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Freedom

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"The three great causes of human immorality are inequality, whether political, economic or social, ignorance, its natural result, and slavery, its inevitable consequence.

BAKUNIN.

A WORLD SAFE FOR HYPOCRISY

Issue Before the Moscow Conference

THE Four Power Conference now in progress in Moscow has not aroused many hopes though all comments have not been as pessimistic as that of Lord Vansittart who declared, even before the Conference had begun, "No one ever expected results from the Moscow Conference".

The main problem facing the Big Four is that of Germany and we already know that two radically opposed solutions will be put forward. They have been summarised in the following way: Britain and America want a Germany "economically prosperous, politically weak" while the Russians want an "economically weak but politically strong Germany".

Translated in plain language this means that America wants to develop German economy with a view to monopolising it. If buying up of shares in German industries has not been perhaps as widespread as the Russians have declared, there is no doubt that American business men will not let a profitable field for investment slip between their fingers.

Britain has also capitalist colonisation in view but is even more concerned with immediate problems. Germany is drawing heavily on British finances, to the tune of £120,000,000 a year and a third of the expenditure on administration and food has to be paid for in dollars. Britain cannot afford to keep Germany in a state of economic prostration.

By "keeping Germany politically weak" is meant that both America and Britain are opposed to a Central Government which could easily fall under Russian control and they are, of course, opposed to any movement which might advocate the political and economic independence of Germany.

The Russians are not burdened by financial obligations towards Germany and approach the economic problem from a different angle. But they are concerned in making Germany a vassal state under the control of a Communist Party which would, naturally, take its orders from Moscow. A "politically strong" Germany with a Central government in Berlin controlled by Parties and Trade Unions faithfully submitting to Stalin's dictates would enormously strengthen their hold over Europe.

The accusations of imperialism which Russia throws at America, and vice versa, are all part of the comedy. Each one of the powers meeting in Moscow to-day is pursuing an imperialist policy—America and Britain mainly through the traditional way of capitalist infiltration, Russia through political control and propaganda (which does not mean, of course, that she neglects getting hold of German industry and trade).

Fostering The Nazi Spirit

Both policies have the same effects on the German people, that of fostering nationalism. The British and Americans have behaved like ruthless and arrogant conquerors—they have inflicted a series of petty insults and frustrations on the German people and have failed to supply them with adequate food and consumer goods. The result of the occupation is that the word "democracy" stinks in German nostrils.

"Democracy" in the New Navy!

A naval officer who ate Christmas dinner, and drank with five ratings on board a minesweeper was ordered by a naval court-martial at Rosyth yesterday to forfeit three months' seniority, to be dismissed from H.M.S. Lochinvar and severely reprimanded.

Temp. Lt. John Thomas Wardle pleaded guilty to taking his lunch and consuming excisable liquor in the after mess of H.M. motor minesweeper 1060 on Christmas Day with five ratings and to giving beer and spirits to the ratings. A memorandum, said the circumstantial letter, issued to commanding officers, including Wardle, stated that no entertainments of ratings were to be allowed in officers' messes during the Christmas season.

Wardle said that in the absence of adequate domestic staff and mindful of the extra work entailed in the preparation and serving of the special Christmas dinner, he had agreed to eat with the care and maintenance party of five men.

News Chronicle, 8/3/47.

Coming back from a visit to Germany, Lady Violet Bonham Carter has declared in the *News Chronicle* (5/3/47):

"While I was in Germany I did not (alas!) meet one single Englishman who did not admit to me that our reputation was steadily sinking, that the Germans had lost faith, not only in ourselves and in our own good faith, but in the whole democratic system for which we stand . . . is it to be wondered at? . . . How, for instance, can we possibly justify the ruling whereby "a German cannot claim damages from a member of the occupation forces", no matter what injury he or she has suffered at their hands? . . . We are in effect telling our forces of occupation that the conquered have no rights, and that, as conquerors, they can do no wrong."

It is very doubtful if the experience of Russian occupation has given Germans a better impression of State Socialism. The behaviour of the Red Army, the starvation rations meted out in the Russian zone, the political dictatorship, have disillusioned even those who had remained faithful to communism through Nazi prisons and concentration camps. Russia is trying to compensate for this feeling of despair by its propaganda for an united Germany and a Fourth Reich. This will have some effect; nationalism always thrives on empty stomachs.

The policies of the occupying powers all lead to the same results—a revival of the Nazi spirit.

Large-Scale Lunacy

Potsdam will come in for some sharp criticism at the Moscow Conference but not from the right quarters. Up till now this agreement has been carried out rather like the Red Queen's Croquet Party—"Off with that factory", "Off with that ship" said the Control Commission following its whims and fancies.

While we hear that more German ships are going to be blown up, Herbert Hoover, recently returned from an economic mission to Germany, recommends to President Truman that there should be a German-operated supply fleet of 75 Liberty ships. One will remember that a few months ago trawlers, which could have easily been fitted as fishing boats, were blown up at Bremerhaven. Now Hoover suggests that additional fishing boats should be leased to Germany.

Potsdam is certainly one of the most perfect political farces. While Mr. Molotov points an accusing finger to factories scheduled for destruction and still standing in the British zone, Mr. Bevin sweetly reminds him that Russia has forgotten to blow up a few warships and submarines. It is open knowledge that the Russian interpretation of Potsdam has been to dismantle and remove to Russia the industries situated in their zone rather than blowing them up.

All this can only contribute to the atmosphere of trust and friendship which is supposed to reign in Moscow.

When Slave Labour Is Abominable

The Conference has "turned to a poignantly human angle" (in the words of a Sunday newspaper) in discussing the fate of war prisoners and displaced persons and we must expect an avalanche of sensational revelations on German slave labour in Russia.

The Russians, pressed by Mr. Bevin, have at last announced their totals of prisoners. They say they have 895,530 Germans still in captivity and that over a million have been sent back to Germany. This came somewhat as a surprise, since last Autumn they announced

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Police Censorship in India

That the Indian National Congress would behave like all other governments has for many years been the basis of Anarchist opposition to Indian Nationalism. The plight of the working class is never substantially altered by a mere change of rulers, and the Congress have fully realised our forecasts—not because they are wicked men, but because the nature of government is not altered by a change of government personnel.

In the United Provinces, the Indian government has sent a special order (Confidential Department No. A3590 (1) XXV cx, Dated Lucknow, October 1st, 1946) to the following ten organizations:

1. All-India Muslim League.
2. Radical Democratic Party.
3. Indian Federation of Labour.
4. Scheduled Castes Federation.
5. The Depressed Class League.
6. Republican-Socialist Party of India.
7. Hindu Mahasabha.
8. Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh.
9. Communist Party of India.
10. The Khaksar Organization.

According to M. N. Roy's paper *Independent India*, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, the Minister of Home Security, has thereby ordered all Superintendents of Police, Superintendents of Post Offices and lower postal officials to censor and, if considered "necessary", to withhold correspondence belonging to these organizations. Roy also quotes a covering letter (Criminal Investigation Dept., Special Branch U.P. No. GC-4 (a) Genl. S.B. dated, Lucknow, October 18th, 1946) "Since censorship is a very important source of information . . . see that this source is intelligently tapped. I am also sure that in present political atmosphere you will appreciate the absolute need for causing Government as little embarrassment as possible by instructing your censoring staff to conduct the censorship as secretly and expeditiously as possible. For this reason, only copies or translations of interesting letters should be sent to me; letters which are very objectionable or calculated to inflame communal feelings, or to incite disorder or contempt for the law, should be withheld and sent to me in original; letters containing very important information, but which are not suitable for withholding should be photographed by your D.I.S. and released for delivery with the least possible delay."

So much for Indian freedom.

Conscription to End in U.S.A.

It has recently been announced in America that compulsory military service is to end, and that there will be no inductions after the 31st March. The reasons for this are several. Firstly, the American army is better paid than most industries in civilian life, which are suffering from a drastic lowering of real wages, owing to the heavy rise in the cost of living combined with a falling of actual money wages due to the cutting of overtime after the war. Consequently, many men, choosing between an unpleasant life in industry and a hardly more unpleasant one in the army, select the latter because it provides them with more economic security. The result has been that the military chiefs claim that they have sufficient men enlisting voluntarily to make it unnecessary to introduce conscription. A further element in this is also, of course the increasing unemployment in America, which, while it has not nearly reached the depths of the great pre-war depression, is already much higher proportionately than in England, and many men may have difficulty in resisting the economic inducements of the army in preference to continued unemployment.

On the other hand, the second main reason for the abandonment of conscription is admitted, according to the *Manchester Guardian* correspondent, to be a growing public hostility to the old plan of subjecting all youths of 18 or 19 to compulsory military service. Apparently this hostility is now growing so great, that it is regarded as unlikely that such a law would get through congress, because the representatives would be afraid of losing their seats if they voted for such an unpopular law.

The abandonment of conscription in a country which had previously decided to embrace it wholeheartedly, shows that, in spite of the trend towards state control, centralisation and governmental tyranny which was shown in America during the

Roosevelt administration, there still remains sufficient concern for individual liberty among the people to make them realise, once the bad dream of war is over, that conscription is a direct threat to their freedom. But it is a very unsatisfactory kind of concern for freedom that only manifests itself in peacetime, and that is not proof against the blandishments of the wartime propagandists. Moreover, it is a disquieting fact that a people, like the Americans, who are at times ready to resist with great vigour an encroachment on freedom which affects the white majority, should be so careless of the liberties of minorities of colour or opinion. It demonstrates that a mere resistance to encroachments on our own freedom is not enough if we are to gain that real freedom which comes from living in a world where no men are slaves.

But it must not be overlooked that this abandonment of conscription by the American government is a great sign of what a really deeply-felt public discontent can do in forcing a government to abandon its coercive attitude. Now it is time for the English people to demonstrate equally strongly their opposition to conscription. The American government, for all its commitments in the Pacific, has been forced to abandon compulsion. Why should not the British government be forced to discover that the pressure of public discontent at home is more important than commitments abroad? Or are British conscripts to be used to police Europe on behalf of an American capitalism which is too scared of its own people to continue conscription? It is time the British people joined with the Americans and the Canadians in making conscription impossible by openly and widely voicing their discontent. In this at least the American people have given us an example which we should follow and exceed.

Another G. P. U. Crime ?

(The account of the disappearance of an Austrian opposition Communist in the Russian zone has reached us as an urgent Press Release from the magazine "Politics" in New York. We give it prominence, because it is a well-documented case of the kind of disappearances which have been taking place frequently in the Russian zones of Germany and Austria, but which it is difficult always to relate to such obvious motives on the part of the C.P. and—one might reasonably suggest—the GPU, as in this case.)

Karl Fischer, employee of the Labour Chamber in Linz and member of the Austrian Socialist Party, born September 23rd, 1918, disappeared in Urfar, Upper Austria, in the Russian zone, on January 22nd, 1947. Fischer had been sentenced to five years in gaol by the Schuschnigg regime in Austria, and released in connection with a general amnesty in February, 1938. After the Anschluss, he went to France; in 1943 he was delivered to the Gestapo by Vichy authorities. Fischer was imprisoned in the Buchenwald concentration camp until his liberation by the American Army in 1945.

When the American troops were approaching, the leaders of the communists in the camp tried to get rid of their adversaries by placing them in special dangerous labour gangs.

Karl Fischer escaped death with the help of Benedict Kautsky, a son of the socialist theoretician Karl Kautsky. The Communist Party leader Otto Horn, who is now one of the main leaders of the Communist Party in Austria, was

particularly active in persecuting Fischer. Horn succeeded in excluding him from the first transports of liberated prisoners from Buchenwald to Austria. On his release, Fischer decided to go to Linz in the American zone, where he worked until April 1st, 1946, as secretary of Captain Rozan in the French Liaison Office. After the dissolution of that office, he worked in the office of economy and statistics of the Labour Chamber in Linz.

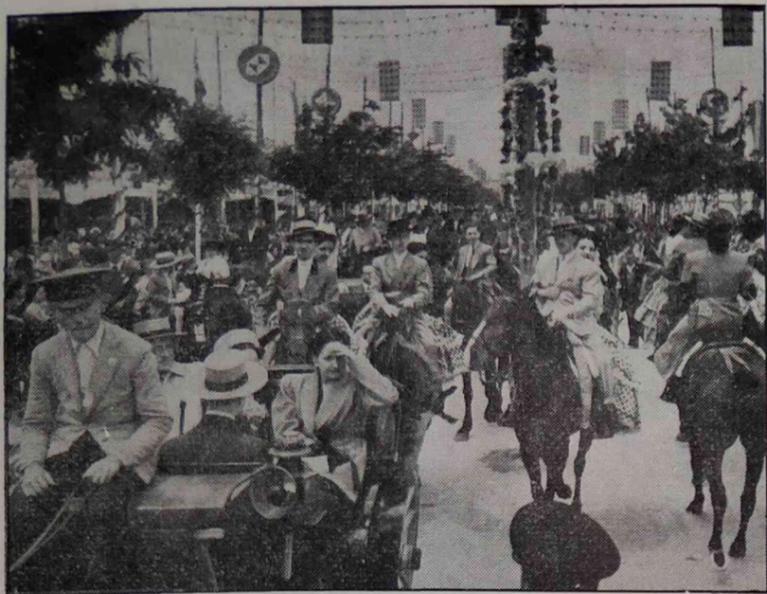
A short time before Fischer's disappearance, the Communist Party leader for Upper Austria, Haider, spoke to the girl-friend of Fischer, Vera Kerschbaumer, whose father is a member of the CP and director of its publishing house in Linz. Haider tried to persuade the girl to spy on Fischer. Vera, 21 years old and only two years in the CP, was shocked and refused; she warned Fischer. Another leader of the CP asked Fischer to end his relations with Vera, warning that something bad would happen to him. Fischer refused this interference with his personal life.

