on the part of the workers in other countries. Such action to take the form either of direct action to bring pressure to bear on their own governments to take action against Franco; or a direct embargo by the workers on goods and trade with Spain. That has been our belief all along; and events are bearing it out as procrastinating month succeeds month—months during which Spanish militants are caught and tortured and killed while the workers of the world look uncomprehendingly on.



# CHEMICALS—THE MEANS



Common Ground Picture.  
One hundred years ago, this was the standard "equipment" in the chemical industry.

## The Stranglehold of Monopoly Capital over the Vital Industries

It is a truism to remark that chemicals production is one of the key industries of the contemporary technological revolution which will eventually make the old industrial revolution, based on steam power, look like child's play. Because that industry is so vital, any contribution to our knowledge of its potentialities and of the interests that at present control it is valuable in estimating the direction of social change, and the power of those forces that militate against the liberation of humanity.

For these reasons, Bob Edwards' new book, *Chemicals, Servant or Master?* must be regarded as an important study of social facts. One might make certain stylistic criticisms of the book—it is not presented in a particularly vivid manner, and a more careful attention to punctuation and similar details would have made for much greater clarity. Nor can we agree wholly with the political conclusions which the author derives from his material. But the facts presented are of the greatest value to anyone who wishes to gain a reasonably good idea of the situation in this industry. For a comparatively short book, it is surprisingly well-packed with information. Bob Edwards begins with a brief survey of the history of the industry, showing how badly chemical workers were treated in the past, and the struggles involved in forcing the manufacturers to accept responsibility for and take precautions against the many forms

\*National Labour Press, 3/6.

of industrial disease associated with chemical works. Even to-day, many hundreds of workers suffer from such diseases. In 1945, for instance, there were 5,996 notified cases of dermatitis in chemical factories, and the precautions taken against this disease are still inadequate, while in the same year 27 men died from fumes and gases. As the author reveals, there is still very little research into the disease-provoking qualities of new chemical processes, and "the chemical worker is still being treated as the experimental animal and steps are taken only after there is a noticeable effect on the workers' health."

### Monopoly Control

But, if these are unpleasant facts, even more sinister are the data which Bob Edwards presents regarding the structure of the chemical industry. It should be remembered, when considering the importance of the industry, that it is no longer restricted to the production of what are commonly known as "chemicals". These products, which include drugs and industrial acids and alkalis, remain important. But the chemical industry also provides necessary raw materials for agriculture, engineering, the textile and food industries, and its importance can be seen when it is realised that such products as aluminium, magnesium, explosives, fertilisers, plastic products of all kinds, rayon, nylon, synthetic rubber, dyes and all the other bye-products of coal tar, coal oil and soap, are all included in its province. It is no exaggeration to say that every important industry to-day is to a high degree dependent on chemical products for its raw materials, and it will thus be seen that the interests which control these vital processes hold the key points of industrial power.

And in fact, as is shown emphatically in this book, nowhere else is monopoly capitalism so securely entrenched as in the various branches of the chemical industry. Imperial Chemical Industries is the most famous of these monopolies, but, although most people realise this corporation as a shadowy menace, it is not generally understood just how great its power really is, or how strong the hold which it and a few other monopolies have over the major sections of the industry, from which small-scale capitalist undertakings have been almost completely squeezed out. To illustrate this situation in concrete terms, I summarise a few of the facts given by Bob Edwards:

**Dyestuffs.** I.C.I. controls about 75% of industry.

**Rayon.** 80% of production controlled by Courtaulds.

**Nylon.** Sole control held jointly by

I.C.I. and Courtaulds.

**Alcohol.** Almost the whole of the production of industrial alcohol and spirits is in the hands of one combine, The Distillers Co. Ltd., which controls 30 subsidiary companies and in 1945 showed a profit of £2½ millions.

**Drugs and Fine Chemicals.** Majority of production controlled by rival combines of Boots and I.C.I. Majority of patent medicine industry controlled by the Beechams Combine, with nearly 60 subsidiary companies and annual profits of £2,800,000.

**Heavy Chemicals and Explosives.** Virtual monopoly of I.C.I.

**Soap.** 80% of production controlled by the Lever combine. This combine has 400 subsidiary companies, owns 800 factories in 27 countries, and dominates world production of both soap and margarine, as well as controlling several chains of food stores.

### The Power of I.C.I.

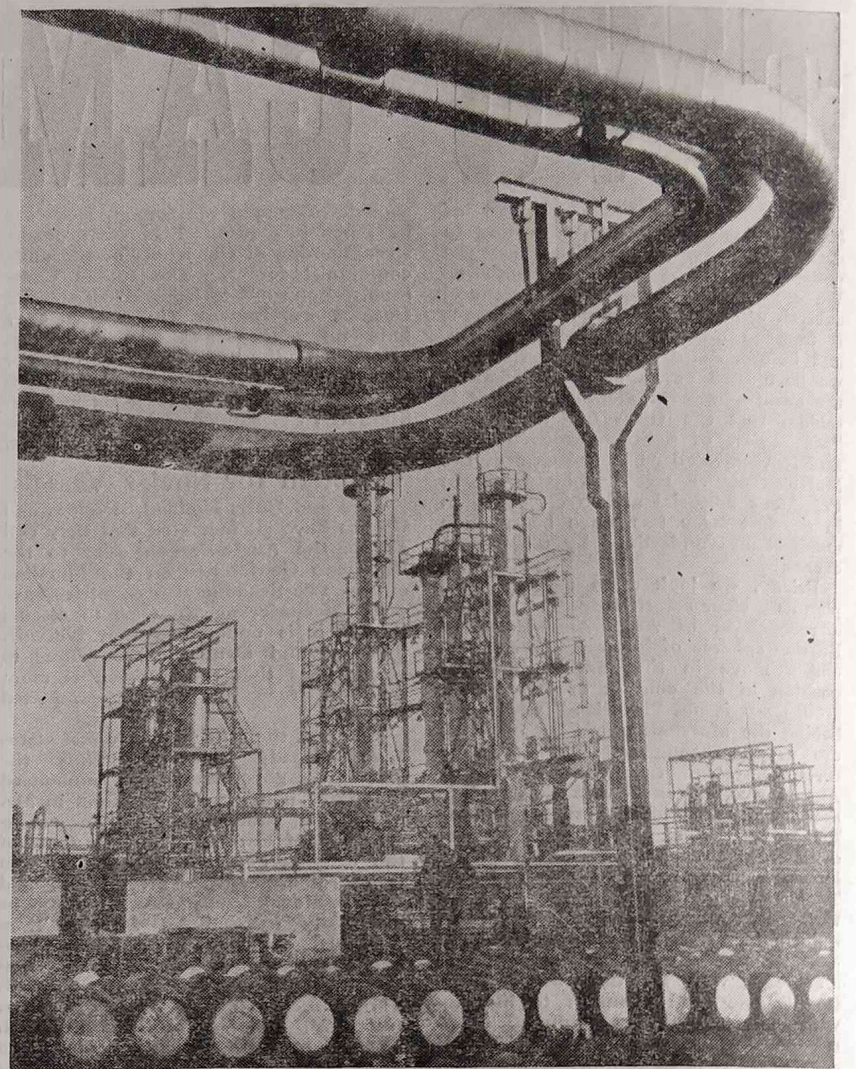
But among all these great combines the formidable and decisive influence is certainly that wielded by the I.C.I., which is summarised in the following paragraph:

"To-day, I.C.I. is not merely the largest industrial concern in Britain. Its authorised capital is now £94,000,000, and its assets total £141,000,000. It controls 95 companies through which the production of thousands of vital chemical products, including dyes, fertilisers, explosives, plastics, drugs and insecticides is to large extent monopolised, besides which it has a monopoly control of salt production in the Northwich district, a near monopoly of lime at Buxton, it distils oils and aviation spirits by the millions of gallons at Billingham, manufactures bullets and ammunition primings in Birmingham, refines Britain's nickel at Swansea, makes copper and non-ferrous metals in Salford and Wolverhampton. In agriculture it occupies a strategic position by its control over Scottish Agriculture, Ltd., and its fifty per cent. control, through Plant Protection Ltd. By means of its patents agreements with American du Ponts, it controls the British Patent Rights for the productions of nylon which it exploits jointly with the rayon producing combine of Courtaulds Ltd. Through the jointly-owned British Nylon Spinners Ltd., it has acquired a strategical position in the production of light metals by its control of one-third of the shares in the magnesium producing monopoly of Magnesium Elektron Ltd., together with its control over the magnesium alloy firm of Murex, and it owns lands, property and real estate in the Thames Valley, London. In partnership with Stewarts & Lloyds—

the great steel-tube combine, it controls the new house-prefabricating firm of Arcon and has government orders for 41,000 pre-fab. houses, which represents 50 per cent. of the government's temporary

housing programme." By virtue of their monopoly controls, the great chemical combines have been able to make vast profits out of their products, since even during periods of depression

## TO PLENTY



To-day, not only by the skill and invention of the technicians, but also by the sweat and skill of the workers, technical resources are such as these. Are they to be used for the continued slavery or for the emancipation of mankind? A view of the Shell Petroleum Company's Teepol Plant (Ester Salts) at Stanlow, near Chester.

# Silone on The Will to Keep Faith

In our last issue we mentioned the International Congress of P.E.N. Clubs at Zurich, and the notable speech of Ignazio Silone, the Italian author of *Fontamara*, *Bread and Wine*, and *The School for Dictators*. We reprint below the report of his speech from *Combat* (20/6/47).

IGNAZIO SILONE began by saying that he was not thinking only of the re-appearance of an Italian delegation to the congress, but also "of that invisible frontier-less country, the underground nation created during long years of persecution, amongst certain members of the congress, and amongst others who were no longer with us. We are all," he added, "in a certain sense citizens of that country."

"It is essential that we should set aside the slightest hint of self-congratulation. Insofar as we are writers, artists, intellectuals in the best sense of the word, have we any reason for priding ourselves on the role we have played collectively in these difficult years through which we are living? Events have once again demonstrated the limitations of Humanism; they have shown that professional consecration to literature or to art is no guarantee of moral rectitude. They have shown that everywhere, when a dominant class is carried away into error and delusion under the pressure of a crisis, the majority of its artists and men of letters act no more wisely than that class.

"Writers have their share of the virtues and the faults of their fellow-countrymen, and their environment.

And it is often more difficult for a writer, than for anyone else, to swim against the stream. For him it is perhaps harder to risk unpopularity than to risk death. The exceptions, the men who remain faithful to truth and justice, who heedless of personal loss or risk, set themselves against their own country, their own class, their own party, are all the more worthy of admiration. But it can be shown that they are the exceptions and they are not found solely, or principally in "cultivated circles". In general, there is no justification for talking of a supposedly exemplary attitude on the part of intellectuals in recent events or to claim for them the leadership of public opinion in the present crisis."

### 'THE CONSCRIPTED SPIRIT

Silone went on to declare that one could not identify the "moral élite" with the "intellectual élite", and that "This degeneration is too widespread for one to condemn unilaterally this or that national group of writers, or to want to find scape-goats. I do not know if there has been in the last few years a single country or a single party, where the human spirit has not been debased to the status of a war material. It cannot be denied that the general principles of "liberty", or "human dignity", or "security for all", have been mobilised, like a bit of military equipment by the war leaders. The cause of "democratic liberties", continued Silone, has been that of a certain group of powers; "it is dangerous to identify the cause of spiritual values, with that of the

forces of the state. The human spirit must be free to go its own way. It is a priest-like pretence to assign it certain paths and forbid it others."

"I am not speaking of this, in order to complain about the past, for it is a subject of present importance. Have we not heard to-day at this congress of writers' allusions to a new ideological crusade? It must be made perfectly clear to these zealous defenders of the spirit that there is no greater danger to spiritual values than to tie them down arbitrarily to any particular epoch or to any particular economic or political systems. This brings down upon them all the hate and scorn directed at the systems to which they are tied. Whoever wants to avoid consciously participating in this contemptible muddle-headedness must always refuse to identify the cause of truth with that of any armed force.

To-day, to take sides with one group of powers against another, is, politically, nothing less than to capitulate in advance to the threat of future wars, to justify them in advance, and to accelerate their onslaught. It is, consequently, not only an insult to the human spirit, but a contemptuous betrayal of it.

After declaring that "military victory has left untouched all the problems which gave birth to Fascism and national-socialism", Silone went on: "I know of no party, no institution or Church which is not affected to-day by the resignation of the spirit . . . We see that those who, in the past few years, have been in the forefront of the struggle against racial hatred,

who have been loudest in its denunciation, are not averse to judging their now defeated adversaries in the spirit of racial madness. Justice is defended when convenient. It is, however, clear that we cannot properly understand this crisis of our time if we do not examine its characteristics. No unilateral condemnation of scape-goats can silence in our conscience the feeling of a universal guilt . . ."

### SALVATION BY FIDELITY

"We cannot save ourselves through our intellectual modes of thought, but through our way of living and feeling. Salvation does not reside in ideas and theories, for the universal degeneration has carried away the spokesmen of the most varied and contradictory doctrines. Salvation is found only in an honest, straightforward fidelity to the tragic reality behind all human existence. The uneasiness of our hearts will not be pacified by any progress or social and political change. The suffering of the poor, the Chinese coolies, the South American peons, the Arab fellahs, the Italian cafoni, or the workers in general, or again the Jews, —these constitute the only basic reality of human history."

