

Freedom

AN ANARCHIST FORTNIGHTLY

'MONEY IS THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL'

REACTIONS to the Cripps Budget have been many and varied. The public reacts according to the way its standard of living is affected by the proposals. Those who have made fortunes by increases in duty or purchase tax will be prejudiced in their judgment of the Budget as a whole, as will those to whom the Budget means simply an extra 2d. on cigarettes and a 1d. on beer. Similarly, the politicians in the Opposition have seized on those points which they think will be useful propaganda in their efforts to win popular support by blackening the Government.

The Government on the other hand cannot be said to have aimed at popular support. If one attempts to draw political inferences from the budget proposals, it would seem that this time they have concentrated their efforts on the middle-class vote, which has obviously been causing the Party much concern at recent by-elections, by granting certain concessions in taxation and allowances on earned incomes. So far as the "working-class" vote is concerned, obviously they can afford to wait until a future budget, nearer the time of the next general elections, to knock off a few coppers on beer, and tobacco.

Much has been made of the Capital Levy, and judging by Conservative propaganda one would imagine that the poor rich have been ruined. The Government can only be delighted by the unwarranted praise this propaganda must be winning for them among workers who have long advocated a Capital Levy, but how "ruinous" it is to the rich is shown by an example of its effect, quoted in the *Evening Standard* (7/4/48):

"Lady Mountbatten has an estimated gross income of £60,000 from the investment of £2,000,000 capital. On this she pays around £55,000 in income tax and surtax. The new levy will claim some £30,000 extra. So her total payment will now be £85,000.

This is £25,000 more than her income. Lady Mountbatten must find it out of capital."

Which means that Lady Mountbatten will be left with £1,975,000, instead of £2,000,000!

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VERY little interest is shown by the popular press, however, in the proposed expenditure for the current financial year. The Chancellor estimated expenditure at £2,976 millions, of which £500 millions would be spent on "interest and management of the National Debt", £693 millions on Defence, and £29 millions for cost of tax collection. That is £1,222 millions or 41% of the total budgeted expenditure for the financial year. Translated in terms of labour hours this figure reaches astronomical proportions. Taking the average weekly earnings for operatives in all industries as a basis, this figure of £1,222 millions is the equivalent of 9,760 million labour hours. For what? To pay interest on a National Debt of some £24,000 millions, to equip and maintain an Army, Navy and Air Force, and to pay for a horde of unproductive Civil Servants who collect the taxes to pay the interest from which they collect a tax to pay more interest and so on *ad infinitum*.

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WE are often told by people who are not in principle ill-disposed to anarchist ideas, that however much they try they cannot imagine how society could exist without money. For our part, when we read the perennial statements of Chancellors of the Exchequer, we are amazed how sane people can go on accepting the money system. The only ones who benefit by it are those who succeed in using the money system to live on the backs of the working community. And they are in a very small minority. In 1946, the total working population was 20,523 million of which 17,327 million were in industry, the remainder being engaged in such non-productive occupations as the Armed Forces (2 millions), Civil Defence, N.F.S. and Police (88,000) or simply drawing unemployment benefits. There total income for that year was £3,020 millions in wages and £1,675 millions in salaries: total £4,695 millions. In the same year income from Rent, Interest and Profits totalled £2,567 millions!

WE now come to that section of the Community for whom the money system has some point, and who obviously find the system practical and desirable. Our Government statisticians provide us with the illuminating figures that there were in 1944/45 125,001 persons with incomes liable to surtax, and that the incomes assessed amounted to £568 million. 50 of these had incomes exceeding £100,000 a year, which is more than the average industrial worker could earn by his honest toil (even if he discovered the secret of prolonging the normal span of life) for to do so would take him no less than 400 years.

It is said by apologists of the Labour Party that high taxation of the rich will bring about a levelling-up of incomes. The fact that the Labour Party is not opposed to the money system should be evidence enough that they do not seek to abolish privilege. For the one cannot exist without the other.

"Money is the root of all evil," says the popular refrain and no truer words were uttered. Money is at the root of greed, envy and jealousy; it is at the root of dishonesty with oneself and with one's fellow beings; it is at the root of shoddy workmanship and bad industrial conditions, and in the final analysis, it is at the root of war and utter misery.