Karl Fischer did not conceal his political views and criticised the Communist Party openly in speech; he also distributed anti-Communist books to his friends. He had tried to bring Vera into opposition to the CP.

On January 22nd, 1947, when he finished his work at 5 p.m., he went with Vera to Urfar in the Russian zone. According to Vera, he left her at 5.45 p.m. to go back. Since then, he has not been heard from.

The investigation was very superficial. The Secretary Mantler, the Mayor of Linz, Dr. Koref, and the Minister of the Interior, Helmer, all of them socialists, were informed and promised to deal with the matter. Not until January 27th, five days later, were the police ready to publish a notice that Fischer was missing. The notice was first published in the *Communist Neue Zeit* in a distorted fashion.

Fischer's boss, Richard Strasser, Secretary of the Labour Chamber and member of the Association of Friends of the USSR, tried at first to place suspicion on the American and French authorities. Later he started to speak about Fischer's "lack of physical balance" and hinted at suicide. According to Fischer's mother, who had spent two years in a concentration camp herself and was also freed by the Americans in 1945, there is no truth in this statement.



Nothing must prevent the fiestas from being held, where the well-dressed 'señoras' ride on horseback behind their husbands, or in open carriages along the gaily decorated Madrid avenues . . .



. . . But not even the fiestas can hide the misery of the Spanish workers and their families.

We are glad to publish this article by Gaston Leval whose pamphlet, "Social Reconstruction in Spain" is well-known to many of our readers. We publish it as a frank statement on the Spanish situation and on our movement in particular but we do not subscribe to all the views expressed by the author. Our paper has opposed, as he does, the collaboration of anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists in the Government but many of us still believe in what he calls "the traditional anarchist attitude".

VIEWPOINT ON THE SPANISH SITUATION

THE present situation and the immediate future of Spain profoundly interests many anti-fascists throughout the world who have not forgotten the terrible struggle of the Spanish people against international fascism and who feel for them all the sympathy which one has for those who do not hesitate to face martyrdom in order to fight against the cruelty of their fate.

What is the exact situation in Spain today? And above all, where do the various currents, which divide Spanish anti-fascists stand? The problem is not merely to know if Franco will fall soon, but when and how he will fall. The problem is also to know the kind of regime which will replace him and whether this regime will be sound or not.

The overthrow of Franco depends mainly, of course, on the international political situation. Like Greece and Palestine, Spain is merely a pawn in the game played on one side by Russia and on the other by England and the U.S.A. If, as one may foresee, the rivalry between the great imperialist powers will take a less bellicose turn, due to the dangers a war would represent for each of them, one may hope that Franco will no longer enjoy the support of Anglo-Saxon imperialisms and will eventually fall. His fall would be greatly facilitated if dockers all over the world had systematically refused to load and unload ships sailing to, or coming from, Spain. There is still time to do so. But workers' international solidarity has been practically destroyed by reformism.

Internal Problems of Anti-Fascism

I want to deal in this article with the internal problems of Spanish anti-fascism. To what extent can it act against Franco and in what way is it prepared to deal with the Spanish situation?

I regret having to put forward a point of view which cannot be optimistic. But to ignore one's faults does not help to rectify them.

From the extreme right to the extreme left the anti-Franquist forces include the carlists and the anarchists. The carlists are monarchists of a particularly reactionary brand. During the struggles of 1936-39 they displayed the utmost cruelty against anti-fascists. They oppose fascism now as being too far to the Left and giving too much power to the State instead of to the Church.

Next come the monarchist, conservatives and liberals who advocate freedom to-day but who will to-morrow, as they have done in the past, subject Spain to the domination of the great landlords, of the Church and the Army, and will keep the country in a state of siege against working class movements for years to come.

The republicans are divided and subdivided into specifically Spanish republicans of the Right, the Left and the Centre; into federalists and centralists; into regionalists, Catalans and Basques and also autonomists, Valencians and Galicians, to name only the most important.

The socialists are virtually divided into two parties. One pursues the traditional line and is led by men like Indalecio Prieto and Fernando de los Rios. The other, under communist influence, attracts increasingly the socialist youth and is led by Negrin and Alvarez del Vayo.

The communists are also a force to be reckoned with. The able exploitation of the arms Russia sent to Spain (arms which had been paid for in gold and in advance) and the International Brigades (cannon fodder for Stalinist propaganda) has borne its fruits. There is no doubt that thanks to the funds at their disposal

and their great activity the communists represent a much greater force than they did in 1936.

Socialists and communists compete for the control of the General Workers' Union (U.G.T.) which had approximately a million members before Franco's victory.

Finally, there is the libertarian movement, particularly strong in Catalonia, Aragon, Levant and Andalusia, which founded and inspired the National Confederation of Labour (C.N.T.) which also had a membership of a million in 1936, but which represented a greater force than the General Workers' Union thanks to its dynamism and revolutionary spirit.

fascist sectors or even between two important anti-fascist sectors. This has contributed to weakening the anti-fascist struggle within Spain as well as the help of anti-fascist organisations all over the world who fear that chaos may replace Franco's regime.

The Libertarian Movement

The Spanish libertarian movement is at present divided into two tendencies. The first is in favour of participation in the government. The second, with which I find myself in agreement, is completely opposed to it.

The "collaborationists", as they are called, are themselves divided into two

No doubt some of the "collaborationists" are agents of Franco. No doubt many amongst them are perfectly honest. But what is certain is that this crisis, the logical consequence of unforgivable deviation in 1936-39, can do a lot of harm to our movement, particularly if it is not discussed dispassionately. Too often the intolerance shown in discussions creates barriers which become impossible to overcome.

Background of "Collaborationist" Tendencies

Which are the reasons for the birth of this "collaborationist" tendency? One can, of course, talk of the authoritarian and bureaucratic corruption of those who were, during the Spanish revolution, Ministers in the Central Government, Councillors in the Catalan Government, State officials, police chiefs and officers in the Army. This is certainly a contributory factor. But there are also men who have adopted this attitude out of sincere and unselfish motives and I believe they are in the majority.

These men believe that, when we shall be able to return to Spain, we shall be unable to carry out the social revolution as we had visualised it—a violent insurrection which would wipe away the partisans of capitalism and the State and which would bring about a socialist and libertarian society.

This would not be possible first of all because we lack the necessary strength. Secondly, because we could not prevent foreign armed intervention or, more simply, a few atomic bombs which would crush the revolution. Finally, because the Spanish people, who lost a million men and women during the war 1936-39, are not prepared to start another bloody struggle. The power of human suffering has limits.

Taking this into consideration those of our comrades who honestly believe in a permanent incorporation in the State conclude that our tactics should be changed or our movement will be condemned to impotence and degeneration.

On the other hand, the partisans of the "anti-collaborationist" tendency defend the classical point of view of revolutionary anarchism. This attitude can only strengthen, in my opinion, the arguments of the "collaborationists" because plain common sense should make one realise (however unpleasant that may be), that a social upheaval such as Bakunin advocated and such as we hoped for in 1936 is inconceivable even in Spain.

When Franco Goes

Let us suppose that to-morrow Franco is overthrown. Let us go still further and assume that the Republic is re-established. What will the situation then be?

Undoubtedly, the conservative forces will still exist. The "republican" Right, whose leaders were Gil Robles and Lerroux, was powerful. It will have preserved some of its power.

Apart from this conservative, neo-fascist section, the main forces will be: the Republicans, the Socialists and the Anarchists. Let us add the Communists whose potentialities are difficult to estimate.

These three great forces are approximately equal. The Republicans are probably numerically weaker amongst the popular masses. They represent mostly the peasants, tradesmen, bureaucrats and intellectuals and a small minority of workers—(20% of the members of the C.N.T. are republicans). But they can rely on the armed forces, the police and right-wing elements, as well as a good number of socialists, for support against a popular revolution.

The socialists have a membership composed mainly of workers—in the Basque country, Asturias, province of Pontevedra in Galicia, Madrid and Catalonia,—and of peasants—Castile and Andalusia. Its members have no revolutionary dynamism. The Socialist Party does not

pretend to implant socialism. At the most it will carry out an agrarian reform which will tend to create small farmers—a reform which would have tremendous importance for the social future of Spain—and a nationalisation of industries whose influence would be much smaller than one might be led to believe when one considers that nationalised industries would involve only 10% of the workers in Spain.

So far as the Anarchist Federation of Iberia (F.A.I.) and the National Confederation of Labour (C.N.T.) are concerned, if they can surmount the present crisis and intervene with all their strength in public life, they will constitute a factor of first importance. I persist in thinking however that they will not be able to achieve a successful revolution.

We are, therefore, in the presence of three great forces, republican, socialist, anarchist, capable of neutralising one another, unable to destroy one another but which, by continuous strife, would prevent normal life in Spain. And the result would be a military dictatorship after a short time.

The Future of Spanish Anarchism

The Republicans and Socialists can destroy anarchist influence, to a great extent, by putting into operation the agrarian reforms to which I referred earlier.

Three-quarters of Spain's population lives on the land. Sixty per cent. of cultivated land belongs to the big landlords. During the five years the Republic was in existence the Socialists advocated the agrarian reform by decree. The Republicans were too timorous to agree to it. But if they get power again and the Socialists press them to carry out this reform it is probable that they will accept. The sharing out of the "latifundia" or large estates would create from two million and a half to three million small-holders who would live miserably but who would constitute a reactionary force much more powerful than that of the present big landlords.

I think therefore that, if the position of the "collaborationists" is false, that of our comrades who persist in advocating the traditional insurrection is equally wrong.

The main problem of Spain is that of the land. The experience of the collectives created during the revolution has proved that our comrades have exceptional gifts as organisers. Those who have organised these collectives can no longer be satisfied with working the land by themselves or as labourers for a boss.

I think that anarchists should do all in their power to prevent the division of the land. They should immediately organise collectives, agrarian co-operatives and, in some cases, the communal exploitation of big landed estates.

We should plan the constitution of vast federations of agrarian collectives which might serve as a basis for industrial co-operatives. Before the Republic is able to implant itself firmly we must boldly take the initiative of social reforms which republicans and socialists are incapable of carrying out.

If the Spanish libertarian movement was merely a negligible force, these isolated achievements would run the risk of being crushed. But its strength is such that it can, if it wishes to do so, impose respect for its achievements.

If this work was carried out it would permit the existence, side by side, of republicans, socialists, and libertarians, though a certain amount of friction would be inevitable. What is more important, many republican and socialist workers and peasants and even technicians and professional people would join the collectives as they did during the revolution. We would no longer fear a military dictatorship which put an end to the First Republic in spite of the fact that its leaders were men of greater breadth



The Church and the Army have conspired together through the centuries to keep the Spanish people in abject misery and ignorance.

The Aims Of The Anti-Franco Factions

As one can see there are many anti-fascist sections, too many in fact, since their diversity is an obstacle to their union. It is common knowledge that, speculating on the overthrow of Franco, the monarchists want to reinstall a king, the right-wing Republicans want to impose themselves on the left-wing Republicans, the Regionalists want to obtain their autonomy, the Socialists want to overpower the Right and the extreme Left, the Communists to capture the General Workers' Union and the Anarchists to resume once again their revolutionary struggle against all parties.

Before examining the situation of the Spanish Libertarian Movement, I would like to point out that up to now, it has not been possible to establish a sincere and loyal agreement between all anti-

factions. One faction is in favour of participating in the government so long as Franco remains in power but of withdrawing as soon as the Republic has been installed. The other is in favour of a permanent incorporation in the State and the Government. It is difficult to understand how its members can continue to call themselves libertarians or anarchists.

Those who are in favour of temporary collaboration argue that, if it was right to join the government to prevent Franco's triumph it is also right to be in a government which tries to overthrow him.

Quite impartially, I cannot say, and no-one can say which tendency is the strongest in Spain. The majority of the anarchists in exile are anti-collaborationists. But the men and women who live under Franco's dictatorship—republicans, socialists, anarchists, are generally less intransigent towards one another than their comrades outside Spain.

Another Strike at the Savoy

THE trouble at the Savoy hotel, which broke out in an unexpectedly militant strike last October, and forced considerable concessions from the various managements of the large hotels in London, broke out again last week in a further strike of some 850 waiters and kitchen staff.

Since the settlement of the October strike, the management of the Savoy have been consistently trying to avoid meeting their obligations to the men. At Christmas, the men had to threaten a strike before they were granted extra payment for working on Christmas holidays. Later, when a steward was sacked without reason, another strike had to be threatened before he was reinstated.

The present strike began on Tuesday, when the staff raised objections to a new supervisor. The management began to negotiate with the union representative, but contended that the men should continue work and remove the dirty plates from the tables. This, however, they refused to do, and a waiter, Frank Piazza, who had been active in the October strike, was immediately suspended by the management as a reprisal.

The men demanded Piazza's reinstatement within 24 hours.

When the management refused to do this, the men came out on strike. At a meeting the organising secretary of the Catering Branch of the G. & M.W.U., tried to persuade the men to go back, but they refused to do so, and out of 400 men present only 20 were in favour of ending the strike. A statement issued by the strike committee says:

"Since Christmas we have been faced with continuous delays. This culminated in a minor stoppage in the plate room on Tuesday. The chairman of our stewards' committee, Frank Piazza (against whom the Savoy issued an injunction last November) was suspended, presumably because he attempted to prevent the stoppage spreading.