"These remarks," concluded Silone, "have perhaps sounded a more political note than one would have wished, but my intention has been no more than this: To bear witness to a way of existence which is perhaps no more than mere survival, and to proclaim the will to keep faith with it, the will not to betray it, come what may."

they can control prices in such a way as to prevent loss. During the war, of course, they made hay at an extravagant rate—the following figures show the profits made by the leading combines out of the death and misery of workers and soldiers.

I.C.I.	£39,000,000.
Courtaulds	£20,000,000
Beechams	£6,600,000
Boots	£3,000,000
Unilevers	£36,000,000
Distillers	£12,000,000
Dunlop Rubber	£15,600,000
Crosfields	£3,300,000

Almost all these combines have their international organisations, and Bob Edwards gives copious details of the (Continued on page 8)

### ANARCHISM Interpretations

"Men thrown into Government by a revolutionary wave have never been able to accomplish what was expected from them. And this is UNAVOIDABLE. Because in the task of reconstructing society on new principles, separate men, however intelligent and devoted they may be, are sure to fail. The collective spirit of the masses is necessary for this purpose . . . During a revolution new forms of life will always germinate on the ruins of old forms, but no Government will ever be able to find their expression SO LONG AS THESE FORMS WILL NOT HAVE TAKEN A DEFINITE SHAPE DURING THE WORK OF RECONSTRUCTION ITSELF which must be going on in thousands of spots at the same time . . . It is impossible to legislate for FUTURE. All we can do is to vaguely guess its essential tendencies and clear the road for it.

PETER KROPOTKIN.



# THE CATERING TRADE

The purpose of this brief article is to form an appendix to the excellent pamphlet written by W. McCartney, entitled "The French Cooks' Syndicate". For McCartney's account of the heroic efforts of the early syndicalists, finishes in the period immediately following the first world-war.

Conditions in the catering trade are still bad, although not quite to the extent of that post-war period and very few official enquiries have been made; in fact, the main investigation was made in 1929, and a report was published the following year. Entitled "Report on the Enquiry into the Remuneration of hours of Employment in the Catering Trades", it painted a very grim picture of long hours of hard work in a sweltering atmosphere, with extremely low wage rates.

At this time only five per cent. of the catering workers were in any union. However, this figure includes maintenance engineers and electricians, who belong to their own unions. The cooks, waiters, porters, etc., belonged to clubs and political groups, all small and relatively weak.

There has been no official enquiry since 1929, and until 1939 the only data available was from the records of the M.O.L.; which give no details of wage scales.

## THE EARLY '30's

During the early part of the thirties the seven-day week was still common. Long hours were normal, but faced with mass unemployment in the trade, it was a case of work under the employers' conditions, or tramp the streets. There was a joke current in the trade at that time about a chef, whose children asked their mother who the "lodger" was.

It was during this period that I finished my apprenticeship, and entered the trade. My day began at nine in the morning, and finished at nine in the evening, with a break of two hours in the afternoon. However, this break did not materialise very often, there were many odd jobs to be done, and the young "commis" was usually told to get on with them. Our "off duty" periods were half-a-day one week, and a day the next week, and for this I received the munificent sum of 30/- a week.

In 1931 Margaret Bondfield (M.O.L.) tried to establish a Trade Board for Catering. This was taken to the High Court, and here the decision was made in favour of the employers. This decision was reversed by the Court of Appeal . . . so the employers took the matter to the House of Lords.

Shortly after this the Labour Government fell, and the new M.O.L., Sir Henry Betterton (now Lord Rushcliffe) stated that he was not prepared to apply the Trade Board's Act.

## THE LATE '30's

1938 was a slump year in the catering trade, and many hotels and restaurants were nominally bankrupt. It was in this year that catering workers became eligible to join the TGWU and the NUGMW.

From 1939 profits have improved, and high dividends have been paid to the shareholders. For example, a share in the Frederick Hotels which stood at a nominal value of one penny (1939) is now worth 16/9. Similarly, a share in the Gordon Hotels which stood at one penny has now reached 17/6.

During the war 100,000 cooks were taken into the army. Faced with an acute shortage of skilled workers, the employers were forced to raise wages and lower the hours, but these improvements were patchy and uneven.

## INDUSTRIAL CANTEENS

The Labour Research Department issued a questionnaire on canteens, in June, 1942. The result showed an average rate of 8d.—9d. per hour for female kitchen and counter hands, and a shilling an hour for cooks. One of the reports said ". . . staff are provided with breakfast and dinner, but their breaks are so congested that they have no real breaks in which to eat their meals properly."

Then in 1944 a National Joint Industrial Council was formed between the National Society of Caterers to Industry and the NUGMW, setting minimum rates in canteens ranging from £3/17/6 for Chargehand Cooks (men) to £2/0/6 for Cleaners in London, the Provinces being in general slightly lower.

These rates are still in force, and it is worthy of mentioning that E.W.O. were applied to keep these workers chained to their jobs, as many wished to get into the munition trade where pay was higher.

The NUDA and NUR have an agreement with canteen staffs, giving the following pay rates:— Chef £4/10/0; Female Cook £2/12/6 Asst. Cooks £2/6/6; Kitchen Hands £2/1/6. Food and overalls supplied.

An agreement has also been made between the TGWU and NUGMW and National Service Hostels Corporation Ltd. giving, for instance, a Head Male Cook £6 a week, and proportionately

higher wages in all grades. These are the highest wages in any agreement yet made.

## EMPLOYERS' UNIONS

In the luxury catering trades the employers are strongly organised. In fact, they have better trade unions than the workers, and among the directors of these organisations are men like—Bracewell Smith (Chairman Hotels Assoc., Mayor of London). Earl of Clarendon (Barclays' Bank. Former Governor, South Africa). Earl de la Warr (First Commissioner of Works, 1940). Lord Hiffe (Guardian Ass., London Ass., Midland Daily Telegraph). Sir Alan Anderson (Bank of England, P. & O. Railways). Earl of Bessborough (Allied Assurance, Etc.).

Perhaps it will not surprise the reader to learn that all these are Tories! As an example of the pious and touching concern that they have for the men they employ, I would like to quote a director of Smallmans of Manchester, who employ approximately a thousand people. He said ". . . as a practical caterer, I hold very strong views on the distressing conditions and the underpayment of the workers, that have been operating in the catering trade for many years." Yet it is worth remembering that Smallmans pay cooks £2/15/0, assistants £1/18/6 and staff hands £1/14/0.

## THE CATERING BILL

In July, 1942, Bevin proposed wage boards. The employers formed a joint committee of the catering trades and launched an opposition campaign. They also set up a parliamentary committee of five M.P.s to organise opposition to the bill, in the House.

## The Propositions of the Bill were:

1. To set up a Catering Wages Commission of not more than seven members, including some representatives of workers and employers not in the Catering Trade.
2. The Commission to have power to examine wages and conditions, and to report to the M.O.L. with recommendations.
3. The M.O.L. may issue an order on this.
4. Where no satisfactory wage regulations are in operation at all, the M.O.L. may establish a wages board.
5. A wages board will consist of not more than three independent persons plus equal numbers of repre-

sentatives of employers and workers. It will deal with wages, hours, mealtimes, holidays and tips. It reports to the M.O.L. who can make a Wage Regulation Order, which is effective immediately.

A Wages Board may also deal with welfare and industrial development to be referred to the appropriate ministry.

Then on February 5th, 1943, thirty-one M.P.s tabled a motion for the rejection of the Bill. On February 9th the motion was defeated by 116 votes for and 283 against. The line of opposition to the Bill was that it had nothing to do with the war, that the Government had promised not to bring in controversial legislation, and that the "dictatorship of the bill was unfriendly".

The Bill never reached the Committee Stage, and has since been forgotten.

## TRADE UNIONISM IN CATERING

In October, 1946, the NUGMW instigated a strike at the Savoy. This was a remarkable piece of bluff, for the union had about one hundred members at that time. Thinking that it was the real thing, the whole trade joined in. Union membership jumped up to

10,000. Excellent solidarity was shown by the food suppliers of Smithfield and Covent Garden who stopped supplies.

An agreement was signed, with the promise of "another strike later" . . . and so the Union sent the men back to work. One of the clauses in this agreement was that a shop steward could not negotiate unless he was approved by the employer! The extent that collaboration between union and employer has reached is clearly shown in the following notice, one that I have seen many times.

### UNION NOTICE BOARD.

"On the request of the staff representative for a notice to be displayed, it will be displayed on this board, subject to the consent of the management, whose signature it will bear."

So by the clauses of the agreement, if the shop steward wished to post up a notice for a strike, it would have to bear the signature of the employer!! In fact, the above announcement contains the whole germ of the union ideology, "subject to the consent of the management". An idea that smacks strongly of the old Chicago gangster "protection money" racket.

Recently, a new strike was promised, in order to re-instate the waiter Frank Piazza in his job at the Savoy. The

twenty-one days' notice (to allow the bosses to book up the blacklegs and stock up the larders) expired on May 27th. The shop stewards warned us to be ready for a strike, telling us that the case had gone before the Court of Arbitration. It is now July, and still the strike has not materialised. The shop stewards of the NUGMW have no explanation to offer us. Where is Piazza? Has he been reinstated? The shop stewards can give us no answer. Perhaps the truth is that the management have refused to sign the strike notices and unlock the glass doors of the Union notice boards!

## SYNDICALISM IN CATERING

A few months ago the nucleus of the catering syndicalist movement was formed and three weeks later the French C.N.T. formed the Hotel and Café Workers' Syndicate.

Named the CATERING ACTION MOVEMENT, based on good solid anarcho-syndicalist lines, this syndicate is our hope and our weapon for the future. It is not aimed at reforming conditions in the trade, it's ultimate objective is the workers' control of the industry.

Any worker interested in learning more of the CAM, can write to the Secretary, Raymond Upton, 159, Ledbury Road, W.11. Copies of the aims and principles, and of the monthly bulletins will be sent, free of charge.

BILL MANSBRIDGE.

# BUS STRIKE FLARES UP AGAIN

When the article on the Busmen's strike which appeared in the last issue of *Freedom* was written, the situation appeared vague and confused. It largely still is, although since then another dispute—this time among London busmen—has led to strike action.

It cannot honestly be said that the busmen have handled this dispute with any display of organising ability, or even any great show of solidarity. In the North, men have been coming out and going back, and no real effort seems to have been made to establish the strike on a solid nation-wide basis, although in various other parts of the country busmen have also struck.

What apparently happened was that many of the original strikers in the North went back to work pending the result of a meeting of the National Council for the Omnibus Industry. At this meeting, the employers' rejected the union's claims aimed at putting employees of private companies on a parity with those of municipally-run undertakings, so the men who had gone back on the union's advice—"so as not to prejudice the

success of the negotiations"—found themselves in the same position as before the strike and so came out again.

This time they were joined by workers at scattered points in the South of England. At Plymouth, 300 Western National busmen struck; at Bournemouth, 80 coach drivers and 400 Hants & Dorset busmen were out, but the Wilts & Dorset busmen, who came out in March with the Hants & Dorset men, stayed in this time.

In the Essex dock areas, around Grays and Tilbury, the Eastern National busmen refused to work overtime at the old rate of time-and-a-quarter, and so they finished their 44 hours for the week, simply took their buses into the garage and finished. Their demand was for time-and-a-half for all overtime, Sundays and Bank Holidays.

## LONDON'S SUNDAY STRIKE

The London busmen, probably because they all work for the same company—the London Passenger Trans-

port Board—and their large numbers are concentrated into a relatively small geographical area, have shown themselves more united in their strike action.

Under a new agreement, London's busmen now have what they have been wanting for a long time—a 44-hour week instead of 47 or 48. But because of the "manpower shortage" the board say it is impossible to find extra staff to maintain existing services with a shorter working week, so that the busmen will have to continue working the old hours but with overtime pay for hours over 44.

Unfortunately for the board, the agreement showed no improvement in the rates for Sunday work—time-and-a-quarter, so London will be without buses on Sundays until the board meets the men's demands for time-and-a-half. The first day of this action by the men (and not forgetting the "clippies"), July 6th, has already seen the strike call well responded to—80 per cent. of busmen staying at home. The union is considering what "action" can be taken against these unofficial strikers.

## Land Notes

ONE knows, of course, that the main function of education is to adapt the educated to the society in which they live and to their allotted place in it, to make them what are known as "good citizens"—that is people who do what they are told without questioning the validity of what they are doing and yet, preferably, at the same time display a mild and uncritical interest in their work; sufficient, that is, to make them get on with it without being unduly bored and with just sufficient interest in political matters to make them bother to vote for someone or other at election time—for too much apathy can become as dangerous to a ruling class as too much social criticism because of the latent resentment and frustration of which it is the expression.

One knows, in brief, that education in its widest sense is probably the most powerful single instrument by which the existing order, or, as our popular leaders call it somewhat more formidably, the *status quo*, is maintained and suitably modified to suit changing conditions.