And instead of reacting, as one would to the plague, millions of people in this country spend their leisure hours filling in football pool coupons, studying racing form, queuing up at the greyhound racing totalisators in desperate efforts to catch the disease. **AND TO THE TUNE OF ONE THOUSAND MILLION POUNDS STERLING PER ANNUM!**

'THIRD DEGREE' TRIAL

A Sign of the Times

THE least interesting feature of the Bad Nendorf trial was the verdict, and though Lieut. Langham was acquitted, the procedure effectively condemned the practice of "interrogation".

Langham was charged with "disgraceful conduct of a cruel kind" towards Germans. It is to the credit of the court that the fact that the two Germans who had been maltreated were former SS. men was not at any point considered a justification for cruelty towards them. They had been subjected to long interrogations of an exhausting character, had been beaten up, and according to some of the prosecution witnesses had been chased up and down a cold cell naked.

The admissions of cruelty are very significant. The Judge Advocate in his summing-up said that "it was quite certain that a certain amount of violence had been administered to both of the men with the object of trying to get statements out of them." One of the witnesses said that prisoners often made statements in order to "please the interrogator". These things were not in question. The court was only required to decide whether Langham knew of them or not.

It is not surprising that certain misgivings about public procedure in this case should have been felt. Part of the evidence was heard in camera. After a considerable period in Germany, the court was transferred to Chelsea. Doubtless there are valid official reasons for all this, but it is possible to sense a feeling of uncomfortable disquiet. Perhaps the long delay—almost two years—between the commission of the offences and the trial also reflects this uneasiness.

Third Degree Trend

Third degree methods used in Nazi Germany or Soviet Russia or capitalist America are looked upon with disfavour (to put it no more strongly) in this coun-

Political Terror In Bulgaria

IN the "Camp of Death" (Kutzian) and the "Camp of Ghosts" (Bogdanoff Dol), the anarchist internees are the worst treated. The space per man in these camps is two yards long, one foot wide and two feet high. A coffin could hardly be narrower. Water is scarce, hygiene unknown. The doctor is not allowed to order even dying people to rest if their number exceeds 1% of the prisoners. The food is described as "the worst that can exist in Bulgaria. The sugar and fat rations are merely theoretical as the officers sell them on the black market.

At Kutzian, the food for a thousand mine-workers is cooked in boilers designed for 200-250 men's meals. At Bogdanoff Dol, the meals for a 15-hour working day are prepared in quantities corresponding to 70-80 military rations and distributed to 200. Starvation, overwork, ill-treatment, the complete disappearance of food and clothing parcels since the 1st of January, result in the prisoner's death. According to evidence published by *Umanita Nova* (21/3/48), the anarchist prisoners are especially victimised. They are obliged to toil without interruption all day long and sometimes during the night. 36 hours of continuous forced labour is no exception. Healthy men are reduced in a few months to walking corpses; then they are sent back home to avoid the trouble of letting them die in the camp.

One of the most common punishments is known as "counting the stars". It consists of having to stay the whole

night out of doors, under rain, snow or frost, while the guards prevent the victim from moving. Two, three, five or ten consecutive nights of such suffering have been endured by our comrades, for the most trivial offences, while they have also had to work during the day.

An anarchist was sent "counting the stars" for having escorted to his bed a fellow prisoner suffering from fainting fits. Another spent ten nights on his feet, motionless because he did not get up, during the meal, when an official passed by. "Collective responsibility" is applied, a group, a barrack, or the entire camp being punished for an individual case. All the anarchists in the camp are frequently subjected to wholesale punishment, for instance, by depriving them of the food which they share out between themselves.

"He who lets the world, or his own portion of it, choose his plan of life for him, has no need of any other faculty than the apeline one of imitation. He who chooses his plan for himself employs all his faculties."

JOHN STUART MILL.

The reason for the detention of our comrades, and the tortures they have to undergo is openly expressed in a recent ministerial declaration: "Whoever is not with us is the People's foe, and ought to be punished without any pity."

Among the People's foes dying at Kutzian, were recently boys of 14, who remained two months. A dozen Turkish boys are still at Bogdanoff Dol, together with old men of 70.

Tito's visit to Bulgaria last winter, was the occasion for wholesale arrests in the working populations of Varna, Jambol, Plovdiv, Hascovo, Kritshim, Kazanlik, etc.

But all that tyranny is not yet sufficient to break down the idealism of the Bulgarian Anarchists, and they keep the sympathy of the people. For this reason, a more widespread terror is in preparation. An outcry of indignation and protest from the whole world is needed if Georg Dimitroff is to be prevented from giving the order for extermination to the gangs of professional killers he has inherited from the bloody regime which was fought by the Bulgarian workers in the recent past.

—Provisional Secretariat for International Relations (S.P.R.I.), Paris.