"GUESS-WHEN" BUS STRIKE

"Keep the boss guessing" is a good syndicalist line, and employees of the Hants and Dorset and Wilts & Dorset bus companies, put it across their employers well when they planned a 24-hour token strike on 11th March, to take place "any day in the next 10".

Actually they sprung their surprise on Saturday, March 15th, when only early workmen's buses were operated.

The strike is against delay in improving conditions and is, of course, unofficial, the unions claiming that their grievances are of a national character, not local. Well, what are the other busmen waiting for?

AIRPORT WORKERS' BUILDING SOCIETY

Once again workers are stepping in to help themselves in the matter of accommodation after getting fed-up with the slowness of government and local authorities.

Employees of the British Overseas Airways Corporation (B.A.O.C.) have formed the British Airways Staff Housing Society to form a pool of money, through shares ranging from £1 to £200, for the purchase of houses for conversion into flats, and of land for the building of new dwellings.

Ultimately, there will be 6,000 employees at London Airport alone, and these and employees of the other British air corporations and airport staffs of the Ministry of Civil Aviation may join in the scheme which so far has borrowed powers of £1,000,000, and a promise of financial backing from B.A.O.C. It is another example of how "getting together" can solve the problems of workers who individually are helpless.

"We have used all the available machinery to settle the issue. Mr. Arthur Lewis has tried to get in touch with the Savoy management. We have no alternative but to cease work until the management are prepared to:

1. Reinstate Piazza, and hold full inquiry into the reason for his suspension.

2. End the constant delay and set our agreement with the Hotel and Restaurants Association into full operation."

The staffs of Claridges, Simpson's and the Berkeley have now struck in solidarity. Naturally enough, the union representatives appealed to them not to come out, but the men are in a militant mood. It also appears that the market porters at Covent Garden and Smithfield are co-operating by refusing to load supplies to the hotel.

It is clear that the workers at the London hotels retain the militancy of their October strike. But they are continually hampered by the delaying and compromising tactics of their union, and it is interesting to compare the partial and slowly-granted results they have obtained with the immediate and great concessions which London hotel workers had when they ran their own union on syndicalist lines and gained a series of sweeping victories over the managements. All this is described vividly in McCartney's pamphlet, *The French Cook's Syndicate* (Freedom Press), which should be read for the topical importance which its account still holds for those interested in the catering industry.

3% of Working Population Employed in Gambling Industry!

In anarchist writings it has always been stressed that the existence of the money system involves a whole mass of unnecessary labour, without which men in general would have more opportunity to produce material goods in plenty and at the same time enjoy an increased leisure and opportunity to fulfil their individual creative desires. In *Freedom* we have frequently drawn attention to the many ways in which this money system involves men in useless work. But perhaps there is no more futile and wasteful feature of the money system—and of our society in general—than the vast amount of labour expended on the gambling industry in all its ramifications.

A recent survey of the gambling industry, made by a religious committee, but reliable in facts, has estimated that the total number of people regularly employed in various occupations connected with gambling—bookmaking, horse-racing and breeding, football pools, fun fairs, gaming saloons, dog racing, etc.—is in the neighbourhood of 400,000, or 2% of the working population of the country. In addition, some 200,000, or a further 1% of the working population, are employed part-time in the industry. Fantastic as it may seem, nearly one worker in thirty spends all or a large proportion of his or her time on this singularly futile work, which serves no productive purpose whatever. Gambling, by any standards, is a major industry, and the fact that it should be so is an ironic comment on our civilisation.

We do not in any way adopt a superior attitude to the worker who bets or does his football pools every week. Far from it. Placed as he is, he probably gets some enjoyment from the hope that one day he will get enough cash to break out of his rut. The whole capitalist system, with its ideal of getting something for nothing, of living as a parasite on those who really work, induces a reaction in the worker towards gaining by hook or by crook the means of escaping from his bondage and enjoying some of the things

which his masters find so worth while.

But the worker who places his hope on gambling, who really becomes involved in it as many do, is the dupe of the money system. There is a distant chance that he may make a great sum of money—perhaps one in fifty thousand do, but the overwhelming likelihood is that he will go on for all his life placing his hope on gambling, and not realising that the only way he can get a good life is not to wait for fortune in the shape of a good win on the penny pools, but to take it for himself by revolutionary action. Gambling, however understandable it may be, however pleasant may be the illusions it fosters in all but the lucky few, acts as an insidious drug on very many of the workers and helps to bind them to the system that oppresses them. It is merely another way of giving them an illusion of having a stake in a system that really gives them nothing, but merely steals the product of their labour.

The object of this article is not to moralise. It is merely to point out the hard facts that gambling is both an integral part of the exploiting system of capitalism, making vast profits for promoters out of the poor who want to get rich, and also one of the principal means of misguiding the workers with "pie in the sky" illusions.

And, beyond these general features, there remains the important fact we mentioned at the beginning, that it involves no less than 3% of the working population in the most futile labour that could be imagined. Like every other branch of capitalist enterprise, it shows the complete wastefulness of the finance and profit system, and the manifest advantages of a system where all these things were ended by the simple application of the anarchist communist idea of "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

Land Notes

FARMING IN EUROPE

A very definite snag in farming is that it is a whole-time job requiring all a man's time and energy. Very few men engaged in it, whether as workers or as employers, have the time, even if they happen to have the inclination, to give much thought to the social and political background of their work or even often to acquire very much theoretical knowledge of it. One result of this has been that the great majority of books on most aspects of agriculture have been written by people whose knowledge of what they write about is mostly academic and who do not have to put into practice what they propose. Consequently, though much of what they write may be excellent in itself, it is rendered largely irrelevant by the writers' apparent ignorance of the social, economic and working conditions in which their ideas have to be implemented. This applies in particular to much agricultural research work. The countryman's traditional distrust of book-learning, though sometimes carried to absurd degrees has, therefore, some justification.

It is, then, a real pleasure when one comes across a book containing much interesting and statistical information, combined with at least some practical knowledge of the day to day lives of the human beings to which the information refers. Such a book, despite a certain political naivety, is *Food and Farming in Post-War Europe* by P. Lamartine Yates and D. Warriner (Oxford University Press, 3/6d.).

Very few people, who read or write about the political and economic events and problems of Europe, appear to be aware of the rather important fact that "half the population of Europe lives by farming, mostly in conditions of extreme poverty". It would seem, therefore, not unreasonable to suggest that at least some knowledge of how half the population of Europe live and work should be a necessary part of anybody's political education and that even those people who have no particular interest in the land would profit by reading this little book. Perhaps I have taken a favourable view of it partly for the very natural and understandable reason that it lends support to some of my own opinions and to some of the propositions that I put forward in a recent article on *Agriculture in a Free Society* in this paper, propositions which, as I anticipated, provoked a certain amount of criticism. I

think therefore, that some extracts from *Food and Farming in Post-War Europe* on the vexed question of social and economic organisation are worth giving.

Bigger, Not Necessarily Better

"The first thought entering the ordinary person's mind in any discussion of farming efficiency is the question of size. Fascinated by the analogy of industry and misled by the example of prairie farming in North America, the ordinary person tends to assume that the bigger the farm the better the farming—at all times and in all places. This is plain nonsense. . . . in truth, of course, optimum size depends on climatic and economic factors; no hard and fast rule can be laid down. Speaking generally, it may be said that the rapid mechanisation of grain production in recent years has given the large unit an overwhelming advantage wherever cereals constitute the sole, or almost the sole, product. But nothing suggests that a thousand acre farm is likely to be any more efficient at dairying than a farm of a hundred acres. On the contrary, the most successful dairying the world has seen is run on 50—150 acre farms of Holland and Denmark."

Speaking of farming in Hungary the authors write: "If a revolutionary movement sweeps away the Hungarian ruling class it might be well to plan the reform of Hungarian farming on the lines of the medium-sized intensive peasant farms, rather than to indulge in doctrinaire collectivisation experiments which lost the revolution before and would do so again."

Although the authors fail apparently to see the full implications of some of their statements and continue to believe in the beneficial effects that well-intentioned governments can achieve, the form of social organisation that they propose comes in actual fact near to being syndicalist, as the following quotations illustrate.

Organisation From Below

"To the extent that measures for rationalising dairying can be organised as far as possible from below upwards rather than from above downwards, and, preferably, through bodies of the peasants' own making, whether called co-operative or not, there is more likelihood of new ideas winning acceptance. There is a striking difference between the vigour and efficiency of the Danish co-operatives for

butter making and bacon curing which are organised from below, and the analogous German institutions organised from above. . . . A government which is in too much of a hurry to organise a community for greater efficiency may kill more than it creates. The peasant, of all classes of the community, will least put up with large doses of bureaucratic interference and will only give of his best when also given responsibility."

As to agricultural "advisors", "experience shows that distrust and dislike are most in evidence where the advisors are state employees and are men with a somewhat academic approach to farming problems. Peasants are most impressed by a man who has farmed successfully himself, preferably in their own locality, and above all by one whom they themselves have selected and whose salary they themselves co-operate to provide. In short, the most effective advisory services have been those growing spontaneously out of the farmers' own organisations, not those provided by the State." In view of the author's opinions as thus expressed, it is difficult to see really what justification the State has for remaining in existence at all.

I have here dealt only with one part of this book which is worth reading just for the information contained in the first part, included in which are three maps of Europe dealing with "Active Workers per Hundred Acres", "Net Output per Acre", "Net Output per Active Worker". These three things, the distinction between which and also their inter-connection, are often very imperfectly understood, are vital to an understanding of contemporary agricultural economy, and also its future potential. For example, the British Isles has the fewest active workers per hundred acres in Europe—under six compared with over fifteen in Italy—but net output per active worker is the highest—£200, whereas in south-eastern Europe and Italy it is less than £30. In output per acre this country is comparatively low—£8 per acre compared with £14 in Belgium—but in parts of south-eastern Europe the output is under £3; which means permanent semi-starvation. The social significance of such figures in terms of human health and happiness, or their opposites, is tremendous. In conclusion, it should perhaps be mentioned that these figures are of course for pre-war Europe.

G. V.

DEMOCRACY and TRADE UNIONS

Of course, the word 'democracy' is a much misused word; it is also a word to be judged in a relative sense. But there is nevertheless a popular understanding of it among organised workers. In discussions among workers belonging to the trade unions, there is evidence that the predominant opinion is, that the officials have too much control and the members too little. In recent disputes we have seen that the members of certain trade unions have had to set up additional organisations within the trade unions in order to compel the officials to persist in the claims of the workers. This is not merely paradoxical, but should demonstrate some obvious deficiencies in trade union structure.

Apparently, the workers recently involved in strikes and wages movements are maintaining their independent rank and file organisations. From time to time as the ferment of industrial conflict rises, we get examples of the development of independent rank and file committees, etc. These facts go far to prove that the workers are under no illusions about democracy in the existing unions.

Many workers possessing a sense of working-class solidarity, recognise the lack of it when grievances arise of a local character. Everything in the trade unions is so formalised, so constitutionalised, that no action is possible without the sanction of the permanent officials. The permanent officials however, are absorbed in the task of maintaining their positions, and their attitude to all questions is determined by the effect it might have on their capacity to hold such positions. To-day, holding a bureaucratic job requires subservience to the dominant political philosophy influencing the unions, and so we find union officials advocating that the workers tolerate all manner of serious grievances which at other times the workers would object to. For instance, in certain industries the union officials have even told the workers to be prepared to work in unheated factories and to wear their overcoats if necessary. The difficulties of the Labour Government are, of course, the explanation for this attitude so blatantly practised to-day. That the workers should be so easily deceived by all the propaganda to justify the union officials' opposition to improvements in wages, etc., is a disappointment, but it is occurring to really progressive members of the unions that it will always be possible for the bureaucratic officials to enforce any policy on the membership. Instances where the officials suffer a partial frustration, as in recent strikes, only serve to prove that in general, centralisation of power in the hands of a few officials is sufficient to compel the membership to obey official dictation. There is the case of a recent local railway strike which continued over a number of weeks. The workers involved persistently ignored the defeatist instructions of the union officials. These officials, as in all such cases, argue that a few hundred members cannot be allowed to ignore the elected representatives of the entire membership. Always this is a plausible excuse for an outrageous demonstration of anti-democratic bureaucracy. Actually, these elected representatives include permanent officials who are no longer interested in the votes of the membership. But the more important fact is, that the entire membership never has the chance to consider the merits of a local dispute. The technique of the union official is to isolate such local disputes, and the workers involved find it physically and materially impossible to get mass union solidarity in their support. It just cannot be done until the workers build an alternative form of organisation which they really control themselves, and which can only exist to give the essential mutual aid in all disputes.

Some suggestions which have frequently been made to effect a greater degree of democracy within working-class organisations, are deserving of consideration by all who are anxious to see a new type of industrial organisation fighting the day to day struggle and having the objective of a free society.

- (1) Full time officials should be limited to the smallest number consistent with efficient administration.

- (2) Pay for officials should correspond to the prevailing rates in the industry of the union.

- (3) There should be no permanently appointed officials, all officials to be elected for defined periods.

- (4) Funds of the union should be controlled by the local branches.

- (5) The right to strike should be the prerogative of the members directly concerned.

- (6) Industrial matters must be the primary business of the union. Political questions arising from the activities of political parties seeking power may be left to individual decisions, since free speech, and political liberty must be the policy of the new unionism.

Compulsory unionism, the closed shop, and similar policies are synonymous with the present form of authoritarian trade-unionism and would have no place in the syndicalist or industrial union.