Nevertheless, it was not without a certain amount of ironic amusement that, while paying a visit recently to my eldest boy (aged nine) at school, I noticed, chalked up in capital letters on the blackboard of his class-room, the slogan—"Exports mean more food". On my enquiring whether his teacher had succeeded in adequately explaining why exports meant more food, he replied, in his own words, that it had all seemed rather involved and complicated and that, no, he had not really properly understood it. He then added, with a quick, coy smile, that he rather suspected that the teacher didn't really understand it properly either. Hastening to the defence of the world of grown-ups, to which it is my misfortune to belong, I replied, in as simple terms as possible, that that was quite likely since the world of capitalist economics was indeed so involved and contradictory that it frequently

# Education & Exports

failed even to obey those laws which the economists, in their very natural eagerness to explain seemingly inexplicable phenomena, had laid down for its guidance, and that his teacher's comprehension of these very difficult matters might well indeed be a bit shaky.

## AN EMBARRASSING QUESTION

He listened to my little monologue with that courteous patience that children only display when they are not in the least interested. Then he suddenly said with an eagerness that portrayed considerable interest, "But why do you have to make things and sell them for money so that you can buy other things? If you can't make some of the things you want, people who could make them could give you some and you could give them other things that they wanted instead. Sort of swap things. Wouldn't that be much better and easier?"

Somewhat at a loss for a reply, I tactfully changed the subject, consoling myself with the fact that when his education was further advanced he would no doubt cease to ask such stupid and embarrassing questions. So I suggested that we had a look at the little patch of garden that he and some of his friends had made out of a piece of waste ground and then, in a moment of bitterness, I asked him if he had considered the possibilities of working up an export trade in the few potatoes, lettuces and whatnot in the little garden, for he must surely see, after what he had been taught, that it would be quite stupid and ridiculous to eat them himself. If he sold them for money he would be able to buy a nice tin of dehydrated something or other instead.

Fortunately, perhaps, the irony passed unappreciated and he merely smiled with that good-humoured tolerance that most children show towards adults when they try to be funny.

## MEN AND MACHINES

The attitude of our society to its working-class members, that they exist not in their own right, but primarily to perform certain functions, that is, as workers first and as human beings hardly at all, is shown clearly, I think, in the little matter of the design of most agricultural machinery where the actual comfort of the worker, while on the job, appears hardly to be considered at all. I was reminded of this fact once again while looking at one of the newest and probably soon to become, most popular farm tractors.

To begin with, convention has long since established the fact that tractors must not be fitted with proper silencers because an infinitesimal amount of power and fuel would thereby be wasted. Likewise, the exhaust pipe is so situated that, in addition to his hearing capacity becoming half-numbed by the constant, and continuous din, he is also enveloped in paraffin fumes for the whole of his working day. No protection from the weather, from sun or rain, is provided, even that amount which could easily be provided without much additional expense at all, like keeping out the wind from around the legs. The seat, instead of being mounted on a stiff swivel, is fixed so that in most field operations the driver really needs two heads like the old Shell adverts, and since he hasn't, he easily gets a stiff neck instead. The cost of providing reasonable weather protection for the driver would probably not add on much more than 5% to the selling price of the tractor but, in a profit economy, this is apparently unthinkable. The same often applies to a lesser extent to implements including, and especially, horse-drawn ones where the horseman often has to follow his team all day on foot when he could easily, as with corn and manure drills, stand on a platform at the back, like a tractor drill, and perform his job equally well.

## LIVESTOCK ARE BETTER OFF

In contrast to this lack of concern for the workers, an ever-increasing concern is shown for the comfort of farm animals, the reason being of course, that, unlike human employees, they cannot be made to yield a greater profit by being bullied, nor does the threat of termination of employment hold any fears for them. Indeed, some cows and horses of militant disposition, whose early education has failed to make them passively accept human domination and who indulge in various forms of direct action by way of protest, often change their place of work with remarkable frequency. And though the new employer is usually worse off for the change, to the animal in question it makes little or no difference.

So, all over the country, one finds, time and time again, the really fantastic position of cowmen, whose charges have water laid on in front of their noses, having to fetch their water in buckets from a pump or well for use in their cottages which are nearly always of far greater antiquity than the cow-houses in which they work.

During the war years it was far easier, and usually still is, to obtain the necessary permit to have water laid on to a cow-house, or in the fields, than it was to have water laid on to a farm worker's cottage.

## COURTESY AIDS SERVICE DEPT.

To indicate to what lengths, solely of course in the name of efficiency (i.e., profits), this consideration for the comfort of our dumb friends can go, here is something from the *Daily Mirror*:—

"Politeness to hens is advocated in a Massachusetts University Bulletin, which says: 'Knocking on the laying-house door before entering will give the hens a chance to know you are coming and they won't be scared.'"

Sorry, just a minute, please. G.V.



# Politics in Germany

WHEN one reads the reports on Germany in the most important English newspapers one is amazed. Why in the name of truth do they not tell the English public the plain facts about this country instead of beating about the bush or writing a lot of nonsense? Of course, the German papers are no better (they have their own faults to cover up); and if they did print the facts they would soon be suppressed, because democracy in this country does not, as yet, tolerate a free press. Newspapers in Germany as everywhere else are in the hands of politicians, and they are liars the world over.

The parliaments in this country operate as in the 16th century when England was ruled by the Tudors. Our politicians can pass a Bill or submit a petition, but the Governor can veto these without even giving a reason. Yet in spite of this fact, our politicians go on promising things to the people, and telling them what they will do for them, etc.

## Three Political Parties

There are three parties of consequence, and four or five others with considerably less influence.

The largest party is the C.D.U. (Christian Democratic Union) which has the support of the capitalists, former Nazis and the Churches of all denominations. This party stands for private ownership, special privileges for the Church and protection for the former Nazis. The Governments of the Western zones prefer this party to the others.

The second party in importance is the S.P.D. (Socialist Party of Germany) which obtained 70 to every 100 votes cast in favour of the C.D.U. Its supporters are found among the workers and the middle class; its policy is State ownership on the British model.

The third party is the K.P.D. (Communist Party of Germany) and its supporters are mainly workers. Its policy is State Capitalism on the Russian

model, and the prosecution of former Nazis. The Communist vote has fallen from 6 million before Hitler seized power to one million 200 thousand. This sharp drop is accounted for by the actions of the Russian communists. Many Germans looked to the Russians during the war as their liberators from the Nazi yoke, but contact with them has made them revise their ideas, and even old German bolsheviks, who had been in Hitler's concentration camps for their political convictions, have torn up their membership cards and have sworn never to have anything more to do with the Communists.

In the Russian zone of Germany the K.P.D. is a party of the Government and all-powerful, ruling the zone with the aid of the Russian political police, N.K.V.D. In the Western zones however the Communists, in spite of their intensive propaganda have met with little support and few votes. This is particularly interesting in view of the fact that the Party had more victims

of Hitler's repression than all the other anti-Nazi parties put together. Even the Communist-inspired S.E.D. (Socialist Unity Party) has failed to impose itself.

Apart from the fact that Russian rule in their zone does not commend itself to the other zones, the German people charge the Russians with (1) the ill-treatment of their prisoners of war, (2) the ill-treatment of German women in the Russian zone, and (3) the secession to Poland of the Eastern part of Germany, thus rendering homeless 11 million Germans whose only recourse is to enter Western Germany and there to starve.

## German Treatment of Russian Prisoners

But before I refer to the Russian treatment of German prisoners, I must recall the treatment of Russian prisoners captured in Russia by the Nazis. At least a million Russian prisoners of war died of starvation in the Nazi camps, and the transport from the battlefields to the camps resulted in an even greater death-roll. Prisoners were herded standing into railway trucks, and when a truck was filled to capacity, so that there was no room for anyone to lie down, the doors were bolted from outside. There was, therefore, no possibility of prisoners escaping during the journey. No water or nourishment was provided during the journey which in some cases lasted a week, and the prisoners were forced by circumstances to shift for themselves. Unbelievable things happened, including cannibalism.

But dictatorship is dictatorship, and for a dictator the life of a man has no more value than a dead rat. These are the fruits of the Nazi dictatorship. Now let us turn to the fruits of the Communist dictatorship.

## Russian Treatment of German P.O.W.s

The Russians place more value on the life of a man than did the Nazis—provided of course that he is an able-bodied man. They do not let these men die in sealed railway trucks or kill them in gas chambers. They are Marxists and therefore materialists, and aim at getting some work out of a man before he dies. They provide him with some sort of housing, some rags for clothes, enough nourishment to keep alive a child and enough work to keep a well-fed man fully occupied all day. Eventually such men break down as a result either of the hard work or of the rigorous climate. He then gets a good beating to make him work, and when even a beating won't shift him they let

him die like a dog. That is how the Communists treat their prisoners of war; and if anyone doubts this story, let him come to this country and investigate. There are thousands of witnesses who escaped from this living hell with their lives who will confirm, in much more forceful language however, what I have written.

The way women in the countries from the Baltic to the Danube were treated by the Russians is a story which should be taken up by the world Press. An investigation should be made in all the small and large cities and villages. Indeed, wherever the Russians went during the war. Of course, many women are dead, many are in hospital with V.D. Yet there are many left to recount what happened, because it was the rule and not the exception among the Russians to take everything, from the girls of 14 to old ladies of 60. Only those who hid in the woods or in the cellars could hope to save themselves.

## The Secession of E. Germany

The secession of E. Germany to Poland was an agreement made in the summer of 1945 at Potsdam between Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill-Atlee. Had the Germans been allowed to remain in E. Germany, even under Polish rule things would have been different. But these so-called Statesmen agreed that all the Germans had to leave the country, leaving behind all their property with the exception of 50 pounds weight which they could take with them.

The point was that Stalin, with the help of Hitler, had conquered Eastern Poland in 1939, and was determined to hold on to his conquests. So he has forced the Germans out of E. Germany and the Poles from E. Poland have been forced to rebuild their homes in E. Germany. These moves created some 20 million displaced persons. For Western Germany this has proved a catastrophe, since 11 million Germans have come into a country where most of the cities are in ruins and the people starving. A further 4 million Germans have come from the Danube States.

On top of all this the Governments of the Western zones have been closing down factories and workshops wholesale, presumably to keep German competition off the world's markets. But now they are finding themselves faced with a dilemma: whether to let Germany live on charity and keep the factories closed or whether to stop the charity and re-open the factories and workshops.

And though, for the ordinary man, the answer is clearly that the factories should be opened, Governments will hesitate because the spectre of cheap goods being dumped on the world's markets (and hungry people will work for almost nothing to sustain life) affects their own export plans.

WILLY F.

## Children from Concentration Camps

THE subject of this excellent pamphlet\* is the rehabilitation of children released at the end of the war from concentration camps. The author worked in such a rehabilitation scheme at Windermere, and she has used her own experience in order to indicate the main difficulties encountered in this work, and the kind of principles which give most hope of success. In outlining these points she has conveyed an attitude of mind, a set of values, of the highest humanity. But, more than this, she shows that the application of such high standards of values and humanity, which in everyday life in our society would be regarded as wildly idealistic and utopian, are necessary and practical when it comes to trying to repair the appalling effects which concentration camp life had on these children. Not that she herself draws these comparisons between the rehabilitation methods employed and current social values; but the reader cannot help being struck by the difference in the outlook of these psychiatric social workers towards the children under their care, and that obtaining in general between the State and the individual or between individuals themselves in our society.

When the 300 children from Belsen, Buchenwald, Auschwitz and other concentration camps arrived in this country, they had already made considerable physical progress from the skin and bone skeletons of the victory news-reels. But they still retained much of the concentration camp mentality. Many of them had seen their parents killed with the utmost brutality; had seen their sick fellows shot; had experienced hunger so intense that the idea of "each for himself" had become the law of survival. Some had grown up in concentration camps and had never been to school or known any other life. All had learnt the utility of petty bribes to guards, of ingenious methods of stealing, of all kinds of behaviour which were necessary for survival in the camps, but which are ordinarily regarded as delinquent and anti-social. And they had been collected by the UNRRA authorities and sent over to England, still having no say in their own fate, and prone to treat all who held their destinies in their hands with the utmost suspicion.

What means had the rehabilitation workers at their disposal to combat this formidable heritage? They were provided with accommodation, adequate, but with certain drawbacks, and limited but moderate supplies of food and clothing. To these physical requirements they added three others, summarized by Margot Hicklin thus: "Generosity, both material and personal: Time, which means patience on the part of the educators and a sense of continuity for the child; and Understanding, i.e., acceptance of the child as a whole, including its disturbance."

## Treated As Individuals

Of course, what this meant in practice was that the children were always regarded as individuals. Their peculiar or "immoral" behaviour was understood as deriving from their individual problems and experiences, and they were not treated with that impersonal judgment on moral principles which is of the essence of the State's attitude towards the subject citizen. Taking this individual attitude, it is not perhaps surprising to find sentiments not far removed from anarchism being advocated. "In the opinion of one of the social workers who had been connected with this work from its beginnings, the most powerful factor in this broad

scheme of community rehabilitation, has been the replacement of oppression by fellowship and equality... the democratic forms of community life, and their flexibility and variation, will allow for the inner freedom of the individual which alone can secure complete recovery from group oppression."