Elections in Italy

THE Italian elections might have been expected to interest mainly the inhabitants of Italy. But, in fact, few national events have excited so much world-wide interest and attention. And in America this interest is carried to the extent of judging aspects of U.S. foreign policy by its likely effect on the election in Italy: for when the House of Representatives, on the recommendation of its Foreign Affairs Committee decided to extend the Marshall Plan for European relief to Franco Spain, the opposition pointed to the effect of such a decision in Italy. Representative Emmanuel Celler, for instance, declared: "The effect of this action upon the Italian elections will be catastrophic."

This widespread interest in Italian politics is not difficult to explain. The Christian Democrats and the Vatican look to America for support, and the U.S. Government is only too glad to utilise them as the lever for American policies in Italy and Europe. On the other side are the nominees of Russia, the Italian Communists and the Nenni Socialists who favour collaboration with them. Italy is a "political battlefield" not only, or even mainly, for Italians, but for the great power block of the West and East that face each other throughout

the globe.

The American Government had already opened its electoral campaign by offering Trieste to Italy. This move put the Communists in a most difficult position, for in a fever of nationalism Togliatti, the Communist leader, had personally argued the claims of Italy to Trieste with Tito. "But for Togliatti, Tito would never even have recognised Trieste as an Italian city." Now, because the offer of Trieste comes from the U.S. instead of the U.S.S.R. (or Cominform) the Italian C.P. has to repudiate and denounce it. This shrewd American blow has made a big problem for the C.P. and their speakers have a difficult task to defend their change of line over Trieste.

Arms Dumps

Luigi Longo, head of the Communist shock brigades, has threatened that if a Communist victory at the polls is not recognised, they will use "our own methods". But this does not necessarily mean that the C.P. are prepared to seize power by violence. Another Communist leader, Terracini, has said, "If we fail to win we accept our destiny," and defined that as an opposition minority which criticizes.

Nevertheless, much interest has been aroused by the finding of dumps of arms. In order to encourage the handing in of arms, the government has prescribed heavy penalties for possession of such, but granted no action against those who surrender them before a certain date. The result has been a tremendous increase in the number of weapons handed in.

Don Sturzo, the anti-fascist Christian Democrat leader, has derided the idea that the Communists will ever take to the mountains and form guerillas. He points out that the formation of a so-called Popular Front shows a weakness in the C.P., (Continued on page 4)

police and a young A.T.S. girl. Sir David Robertson asked in parliament, "Is it not a fact that this young woman was placed in a chair in a room without witnesses while a policewoman kept walking around her hurling at her allegations that she had committed a crime which, of course, she did not commit; and that as a result, the girl's health broke down and she had to go to hospital?" He described the incident as savouring "of third degree", and when Chuter Ede said he would investigate the allegations against the police, pointed out that they were already confirmed by the War Office.

These are the trends which follow the "war to end Fascism".

A General Trend

The Langham trial is not an isolated happening. A further trial is now in progress at Bad Nenndorf involving the Camp medical officer, which we shall report on in due course. But the Third Degree is also coming to light in this country, for the Home Secretary was recently driven into a very weak defensive position regarding the Wiltshire

ON the 10th April, 1848, occurred the last farcical event of the Chartist movement, a pathetic incident which also represents the main contribution of England to the history of the revolutionary movements of 1848. But it was an event which can only be appreciated by its relationship to the history of English working-class activity during the preceding twenty years, and I therefore think it necessary to preface it by a brief summary of that tragic story of misplaced devotion and exploded hopes.

The oppression of Pitt and Castle-reagh during the first decades of the nineteenth century effectively kept down the spirit of revolt which had made itself shown among the British working-class during the years immediately following the French revolution of 1789. The lingering relics of the various Jacobin organisations had been effectively destroyed, attempts at industrial organisation among the workers had been suppressed, and the vast influence which Godwin's anarchist ideas wielded over people of all classes from 1793 up to about 1800 had dwindled almost to nothing with the corruption of the intellectuals and the diversion of popular attention to patriotic ends during the Napoleonic wars. Godwin himself lingered on to 1836, a neglected and maligned old man, and the influence of his ideas survived only indirectly, in the poems of Shelley and the social ideas of Robert Owen.

The Re-action of 1800-20

During this period the press was effectively gagged by the imposition of a heavy stamp duty on newspapers, all attempts at radical organisation were destroyed, and the workers were beguiled and betrayed by the most contemptible set of police spies and provocateurs that history has yet recorded. As a result of the activity of these men, many workers were executed for movements of revolt into which they had been incited by government agents waiting to betray them; the British government had

used the middle-class fear of Napoleon to create in England a reign of terror as thorough and as bloody as that of Robespierre.