C. W. ROOKE.

Letter from **Switzerland****SWISS GOVERNMENT & REFUGEES**

The Swiss government endeavours presents are given them by Swiss zealously to hush up the crime which frontier inhabitants. If such children, it committed by driving numerous who have often walked for a long German and Italian refugees to their time in the cold in dilapidated clothes and bare-footed, and who are completely under-nourished, should fall death at the hands of the Nazis and Fascists. These facts I have given with full details in a previous issue of *Freedom*.

To-day the same tradition is being continued. And still the world is supposed to believe that Switzerland is a paradise for the persecuted victims. I should like to communicate some facts by means of which the English reader can judge for himself.

The German frontiers near Basle are being watched minutely by the Customs authorities and the Cantonal Police. The inhabitants of the frontier district have to show daily their identification papers, and to give an account of what they carry with them. The supposed reason for this measure is so that "foreign elements" shall be prevented from crossing the frontier. But in fact it is obvious that the authorities are mostly concerned, on the one hand, to prevent food from being carried over the frontier to the starving Germans, and, on the other, they are searching for Germans who try to find food for themselves and their relatives.

Some time ago Swiss women on the German-Swiss frontier who wanted to hand bread over the barbed-wire fence to starving German children in a dreadful condition of neglect and starvation, were driven away by Swiss detectives and threatened with prosecution.

Children Sent Back To Germany

From time to time German children are successful in crossing the frontier. They are looked after and

amount of calories were banned. The population of Basle, which formerly had a close connection with that of Baden, did not obey these regulations, but sacrificed from their rations large quantities of valuable foodstuffs. Afterwards it was made public that these foodstuffs would not leave the country. Nobody knows what has happened to them since.

Persecution For Feeding Germans

The Swiss people are prepared to help the starving Germans actively, and to sacrifice part of their own rations. But whoever does this and finds a means of getting the meat or butter across the frontier into the hands of those for whom it may be the means of saving life, becomes guilty of a misdemeanour and is liable to be persecuted and prosecuted. This is all the more ridiculous since, through such personal aid, the Swiss food ministry would in no way have to carry any responsibility, and it is simply a matter of individual sacrifice and a gift from each person's own ration.

This is how the Swiss state, which has a social-democratic federal council and possesses in numerous cantons governments with socialist and communist majorities, cultivates its tradition of "solidarity, humanity and the right of asylum".

I invite Professor Häuserman of Geneva to condone and whitewash these further deeds of the authorities, as he did their cruel attitude towards the refugees. I myself am an inhabitant of the frontier region, and am always prepared to give him further information regarding the customs and practices of the Swiss Police State.

F. K. (Basel, Switzerland).

**Tito's Concentration Camps
Former Inmate's Story**

A COMRADE recently in Istria has sent us an account of Yugoslav concentration camps written by a former inmate. The latter was an Italian who had been a member of the Fascist Party, and was thrown into a concentration camp by the Yugoslav Partisans in May, 1945—i.e., since the end of the war. Despite his membership of the Fascist Party, he had been in trouble with the party officials because of his persistent refusal to wear party uniform. It is worth remarking, however, that Domenico Cernecca, a former Professor of Fascist Culture and Aide-de-Camp to General Esposito, the C.-in-C. of the Fascist occupation forces in Yugoslavia during the war, is now the director of a Tito-controlled paper *Il Nostro Giornale*, published at Pola. Cernecca has also been an official Tito candidate, and has been made a citizen of the town of Fiume! He is just one of many former Fascist officials who have now been accepted on to the Communist handwagon in Yugoslavia, being now an official Communist and a member of the Communist-sponsored Italo-Slovene Anti-Fascist Union.

The writer of the account of the Tito concentration camps, whom we will call "X", was finally cleared by a purge court at Pola after his release from the camp at Kocevje. The court held that he should never have been imprisoned at all. In substance, this is his story:

In May, 1945, he was arrested by the Communist-controlled "People's Liberation Committee". With other prisoners he was taken to Pisino, after their valuables had been removed (they were not returned), and without any food. 30 of them were crammed into a cell with 24 square metres of floor space. They were given a bowl of thin vegetable soup on the evening after their arrival. Next day they were interrogated by the OZNA, the Communist secret police. Statements were drawn up in Slav, which none of them could read, and they were forced to sign them. Twenty-four of these men were later taken away by lorry to be shot. "Those terrible moments at Pisino are, and always will remain, unforgettable to me. Each night, about nine o'clock, the Director of the prison would break the silence with his lugubrious voice, calling out the names

of some of us. His voice still echoes in my ears. Each name that was not ours caused us to look around in mute and terrified interrogation, and each of us felt a little happy to have avoided death for another day. But when the name was one of us, then an icy shiver would pass through our souls, and our anguished gaze would convey our sympathy to the miserable wretch."

Bound With Wire

At the end of June, 1945, the prisoners were transferred to Albona, where the schools had been transformed into prisons. On the journey their wrists were bound with wire. This method, which produces great pain, appears to be the regular thing under the Tito administration, for the bodies recovered from mass graves in the natural crevices called "foibe", also had their wrists bound with wire, frequently with barbed wire. X also describes the condition of prisoners who, in order to encourage them to confess, had been tortured with the "bicycle". This consists simply of two triangular wedge-shaped pieces of wood on which the prisoner is forced to stand for hours and even days on end. It produces sores on the feet, tremendous swelling of the legs, and the victim is soon prostrated with exhaustion.

At Albona, X was brought to trial, accused as an Italian of being responsible for the prolongation of the war. The judge said to one of his companions in the dock: "How can you hope to live well in Italy where there are ten parties, whereas with us there is only one party and that is the one which knows what it is doing?" They were condemned to the concentration camp of Kocevje.

The Concentration Camp Of Kocevje

Here they lived in huts infested with lice and fleas. "Our rations consisted of 250 grammes of bread in a ration of warmed blackish water in the morning, half a litre of water and a potato at mid-day, and the same in the evening. For 500 people there was a ration of 700 grammes of fat . . . At this time the temperature stood at about 20 degrees below zero . . . but we had to work just the same. Invalids, except for those with high fever or a completely immobilized limb, were not recognised as such, and they too had to work. Some were working in the open dressed only in thin cotton clothing, and some were bare-footed."

He goes on to say: "One of the worst tortures we had to undergo was that of being forced to listen to speeches praising the Federative (i.e., the Tito regime) and its leader; worse still, each of us in turn was forced to make speeches praising these two 'ideals'; those of us who tried to dodge doing this were subjected to hard discipline, which included a reduction of our already miserable rations."

Finally, he was released, and managed to cross the Morgan zone to the British zone. His account makes it clear that Tito's concentration camps are the same as any others; physical hardship is mixed with tortures, and deliberate attempts are made to demoralize the inmates.

**Religious Persecution in Argentine
Non-Catholics Dubbed
"Jews"**

All Argentina is engaged in the fight over the teaching of Catholic doctrine in the public schools. Theoretically pupils may be excused but in practice non-conformists are exposed to persecution. Sometimes this takes the form of name-calling, both by schoolmates and teachers. The state of mind may be gathered by the fact that a common name given to children asking exemption is "Jews", regardless of their religion. At the moment, signs in white paint are smeared on walls throughout the country, reading "Religious teaching", "We want Christ", "Christ the King". The opposition, however, is waging a genuine struggle by press and radio.

(Worldover Press.)

**Danes To Feed 50,000
German Children**

After appeals from Danish relief groups, the Danish Government has decided to feed 50,000 children in northern Germany from the border to Hamburg. All food will be bought in Denmark and paid for by the Government, then turned over to the Danish Red Cross, Danish Save the Children and Peace Friends Relief Service.

Starting in February, these organizations will serve a daily hot meal in German schools. Each child will get between 600 and 1,000 calories a meal, made up from the following Danish staples: fresh milk, meat, bacon, peas, beans, groats and potatoes.

(Worldover Press.)

Oil War Continues

A new phase has now been reached in the manoeuvres in the oil war of the Middle East. A few weeks back an agreement between British and American oil companies, supported by political pressure on Persia, sealed off the production of oil in the Middle East as an Anglo-American province, with the obvious intention of countering Russian attempts to gain a share of control over Middle East oil.

The Russians are now entering the Near East in a new guise—as oil salesmen. It is a known fact that Russia, even with the Caucasus and Rumanian fields under its control, suffers from an oil shortage. That was one of the reasons for its efforts to gain political control over Persia in order to get control of some of the fields there. But now, for political reasons, the Russian government has entered the Levant as a cut-price oil seller, and the Soviet Oil Trust is offering the Syrian and Lebanese governments petrol at 17/6 a ton, as against 31/8 asked by the neighbouring Anglo-American controlled Iraq Petroleum Company. As these governments buy almost all the oil consumed in their countries, success in this deal will give Russia quite a large economic foothold in the Levant. And for this the Kremlin evidently thinks it worth while getting rid of some of its own much-needed oil.

A fifth column of commercial agents was a device much used by the Nazis, and Stalin has always been ready to learn from his late friend Hitler. We can certainly expect the little group of oil men to be followed by other Russian agents, as the political struggle in the Eastern Mediterranean, presaged by Russian claims on the Dardanelles and the former Italian colonies, becomes intensified. No doubt the Kremlin sees this as a case of casting its bread on the waters; by giving up a little oil now to gain political contacts in the Middle East, it hopes to push its influence always nearer to the vital oil fields in whose operation it eventually hopes to gain a share. But that is something the English and Americans will not give up without a struggle, and we can therefore count the Middle East oilfields as a major battlefield in any future war.

**Are You Helping to
Obtain New Readers
for FREEDOM?**

Foreign Commentary**Was Mr. Churchill Interested?**

READERS of this column will recall that in the last issue we referred to the scandal of Mussolini's loot, and the accusations levelled at the Communists that the booty had been handed over to the Party. The *Corriere della Sera* has published a series of articles on the subject, dealing not only with the available evidence about the money and treasures now known as the "Dongo Treasure", but also with 27 cases including many cases of documents which Mussolini was hoping to take with him into exile, but which disappeared between Milan and Como. Documents are embarrassing things, and it appears, according to the *Corriere della Sera* that amongst the documents were letters from Eden, Chamberlain and Churchill to Mussolini. Now the facts as ascertained by the *Corriere della Sera* (4/3/47) were as follows: On May, 9th, 1945, the cases were taken and stored at the fire-station in Como. Some ten days later they were opened by a police officer who prepared an inventory of their contents. The cases were closed and more or less forgotten until the end of August when a British officer accompanied by a number of British soldiers in a lorry, demanded that the cases should be handed over immediately. The caretaker phoned the police who told him to let the British take the cases. (The report here points out that it was later ascertained that the soldiers were in fact British and not imposters.) Nothing more was heard of the cases. Now, where the scandal comes in is that it was alleged at the time that there were many letters from Churchill which "were considered somewhat compromising for the British Premier who had on several occasions praised, even in public, fascism and its leader". According to the report these rumours reached the British, who immediately set about tracing the famous cases. "But apparently what they were seeking was not found since, in September, Churchill himself, with the pretext of taking a short holiday, came to Italy and stayed, by a strange coincidence, on Lake Como. Only Churchill could say if and by whom his letters were returned." It may be just a coincidence that in August the cases were seized by the British in Como and that Mr. Churchill paid a visit to Como the following month. But what has happened to the 27 cases? The British Press—so far as can be ascertained—has been silent about the whole business. Is it a diplomatic silence?

"DENAZIFICATION IN HANOVER"

The American Military Government in Germany announces that the German denazification courts in the American zone up to the end of January had tried 197,019 Nazis. 2,350 had been given sentences of up to 10 years imprisonment or internment, 161,522 have been fined. 48,450 are still detained awaiting trial. But as our American contemporary *l'Adunata dei Refrattari* (8/3/47) points out the sentences imposed by the courts do not necessarily indicate the effectiveness of denazification in Germany. "There is reason to believe that 'denazification' is inspired more by the ideas of reprisals against people than by real and effective purging of Institutions". And *l'Adunata* quotes a case reported by the *New York Herald Tribune* (2/3/47) to support this view. Apparently in Hanover a theatre critic was sentenced to a week's labour in a squad detailed to clear bomb damage in the city for having violently criticised in a local paper a concert performance. *l'Adunata* comments on this really amazing case, "It is quite possible that the criticism of this journalist was unjust; and it is equally possible that this journalist has never done a more useful piece of work in his life than what he was obliged to do as a punishment. But intolerance for freedom of criticism is one of the principal characteristics of Nazism, and the incident shows that this spirit of intolerance remains, so far as the authorities of Hanover are concerned, in spite of nearly two years of military and legal 'denazification'."

ON NATIONAL LOTTERIES

Football pools, and greyhounds have been in the news recently, but mainly from the point of view of the tremendous labour power required to operate these concerns. But these "get rich quick or bust" pastimes are not limited to this country. Football pools based on football results in Britain are operated in Sweden, Belgium and other European countries. In Italy, the Lotto (Lottery) has been a national institution for decades, and a matter which is not left in the hands of private enterprise but in which the Government takes an active interest as well as a 6% rake-off! When one considers the real misery of Italy and

and the government's inept handling of the situation, it is ironically amusing to read in the Italian press that the intended modifications in the National Lottery will be "submitted for approval by the Council of Ministers"! Since one of the proposals is another tax which would go to the Treasury, we are sure the government will approve!

The National Lottery is a weekly affair and the figures published show the extent to which the Italian people are addicted to this occupation. In July, 1946, the weekly turnover for the whole of Italy was 30 million lire, in September 65 million, October, 1946, 72 million lire per week. It would appear that as the economic situation in Italy worsens so the Lotto represents the last hope to get rich. (This argument is strengthened by the fact that the city of Naples alone, where misery is rampant, contributes about 30 million lire.)