And the same attitude is revealed in a passage on certain dangers during the recovery phase:

"It is most important that allegiances formed under the stress of this phase of development should not be exploited. Propagandists can point to the child's apparent enthusiasm in order to win him permanently for their cause. Young people who lived for so long under the strictest possible authority, though this was felt as bad, are so liable to succumb to a new one that their independence of choice can only be established after a considerable period of trial and error. However favourable the adult helper himself may be to one or other of the movements the children favour, this should never induce him to close the door on others, or to avoid giving the children every opportunity for comparison. Contacts with groups outside their own, information about the world at large and the pros and cons of all social and political as well as religious problems, will help to stabilize the choice made in the end, and give validity to the decision as it will be made honestly, from the

young person's own volition."

This is the reverse of the Jesuit, the Communist and Fascist attitude to children, with their regimented youth movements; it is a fair approximation to an anarchist attitude.

## Remarkable Recoveries

What of the results? "That nature is on the side of cure," writes the author, "has nowhere been more noticeable than in the condition of war-damaged children; the rate of recovery, and the degree to which even severely affected young beings were able to rally, is only slightly more miraculous than the fact that some of them managed to survive their ordeals at all." The success which attended the humane treatment of these individual children is immensely encouraging, for it is difficult to imagine more apparently hopeless material. It is impossible not to feel that the brutality and impersonal cruelty to which these children were subjected was only an immensely extended exaggeration of the normal attitude of society to its individual components. Could not a similar response be expected, away from anti-social and delinquent behaviour, if every member of society were treated with generosity, understanding and tolerance? Is not this what "the replacement of oppression by fellowship and equality" means?

J.H.

## Foreign Commentary

THE American Labour Bill which was passed by the Senate in spite of Truman's veto attempt is discussed at length in an article recently published in the *New York Times*. The article discusses at length the nine principal provisions of the new Act, and whilst space considerations do not allow even a summary to be included in this column, readers may be interested to know what are the principal points of this Bill about which the Press here has written so much from the sensational angle (threatened stoppages of work, filibustering, etc.) and so little from the factual angle.

(1) The closed shop (making union membership a condition of employment) is forbidden and the union shop (requiring workers to join after they are hired) is greatly restricted.

(2) The National Labour Relations Board's administrative and judicial functions are separated.

(3) To "equalize" the Wagner Act, which limits unfair labour practices to those committed by employers, a new section is added banning unfair labour practices by employees.

(4) The right to strike is restricted in some respects but is not banned.

(5) Employers' "free speech" rights are broadened.

(6) Injunctions and damage suits against unions are made easier.

(7) Industry-wide bargaining is limited.

(8) The individual employee's rights are to be protected against his union.

(9) Political expenditures and contributions by unions to caucuses, conventions as well as to elections are prohibited.

As to whose interests the Bill is intended to defend there can be little doubt.

## BRITISH TROOPS IN ITALY

ONE is always being reminded of Britain's overseas commitments when the question of manpower is discussed in Parliament. So the figures of British troops in Italy quoted in a recent issue of the socialist (fusionist) *Avanti!* of Milan (15/6/47) are of special interest. In spite of the fact that the war ended two years ago and that Italy is not an

# The Anti-Labour Bill

"occupied" country there are still about 35,000 British troops kicking their heels in that country. It now appears that these troops will be withdrawn "90 days after the Peace Treaty has been ratified". Does that mean 35,000 more men for British Industry or will they just be absorbed in Palestine and Germany?

Whilst on the subject of Army strengths *Time* (23/6/46) gives some interesting figures for comparison. According to this magazine the U.S. Army strength to-day is "a little above a million men, but they are largely tied down by occupation, supply, and housekeeping chores. Of the 89 divisions in service when Germany fell, the Army has only twelve left. Less than three are available to join the Marines in immediate action to-day, and all of them are in the U.S.: the under-strength 2nd Armoured and 2nd Infantry, the 82nd Airborne.

The 500,000 Army men overseas are mostly green youngsters—the new, volunteer, "one-shave-a-week" Army. They are largely police and riot squads. There are only two divisions in Europe, both tied down by occupation duties, and the equivalent of a third in separate constabulary regiments. In the Pacific, General MacArthur has seven divisions, also committed to the occupation job."

## SUBTLE THIRD-DEGREE

The *Miami Herald* seems very proud of the way SHAEF officers manage to obtain information from Germans who at first won't talk.

"A SHAEF ministerial control liaison team was sent into Bavaria recently to interrogate some Germans who were suspected of possessing Nazi documents and plotting a revival of the Nazi party. Each of the suspects was questioned separately. There was no third degree, no rubber hoses, no punching, no pushing around... The liaison team employed a painless method which was just as effective and just as successful. When a suspect refused to talk he was ordered to remove all his clothes. Then he was ordered to stand on a table. The questioners didn't say a word. They merely sat there silently, while the naked suspect fidgeted, wondered

and became more puzzled. In each case, after half-an-hour of this, the suspect talked."

## SHARING GERMANY'S WAR BRAINS

The hypocrisy behind the Nuremberg trials and the trials of thousands of former Nazis which are taking place in Germany at present is revealed by the complete indifference shown to the political convictions of Germans by the Allies when they can make use of them for World War 3 preparations. We have seen the way the Russians are using von Paulus and other Nazi generals for propaganda purposes (*Freedom*, 14/6/47) and for training the Red Army (*Freedom*, 3rd May). Now one can read an article in the *New York Times* (22/6/47) under the heading "German Experts Give Lift to Army's Experimental Rocket Programme", from which one learns that:

"One hundred and eighteen German scientists and technicians and their 240 dependents, gathered up in the Reich after the war in "Operation Paperclip", have formed a miniature "Peenemunde", a visit to the outskirts of El Paso, Tex., reveals."

"The Germans, headed by the 33-years-old Prof. Wernher von Braun, the "boy-wonder" of German rocketry who received high awards from Hitler for his "invention" and development of the V-2 rocket, are working for the Army on secret rocket projects."

One further learns that most of these Germans were "key men in the Nazi's famous experimental centre at Peenemunde, where the buzz bomb and the giant V-2 rocket were developed."

The writer explains that they were brought to America "first, to be "milked" of their knowledge about rocketry—in which the Germans were some eight years ahead of us—and, second, to continue their studies, planning and design work for American benefit."

It would now appear that the references during the war to the murderous V-2's as a crime against humanity were due to the fact that we were 8 years behind Germany. Had we been 8 years ahead

then we should have found jesuitical justification as in the case of atom bombs on Hiroshima.

But there are other advantages offered to these Nazi scientists. As readers may know a declared Anarchist is denied the right of entry into America or of obtaining American citizenship. But no such harsh treatment is reserved to these Nazi war scientists. Not only have they and their dependents been taken over to America at the Government's expense but "moreover, the hope of American citizenship is held out to them if their work and their conduct and a thorough screening of their past warrant such a reward."

It would be a little embarrassing for the U.S. authorities to convert these Nazis into anti-Nazis overnight. At the moment they are classified as having been "nominal Nazis, von Braun was decorated by Hitler for 'his invention' of the V-2, but none of them, according to Army authorities, were active Nazis, and presumably, long before citizenship papers are granted, all or most of them will have become convinced of the benefits of democracy."

## INTERESTED PHILANTHROPISTS

In Jackson, Michigan, V.P. reports that the 5,600 inmates of Southern Michigan prison, the largest prison in the country, have appealed to state authorities to let them foot the bill for an investigation of the prison management.

"When the investigation, ordered by Gov. Kim Sigler, bogged down recently for lack of funds, the prisoners flooded the Capitol with offers of help. A total of \$25,000 was pledged. Three of the convicts alone offered \$2,000.

Special Assistant Attorney General, conducting the probe, said that they would be unable to accept the money, but thanked the convicts for their 'display of confidence'."

One could, of course, point out that the prisoners generosity was prompted by their lack of confidence... in the prison management!

LIBERTARIAN.



# FOUR FORCES IN SOUTH AMERICA

THE popular imagination still thinks of the South American countries as comic-opera nations, where armies of generals command a single company of soldiers and revolutions occur weekly. But a study of the facts should correct this over-vivid fairy tale. Huge sums of American capital are being invested in the nascent industry of Brazil. The war debts of Great Britain have enabled the Argentine to buy the former British enterprises, particularly railways. An awakening local capitalist class is claiming these undertakings and the exclusive rights for the exploitation of its national riches. Formerly a source of raw materials and cheap manual labour, Latin America is in process of transformation into a new world centre of production, capable from the first of satisfying the needs of local consumption.

Nothing demonstrates more clearly the reshuffling of the great imperialist centres of activity than this reorganisation of South American economy. Formerly London, Paris and Washington dealt directly with each local government, frequently controlling from outside the progress or decline of their economies, facilitating or imposing the growth of this or that crop in this or that region. Insofar as a certain measure of economic unity could be seen in the Spanish-American countries as a whole, its origin and explanation could be found in the policy of some great capital outside the South American continent.

To-day, with the regression of Britain in the World markets, the extension of Yankee imperialism and the disappearance of that of France, a different situation appears. Only the United States now dreams of controlling the unification of the New World. But they have run into a dangerous rival, still weak in capital and technique, but potentially rich and skilled in the art of utilising the forces of political and economic nationalism. This is the Argentine of Peron.

What took the form in the British and French empires, of the emancipation of subject colonial peoples, appears in a different guise in South America, although the basic factors are similar. But it exists more in talk than in fact. In every corner of the globe appears the conflict, not only of the interests but of the actual war machines of the two great rivals, Russia and the United States. Unable or unwilling to assist the struggle for social revolution, unable to influence the South American capitalist class by economic means—with materials, technicians or capital, Russia contents herself with political intervention by utilising the footholds of support she possesses in the left-wing movement and manoeuvring support for the anti-U.S.A. elements participating in the governments.

## U.S.A., U.S.S.R., & PERON

So much for the three official forces which are at work over South America. Some recent examples will illustrate their functioning:

Last Autumn, the presidential elections were held in Chile, a nation whose rich mineral deposits are in the hands of North American firms, for example, Braden Copper. (The White House specialist in South American affairs is Spruille Braden, the principle shareholder). These elections are of great importance as the president's functions are similar to those of the President of the Supreme Court in the United States. The communists, through the Chilean Confederation of Labour, of whom they are the nucleus, entered the fray on behalf of Videla, a verbose and narrow-minded radical. In spite of the opposition of conservatives and liberals, supported by the Yankees, and although an absolute majority was

not obtained, the Chamber of Deputies chose Videla, under the threat of the revolutionary movement, dominated by the Stalinists. A ministry was formed which included three communists. At once the struggle began. The United States curtailed the import into Chile of manufactured goods, raw materials and foodstuffs. Prices rose like lightning. The communist ministers proved incapable of dealing with the situation, and refused to lead the working-class movement to the point of insurrection.

It was the third rogue who won the day. Peron negotiated a commercial treaty with Chile, to supply foodstuffs and to buy part of her mineral output. The communists despite their slogans about unchained workers and uprising peasants, were beaten. Their fear of revolution had thrown away the one deciding factor,—the proletariat.

In Bolivia it is necessary to go back again to 1946 to retrace the chain of events. The nationalist dictator Villaroel tried to wrest certain privileges from the United States firms, notably those concerned with the extraction of tin, the country's principle raw material. A movement arose, in which communists and American agents intervened, which overthrew Villaroel. The communists were in partial control of the political machine, the Americans held the economic levers, but once again the Argentine came out on top, carrying off the market with offers to the independent producers, of better prices than those proposed by America. At the same time Buenos Aires undertook to finance a trade route between Bolivia and the Atlantic coast.

Other examples could be cited to show the method employed by Peron to cash in on Russo-American rivalry, to unify nationalistic tendencies to his advantage, and to work for an economic-military entente between all the South American countries. This last aim is, indeed, only lightly stressed, for Mexico, like Brazil is completely under the broad thumb of Washington. But as he is working to a long-term policy, Peron hopes that first of all the local industries will be well-established by the Northern financiers;—it will then be easier to impel the nationalist bourgeoisie to rally to the point of view of Buenos Aires. Within the Argentine Republic a five-year plan has been established to build up a vigorous industry, capable of absorbing the greater part of the raw materials of the neighbouring countries, and avoiding the cost of sending them to the United States for processing and manufacture.

Where stands the working class in this jungle of self-interest? The bulk of its forces is being dissipated for the benefit of the political parties, supporting the local ruling class, or one or other of the great powers, U.S.A. or U.S.S.R. The greater part of the socialist organisations turn their eyes to Washington. In Chile, for example, the socialist leader Schnake, one-time revolutionary leader and ex-ambassador to France, is trying to unite the pro-U.S.A. forces. The "Apriste" movement of Haya de la Torre in Peru, shows itself equally in favour of a continental bloc—the conception of Roosevelt, and the permanent aim of the White House. As for the communist parties, the distance of the "Russian Menace" and their strict instructions never to take social unrest to its revolutionary conclusions, have obliged them to found their influence at the moment on the working and middle classes. Cleverly ensconced in key administrative positions, so as to seize control of the unions, they will not show their strength in full measure until the day when the conflict between Moscow and Washington has become acute.

With the same facility with which they preached the sacred union of the allies during the war, they now preach anti-imperialist war against Washington. To-day they are attacking British enterprises in particular, discovering on this occasion, a certain sympathy with the pro-American elements or the Anglo-phobe nationalists.