By the early 1820's, deprived of the useful bogey of war abroad, the British ruling class found itself obliged to give way to the growing popular discontent. The more sinister figures who had governed the country disappeared, being replaced by kid-glove rulers like Peel. The system of oppression by military forces, supported by provocateurs and informers, was superseded by the foundation of Peel's police force, who proved more efficient and who, when the occasion arose, were always ready to deal brutally with political demonstrations.

Faced by unrest they could deal with in no other way, the government were forced to give in to Place's campaign for legalising trade unions, and by Acts of Parliament in 1824-5 the old Combination laws and the Judges' Common Law rulings against Trade Unions were revoked, and from that date the workers began to organise widely on an industrial basis. Some of these early trade unionists had already an advanced idea of the function of the industrial organisations in promoting social change, and prominent among these was John Doherty, who in 1830 started the first comprehensive industrial organisation, the National Association for the Protection of Labour. Many industries began to organise themselves, and by 1831

Doherty's organisation had 100,000 members, in addition to which there were many unions who stood aloof. Furthermore, 1830 saw the last great uprising of the landworkers of England, who demanded better wages, lower rents, a less harsh poor law system, and supported their demands by burning ricks and destroying machinery throughout the South and East of England. They showed an exemplary restraint from violence, but their rising scared the government into a terroristic repression, during which nine men were hanged and nearly a thousand transported or sent to prison.

The Reform Red-Herring

Meanwhile, the middle-class manufacturing and commercial classes were pressing for a share in the government of the country, and, headed by the Whigs already in parliament, were pressing for a parliamentary reform which would give them this. Very adroitly, they used the Reform agitation as a means of diverting the attention of the workers from their economic demands; a reformed parliament, it was said, would provide for the needs of the workers. Thus they managed to quieten the industrial activity of the unions, so that the colliery owners were able to smash the miners' unions, and Doherty's N.A.P.L., with its idea of using industrial action to change the economic structure of society, dwindled to nothing. Some of the

unions remained, and there was a growth in the early 1830's of a strong Owenite co-operative movement, based on genuine producers' co-operation, but in general the attention of the working-class for the two years after 1830 was diverted to the struggle for reform. Only a minority realised that it would bring them nothing. These were gathered in the National Union of the Working Classes, which prophesied, accurately, that the Reform Act would merely place the workers in the hands of the capitalists, and which saw in unconstitutional direct action the only means of establishing society on a changed basis that would bring freedom and equality.

The alliance of the middle-classes and the workers forced the Tories to give way, and the Reform Bill became law. Then the workers realised quickly that anti-Reform minority of Owenites and other neo-Godwinians had been right. The suffrage for the Reformed parliament included less than one in twenty of the population, and the result was that only the moneyed class were represented. Almost the first act of the new ruling class was a reform of the Poor Law that replaced the old system by a much harsher system of bureaucratic regulation, which ground down the destitute even more heavily than they had been before, and which was designed to force the poor people of the villages into the terrible conditions of Industrial Revolution factory life.

The workers re-acted by a mass return to industrial action, and there followed the single great but brief flowering of revolutionary unionism among the English working-class. The local unions which had survived the collapse of Doherty's association began to revive, and in October was founded the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union, embracing workers of every trade and from all parts of the country, and at its heyday comprising more than half a million members. The members of the Grand National Consolidated had a clear idea that parliamentary reform was a red herring across the track of the workers' struggle for liberation, and that it was by industrial action that they could gain a new and just society, by themselves taking over industry and working it co-operatively. To gain such a socialised society they saw the significance of the general strike. Their ideas were often optimistic—Owen thought that five years would be enough to complete the transformation of society, Benbow, who introduced the conception of the general strike for the first time in working-class history, envisaged, in his *Grand National Holiday and Congress of the Working-Classes*, the possibility of carrying out the complete expropriation of the means of production and the establishment of social justice in a single great strike. But these were illusions of inexperience, and in their general attitude and theories the men of the Grand National Consolidated showed a real revolutionary consciousness and anticipated with remarkable thoroughness the ideas on which anarchists syndicalism was later to be based.