SUGGESTION FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS

On more than one occasion the Speaker's attention has been drawn to the fact that a "quorum" (forty members) was not present during a debate in the House of Commons. Members are always fond of talking about absenteeism in the mines, but would do well to put their own House in order. They may therefore welcome the system of payment by attendance which is now being operated in Italy. Just recently the office of the President of the Constituent Assembly decided to increase the Deputies' salaries to 30,000 lire per month plus 2,000 lire a day to provincial deputies, and 1,000 lire for Rome deputies when they attend debates or business of the Chamber. We don't know whether the deputies will have to clock-on or just have to inform the bar attendant, but if any M.P. is interested in this suggestion we will gladly make further enquiries!

"VOLONTA"

Those of our readers who can read Italian will be interested to know that besides stocking the weekly *l'Adunata di Refrattari* (published in U.S.A.) the Freedom Press now receive a few copies of the Anarchist monthly *Volonta*, published in Naples. The March issue which has just arrived is a double issue of 96 pages (1/2d. post free) and contains articles on a wide variety of subjects.

LIBERTARIAN.

DISINTEGRATION OF CHIANG'S REGIME

There are abundant signs from China that the Chiang Kai Shek dictatorship, with its Kuomintang totalitarian party rule, is rapidly disintegrating, now that it is attempting to rule the whole of China instead of the relatively small area which it occupied during the war.

China has always had a very marked decentralist tendency. In the whole of known Chinese history it has only been for very limited periods that the central government, whether imperial or theoretically republican, has managed to exercise any efficient rule. The normal tendency has been for local areas to become more or less autonomous, and this is tending to become so again to-day. The Communist areas in the north are already virtually cut off from Nanking, there is a growing separatist movement in the south-west provinces of Yunan and Szechwan, and the most recent news of unrest has come from Taiwan, or Formosa, the Chinese island with six million inhabitants which was taken by the Japanese forty-five years ago, and returned to China at the end of the war.

Risings In Formosa

Throughout the period of Japanese occupation, the inhabitants of Taiwan were anxious to return to a union with China. Now that union has taken place, and the Kuomintang has flooded the island with its corrupt, tyrannical and inefficient bureaucrats, the people have become so disgusted with the plight they are in that risings have taken place and, although news from the island is officially suppressed in China, it appears that the opposition to the government is on a really large scale, and has forced the Governor to broadcast an appeal, promising to grant most of the demands of the inhabitants.

But the growing tendency to disregard the Nanking government does not only apply to these peripheral areas. Everywhere the provincial authorities are tending to disregard the central bureaucracy, and to become more or less self-sufficient.

Meanwhile, the whole Chinese economy rides rapidly to collapse. During one week in February, the Chinese dollar fell from 43,000 to 53,000 to the pound. What is much worse is the fact that the chaos of conflicting power groups has slowed up trade within the country, so that the elements of famine conditions already created by inadequate transport systems and excessive impositions on the peasants are increased by bureaucratic corruption and inefficiency. In a recent article in the *Manchester Guardian*, describing the chaos of trade in China, Walter Fletcher, M.P., who has recently visited the country, said:

"There are to-day no exports from China worth talking of. It costs two to three times as much to move commodities that the world needs from the interior of the country to a seaport as it does to ship them thence to Europe or America, and tax has to be paid in transit to three or four provincial governors and many Customs areas: they have also to pass through districts where guerillas take their cut. The cessation of exports has led to a ban on nearly all imports into China. This is not an 'iron curtain', which would be considered crude in China, but a

rubber one that is lifted at various points to admit mass smuggling which is encouraged by local and even central government."

With such conditions prevailing, it is difficult to see any great immediate hope for the people, whose distress, instead of improving since the war was ended, is rather tending to get worse, as famine and disease continue their ravages among the millions of destitute.

Distress Continues

As a miserable gesture, to compensate for their material miseries, the Chinese have been granted a Constitution which is supposed to be "democratic". It provides for a National Assembly that meets *once every three years*, and chooses from its ranks a Legislative Yuan which 'does the actual lawmaking. This is a device by which the Kuomintang, even if they cannot manage to terrorise the whole population, can at least terrorise the delegates gathered together once every three years into choosing the right "legislators".

The part of the Americans in creating this chaos is worth considering. At the end of the Japanese occupation, the Americans sent a large army of more than a hundred thousand men into China, and took over, in effect if not in name, large sections of the administration, by means of advisers. The introduction of American currency as a black market standard undoubtedly precipitated the collapse of Chinese currency. Now, the Americans have more or less pulled out of China, leaving the administration in more of a chaos than they found it, and seem to be concentrating on making their base in Japan. It remains to be seen what is their object, but it may well

be to allow the rivalries between various power groups to become so great that civil war will ensue on a large scale and some excuse will thereby arise for large-scale American intervention.

No doubt, of course, the Russians have the same eventuality in mind, and China seems to share with the Middle East the highest priority as an area in which American and Russian interests clash.

Chinese Fly To Hong-Kong

The discontent of the Chinese people with their present state of life is

shown, among other things, by the fact that a million Chinese from the mainland, of all classes from merchants to coolies, have migrated into British-controlled Hongkong, which they appear to find preferable to staying under the Kuomintang.

So far there is no evidence of any real people's movement in China. The Communist movement is organised on the Russian model, and its only appeal is that the people feel it is at least an alternative to the Kuomintang dictatorship and cannot in any case be much worse. The various local administrations which

are gaining substantial independence are as corrupt and tyrannical as the Nanking set-up. But the fact remains that the fragmentation of authority offers greater opportunities for the people to make their will felt and for genuine revolutionary movements to arise. The Chinese people have an old and tenacious tradition of autonomy and anti-militarism, which has always reasserted itself whenever it has the chance, and which may yet arise triumphant out of the chaos into which the country descends more deeply from day to day. G. W.

Changing Scene in Russia

Those who imagine the totalitarian state as a wholly rigid structure are wholly mistaken. Perhaps in some future dreamed of by dictators and party leaders, when all men will have been conditioned from birth, a naturally rigid society may ensue—although to me this seems contrary to all our knowledge of the history and growth of human organisation. However that may be, at present the dictator has no rigid society on which to base his rule. He has to deal with mutable and, from his point of view, very unreliable human beings. It is the unpredictability of political life that forces a dictatorship, whatever its apparent rigidity, to be involved in a constant inner flux, a continual changing of policy and reshuffling of persons in order to maintain the balance of forces that will keep the top crust still in place.

The history of the Nazi dictatorship was such a story, and that of the Russian Bolshevik government is an even more obvious case. Not merely have almost all the old leaders of the Revolution—except those who were fortunate enough to die naturally beforehand—been liquidated, but whole succeeding generations of leaders have been displaced in one way or another, and even the lower ranks of

the Communist Party have been subjected to such continual and violent purges that even before the war, at the 18th Party Congress in 1939, it was revealed that only 5 per cent. of the delegates had been members since before the civil war, and that, out of the 260,000 party members in 1918, only 20,000 remained within the ranks. (See *The Yogi and the Commissar*, Koestler.)

Similar changes have taken place in the governing structure of the country. The original system of genuine soviets was replaced by a mock soviet system where the organs which theoretically represented the workers were brought under the direct dominion of the party. Then this in turn was replaced by the mock parliamentary system of the 1936 constitution.

Changes In Constitution

To-day, once again, Russia is going through a series of changes in constitution, in political domination, in party organisation. In the 1936 Constitution, for instance, there was a clause guaranteeing the workers a 7 hour day. This was never adhered to in practice, and now there comes a change in wording which states that the Russian workers are to

work an 8 hour day, except in certain unspecified trades with hard conditions of work. In other words, even theoretically, the Russian workers will have to work a much longer week than the British and American workers seem likely to obtain in the near future. A second significant change is in the education clause of the Constitution. In the 1936 document it ran:

This right (of education) is ensured by universal compulsory elementary education, free of charge, including higher education, by the system of State stipends for the overwhelming majority of students in higher schools. In the new document it runs:

This right is ensured through universal compulsory elementary education; free seven-year education; a system of State scholarships to pupils who distinguish themselves in higher schools.

This change if, of course, meant to cover up the fact that the recent education decrees, re-introducing fee-paying into high schools and universities, have been in direct contradiction to the 1936 constitution.

These changes in the constitution have been accompanied by widespread changes in the party organisation. During the past year there has been a steady purge of party organisations, as well as of various administrations throughout the country, on the alleged ground that counter-revolutionary attitudes have crept in—the old way of saying that during the crisis period following the war some people have been showing their independence rather too much for the authorities.

At the head of affairs similar changes have taken place. During the war, the army leaders had great influence, and were continually in the limelight. Now they have been pushed into the background, and the lead is once more taken by the small group of men who form the Politburo, the real leading group of the party, and who also take within their power all the really important governmental posts.

The New Bosses

The names of these men are, for the most part, not those of celebrated Bolsheviks, nor does there appear among them a single one of the generals who were so much glorified in the last war. The actual names on the list are Stalin, Molotov, Beria, Zhdanov, Voroshilov, Mikoyan, Malenkov, Kaganovitch, Andreyev, Khrushchov, Zoznesensky, Bulganin, Kosygin and Shvernik. Only about four of these names are familiar to English readers, and many of them are not very well known to the Russians. They are, for the most part, ruthless administrators who have succeeded the old revolutionaries of the pre-1917 period, and who are without the least concern for anything but the efficient administration of their departments and the maintenance of the dictatorship. All of them are creatures of Stalin, and significantly, many of them made the grade as secret police organisers or heresy-hunters. Beria started as head of the Cheka in Transcaucasia, and is now in charge of all the "security services". Bulganin was an early organiser of the Cheka in Nijni Novgorod and Moscow. Kosygin gained a formidable reputation as a party purger and Trotskyist hunter. Kaganovitch carried out the—*to Stalin*—valuable task of crushing the opposition in the Ukraine.

But the changes go on continually in Russia, and no doubt these men in turn will have their ups and downs of power. But it would be rash to assume that such changes necessarily mean that the dictatorship is on its last legs. They mean that it is changing its organisation for different circumstances. But the one encouraging fact remains that humanity should, after thirty years, be so untrustworthy that purges are still the order of the day. All opposition groups have long been crushed, and yet, even in the party itself, unreliable elements continue to appear, and this fact encourages one to believe that, when the dictatorship becomes sufficiently corrupt and vitiated, there will be enough desire for liberty in people's minds to unseat it, just as Fascism in Italy was destroyed by the people after twenty years of power.

Middle East Notes

End of Military Glory

imperialist nation. That entails a sacrifice to the Army that practically no-one in England is prepared to make. Kipling's call, "Go bind your sons to exile, to serve their captives' need," is now as dead as a doornail. Britain can no longer lead the world in military glory, and to maintain a glorified scourge in Egypt in the shape of an army drains too much on the manpower she needs at home.

If we cannot lead the world in military glory, we can at least—as French observers have advised France—point the way to freedom. By boldly relinquishing all commitments—military, political and economic—in the Middle East—and setting free not only the subject nations of the Middle and Far East, but also the British soldiers and German slave-labour exiled out there—a new era in the world would open, particularly if (since the Government won't do it) the common folk at home took a lead in the game and did it themselves.

Oranges And Water

Recently, I called to mind an incident that happened in 1941, when I was lecturing in a small town at home, and to get into the hall we had to push our way through a queue for that indeed rare commodity, oranges. In the course of the lecture, on Anarchism, I told a questioner that money would be useless in a free society. I instanced water as something which even to-day, we draw as much of as we wish ("according to our needs"). My questioner raised a laugh when he said that that might be the case with water, but supposing you could walk to the grocer's and draw as many oranges as you could eat!

Last month, in Palestine, I heard about the condition of the orange groves in

1941. The planters were only too anxious for people to come and take the fruit, to prevent it rotting on the trees. There was no transport, but an excellent harvest. The Government subsidised the groves—otherwise they would have been ruined for lack of a market. *At one place the orange planter put his oranges in sacks outside, with a notice, "Please take the fruit and leave the sacks." But sacks were valuable, so passers-by took them and tipped the fruit out!* Meanwhile in England we would not have exchanged an orange for a wilderness of sacks!

The value put on goods is only because of capitalist politics. In a free society all available goods would be in the common pool, for all to take as they wished, and we would create new values, and take people's reason as the criterion for the amount they used—as we do to-day in England in regard to water.

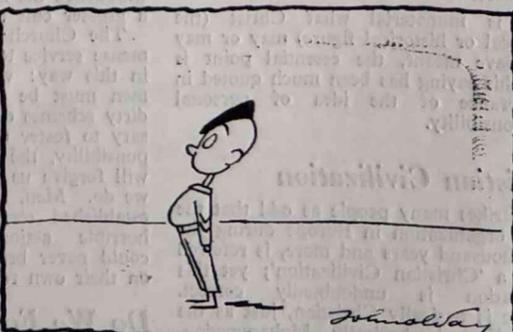
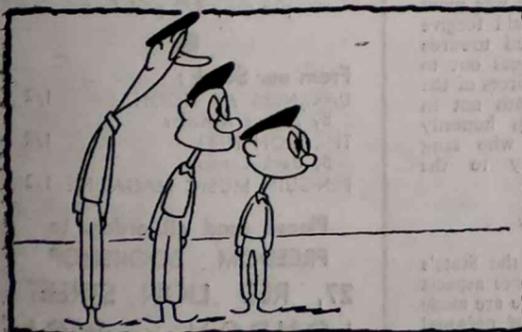
Cairo Discussion Group

On Sunday, March 2nd, the last of a series of free discussions was held in Cairo. Owing to the arrest of one or two members of the discussion group in the "anti-Red" drive of the Egyptian Government, as well as the repatriation of some of the foreign members and dispersal elsewhere of the British members, the discussion group could no longer continue its activities. However, for nearly a year now active interchange of points of view between protagonists of different minority views has been going on, the Anarchist case having been expounded by your correspondent. It is only a drop in the ocean, of course, but our case needs to be brought forward to the Middle East, and who knows whether events themselves may not persuade our rivals in friendly debate of the truth? A. M.