## THE FOURTH FORCE

The fourth force does not yet exist as a power. But the danger it represents is enough for the governments to try to suppress any awakening of the revolutionary movement and to destroy any revival of the old independent organisations.

It should be remembered in this connection, that most of the big left-wing organisations in both North and South America, were the work of immigrant elements—Spanish, Italian or Swedish, strongly influenced by libertarian doctrines and tactics, and carrying this influence into the unions and working-class organisations. In the same way as, in the U.S.A., the I.W.W. before 1914 contained a large proportion of recent immigrants (mostly Scandinavians and Latins), so in the Argentine, Brazil, Uruguay and Chile, left-wing activities were first known after the arrival of European manual workers, well educated in the social struggle.

The F.O.R.A. and the "Antorcha" movement in the Argentine, the F.O.R.U. in Uruguay, the Chilean C.G.T., at one time constituted a serious menace to the newly-organised states. That is why these regimes depended on the support of the army—the only guarantee of capitalist "order", and on foreign intervention.

Each time that a new dictatorship installed itself, its first move was the expulsion of foreign militants, their deportation into the hands of the authorities of their countries of origin, their return to the concentration camps. In 1930 General Uriburu purged the Argentine in this terrible way, decimating the revolutionary movements. The same concern is shown to-day by the care with which Peron controls Italian immigration. His recruitment of Italian labour is accompanied by the supervision of the religious authorities, at both arrival and departure;—the "Black International" is never short of a job!

## THE ANARCHISTS

But these measures are ineffective, for the progress of industrialization is itself creating a new proletariat more compact and well-established than before. Peron knows this and seeks to absorb the unions into a corporate state on the usual fascist lines, where the workers are "represented" by officials drawn from the ranks of the union bureaucracy. But after 17 years of dictatorship, the anarcho-syndicalist F.O.R.A. still has deep roots in the Argentine. The glory of the Forestal and Patagonian insurrections, the memory of the general strikes, the heroism of the Anarchist militants like Ruano, Badarraco, and di Giovanni, are not yet dead.

The workers of F.O.R.A. are in the British refrigerating firms and the American factories, as well as in the state-controlled ports. They boycott the ships of Franco, they are fighting at Rosario for the six-hour working day, and despite prohibitions, imprisonments and executions, they maintain their underground network of militants. And in Brazil, a few days after the relaxation of the dictatorship, several anarchist papers appeared,—evidence of a need that twenty years of oppression could not stifle.

Even in the little towns of the interior of Colombia or Ecuador, amidst frightful poverty, illiteracy, and nepotism, and the private armies of the factory-owners are the law, there still appear propaganda sheets, printed by militant comrades, passed from hand to hand, supported by meagre subscription; which sustain the tenacious faith of the workers, both Indian and immigrant in a future without oppression.

A weak and poor movement, no doubt. The fourth force is perhaps the least powerful. But only those who fight for their own freedom will ever get it.

S. PARANE.

## In Brief

### BETTER THAN MONEY

Wherever there is a cigarette famine you can use cigarettes to some degree to buy food, goods, services, or to exchange for money. Cigarettes have many of the qualities of currency—they are light, easy to handle in quantities, last a long time if properly packed. Moreover, when you want to you can always smoke one, which is more than can be said of a bank-note. Also, nearly everybody wants them, which is not the case with some European currencies.

Western Germany is the outstanding example of a cigarette-currency country. It has three currencies—Reichsmarks, British and U.S. Forces' vouchers, and cigarettes; and of the three, cigarettes are the most stable. Nobody is really interested in the Reichsmark, since no-one has any faith in its future.

Picture Post, 28/6/47.



WHAT African natives are up against in trying to secure democratic expression, is indicated by the fact that in the Somfey Road location of Durban, where recent elections for the Advisory Board were held, only 84 had time to register their votes out of a total electorate of 4,000. The native voters were allowed only two hours in which to cast all the ballots, and when the polls were closed, hundreds were still standing in line. (Worldover Press Service.)



### Indian 'Robin Hood' Caught After 2 Years

A 55-year old ex-convict and so-called "robber philanthropist" has been arrested by the Bombay police after a two-year hunt.

The man, who has been charged with a £1,538 fraud, was convicted in 1942 of cheating business men with forged currency notes. He earned the nickname of "Indian Robin Hood" when he said at his trial that he robbed the rich to give to the poor.—Reuter.

your present social ills.

We are opposed, under all circumstances, to conscription of all kinds, military (including compulsory military training) industrial and economic.

Conscription is the very basis of Militarism, without which it cannot grow strong and for which therefore it is always striving. Conscription is the very heart and soul of Fascism. Conscription is the scourge of the working class in all countries. It seizes upon youths at an early and vital age and ruins their lives and careers. And military conscription in these days means industrial conscription as well. You saw that in the last war and you will assuredly see it again in worse form if you allow yourselves to be dragged into a Third World War. Bureaucracy and regimentation are the methods by which industrial and economic conscription are implemented, therefore; they too must be opposed.

### Anti-Nationalism

We do not oppose the genuine love country. What we do oppose is the misuse of that feeling by militarists and jingoists and patriots of the "my country right or wrong" school. This "Nationalism" that arouses a war-mentality, race-animosities and unthinking hysterical "patriotism" is what we oppose. It is only another form of Imperialism with which it works in close co-operation. Much of the talk about "Australia a Nation" is a cloak for monopolies to develop at the expense of the people. True nationalism is that which provides first and foremost for the well-being and happiness of the people, which endeavours to raise the standard of living to the highest point commensurate with Australian productive capacity. A genuine Nationalism, such as this, is quite compatible with a genuine Internationalism for it has no cause to quarrel with other nations and no strivings against them.

### Racial Equality

We stand for the right of every individual to be free from discrimination politically, or industrially, on account of his race or colour.

### Freedom of Conscience

We stand for the right of every person to express his opinions and to be free from any persecution on account of his political or religious views. We support, in particular, the cause of conscientious objectors."

## From Australia Anti-Militarist Manifesto

We reprint below, in slightly abridged form, a manifesto received from Australia, in the form of the principles of "The League for Freedom". The League is described as Non-Party, and non-sectarian, and it appears to be markedly influenced by anarchist anti-militarism.

"The League for Freedom is a body of people who have joined together to oppose dictatorship in all its forms and particularly the dictatorship of Militarism. It is an organization arising out of and continuing the work of the "No Conscription Campaign".

It may seem to many, now that the war is over and conscription in abeyance, that we can afford to relax and regard the possibility of military dictatorship as a thing of the past. Such is not the case. Militarism is still very powerful in Australia, and it is even now pressing that you and your children shall be conscripted not only for com-

pulsory military training, but for service anywhere in the world.

The precedent for overseas conscription of 1943 was set in the Act, and it will be followed, if you and all other Australian citizens do not organise to prevent it.

### Anti-War

Modern war is fundamentally a war between the ruling groups of each nation or Empire (or Republic) for power and economic domination, above all for overseas markets and the control of sources of raw material. All modern wars are essentially Trade Wars, those of 1914-18 and 1939-45, throughout their whole course, certainly being no exception. The Third World War (for which the militarists, under the domination of their political and economic masters, are already preparing) will arise from similar origins. Modern

States no not fight over ideologies or "isms"—no matter what their propaganda agencies may put forth to the contrary. They fight for plunder, and it is their people who shed the "blood, sweat and tears", that the few at the top may reap the rewards. That is the only sense in which any war is a "People's War".

The League for Freedom declares that none of the Great Powers now engaged in the armaments race has higher motives than those above-mentioned and that there are among them no "peace-loving" Governments. We support none of these Governments but extend the hand of friendship to all genuine peace-loving and anti-militarist organisations in all countries.

### Anti-Militarism

Militarism must be opposed in peace, no less than in war. As indicated above,

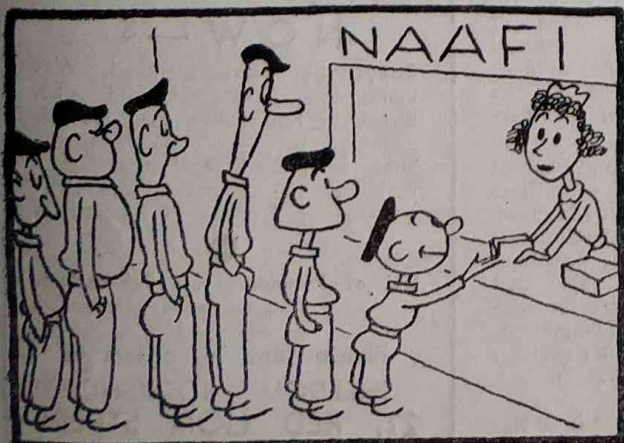
the military caste is always alert to extend its power. It profits by war, it encourages war. It strives to inculcate a war spirit in our children from their earliest years, it encourages jingoism and race hatred, it sneers at democracy and liberty. It is the very spirit of Fascism. It desires the expenditure on armaments, such as rocket bombs and their sites, of huge sums of money wrung from you, the taxpayer. That money could have been spent on Health, Housing, and Education, all much neglected in Australia. Even now, military pay is being increased, while wage-pegging remains.

War and preparation for the next war are responsible for the heavy tax burden you bear. Peace and plenty are not possible if war preparations over-shadow and dominate as they do to-day the activities of all Australians. War and preparations for war have brought about

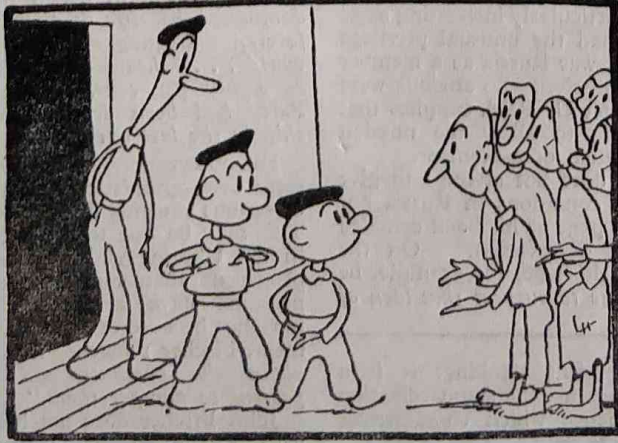
### THE THREE MUSKETEERS—II

### BLESSED BE THE SOFT-HEARTED

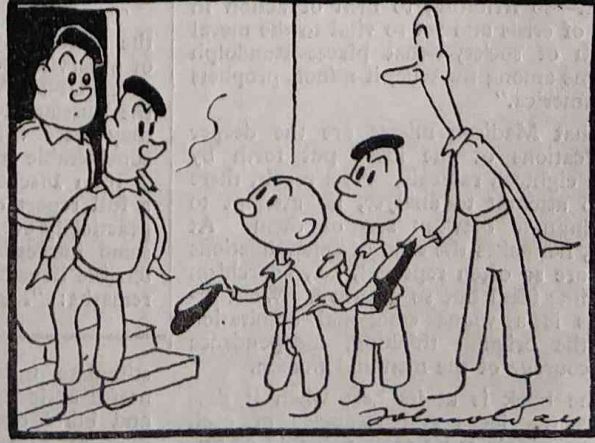
By JOHN OLDAY



Thank heavens for a smoke . . .



.....



. . . brother, can you spare a fag?



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## George Woodcock's

## FRANK HARRIS

ONE of the banned books of England has at last been published in this country. This is Frank Harris's *My Life and Loves*, long a favourite article of contraband for cross-Chanel travellers, which has now appeared as *Frank Harris, His Life and Adventures* (Richards Press, 25/-). Unfortunately, this represents no triumph for the freedom of writing, as the original has been heavily expurgated, and those who have a taste for Harris's smoking-room type of frankness will be disappointed. Personally, I found this side of it somewhat tedious and overdone, but naturally I do not regard that as any excuse for the discrimination which banned this book for so many years and still prevents it being published in its entirety.

Harris was certainly one of the oddest figures who stepped into the London literary world. He was a liar and a financial crook on a large scale, boasted of impossible feats of endurance, wore high heels to make himself look tall, and behaved towards women like a musical comedy libertine. At the same time, he had real literary genius; he wrote some of the best English short stories, several provocative studies of Shakespeare, an acutely debunking book on Shaw, and a biography of Wilde which is wholly unreliable, but very entertaining if read as fiction. He also detected talent in others; *The Saturday Review* under his editorship published such rebels as Cunningham Grahame and Wilde, as well as Shaw and Wells at their early best.

His individualism always made him support others who were up against authority. He was of the few people who stood by Wilde in his downfall, and actually sailed a steam yacht into

## LITERARY NOTES

the Thames Estuary in a quixotic plan to rescue him from the hands of the law. He denounced the war of 1914-18, and, when it began, moved to New York, where he tried in vain to persuade the Americans to keep out. He assisted many rebels, including some anarchists, who found themselves in difficulty, and he always opposed injustice where he recognised it. In spite of all his faults, and his sometimes extremely shabby treatment of individuals, the balance was much in his favour. Perhaps the best final judgment of his is, after all, Bernard Shaw's little epitaph—"Here lies a man of letters who hated cruelty and injustice and bad art, and never spared them in his own interest."