But their very inexperience rendered them vulnerable. The sense of their own strength precipitated them into a series of unco-ordinated strikes in which they wasted their energy and allowed the employers to crush them by division. Some of their spokesmen, indeed, advocated the conservation of their energy and the consolidation of their forces until they were able to embark on "a long strike, a strong strike, and a strike all together". But the workers in many industries continued to start strikes they

(Continued on page 3)

Penal Reform Has Failed

DURING the coming weeks the Criminal Justice Bill will be discussed in both Houses, and in the Press. The question "what would you do with the Criminal?" is one which is often put to Anarchists, in an attempt to force them into admitting that some centralized authority will be necessary. In order to answer this topical question adequately we must first examine the nature of "crime" as it exists to-day, and in the present article we attempt to show that prison reform is doomed to failure because it refuses to admit that crime is an effect and not a cause. The cause is the structure of existing society. Future articles will deal with certain aspects of the penal system in relation to reform, and having presented the facts we shall then be in a position to draw conclusions which will answer this old objection to Anarchism.

is referred to. In 1945 there was accommodation for 14,336 prisoners and inmates of both sexes. The daily average number actually held was 14,708 and the greatest number held at any particular time was 17,576. In 1946 the daily average had increased to 15,800 and by 8th July, 1947, the figure of 17,300 had been passed. And, just recently, the Home Secretary told a London meeting that the figures had risen to 19,400 and was still rising.

To meet this phenomenal increase, the highest figure since 1913, a number of prisons (which had been condemned) have been re-opened: Pentonville, Dartmoor, Northallerton (which had been closed as a civil prison in March, 1922), Reading (closed since 1915), Canterbury (closed since 1922); prisons which have been condemned as unsuitable and in which now presumably they hope to reform the inmates!

In seeking to explain the ever-increasing prison population, the Home Secretary pointed out that though the numbers sentenced in 1945 were only 72 more than in 1938, when the figure was 28,887, the percentage convicted of indictable offences was 74% of the total, compared with 49% in 1938. And this increase was not to be found among the adults sentenced but in the 17-21 group, where the relative percentages were 17% and 7%. And, in Mr. Ede's words, "Undoubtedly, the most difficult and distressing problem which confronts us is the problem not merely of the juvenile but of the adolescent criminal, and in any consideration we give to this matter we must have those persons very clearly in mind, for if we can reform them we can prevent an increase in the

number of the habitual criminals. If we fail with them, we fail in dealing with the habitual criminal." And the main emphasis in the Bill is in fact, on the question of juvenile and adolescent crime.

We do not propose to discuss the possibilities in the Bill for reducing the incidence of crime for the very simple reason that we do not share the opinions of the reformers that the more closely one can make "the punishment fit the criminal" the greater will be the chances be of reforming him. Crime is an effect and not a cause. The cause is the structure of our existing Society, and so long as classes—and that covers inequalities both in status and rights—exist, then crime, so-called, will exist alongside it. Since this is fundamental to the Anarchist case, we propose to submit data obtained from the *Official Report* in support of this argument.

1. Nature of offences committed in 1945 (Table 1).

An analysis of the crimes of the 21,745 men and women sentenced for indictable offences shows that 867 were sentenced for murder (20), attempted murder, manslaughter, infanticide, wounding and other offences of violence; 269 for "unnatural offences", 596 for "rape and other offences against females", 476 for bigamy, 17 for attempted suicide, 37 for perjury, 41 for "other malicious injuries". A total of 2,303. The remaining 19,442 were for offences against property: from burglary, housebreaking, larceny and receiving for forgery, coining, robbery and extortion.

2. Degree of Education of the 21,745 offenders referred to above (Table 2).

Illiterate	145
Read and write imperfectly	39
Moderate proficiency in reading and writing	21,190
Total	21,374
Read and write well	349
Superior Education	22
Total	371

3. Offences and occupations of convicted prisoners.

"Labourers, charwomen, and other unskilled workpeople"	7,166
"Miners, farm hands, factory operatives, merchant seamen and other skilled workpeople"	7,555
Domestic servants	465
Vagrants and prostitutes	56
Members of the Armed Services	3,879
Shop assistants, clerks, waiters, etc.	687
Unclassified	1,377
Total	21,365

Shopkeepers, tradesmen, farmers, etc.	263
Professional employments, merchants, and persons of independent means	117
Total	380

Is it not abundantly clear to the reformers that the class society is at the bottom of the majority of crime? Is it not reasonable to suspect then, that so long as class society exists there will be crime?