THE THREE MUSKETEERS—4

THE NEW ARMY (dreams and reality)

By JOHN OLDAY



"Every Man has a fair chance—No favouritism"

George Woodcock uses the B.B.C. Atomic Bomb Talks Series to discuss

ASPECTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY

THE B.B.C. recently gave a series of some twelve talks, spread over eight evenings, on various aspects of the atomic bomb and atomic energy, and, since the series was arranged elaborately, was given great publicity, and included among its speakers all the leading scientific experts on the question in England, as well as such writers as J. B. Priestley and Bertrand Russell, it was quite evidently intended to give to the public as comprehensive a survey as possible of the various problems connected with atomic energy. It may therefore be profitable to make a survey of some of the salient features of the talks and also to draw some general conclusions from an anarchist point of view.

One interesting aspect of the talks was the precision with which the scientific experts described the effects of the bomb, and the balancing imprecision with which the other experts discussed what should be done about the social problems produced by the atom bomb. It was quite clear that the situation has got them into a state of puzzled fear from which their acceptance of current social ideas can give them no satisfactory way out.

Scientists Enslaved

The series began with an introductory talk by Priestley which made an unremarkable and pessimistic opening on a general line. Then followed two wholly objective accounts of the research into the atomic bomb, the first, by Professor Cockcroft, showing no apparent concern for the results of this work, the second, by Professor Oliphant, recognising in a very frank way the kind of slavery into which the scientists have precipitated themselves by their unthinking failure to recognise their social responsibility. He remarks:

"The very success of the work of the nuclear physicists had created the most horrible of weapons in the hands of man. That first explosion in the desert destroyed the traditional freedom of the scientist, for his work now menaced the security of the world. The first military use of the bomb on Hiroshima came as a complete surprise to all nations. The security restrictions and secrecy, so hateful to the scientists, had been extremely successful. It is the fear of every man of science that these same restrictions will surround his work for evermore."

The fact, of course, is that the scientists have been led into this slavery because they followed their research without any consideration for their debt to others; they did not

realise that their own freedom of research was conditional on the attainment of freedom for all men, and that in a society based on tyranny and war their discoveries would be turned to those ends. The scientists are beginning now to awake to these facts, but whether they will use their new consciousness to any positive purpose is another question.

The Intoxication Of Power

One of the most terrifying facts about the atomic bomb has been that many people who took an active part in its construction were actually ignorant of the object of their endeavours. But, more than this, almost every one of the people who actually knew went about his work with a lack of imagination and a detachment which failed to take into account the results. How many would have started on it if they had themselves had some actual prevision of the consequences? One of the men who was actually concerned in the dropping of the bomb on Hiroshima described very frankly this mood of indifference in which the bomb was actually thrown; and, moreover, the corroding sense of power which helped to destroy any consciousness of the suffering likely to be involved. His statement stands out as sufficiently important to be quoted at length:

"The few weeks I spent on Tinian, the island in the middle of the Pacific from where the two attacks were launched, stand out in my life not so much for the sight of the bomb itself, as for the effect on myself and the others of what we were doing. Of all worldly attractions, the most vicious is that of power, and atomic energy spell power. It spelt power of destruction, power of delving into the realm of the unknown, power of being able to achieve our objective. On every one of us it had its own personal significance, and inevitably it had its effect. We, who hitherto had been occupied with ordinary affairs, became transformed temporarily into kings, as it were, of the new realm. We found ourselves in sole possession of a weapon with which an entire empire, even were it in the ascendant and not, as happened, on the verge of surrender, could be defeated overnight, by one lone aeroplane and without the least danger to ourselves. We were not soldiers waging war, for there was no opposition to stop us, but rather a research team conducting an experiment, and like all researchers, we were cold and detached. As we lay on the beach sunbathing, or sat at table eating, or even as we flew across the Japanese coast

under a faultless, sunlit sky, we gave, I am afraid, little thought to the human life that we were to cut so abruptly short. The end was too overpowering for us to pause and consider the means.

"You will probably say that the novelty has now worn off. We have had time for sober reflection. Even if you believe my account of what happened inside us on Tinian you will argue that it was born of the heat of battle, that it will not happen again, that we have learned our lesson. I doubt it. I lived through those fateful weeks, and I know that if the weapon is powerful enough, the stakes sufficiently high, and the attainment of the goal is within grasp, human nature can lose its sense of values and not even know that it has done so."

This piece of honest description of how men feel when they are in possession of such a monstrous weapon as the atomic bomb illustrates both the corrupting nature of power which the anarchists have always stressed, and also the dangers of the kind of objectivity unilluminated with social consciousness which makes the research worker so careless of the ultimate results of his action.

Risk Of War Greater

At least two of the talkers exploded very convincingly the idea which some sentimentalists have expounded that the very horror of the atomic bomb would put an end to war. Their conclusions were to the contrary. Professor Cyril Falls said:

"But now the risk of the mobilisation period and of the large-scale moves of forces and material to battle stations are greater than ever. A much bigger margin of safety is gained when they have got to their battle stations and organised them. So the time factor gets more important, and the urge to set things in motion in a period of tension grows more insistent. And that in itself is a danger to peace. Mobilisation and preliminary strategic moves might tend to bring on a war because when one nation takes precautionary action another is likely to keep step, and the series of events set in train may go to the point where a clash of forces occurs."

And Bertrand Russell shows that even the attempt to guard against a major disaster in an atomic war may breed war itself:

"To guard against the possibility of this disaster, there would be great restrictions on the admission of alien travellers, and new restraints upon native citizens whose political loyalty might be open to suspicion. Nationalism would be stimulated to a continually increasing intensity. Fear of the horrors of war, so far from promoting peace, as some optimists have imagined ever since Nobel invented dynamite,

would promote hatred of possibly hostile nations and generate the states of mind that lead to war. Sooner or later the tension would become unbearable, and war break out."

Against these possibilities what had the speakers to offer? Very little. Mere inspection, even if it were efficient, would be useless, since, as Sir George Thompson points out, the process of converting atomic energy to industrial purposes involves the preparation of materials which can be used in bombs.

Bertrand Russell comes out with the old chestnut of an international police force possessing all the atomic bombs. But this would not be any guarantee of peace. For what is to prevent the international police, intoxicated with the power in their hands, deciding to set themselves up as a new world ruling class, and attempting to terrorise the world into submission by the use of atomic bombs?

Prerequisite Of Peace

It becomes steadily more clear that, while government exists and ruling class rivalries are allowed to continue, we shall be less rather than more safe from a violently destructive war than we have been in the past. Peace will only come about when capitalism and the state are ended, and when the uses of industry are subordinated to the interests of the workers and the production of useful instead of destructive articles.

It might be argued that eventually a series of atomic wars will bring the end of states and governments and the rise of a series of small self-subsistent free communes. But we do not want to start again from scratch if we can avoid it. The workers should themselves enjoy the benefits of civilisation, or at least have the chance to choose, and to gain this the only means is to end the kind of society that encourages and even needs the atomic bomb. The workers, even in the days of atomic energy, have the last say, in that the withdrawal of their labour can still cripple any system that oppresses them. Large-scale direct action of the workers is still a force which the governments fear more than their national enemies, and which only can bring about the era of peace when we shall be exempt from the fear of man-made disasters.

GEORGE WOODCOCK.

ANARCHISM — Interpretations

"The revolution, as the power of things to-day necessarily presents it before us, will not be national, but international, —that it, universal. In view of the threatened league of all privileged interests and all reactionary powers in Europe, in view of the terrible instrumentalities that a shrewd organization puts at their disposal, in view of the deep chasm that to-day yawns between the bourgeoisie and the workers everywhere, no revolution can count on success if it does not speedily extend itself beyond the individual nation to all other nations. But the revolution can never cross the frontiers and become general unless it has in it the foundations for this generality; that is, unless it is pronouncedly socialistic, and, by equality and justice, destroys the State and establishes liberty. For nothing can better inspire and uplift the sole true power of the century, the workers, than the complete liberation of labour and the shattering of all institutions for the protection of hereditary property and of capital."

BAKUNIN.

"Father Forgive Them..."

One of the much-quoted sayings attributed to Christ is of particular significance to all interested in Anarchism. The story goes that when the Roman soldiery had nailed Christ up on the cross, He looked up to heaven and said:

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

From a Christian standpoint this may be justified by saying that the soldiers were, to their knowledge, only doing a commonplace job of crucifying an agitator—which was all in the day's work for any State official—and were not aware that they had the novel task of nailing up the Deity. Thus, their unusual act could be pardoned as they acted ignorantly and merely as a matter of duty. But the implications of this saying have been much wider. The Christian faith has encouraged a way of thinking which condones any line of action, provided that the responsibility for it can rest on other shoulders.

It is immaterial what Christ (the mythical or historical figure) may or may not have meant, the essential point is that this saying has been much quoted in furtherance of the idea of personal irresponsibility.

Christian Civilization

It strikes many people as odd that the social organization in Europe during the past thousand years and more, is referred to as a 'Christian Civilization'; yet this designation is undoubtedly correct. Europe is basically Christian, just as the Near East is basically Mohammedan. Christianity has been imposed on the people of Europe century after century

not so that the pattern of society should become more and more in accord with the Sermon on the Mount, but simply because the Christian doctrine tends to render the mass of people humble and acquiescent in the hands of their rulers. Throughout the history of our Christian calendar, moreover, whenever imperial conquerors determined to plunder and enslave new lands, the Christian faith was first spread among the native populace to debauch them, and open up the way for the armed force which followed.

Christian principles are for the governed, not for the governors. It is a cruel and terrible paradox that the humane philosophy of Christ has always been the ready instrument of the bloodiest of wars, oppression and exploitation. Christianity, enwrapped with all the beauty, drama and poetry of the Bible, wedded to all the loveliest traditions of music in its rituals, living in the wonders of architectural monuments, has indeed debauched the human heart in a way that a grosser cult could not have done.

The Church has always been of immense service to oppressive ruling classes in this way: when comparatively decent men must be induced to carry out the dirty schemes of their rulers, it is necessary to foster the idea of personal irresponsibility, the notion that 'Our Father' will forgive us when we know not what we do. Men, as soldiers, police or other established servitors, will do incredibly horrible actions—actions which they could never bring themselves to commit on their own responsibility.

Do We Forgive Them?

We read in Shakespeare that:
"... The common executioner

"Whose heart th'accustomed sight of death makes hard,
"Falls not the axe upon the humbled neck

"But first asks pardon."

This was the established custom for many centuries. It is interesting to speculate what the effect would have been on the popular profession of headsman if our forefathers had not been so besotted with Christian ideology, and instead of granting pardon to their executioners, had cursed them roundly for the beastly role they played.

Should revolutionaries let their executioners get away with the comfortable idea that it is just an awkward matter of fulfilling a duty?

It is reported that Francesco Ferrer said to the firing-squad:

"Aim well—it is not your fault."

Yet it is demonstrable that Ferrer and all men like him lose their lives precisely because of those who stupidly lend themselves to such dirty work.

Vanzetti in the electric chair was more cryptic. He said that he could forgive some of those who contributed towards his death. But one's heart goes out to all those who, trapped by the forces of the State, have gone to their death not in benign martyrdom, but in an honestly defiant spirit, like Ravachol, who sang mocking verses on his way to the guillotine.

Who Is Responsible?

At the present time, when the State's onslaught touches more and more aspects of the life of the community, we are made especially aware of this idea of personal irresponsibility of action. The policeman

(Continued on page 7)



"DARKNESS AT NOON", by ARTHUR KOESTLER. (Penguin, 1/-.)

The re-appearance of this book in a popular edition is to be welcomed, as it does represent one of the few novels which deal at all honestly with Russian Communism in action.

It is the story of the arrest of an old Bolshevik on a faked charge of counter-revolutionary activities. The central character, Rubashov, is said to represent Radek. Rubashov is taken away to a prison of the GPU, where he undergoes a process of steady wearing down until at last he confesses to what his persecutors desire, and is finally condemned and shot. As he awaits condemnation and death, he recalls the scenes of his revolutionary life, the merciless betrayal to hostile authorities of party members considered unreliable, the general corruption that comes from an easy acceptance of the philosophy of ends justifying means.

Darkness at Noon might best be described as a brilliant work of fictional journalism. It is a novel for the times, revealing "the dark side of the moon" opportunely and honestly. But I would be less sure of calling this, or any other of Koestler's works, a really great novel. There is a lack of the psychological penetration one finds in a really good novelist, as distinct from a fictional journalist; to me, at least, the mental processes by which Rubashov came to accept his guilt inwardly, as well as acknowledging it outwardly to get rid of his persecution, seemed unconvincing. It is significant that the most impressive scene in the book—where one of Rubashov's old comrades is dragged along the prison corridor to his death, while the other men drum a last salute on their cell doors—is closely connected with Koestler's own experience in a Spanish prison. Here we have the quality that distinguishes the fictional journalist from the real novelist—the lack of imaginative power, combined with a vivid ability to reconstruct and adapt scenes actually experienced.

But, for all this, *Darkness at Noon* is a book to be read, and particularly by those who are still unsure of the enormous inhumanity of the totalitarian state.

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"Father Forgive Them ..."