Frank Harris has one special point of interest for anarchists; he wrote one of the best novels that have ever been made about them, *The Bomb*, written around the story of the Chicago anarchists. I first read this book as a boy, long before I knew what anarchism really meant, and was very impressed. I read it again the other day, and found it just as good. It has always been surprising to me that no pub-

lisher has yet had the enterprise to reprint it—certainly it is better than much of the Victorian dulness which is being laboriously exhumed at present. At any rate, until that time, there is much amusement to be found in *Frank Harris, His Life and Adventures*, particularly if you keep a salt cellar beside you, ready to take a good pinch with every other chapter.

AN EXPOSURE OF  
HENRY A. WALLACE

The most outstanding recent periodical articles I have read are contained in the last two issues of *Politics* (March-April and May-June).<sup>1</sup> The major part of these two issues has been devoted to an amazingly comprehensive and penetrating study by Dwight Macdonald of the career and political significance of Henry A. Wallace, the American politician who has always contrived to betray his pretences of radicalism at the right moment and who is now America's leading Stalinist fellow-traveller. Owing to the advantages of American libel law, Macdonald has been able to be more forthright and candid in his analysis of Wallace's personality than would ever be possible in England, and the material in these two articles certainly forms one of the most valuable studies of the character of a politician that I have ever read. It certainly deserves to be reprinted as a separate volume, and whoever buys the two issues containing it will certainly get his or her money's worth, particularly as in addition there is the usual quota of lively articles and reportages on various subjects.

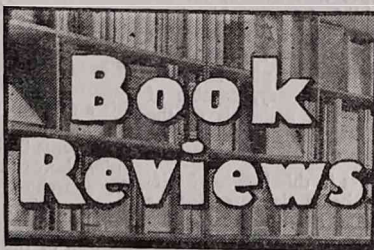
Incidentally, *Politics* has now begun to publish pamphlets on subjects of social interest. The first is Simone Weil's *The Iliad—The Poem of Force*,<sup>2</sup> at once an

unusually satisfying study of classical literature from a social standpoint and a vital illustration of the psychology of force.

*Politics* is certainly the most vital and constantly interesting American intellectual magazine I have yet encountered. Up to the middle of the war *Partisan Review* held something like the same position, although it was more literary in character. At that time Macdonald was one of its active editors. Later, however, a change of policy took place, Macdonald left to found *Politics*, and the *Partisan Review* became a literary magazine with the mildest of liberal tones and a violent preoccupation with that most passive of bourgeois novelists, Henry James. The *Partisan Review* is now being published simultaneously in England and America. Why, it is difficult to understand, since we already have *Horizon*, and *Partisan Review* is merely *Horizon* with a New York accent—no more revolutionary and even less original. The latest issue is typical. There is an article on *The Future of Socialism* by Arthur Schlessinger, which tells how easily capitalists "give in" to Socialism (we know that but do not attribute it to cowardice like Mr. Schlessinger) and ends with a plea for a "firm line" towards Russia, meaning, of course, ideological preparation for an imperialist war. There is a bit of obvious psycho-analysis on Melville, a cheap sneer at Wilde, and a tedious "psychological story" which reads like Henry James in modern dress and under the influence of Freud. Some poems by

(Continued on page 7)

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## An Intelligent Book on Russia

THE SCARED MEN IN THE  
KREMLIN, by John Fischer (Hamish  
Hamilton, 10/6).

SO many books have been written about Russia that there seems to be a belief that everything that could be said about it has been said. Any such illusion would be quickly dispelled by reading John Fischer's book *The Scared Men in the Kremlin*.

John Fischer (not to be confused with the ex-fellow traveller journalist and writer Louis Fischer) approaches the Russian problem without prejudices and his book is a happy combination of reflections on the international situation with special reference to Russia, traveller's observations, acute remarks on the regime and sometimes profound theoretical considerations delivered in a light and pleasant style. But while an intelligent American democrat-liberal is quite capable of seeing where communists go wrong according to the lights of their own doctrine he shows himself incapable of applying the same critical mind to the policy of his country which is also very remote from the democratic principles it claims to follow. The last part of the book can be dismissed as wishful thinking. Peace cannot be achieved by a balance of powers. Imperialism, whether Russian or American, has to expand by its very nature even if it leads to its own destruction.

The title is rather misleading as the book may be taken as an account of the men who rule over Russia to-day, whereas it deals mostly with the author's experiences and observations during his stay in the Ukraine in the Spring of 1946. Yet the main theme of the book is the Soviet leaders' fear of losing their hold over the people. Fear is also their weapon—submission can more readily be obtained if the Russian people live in constant fear of being attacked by a hostile world.

The book is particularly interesting since the author has had the unusual privilege of observing post-war Russia as a member of an UNRRA mission. So anxious were the Russians to get UNRRA supplies that they were willing to allow the mission considerable freedom of movement.

John Fischer does not attempt to give a full report on conditions in Russia but practically every page of his book contains some interesting observation. On the terrible housing shortage, for example, he remarks: "I came to suspect that lack of

homes, together with food shortages, might be one of the main reasons for the Kremlin's reluctance to bring its troops back from the occupied countries", a hint that the Russian rulers are aware that the people's patience has limits.

Through his work with UNRRA, the author was able to acquire first-hand knowledge of Russian bureaucracy which, according to him, compares well in efficiency with that of capitalist countries but which is at the constant mercy of purges and is consequently afraid of taking any initiative. Furthermore, it is extremely ignorant of what happens outside its narrow circle.

John Fischer has many interesting stories to tell about the "so-called classless society". Like many others he has observed the tremendous differences of incomes and particularly of privileges. Khrushchev, boss of the Ukraine "enjoys a home in Kiev that would do credit to a Long Island millionaire; he also is said to have an apartment in the Kremlin, a country place thirty miles outside Moscow, and a villa in the Caucasus for holidays. For entertaining official visitors he has a separate guest house of truly oriental splendour."

Readers of the *Daily Worker's* vituperating articles against antisemites in this country may be surprised to learn that it is far from being absent among the Russian people and that there are indications of racial discrimination within the ruling class itself. Fischer remarks: "I did not encounter a single Jew in the upper ranks of the Ukrainian bureaucracy, although a considerable part of the republic's population is Jewish; nor did I see a recognizably Jewish face, aside from Litvinov's, in the session of the Supreme Soviet. Only one Jew—Kaganovitch—sits on the Politburo. In recent years, moreover, Jews have been barred from recruitment into the Soviet foreign service, in which they once predominated because of their knowledge of foreign languages and the outside world. . . . I heard estimates that as high as eighty per cent. of the Jews in the Party had been dropped from membership in the last ten years."

His observations on the Russian peasant seem over-optimistic compared with those of serious students like Sir John Maynard. This may be due to the fact that he was in the Ukraine where peasants are more prosperous than elsewhere and also that peasants have acquired a greater importance because of the war. The government, Fischer remarks "is a trifle nervous about the peasants and finds it expedient to pamper them."

John Fischer does not believe in a war with Russia in the very near future. The Russian government's threatening attitude is designed to convince the

Russian people that war is a real and immediate peril to reconcile them with the idea of giving up the good things of life in order to build up a great defence industry. "The nude language of the Russian Press may be taken as a rough measure of the Kremlin's troubles at home."

This book is written with a critical mind, which prevents him from attributing the faults and ruthlessness of the Russian Government to its "stupidity" and "wickedness". However irrational its actions may appear, they are motivated by imperative laws inherent in a dictatorial regime.

M.L.B.

## AMERICA'S REBELS

CRITICS & CRUSADERS. A Century  
of American Protest. By Charles  
A. Madison. Henry Holt & Co.,  
\$3.50.

FROM time to time a book is published which deals with little known events or personalities of American History. The latest such book, is Charles A. Madison's *Critics and Crusaders*. In it the author briefly discusses the lives and ideas of eighteen men and women who are little more than names to most people. The book is divided into six general classifications: abolitionists, utopians, anarchists, dissident economists, militant liberals and socialists. The author does a good job of telling the story of each person. He is accurate and objective in his reporting. Exception can be taken to some of his statements, but on the whole, he presents a clear picture of each and discusses them as intelligent, independent thinkers and not as the crackpots of popular opinion.

Yet, like so many books written in this vein, it suffers from a lack of discrimination, over-simplification and often contradictory evaluations. These faults stem from Madison's approach to the people he discusses. Although he admires them for their courage, one senses that he regards them as too radical, too advanced. His thesis seems to be that radicals are necessary, even if not practical, because they act as a sort of conscience for the rest of society and help to keep a good balance. America with all its evils has progressed much and it was the efforts of these critics and crusaders which was most responsible for this progress.

This is a rather naive idea. It is true that the gross brutality which characterized the development of capitalism in America has been softened a bit, made more subtle. But it is equally true that America to-day is what the critics and crusaders were trying to prevent. It is the America of to-day with its standardized human beings, the America whose people accept prefabricated ideas and attitudes as well as prefabricated houses, which the Fullers, the Thoreaus, the Debs and the Goldmans despised.

It is this naiveness which makes the author make statements that are often contradictory. Emotionally he admires these people who looked forward to a new world, but he is "realist" and winds up accepting the New Deal-Roosevelt-liberal position. The contradiction between his admiration for the radical and his "realism" is evident in what he says of Henry David Thoreau: "It was just

because he could foresee the final subjugation of the individual by the Leviathan State that he spoke out against it with such uncompromising idealism. Yet even now, for all the present impracticability of his anarchistic principles, there is an essential appeal in his philosophy which endears him to all freedom-loving people."

At times it seems as if Madison were at odds with Madison. In one chapter he discusses Benjamin Tucker, one of the leading exponents of Individualist Anarchism. During the first world war, Tucker was carried away by anti-German hysteria. In my opinion, he betrayed his anarchistic ideas when he said, "From the start I have favoured war to the limit—war till Germany (rulers and people alike) shall be so whipped and stripped that never more shall she have the will or the power to renew aggression." Madison calls this uncommon prescience not to mention persuasive logic and good sense. Yet, a few chapters later he discusses Randolph Bourne, the most intransigent of the anti-war intellectuals of 1917. He talks of Bourne's passionate struggle against war hysteria in these terms: "It was his passionate eagerness for the richer and freer life of the American promise that made him oppose the war so desperately. He knew that war was inimical to culture; that in fighting Prussianism we would expose ourselves to a similar militarism. . . . His dissenting voice rose accusingly against the moral leaders: a love of country that held fast to the patriotism far nobler than that of the war myopia of the mob and gave expression to an ideal of the ultimate good at a time when practical citizens were concerned solely with matters of immediacy. . . . It was this nobility of vision—so irritating to men of action in time of crisis and yet so vital to the moral health of society—that places Randolph Bourne among the true, if minor, prophets of America."

What Madison misses are the deeper implications of the ideas put forth by these eighteen radicals. As a result, there is no attempt to analyse, no attempt to discriminate between any of them. At most, he makes the kind of generalizations that are so often repeated, i.e., anarchism is a fine ideal but so negative. What remains is a vague emotional admiration for the original thinking, independence and courage of the men and women.

The book is at its best when it describes the ideas and struggles of each person. This is its most valuable contribution. If the retelling of the lives and ideas of these men and women can

stimulate independent thinking, it is a useful antidote against the standardization and blind obedience which characterizes most Americans to-day.

D.A.

(Reprinted from *Resistance*.)

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# "What Next in India?"

Regarding the article on India in the June 14th issue: There is a lot that's puzzling. I agree (I'd add "of course") with its scepticism about partition. And the plans announced for the preparation of elaborate schemes for developing colonial resources show that the Government has not renounced imperialism. But the conclusion of the article as it stands will be criticized by some as unrealistic. And critics may say that the line: "No cause for rejoicing", is made ignoring the reasons there are for rejoicing, or for welcoming Indian home rule as a progressive step. These reasons may be independent of any hopes for the Labour Party. I don't think I hold with them. But I'm not sure of the answers either.

The questions go back a long way, into discussions about "the right of self-determination of nationalities". In which there has been a good deal of balderdash. Marx did not seem to think much of all this, and his attitude towards movements for national independence was guided—at least as often are not—by consideration of how the independence of this or that nation would help or hinder the socialist movement in Western Europe, and especially in Germany. (His enemies might have called it a form of power politics.) But Lenin's theory of imperialism seems to have come to a more definite line in favour of movements for nationalist independence. Much of his distinction between "imperialist wars" and "progressive wars" was connected with this. And Leninists have generally said that such movements are progressive and should be supported.

national independence. They would argue that the national independence of India is a necessary step in the advance towards socialism in India. And this has to do partly with the enlightenment of the Indian masses. While the British are rulers there, they are the most obvious oppressors. And to all except the politically educated it will seem as though the emancipation of the workers and peasants will come with the overthrow of the British rule. The masses, so the Leninists seem to hold, can never be brought to see the need of a different sort of movement than a nationalist movement until they have actually had experience of national independence. They have to learn the hard way. But the achievement of national independence does make this possible. So Leninists may say that Indian independence is a development to be welcomed, although they will say at the same time that it will not free the workers and peasants and that it will not turn out to be what the workers and peasants want.