(Continued from page 6)

The Soil Of Tyranny.

who arrests you, the gaoler who keeps you locked up, the magistrate who sentences you, all theoretically disclaim responsibility for their ill-treatment of you. That you may be a paragon of virtue they will admit—but the Law must be served—they must do their duty. The airmen who go butchering helpless civilians may agree that their actions are open to some philosophical query—but responsibility rests with their superiors. Their immediate superiors pass the responsibility still higher, and eventually it rests on the head of that inhuman abstraction, the State.

"Father, forgive them - - -" This idea has been the pillar of much cruel despotism. The ruling class maintains its hold over the workers by means of a trick. The working class is made to be its own slave-drivers, gaolers and executioners by the ruse of gulling men into the belief that they can be innocent of the results of their own actions.

The issue is in no way moralistic; it is a matter of sheer practical reality. How then should the anarchist address himself to all those engaged in working for the State? We can address ourselves to State servants either with a revolutionary message which takes for granted that they, as individuals, have an unfortunate duty to perform, or we can come directly to the root of the matter and point out that as long as they and their fellows continue to pay tribute to this idea of inevitable "duty", all revolutionary talk is idle.

Such plain speaking is not lost on men and women in State service, for it is often the actual business of performing the functions of a cog in the State machine that brings the individual to realize the significance of his actions, and sows the seed of conscious revolt. Such revolt in the mind is important, for it convinces the individual of his responsibility and of his power, his unquestionable responsibility for the maintenance of oppression, and his power to break it by the simple act of resistance.

To say that the resistance of an individual does not make a revolution, is a platitude. Yet the whole basis of social revolution in the complete sense envisaged by the anarchist, rests on a general awakening to the fact that responsibility cannot be shelved. The individual must know what he does. The God of the Christians may forgive him for his acts of ignorant stupidity, but history will not.

The Nazi generals have been tried for the guilt of the atrocities they organized. Their accusers had a foolproof case against them in its obvious logicity, as far as it went. The only flaw in the proceedings lies in the fact that if this reasoning were carried to a logical conclusion, there would be scarcely a man among the accusers unchanged for murder. Once one admits that the soldier, or other State servant, is responsible for his deeds, then the fallacy of the whole legalistic view of justice becomes apparent.

It was fashionable during the war, to try and bamboozle the conchie on his potato patch that he was just as responsible for the slaughter as the lads who went out and did it with shot and shell. This is a tiresome form of casuistry, for whatever sins of omission individual conchies may be held responsible for, they cannot be saddled with responsibility for operations beyond their control carried out without their consent. The fighting men, however, are responsible for every death and mutilation which results from their actions. Their commanders, trainers, and all those who help to delude people into such participation, are not responsible in their stead, they are responsible as well.

This is not intended as a diatribe against soldiers. The instance of warfare is chosen here merely as a suitable example of the fact that grotesque horrors result automatically from acceptance of the fact that personal responsibility can be delegated to Authority.

Letters to the Editors

From a Temporary Postman

DEAR FRIENDS,

All of us, no doubt, have read with interest the recent letter of V. Wilson and the answer of Abbott (Jan. 18th, 1947). If the present writer is to go on his own experience, then he must agree with friend Wilson. It is all right lashing out at the oppressors, but the slaves also need the whip quite often. They hold their limbs limp for the manacles and viciously bite the hand that attempts quietly to release them.

Can it be wondered that one often feels like saying "To Hell with the Working Class!" I am trying to avoid false sentimentality, and perhaps many comrades feel the same; my motives are purely selfish, altogether a respectable selfishness: if the 'working man' be 'ignorant, miserable, or enslaved, my existence is limited by their ignorance, misery or slavery'. Bakunin expressed these feelings with more clarity than I could hope for.

When a government spokesman struts up and remarks that we must work harder and not selfishly demand better pay, the poor little slave feels ashamed, instead of wondering why the pompous 'gentlemen' of the Socialist Government grabbed a bigger pay packet for themselves as their first act on reaching power.

As a temporary postal worker in a much vaunted nationalized organization of red tape, one soon realizes where the shoe of low wages chafes. My fellow workmates (all ex-servicemen) are as disgruntled as myself, and although we have the loudest union imaginable, consisting of a pack of indifferent "representatives", still trust in it. Allowing for all the difficulties, including a number of typical blacklegs, the temporary postmen at this dump are out to get rid of the incremental scales which forces a newcomer to do the same class of work, only more of it, for as much as a pound less in his meagre packet.

How about it—those in London and other large cities—are you with us?
VERY TEMPORARY POSTMAN.

Hard Facts

DEAR COMRADES,

As a subscriber and donor to *Freedom*, I read with interest your detailed information re costs of producing the paper.

For many years I have supported revolutionary journals, and still do, but I cannot understand why the Executives have to appeal to the masses to send Funds to keep their journals going when they are sent to them at such a ridiculous price.

2d. was perhaps an economic price 7 years ago, and as much as the average worker could afford, but surely it does not apply to-day with money more plentiful, so plentiful that Football pools and Bookmakers have money to burn which they, the workers, supply.

Do you suggest that they will not pay an economic figure for *Freedom*? If they will not, then, it is time that you refused to GIVE your work and abilities to them.

No worker worthy of the name should begrudge a humble sixpence for his OWN paper. This would obviate your having to make appeals to meet your losses.

Personally, I believe that 99% of them would readily pay more, viz., a figure that was an economic one, and enabled you to feel that the "BUMS" were not coming in anytime.

If you offer a worker 2d. to-day, he would probably throw it at you, and so, I suggest that your policy of keeping *Freedom* at 2d. is a wrong one, and you are merely asking for more worry than is necessary.

3/- a YEAR, forsooth, not the price of the average worker's Pool for ONE WEEK.

I would gladly pay any price you fixed which made it possible for you to carry on without the need for appeals, which I'm afraid fall on deaf ears mostly.

I only object to them on grounds of principle; they are like the charitable appeals we have suffered from far too long in many other directions.

If your readers are invited to pay 4d. or 6d. an issue I am quite sure they WILL, and I enclose the first increase.

I invite you to publish this asking for comments. Don't let any reader think I am well off, but I do realise the insignificant value of TUPPENCE.

"RATIONALIST."

Birmingham.

From California

The controlled press in this country paints a very dark picture about the fuel shortage in England. It appears to be an attempt to frighten the people away from what they call a "socially" planned economy. The politicians are muddling public matters while meddling in personal affairs. There is considerable unrest among the people because of the mounting cost of living, and the scarcity of goods together with poor quality. Many people fear the outbreak of an atomic war due to the militarists who have become entrenched in high offices. The state department is dominated principally by high-ranking officers recently retired from the armed services. A recent poll of the cross-section of the public indicates that 36 per cent. of the people polled believe that the atomic bomb should never have been discovered and made. The general opinion seems to be that there will be an atomic war in the not too distant future. It may surprise you that some people even condemn the scientists for ever having a part in the manufacture of the atomic bomb. Despite all this and the uncertainties and fears, people in general are indifferent and apathetic, with a tendency in some cases toward despair. Many of the independent economists predict a financial "slump" the last quarter of this year, while many others believe it will come about the third quarter of 1948. Anyway you look at it, they seem to think it will come within the next year. Last month (January) more people "cashed in" their government bonds than ever before, and more savings was withdrawn from the banks than since the days of the "Big Depression". It seems we are witnessing the throes and convulsions of a dying civilisation.

E. V. J.

VICTIMS ARE VALUABLE RECRUITS

The placing of men with dust diseases in ancillary employment under the Coal Board is to be discussed with the National Union of Mineworkers.

"In South Wales alone," said Mr. Edwards, "some 4,000 men suffering from these diseases are unemployed or working outside the industry."

"We want to bring them all back to the pits in some job or other. They will be valuable recruits."

"We want all the industry's above-ground jobs to be filled by the industry's victims."

Daily Mirror, 10/3/47.

HOUSES FOR OFFICES

Westminster City Council is trying to prevent 43 luxury flats in Ashley-gardens, Victoria-street, being taken over as offices by the Ministry of Food.

The flats—in three blocks—each have seven rooms, kitchen and bathroom. The City Housing Committee estimate that nearly 100 families could be housed in them.

They were occupied for several years by Poles, who recently moved out.

The Ministry of Health has informed the council that the flats, instead of being released for housing some of Westminster's 1,800 homeless families, are being allocated to the Ministry of Food for office purposes.

Daily Mail, 28/2/47.

STRAIGHT ANSWER

"Is the court to understand that you spend all your money on drink?"

"No, your worship . . . a lot goes in fines."

Evening News, 10/3/47.

DEPT. OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

There, according to a local newspaper, Walter Higgs, recently the Tory M.P. for West Birmingham, New Zealand, used these words:

"Empty bellies are the one thing that will make Britons work. Empty bellies will force the miners back to the pits. It's the only economic way."

Daily Herald, 10/3/47.

(i) NEWS ITEM

A total of 305 people were frozen to death in Berlin between December 11 and February 26.

Daily Mirror, 10/3/47.

(ii) POSSIBLE EXPLANATION

Electrical current is being allowed to Hamburg citizens on two nights a week only, Berlin radio said last night.

Only the families of Allied nationals could expect coal deliveries.

Daily Mirror, 3/3/47.

TEAM WORK

Sir John Anderson, chairman of the Government's Advisory Committee on Atomic Energy, said in a broadcast last night:

"But for Britain's help, atomic bombs would not have been available as early as the middle of 1945."

Daily Mirror, 10/3/47.

THE ROYAL TOUR

Police drew clubs and riding whips to control 20,000 natives who knocked down wire barriers when the royal train stopped at Bloemfontein to-day. The natives drew back, and the police did not have to use their weapons.

Daily Express, 8/3/47.

DEPT. OF SOCIAL ANALYSIS

What is this crisis? Fuel? Power? Finance? Weather? No. These are serious and annoying, but the crisis is that morality and family life in England are endangered.—Archbishop of Westminster. *Evening Standard*, 28/2/47.

TO HIM THAT HATH

It is to be hoped that food will rank with manpower, fuel and exports, as a vital matter for discussion. The following table, based on a 1937-8 Ministry of Labour inquiry into urban working-class budgets, and reproduced from yesterday's *Sunday Times*, shows the deterioration in British diet over the last decade:

	WEEKLY AMOUNTS PER HEAD	
	Working class Consumption 1937-38	Present Ration
Meat	1 lb. 4 oz.	
Bacon and Ham	1s. 6d. (a)	1s. 0d.
Bread and Flour	6 oz.	3 oz.
Fresh Milk	4 lb. 12 oz. plus 3½ d. worth cakes, etc.	3 lb.
Butter	3 pints	3 pints (b)
Margarine	plus 2d. worth of cream.	
Lard	7½ oz. }	6 oz. (c)
Cheese	3 oz. }	
Sugar	2 oz.	1 oz.
Eggs	1 lb. 7 oz.	2 oz.
	3½	8 oz.
		1 (d)

(a) At present prices; (b) Including allowance for school milk; (c) Of which butter is not more than 3 oz.; (d) Average non-priority allocation in 52 weeks ended September, 1946.

★
Caviare at £10 10s. a pound is on sale at a grocery shop in South Audley-street, Mayfair. Demand exceeds supply; in four months the shop has sold 400 lb.

The stock also includes paté de foie gras at 35s. a tin, marron glacé at 8s. 6d. a pound and almond oil at 25s. a bottle. *Evening Standard*, 10/3/47.

LITTLE BO PEEP DEPT.

A dispute between the Rev. D. H. Ashford Smith, rector of the parish church, and Father Roberts, of the Roman Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart, is raging at Frinton-on-Sea, Essex.

For Mr. Smith has accused Father Roberts of "sheep-stealing", the sheep in this case being human ones who once belonged to the Church of England flock but have entered the Roman Catholic fold.

It all began when Miss D. M. Palmer, of Walton-road, Walton-on-Naze, who had attended the parish church for some years, became a Catholic and was received into the Church of the Sacred Heart.

Mr. Smith described her conversion both verbally and in print as "sheep-stealing". *Sunday Dispatch*, 9/3/47.

WHAT OTHER SECRET SERVICES?

A sum of £2,500,000 "to defray the charge of his Majesty's foreign and other secret services" is included in the Civil Estimates for Central Government and Finance issued yesterday.

Daily Express, 8/3/47.

Through the Press

SECOND EVICTION ?

After being forced out into the snow with all his furniture, his wife, and his two children, Frank and Shirley, from the house they had occupied for five years in Farnham-road, Slough, Mr. Albert Shrubbs now faces the possibility of a second eviction.

Just under a week ago the Shrubbs were turned out of their rooms under a court order, and the furniture had to be left on the pavement. The Slough Council lent Mr. Shrubbs, a former N.F.S. man wounded in the London blitz, a lorry so that he could store it for the time being in their depot.

After several days of tramping the streets, Mr. Shrubbs found a place to stay in Farnham-road, and got his wife and two children into the house where a friend had rooms in Eastcroft-road nearby.

Now, I understand, the owner of the Eastcroft-road house has approached her lawyer with a view to regaining total possession of her property.

Evening News, 10/3/47.

SO NICE TO COME HOME TO

Many men who a year or so ago were singing, "When I put my civvy clothes on, Oh how happy I shall be!" are finding their way to the nearest recruiting office. And the Army seems to be their first choice.

Latest figures available at London's Central Recruiting Office—those for last month—showed an increase of 16 per cent. in the number of enlistments.

I asked some of these ex-Servicemen their reasons for joining up again. A 28-year-old Acton lorry driver who had seen six years' Army service, was "fed up with Civvy-street." He said he missed the comradeship of Service life.

"I didn't have a secure job to return to," he added. "I intend making the Army my career."