Now all this is difficult; as questions often are when they get down to a discussion of "necessary stages". It would be interesting to ask in detail how far it has worked out that way in the various nationalities that have become independent in the past thirty years. Experiences there—in Poland or in Czechoslovakia or in Hungary, for instance—may not prove the theory false. But do they exactly bear it out? And is there not some substance in the fear that the support of nationalist movements will so corrupt socialist and other working class movements that the task will be doubly difficult for socialists when the nationalist goal is achieved? Has not the persistence of nationalism in the small states been one of the biggest obstacles to the development of the working class movement? Of course, socialists may say at once that the government of the newly independent nation will let the workers down. But if you have been working for years in support of the nationalist movement, you may not sound impressive in condemning the success for which you have striven. The nationalists will always have replies: it is because of the foreigners. And if you have been saying for so long that nationalism is progressive, then what can you answer? Tactics, as we all know, may be the devil. And they don't seem to further the working class movement when they lead to the loss of any working class character.

So it does not seem to me clear that national independence is "progressive", either in the sense of furthering the development of productive forces, or in the sense of furthering the "enlightenment" of the masses.

Anarchists have always favoured decentralization. But it may not be that important. But it may be that distinctions

# Letters to the Editors

are needed here too. We are opposed to centralization. But it may not be that every form of decentralization is any better. Probably the Leninists would be right in saying that some forms of decentralization are "reactionary". But their support of centralization is more muddled still.

Opposition to the British Empire need not commit one to favouring national independence of the subject nations in it. That might even be worse than what we have now. I don't say it would. I don't know. But just as socialists were not clear what they wanted when they worked for the overthrow of capitalism, with the idea that this would be the same thing as the achievement of socialism, so we may not be clear what we want when we work against imperialism.

By R. RHEES.

comrade's letter in *Freedom* for 14/6/47, when he attacks the attitude represented by Herbert Read's lecture on "Anarchism, Past and Future". At this time which is so obviously a breathing space between cataclysmic conflicts, it seems a little unrealistic to talk so exclusively of plans for research and study. McD.'s letter finds an echo in the cry of Christobal in "The World is Mine": "The revolution is not a university class", and were it not for Read's final paragraph we would indeed have to describe his attitude as "out of this world".

Read would be unconvincing as a honey-worded seducer, but there are dangers implicit in the attractive picture he paints of the anarchist's role as an instigator and co-ordinator of research along his seven-fold path, for a scholarly life is so much more attractive to many of us than the thankless rough-and-tumble of agitation, propaganda and resistance, and it would be fatal to our movement to delegate these tasks to "those comrades whose temperaments are extraverted and energetic".

It is not true to say that "the last important contribution to anarchism was Kropotkin's 'Mutual Aid'". Are we justified in so lightly setting-at-nought the activities of the last 50 years because they have not found a literary expression? Kropotkin observes that Anarchism began among the people and will only retain its vitality while it remains a movement of the people, and it is the revolutionary efforts of "ignorant" and unlettered people, which (if we are willing to learn) should teach us and encourage us. The libertarian community established by the Mexican peons in the wake of Zapata's army, the exploits of the Makhnovists in the Ukraine, the achievements of the Spanish working-class, and even our own "Squatters" movement, — these have "pushed forward the landmarks of liberty" just as surely as the works of our great theoreticians. The vindication of anarchism in the light of the social sciences is being done—by the anthropologists, the educational pioneers, the enlightened psychologists, and the social biologists of Peckham and Coventry.

For those who consciously embrace anarchism, there is the harder, and less rewarded task of fighting for it.

C.W.

## Literary Notes

(Continued from page 7)

Wallace Stevens and two pieces of reportage on Paris and Nuremberg are the most interesting fragments of this at least well-produced magazine.

### The German Opposition

The latest issue of *Polemic* is up to its usual standard. There is an informative article by Hugh Trevor-Roper on the conservative opposition movement in Germany, which culminated in the almost successful attempt to assassinate Hitler planned by some of the younger generals. Accurate on its proper subject, this article tends to stray into unjust generalisations against the left in Germany. Admitting that the right-wing plot was the most nearly successful attempt against Hitler, this really means nothing more than that the Conservatives, being nearer to Hitler, had better opportunities to attack him. It certainly does not invalidate the fact that—as even a study of the news that actually emerged will show—many hundreds of left-wing anti-Nazis were executed or sent to concentration camps for plotting to overthrow the regime.

This issue of *Polemic* also contains provocative articles by Edward Sackville-West on English music and Philip Toynbee on Ulysses, while there is an ingenious, but for me unconvincing, exposure of the "Psychology of Surrealism" by Charles Glicksberg.

A new issue of the American anarchist quarterly, *Revolt*, has just arrived, and contains, among other items, a study of anti-Bolshevik Communism in Germany by Paul Mattick, and a discussion on Orwell between Dachine Rainer and Dwight Macdonald, in which the latter defends Orwell sensibly against a somewhat self-righteous attack.

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### Imperialism an Obstacle to Progress

I think one reason for this view is just that they hold that imperialism is an obstacle to progress; and since the independence of subject nations weakens or destroys imperialism, it must be a progressive step. So far the argument is shaky. There is no reason why two reactionary developments should not conflict. And you cannot argue that a rebellion is progressive just because it opposes a reactionary government. But the Leninists argue further that imperialism prevents the development of productive forces—chiefly of industry and trade—in the areas where it extends. And they suggest that the independence of subject peoples will make it possible for industry and trade to develop further. How much there is in this I do not know. There were more independent nationalities after the 1914 war than there were before it. The "succession states" in south-eastern Europe and the Baltic states in the north were free of the empires that had ruled them. But one result of all this was increasing trade restrictions through tariffs. It did not seem to contribute to the free movement of goods throughout the world, which should belong to progress as Marxists treat it. And the same holds of the movements towards "autarkie" or national self-sufficiency, in place of the development towards a world division of labour. It is at least possible that developments of this sort will appear in India. And this has made some people doubtful about supporting Indian nationalism in the past.

### Political "Experience"

But the Leninists also have political reasons for supporting movements for

## GAY SENORA

Senora Eva de Peron has not worn the same clothes twice since her arrival in Madrid last Sunday, and in the last 24 hours has worn three dresses to attend three functions.

She has won the hearts of Spaniards by her interest in working class problems and has given considerable sums to children in the streets.

Before her tour of Spanish provinces she will give a gala dinner and ball at the Argentine Embassy.

*Sunday Express*, 15/6/47.

We know the sort of interest in the workers the philanthropic Senora has!

## ANARCHY—I

The intervention of the State and the States within the States (Coal Boards, Transport Boards and all that) will increase.

Do not suppose that, if Mr. Attlee is replaced by a Conservative or Liberal Prime Minister, you, the toad, will find much difference in the harrow. They will all promise you more liberty and they will really mean it, but, since you will also be demanding a more complicated, a more intricate, and a more physically comfortable existence, and threatening them with the political wilderness if they don't give you what your bodies want, they will regulate you more and more.

Liberty in economic matters will get less and less. Therefore it is most important that liberty in spiritual and intellectual affairs should become more and more apparent.

You may have to be regulated robots in the production of wealth; let us cherish anarchy in the art of living and the production of ideas.

*The Leader*, 14/6/47.

A true enough prophecy—but anarchy in the production of ideas leads to demands for simplification, not complication. And we demand anarchy in the production of wealth, too.

## ANARCHY—2

The Western Powers should therefore seek the agreement of Russia to the establishment of spheres of influence. They will, of course, be accused of playing power politics. But without power politics the affairs of the world would rapidly degenerate into powerless anarchy.

*Evening Standard*, 16/6/47.

For "degenerate" read "progress".

# Through the Press

### NOT SO NEW

Atomic units providing direct heat for larger buildings and hot steam for houses were a real and early possibility in cities, Dr. Arthur H. Compton, Nobel prize-winner, told a gathering of American scientists.

*Evening Standard*, 13/6/47.

Hiroshima had that two years ago!

### POSSIBILITY

Mr. Sydney J. Goldsack, publisher, said at Library Association conference at Brighton, it would not be surprising if before year ended Government instructed book trade as to exactly what books they may or may not publish.

*Evening News*, 11/6/47.

### ENTHUSIASTIC

The Boeing Aeroplane Co. of Seattle, is ready to make test flights on the B-50, the Super Flying Fort, 133 of which are on order for the Army. It is called by enthusiasts "The Bomber for the Atomic Age."

*News Review*, 5/6/47.

### ATOM SLAVERY

Thousands of Germans in the Russian Zone are fleeing into the American Zone to escape forced labour in Russian-operated uranium mines, U.S. officials in Frankfurt said yesterday.

"In the first two weeks of this month at least 2,000 refugees crossed the border," it was stated, "and most of them tell the same story."

All men in Saxony between the ages of sixteen and sixty, they say, have been ordered to register for work in the pitchblende mines 3,000 ft. deep in the Erzgebirge.

On June 14th, refugees say, a Soviet raid was conducted in the cities of Halle, Erfurt and Mulhausen to question all men between the ages of 17 and 35. Those who had served in the Luftwaffe or navy were sent to unknown destinations.

*The People*, 29/6/47.

### ANARCHY IN RAMSGATE

Ramsgate is a town without a "government" to-day.

The Council, led by Alderman S. E. Austin, the mayor, and accompanied by the town clerk, town crier and other officials, are sailing for France.

*Evening News*, 25/6/47.

Look out for news of a crime wave at Ramsgate!

### BIRDS OF A FEATHER

An unofficial reception committee under the chairmanship of ex-Tory chief, Lord Davidson, has been set up in London to welcome Senora de Peron, wife of the Argentine dictator, when she arrives in Britain on July 15.

Lord Davidson said yesterday: "It will be a very powerful and important committee of British people who have long-standing associations with the cultural, social and commercial life of Argentina."

Mr. Kenneth Grubb, the secretary, told me last night: "Invitations to serve on the committee will be sent out on Monday. We expect to have 50 V.I.P., including directors of firms, such as Imperial Chemical Industries, Shell Mex, and General Electric, who have commercial links with South America. No politicians will be invited."

Lord Davidson was chairman of the Conservative Party from November, 1926, to May, 1930, and is on the board of the Central Argentine Railway Co.

*Reynold's News*, 22/6/47.

### THOSE HUMANE SCREWS

The closing down of Dartmoor Prison "in the interests of humanity" is to be urged once more.

When the Prison Officers Association meets in conference on Wednesday, a resolution to this effect will be moved.

*Reynold's News*, 25/5/47.

Why stop at Dartmoor? In the interests of humanity every prison should be closed down.

### IMPROVEMENTS

Mr. Robert Hutchins, Chancellor of Chicago University, where the atom bomb was pioneered, said yesterday that the present American supply of "new and improved bombs" was big enough to destroy all the world's largest cities.

"The Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs," he said, "are obsolete."

*The People*, 29/6/47.



The U.S. Navy revealed in a report to Congress hitherto secret weapons developed during the last few years.

These included the closely guarded secret electric torpedo which seeks out and tracks down its target, new high-accuracy rapid-fire 3 in. anti-aircraft guns which can fling their proximity-fused shells 50,000 ft into the air to burst in the path of approaching aircraft or guided missiles, and new types of mines and components for which no counter-measures have been developed.

*Evening News*, 25/6/47.

### NATURE vs. LAW

Cradling his baby in his arms is Werner Vetter, German P.O.W., who pleaded guilty at a court-martial at Hampton Lovett, near Droitwich, yesterday to improperly associating with Miss Olive Reynolds, mother of his child. Sentence will be promulgated. This is what he said in mitigation:—

"As a boy of 17 I was plucked away from my studies in order to fight for an insane war leader who wanted to conquer the whole world with our young lives . . . they never tired of making promises to us, but it was never thought what our feelings were.

"On May 12th, 1946, my life took on at last a different meaning. I met a human being to whom I could trust all my worries, well knowing that I was understood and knowing that that person had no hatred of me.

"The whole day I was thinking of the joy of the evening hours. We made plans about the future.

"We wanted to marry, but then we were reminded that I was a prisoner of war or, to put it in a better way, a member of a defeated army, a man who had no right to love. But we two were happy, happy beyond words to describe.

"We did not worry about rules or regulations, because love is a law of its own, a law of human nature, and nature won. I know the mother of my child will be on my side for ever."

*News Chronicle*, 27/6/47.

And the sentence the C.M. ordered was 12 months imprisonment.

### QUITE RIGHT, MR. ATTLEE!

Mr. Attlee said that in certain Eastern European countries human rights were denied and so-called democratic government was a travesty. He added:

"I am concerned that there should be people in this country and people who profess to be Socialists, who appear to condone things that are done by Governments of the Right.

"It was vitally important to the health of the Socialist movement that it should uphold absolute moral values and that justice should be done, whatever the views of the individual.

"Freedom of speech, freedom of conscience and personal freedom is the right of the individual, whether he is a capitalist or a worker, a Conservative, a Liberal or a Socialist."

Present foreign policy was based on the principle that every people had the right to choose its Government whatever its political character.

*Sunday Pictorial*, 22/6/47.

### IS THERE A HYPOCRITE IN THE HOUSE?

President Peron calls himself a Labour man, and describes his party as the Labour Party of the Argentine.

How true is it to say that the present Government in the Argentine is Fascist?

Admittedly, the country came into the war very late; but so did some of our other allies. Admittedly, also, there was delay in rooting out Nazis and other German influences. Certain phases of the Government are certainly dictatorial, but we must remember that this is South America, where democracy is comparatively young.

—Lord Stragboli (leading Labour Peer) in *Sunday Pictorial*, 22/6/47.



# POLITICAL CAREERIST OFFICERS

AT the time of the Election, *Freedom* attacked a particular class of person: the careerist officer who was trying to make up his mind which Party to choose to enable him to pursue a political career. "Ideals" and convictions did not seem to us to enter into it a great deal. Just as a lawyer enters the Law because it is a profession which is a good living, and accepts briefs according to the emoluments and not according to the rights or wrongs of the case, so a politician goes in for politics because it is a profession which is a good living, and accepts nomination not according to his convictions, but according to whether it will assist his career or not.

Many people have thought we were being too cynical; perhaps some thought the people the Labour Party accepted as candidates were idealists. But the Labour Party knows better. Lord Woolton has just announced that Colonel Mark Chapman Walker is to be his personal assistant and right-hand man at the Conservative Central Office, and he had in fact been performing these duties since September,

1946. The *Labour Daily Herald* of 11/6/47 states:

This is an interesting appointment. For, only three months before then, Colonel Mark Chapman Walker was seeking an appointment on the headquarters staff of the Labour Party.

In April last year he wrote to his old chief, General Carton de Wiart, from the Bath Club to say: "I would like, if possible, to get into the administrative and organisation side of the Labour Party."

General de Wiart passed his application forward, saying: "I know he is very keen to work with the Labour Party." Colonel Chapman Walker was communicated with and told that at the moment there were no available or suitable posts.

In May, last year he sent a further letter to the secretary of the Parliamentary Labour Party, in which he said: "I am a member of the Labour Party, and I wondered whether it would be possible to obtain employment in some capacity on the administrative and executive side of the Labour Party."

Not since St. Paul was struck with a blinding flash on the road to Damascus does their seem to have been such a rapid conversion.

It will be appreciated that everybody who fails to get a job (whether as staff, and living on the pennies of the workers, or as an M.P.) with one Party, does not necessarily automatically get it with the other. When he does, as in this case, it is quite good publicity to expose the fact, as the Labour columnist has done. But in how many instances are these facts never revealed?—when instead of becoming M.P.s or staff, the people for whom no vacancies are found go into business and exploit the workers in other ways?

The sooner people realise that those who want to go to Westminster to represent them are thinking of their careers and not of any ideals or causes, any more than lawyers care about a client's innocence, the better it will be. Of course, if you happen to believe in a cause, it comes in handy, just as a barrister gets on better when he knows his client is really innocent, but why do the rank-and-file make the sacrifices?

POSTSCRIPT: But can anyone explain why the *Daily Herald* had to go back to St. Paul for a reference? There have been many blinding flashes since then. For instance, the leading Communist intellectual in 1939 (Mr. Strachey) is a Labour Minister to-day. Admiral Evans spoke on Tory platforms in the Election and became a Labour peer afterwards. Not a few Conservative councillors blossomed out as Labour candidates in the last Election, and at least one former Conservative councillor is now a Labour Minister. Why give Damascus the credit for all the miracles?

## The Postmen's Strike

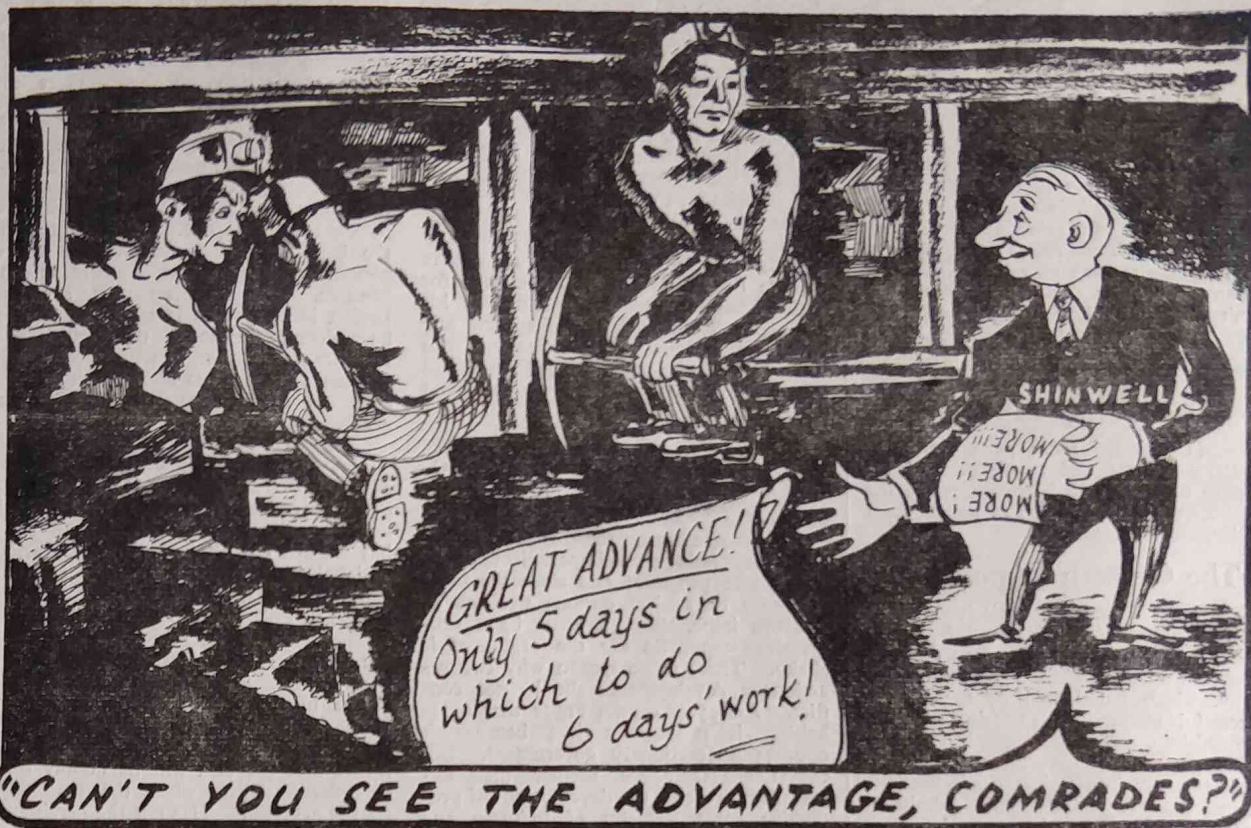
A short strike by Post Office workers at Wallington, Surrey, has resulted in an imposition being removed from their work.

It started with the refusal by C. Hadley, secretary of the Wallington Branch of the Post Office Workers' Union to deliver telephone directories. Obviously, he was making a test case of it, and the officials bit, and suspended him. Whereupon his fellows—100 men and a girl—struck immediately.

The workers claimed that they got no overtime or extra pay for delivering telephone directories, football pool coupons or fuel pamphlets. They were expected to do it all in their own time. At a meeting between the strikers (unofficial, of course), the union district organiser and postmasters, the men demanded:—

No victimisation of the secretary or any other suspended worker; overtime for dealing with accumulated mail; telephone directories to be taken out on overtime and, if possible, a special delivery of directories to be arranged by local firms.

The strike only lasted two days, and the workers went back on satisfactory terms, but this niggardly action by the Post Office is perhaps one of the reasons why it made a profit of £22,500,000 last year—a sum which is not used for the improvement of equipment or reduction of charges, but is handed straight over to Mr. Dalton.



## TOM McEWAN

Glasgow Group have lost a staunch and true comrade by the death of Tom McEwan at the age of 77 in Stobhill Hospital on May 29th, following a brief attack of Broncho-Pneumonia.

Always a rebel against the established order his faculties were clear to the last. His hatred of Church and State earned him the titles of *Atheist and Anarchist*. Titles he was satisfied to hold. Clear and sincere in argument and thought he had nothing but contempt for liars and hypocrites. At every opportunity he took pleasure in exposing the cant of *Burnsites and Free-Masons* by quoting Robert Burns to them.

He had a similar contempt for the parasites who had fastened on the backs of the Working Class movement:—the "Labour" and Trade Union officials, particularly Shinwell of whom Tom had personal experience having been a ship's stoker (greaser) most of his working life.

At the age of 71 after our *Literature Funds* had been pilfered and our printing press destroyed by marauding members of a Marxian Study Group, he volunteered to look after our bookshop in George Street, where it was a pleasant experience to hear Tom encouraging enquirers to read our literature.

His funeral took place in Riddrie Cemetery, near that "Christian Institute" (his own phrase), Barlinnie Prison, where he lies buried beside his companion, Mary Chalmers. Mary and Tom spent over forty years together held together not by any conventional or legal ties but by their natural mutual interest, a companionship which was enhanced by a recognition of the right of each other to freedom.

To old-time boxers he will be remembered as one who fought with Mick McGowan and Jimmie Lundie. To us he will be remembered as I have described him.

His knowledge and experience will certainly be a loss to our movement.

FRANK LEECH.

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## CHEMICALS—The Means of Plenty

(Continued from page 2)  
activities of the various cartels by which chemical monopolies in different countries combined to protect their own interests and, incidentally, to restrict the world production of chemical products in order to keep profits high.

### Restrictions on Plenty

The role of these capitalist monopolies in deliberately restricting the output of vital products is shown by many examples which demonstrate the way in which capitalism, operating through patent laws, keeps production at an artificially low level in an era of potential plenty. Nor is this the only method of restriction, for:

"As we have seen, the life of a patent is limited. Upon its expiry competitors are free to use it. Consequently, the big combines secure a whole range of supplementary patents so as to extend the life of this monopoly indefinitely, besides which, big business is constantly extending the scope of its operations by invading industries closely related to its own. I.C.I. for example, makes the raw materials from which drugs and plastic mouldings are made—so they move into both of these industries by establishing subsidiary companies. The aluminium combines are interested in all light metals—so they move into the control of magnesium alloys and, as magnesium and aluminium are basic materials in the production of aircraft and motor cars, they establish interests in these industries. The big oil combines are interested in chemicals and rubber because oil is a basic raw material for both chemicals and rubber substitutes—so, by means of interlocking directorates and patents pools, they establish a link with both these industries. The close alignment of rayon production with that of plastics compels Courtaulds and British Celanese to establish interests in this latter industry. For these reasons they must establish some control over all known patents—not necessarily for use but often to prevent them being used by potential competitors."

To-day, it has become almost banal to say that we live in a world of potential plenty. But this fact is abundantly true, and the recent technical developments of chemical industry have made it possible to achieve abundance with a minimum of work and industrial centralisation. For, like so many other recent changes in industry, modern chemical developments show a great potentiality of decentralisation, which will mean the end of the kind of industrial society we "enjoy". We are no longer bound to the old centres of industry, since the metals of the future, aluminium and magnesium, can be brought, by relatively easy processes, out of common clay and sea water respectively. The most important agricultural fertilisers can now be produced from the inexhaustible nitrogen of the air, while the surplus straw of our fields can be converted by modern chemical processes into good paper. Textiles can be produced from such strangely assorted products as coal, pea-nuts, soya-beans, glass and wood-pulp. Plastics can be made from a whole range of common vegetable and mineral products, including such simple materials as limestone and surplus milk. We are reaching an era when no particular locality will be more favoured than another, since the earth and air and water in any part of the world will be able to produce the essential goods for an abundant life.

The chemical industries, taken in combination with the new sources of physical

energy which are potentially available in atomic and solar power, can bring us into this era of abundance, if only they are in the hands of those who will use them to such ends; in other words, the workers who will benefit by such advances. If they remain, as to-day, in the hands of capitalist monopolies, they will represent nothing better than a means of power and profit for their owners and of added misery, fear and destruction to the other inhabitants of the earth.

### State Ownership or Workers' Control

It is on this point that the book is least explicit and least satisfactory. The author talks in terms of common ownership, but also of state control. The two are clearly incompatible. As Russia has shown, a socialist state can make as gross misuse of its resources as monopoly capitalism; the state, with its vested interest in war, is likely to turn the chemical industry to destruction rather than the production of plenty. A "National Council of Workers" such as Bob Edwards proposes, with a mere "voice and vote in the control of the industry", will be able to do little against the power interests of the national politicians, and its members would probably be corrupted in the process of co-operation with governmental institutions.

The only way in which the chemical industry can be removed from the orbit of both monopoly finance and power politics is for it to be controlled by the workers themselves, by the men who have the most real interest in the industry, and who will have no reason to use it for any other purpose but the general good of the community and the production of that economic plenty which is complementary to social freedom.

G.W.

### JUST POLITICS

Communists may be outlawed by the Labour Party; but what is to be done when one of their best-known members—Arthur Horner—is a miner's leader, and we want coal?

At a Doncaster dinner at which Clement Attlee, addressing mine-workers in the presence of Lord Citrine, appealed for "the team spirit in a Test Match against Injustice," such fervent demands for increased output were made by Horner that Attlee cordially shook his hand in gratitude.

And a Tory mine-manager shouted, "That's the stuff!"

*The People*, 29/6/47.

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