Another Londoner with six years' service said: "Civilian life is grim. I always had more money in my pocket in the Army. I seem to be constantly broke now."

The Star, 10/3/47.

FOR OUR WOMEN READERS

Nothing sets off a beautiful woman so well or goes so well with a mink coat as a Borzoi, that silky, slinky hound, which looks too aristocratic to live in a rough world.

Now I am told that the Borzoi is enjoying a boom even though other breeds of big dogs are going out of favour.

Because of their grace and beauty there is an extraordinary demand for these dogs as women's pets.

Borzoi are difficult to rear, subject to distemper when young and become a bundle of nerves if treated harshly. But if they are reared by women who understand their temperament they develop into hardy, affectionate and intelligent animals and make excellent house dogs.

Incidentally, Borzoi thrive on cold weather and are best when kennelled out of doors. They eat little more than a fox terrier. It is best to buy them at six months.

The Star, 10/3/47.

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

Lord Dukes—"Charlie"—to trade unionists—has been appointed a director of the Bank of England. He was general secretary of the National Union of General and Municipal Workers, twice Socialist M.P. for Warrington, and started work at the age of 11 as an errand boy in his native town of Stourbridge.

News Chronicle, 1/3/47.

BREAD AND CIRCUSES

If mid-week sport is to be stopped, don't let there be any hypocrisy about it. Don't let it be stated that it is to save fuel.

If the electricity companies are forced to shed their load in the afternoons, and if the coal allocation is going to be as low for industry as is now forecast, the need will be not to stop mid-week sport, but to find some way to keep the unemployed reasonably contented.

Daily Express, 8/3/47.

HELPING FATHER

Sir Stanley Jackson is dead—and English sportsmanship loses one of its greatest champions.

He died yesterday in London, aged 76—after a life which had seen him become not only a great cricketer, but a politician (Con., M.P. for Howdenshire, Yorks, 1915-27, Tory Party chairman 1923-26), and an administrator (Financial Secretary, War Office, 1922-23, and Governor of Bengal, 1927-32).

In 20 years of first-class cricket he scored 15,824 runs and took over 1,000 wickets. He played for England under W. G. Grace—played against Australia 20 times.

His fag at Harrow was Winston Churchill.

In three years in the Eleven he took 11 Eton wickets and scored 108. "I'm glad. It will do my father so much good," was his only comment—his father was then a member of the Cabinet.

Daily Herald, 10/3/47.

LEGAL AID

American Army Corporal Fred Martin, granted a divorce at Detroit, asked the judge to make out an order to prevent him from marrying for two years.

"I need it for my own protection," said Martin. "There are too many good-looking girls round here."

The judge agreed. "But I can send you to gaol if you do marry," he warned.

Daily Mail, 28/2/47.

HAPPY ENDING

I was talking with a man the other evening who had sat in on some of the atomic energy discussions. He said that among his scientist acquaintances in that field, if you can call it a field, the talk was not of the next world war but of the coming interplanetary wars.

"But why," I asked, "should we want to go to war with other planets?"

"Because," he explained with mild impatience, "it is pretty generally believed we will go to war with them."

News Chronicle, 8/3/47.

A DESERTER WHO SURRENDERED

Describes Court Martial Procedure

DEAR SIR,

It was with great interest that I read your article campaigning for an amnesty for deserters. It was only to-day that I saw your article, and I am writing to give you some true facts. I was a deserter for 3 years, and I surrendered to the civil police on the 30th January, 1947. I was taken from the police station by Military Police to Whitehall detention cells where, on arrival, I had all my belongings taken from me, as well as my shoe laces and braces, and was put into a cell.

I had a bed, made of planks of wood, and a block of wood for a pillow. I was then issued with three dirty blankets and a small mattress. All this happened on Thursday, the 30th of January. I was wakened at 5 o'clock in the morning and my bedding was taken away and I was left alone in a cold cell all day, and only allowed out to collect my meagre meals, and had to eat them in the cells. This carried on until Sunday morning, the 2nd February, and then an escort awaited me, and I was handcuffed and taken to Barnard Castle, Co. Durham.

On arrival there, I was put into the guardroom until the Tuesday, and I was then issued with a uniform. On the 17th of February, I was before a court-martial charged with desertion, and I was told by my defending officer to plead guilty to desertion, so that he could put in a plea of mitigation.

The Prosecuting Officer had to

advise the Court President as to the procedure, all during my trial. On the 6th of March, I heard my sentence, and was awarded 18 months detention. I naturally appealed against such a severe sentence, as the Government had promised us leniency, but my defending officer told me to withdraw my appeal, as my sentence could be raised. I took his advice, as naturally I didn't want to spend more time in detention than necessary, as my young wife is ill, after hearing my sentence, and my little boy is fretting for me.

I am due any day now to go to a proper detention barracks and serve my sentence, which consists of drill and learning over again the components of a rifle, etc. I am of the opinion that this is a sheer waste of time and manpower. I consider I would be more useful to the country, back in my civilian occupation of skilled motor mechanic, and I would also be saving the taxpayers' money, instead of having it wasted on men like me in detention.

I would be extremely grateful, sir, if you could print my story and let the ordinary people know how we, the surrenders, are being treated, and the sentences imposed. I have no objection to my name, number and Regiment being quoted.

I am, sir,
Your obedient servant,

(We have withheld name and address, which were supplied by our correspondent, for obvious reasons.—Eds.)

TOO MUCH SEX?

THE recent Cornock case, with its background of sexual perversion, has raised the question in the press as to whether such matters should be publicly ventilated or not. The *pros* and *cons* were debated in the *Sunday Pictorial*, and some of the views expressed invite comment. "Before last week," writes Mary Sinclair, "I was hardly aware that these things went on. Now that I know they do—and I wish to heaven that I was as ignorant to-day as I was a week ago—I can see the dangers which beset impressionable young men and girls... and even schoolchildren." Now informed people may be well enough aware of the fact of sexual perversion; but it is likely that the great majority of the population are ignorant. And their ignorance is not very effectively dispelled by the half-hints of the Sunday press, and the inscriptions on lavatory walls. Half-ignorance is inevitably even more pernicious than full ignorance.

In favour of full discussion, Geoffrey Carr based his arguments on the fact that unless one knows the dangers, how can children and women be protected? Neither seemed to be bothered by the fact that widespread perverse practices in sex indicates a sickness in sexual life in general in our society. But it is clear that a rational approach is required, when one finds sexual perversion—surely a matter for pity and commiseration—being held up to such odium. "Disgusting," "filthy," "shameful," "odious"—this is not the language of reason. But it makes clearer the secret emotional satisfactions which the more prurient section of the Sunday press make it their business to supply. No such hysteria would be possible in a clean and healthy atmosphere on sexual topics.

Too Much Sex!

But what has all this to do with *Freedom*? Several of our correspondents have suggested that we devote "too much space to sex". Let us say straight away that we consider that any matter which touches the wellsprings of human motives and human happiness comes within the province of those who look for a better world. Whatever the exact importance one attaches to sexual matters, there can be no question of their very considerable significance in human misery and happiness. And the public comments made about the Cornock case indicate only too clearly how lacking is a human and rational approach in general. Neglect of such a question carries very serious dangers, for to try and provide a social environment which will permit of human freedom and self-development, while denying the importance of the very things which pre-occupy every normal individual for a considerable proportion of their days and nights—such a course certainly does not commend itself to reason.

Prejudice And Unwanted Children

Nor is the question of a rational sexual attitude without practical applications here and now. Another Sunday paper, *Reynolds News*, has drawn attention to the plight of many hundreds of half-caste children, the off-spring of coloured U.S. soldiers and English women, who are now unwanted, and whose future is fraught with all the cruelty that prejudice invariably brings with it. *Reynolds* has made attempts to suggest solutions. Coloured couples in America are willing to adopt these unwanted kids; but immigration red tape is inevitably obstructive. It is urged that the children should be cared for at public expense; but behind that phrase lies the cold shadow of the public orphanage, with all the love-starvation which is so stunting to the young, even when it does not cover more positive harms. These are the "remedies" to which good-hearted people are driven. But driven by what—if not by prejudice regarding illegitimacy, race prejudice and the rest of the obscurantist business? Until all such obsolete prejudice is cleared away by the expression of a rational and humane attitude on sexual matters, the world will continue to heap cruelty and neglect on unwanted children—not merely of mixed marriages, but of the off-spring of all sexual relations which do not remain on a voluntary basis of mutual affection and contentment. If *Freedom* contributes to destroy sexual obscurantism, we shall not consider in retrospect that we have devoted "too much space to sex".

NORTH EAST LONDON
ANARCHIST GROUP

A GROUP MEETING
TUESDAY, 15th APRIL at 7.30 p.m.
at 43, NEW WANSTEAD
(Near Whipps X) E.17

DISCUSSIONS led by H.G. HANMER

on
"What Do You Understand by
Anarchism?"

All Enquiries to:—
The Secretary, c/o Freedom Press.

Meetings and Announcements

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The Freedom Defence Committee
and Civil Liberty To-day

MARCH 30th. G. Pittock Buss
The Drama as a Social Force

APRIL 6th. Gerald Vaughan
The Social Implications of Reich's
Sexology

Admission Free. Questions invited

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(Lancashire)

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in CHORLEY

at the ODDFELLOWS' ROOMS,
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Lecturer—ALBERT SMITH, B.A.

SUN. MARCH 30th

Science—its meaning and Technique

SUN. APRIL 13th

Godwin and Malthus

SUN. APRIL 27th

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A World Safe for Hypocrisy

(Continued from page 1)

noticed that they intended to return a mere 100,000.

The Russian figure is an obvious understatement. The American news letter *Looking Ahead* (31st December, 1946), which contains a carefully documented study on Russian concentration camps, estimates that the MVD (alias NKVD, alias GPU), "has now at its disposal 3,000,000 German, Italian, Finnish, Hungarian and Japanese war prisoners. The latter are co-operating with the millions of civilian wards of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to build railways, highways, strategic airfields in the great stretches of Siberia. Referring to the foreign little helpers, the *Irkutsk Pravda* recently wrote that the new Siberian railroad will be the largest transport construction job in the current Five Year Plan".

We can be sure that righteous indignation will be expressed in unexpected quarters about this slave labour. It may not be unsuitable to recall that:

1. Russia has been using slave labour for the past twenty years; it has become an essential feature of its industrial development and is responsible for some of the greatest achievements of the Socialist State.

2. That France and England are also using German slave labour. Whether it is on a smaller scale and the prisoners are better treated is beside the point.

We think that slave labour should be exposed, condemned and abolished and not merely used to score a point round conference tables. We condemn it whether it is applied by Russians to Russians or by French, British and

Americans to Germans.

A German recently expressed the view to a journalist that the war had been fought to make the world safe for hypocrisy. The Moscow Conference will certainly not dispel this view. While the public in Britain and America look at this meeting with indifference the German people are closely following the discussions and these can only have the effect of making them lose the little faith they may have left in "democracy". This would not be a bad thing in itself, but if it is not counteracted by demonstrations of working class solidarity on the part of the workers of the Allied countries, peoples will be identified with their governments and the seeds of another world war will be scattered.

Bevin may have been raised to power as a representative of the workers but his policy only represents the interests of British and American capitalists and will bring new misery to the working class.

WANTED: 2,000 New Readers!
Are you helping to introduce new readers to *FREEDOM*? Have you asked your newsagent to stock the paper?

Can you sell a few copies among your friends? We can supply you with copies of the current issue (6 copies 1/-, 12 copies 2/- post free).

DISPERSE THIS CLOUD!

AN acquaintance who is on the editorial staff of a national magazine was shown a copy of "Freedom" recently, and his first remark was "Do you actually bring this out every fortnight?" "How do you manage the editing?" In fact, he could not believe that "Freedom" represented the voluntary effort of a few people. And indeed, looking through the balance sheet of a small weekly paper, the contents of which represented approximately one half of that contained in "Freedom", we noticed that some £3,000 was spent in a year on wages and salaries for the editorial staff. Admittedly, the problems of a weekly are always considerably greater than for a fortnightly. Nevertheless they are not in the proportion of £3,000 to £0!

We mention this not because we expect to be paid for our work, nor as a criticism of the other paper's £3,000 salary bill (it's their affair), but in order to convince our readers that the production of "Freedom" regularly each fortnight demands considerable time and thought on the part of those responsible for its production and distribution. But how much more difficult and tiring this can be when one works under a cloud, only few, apparently, of our readers have so far appreciated.

The "cloud" is the financial situation of Freedom Press. The paper lives a hand-to-mouth existence, and much of the editors' time is spent in asking themselves where the money for the next issue will come from. Is it really fair to expect people to run a paper under such conditions? Are there really so few comrades who are concerned with lightening our burden? As we have already indicated there are two ways to help: regular contributions to the Press Fund and helping to increase the circulation of the paper by making yourselves responsible for distributing a certain number of copies of each issue of "Freedom". By so doing you will disperse the cloud and at the same time have done something to introduce more people to the Anarchist ideas.

Press Fund

Feb. 25th — March 13th.

London: P.H.S. £1/0/0; London: J.B. 10/-; Horwich: W.H.B. 4/-; Sympathiser 10/-; Anon 4d.; Leeds: A.E. 4/-; Colwyn Bay: W.D.R. 5/-; Wadebridge: F.E.R. 6d.; Wallasey: K.H.J. 5/-; Detroit: A.V.P. £1/0/0; New Haven, Conn.: J.P. 17/6; Anon 2/6; Horley: B.G. 1/4; Glasgow: G.G. 4/-; London: H.C. 5/-; Newton Abbot: E.D. 1/2; Horley: B.G. 2/-; M.E.F.: A.M. 2/-.

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