"At Borstal there are only three subjects of conversation: what you have done and are in for; what you are going to do when you go out; women and girls. Boys who are expert in one type of crime hold 'classes' for the other boys. Gangs are formed of boys likely to be released about the same time. The idea of going straight is laughed at. In Borstal my friends and I talked of little else than the jobs we intended to do when we were out in the world again. On does not peek at the problem with boys' clubs, Sunday-schools and such-like things. You have to go to the whole root of the trouble—the slums."

This powerful indictment of penal reform is an extract from a farewell letter by 20-year-old Geraghty, who was one of the two youths hanged for the much-dramatised Antiquis murder.

"You have to go to the whole root of the trouble—the slums." And that is what the reformers are afraid to face.
V.R.

FLASHBACK-2

WHEN we cast a broad glance upon the history of mankind, we see one distinctive feature pervading it from the remotest antiquity up to our own times. On the one side there are the masses, toiling, labouring, creating wealth by the labour of their hands, and asking for nothing else but peace, liberty, and equality among themselves. And on the other side there is a minority, sometimes of foreign conquerors, and sometimes natives of the country itself, who continually aim at dominating the masses, at freely enjoying the fruits of their labour, and at rendering their own rule everlasting by means of Law and Force, by an appropriate education, and religious teachings. All the history of mankind is nothing but that struggle between the two hostile forces.

The pretext under which the rule of the minority is imposed upon the masses may vary to some extent in the course of centuries; but in fact it remains always the same, whatever the minor differences it assumes. Those who pretend to rule over the people maintain that the people are unable to protect themselves against foreign aggressors; that they are unable to keep internal peace; unable to organise themselves so as to permit everybody the free exercise of his faculties; and that they—the minority of would-be rulers—are able to secure all this. If they restrain the liberty of the individual, it is only to give the fullest amount of liberty to society. And always through history, from its very dawn until now, we see that the minority of rulers, do not keep their promises. They promise peace, and they bring war, external and internal. They promise liberty, and they bring oppression. They promise wealth and harmony, and they bring misery and disorder.
—"Freedom", May, 1888.

*This viewpoint is developed by Mark Benney in his book *Gaol Delivery* (Longmans). He is convinced that "the real function of our prison system is not to discover or crime but to canalize it", and that the "criterion of efficiency lies not in the number of offenders who do not return to prison, but in the kind of offences committed by those who do return. If criminals are a necessary evil, there is a positive gain in turning their energies into fairly harmless channels. . . . It is true that a street bookmaker or a diseased prostitute can do more real harm to the community than a dozen of the most ingenious embezzlers, but not of a kind that will affect Stock Exchange prices. From a purely workaday point of view, then, a penal system which did no more than transform murderers and forgers into sneak-thieves and racing toughs might well be considered highly successful."

†It is an interesting fact that though most people seem to support the idea of a police force to maintain "law and order" and prisons in which to shut up criminals, very few of them are willing to volunteer as policemen and prison warders. On the one hand, this shows a healthy dislike of the unpleasant work a policeman and warder are required to do; on the other hand, however, it shows that people are prepared to support it though they personally are not prepared to do it. It is the same problem as that of hanging. Many people support the death penalty but would shrink from doing such a job. And it is a fact that prison warders and hangmen are unpopular among their fellow beings, though they are doing something which most people approve!

NEW METHODS OF EXPLOITATION

PAINFULLY aware of the inadequacies of capitalism to obtain a high standard of industrial production, the various apologists for that system are always endeavouring to find ways and means by which the workers can be induced to work harder without the incentive of being themselves the owners and controllers of the means of production.

In the palmy pre-war days, when there was an ample pool of unemployed and the threat of the sack could be held over every man who did not fall in with the needs of his employers, these schemes were brutal and mechanical in their application, and took no cognisance of the "human factor", of the mental and physical harm which they could do to the employee.

The belt system, the division of labour to absurdity, the Ford and Bedaux theories of getting the most out of the worker, were of this kind, and to them was allied the piece-work system, by which an ever-increasing tempo of production was attained by continually cutting the piece rate.

To-day, things have altered. There is little unemployment as yet, and the entry of the trade unions into full partnership with employers and governments has made it necessary to seek solutions that will not discriminate too obviously against the workers. Therefore, there has been an outburst of plans in which the old pills appear, but this time sugared up a little with a semblance of benevolence, which makes it all the more necessary for the workers to be on their guard against such deceptive schemes.

Wages on Points

A recent article in *Picture Post*, by C. A. Lidbury, advocates a so-called "points system" of paying wages, which is already in use in certain factories both in England and America. Under this scheme a "total amount of money available for distribution as wages" is agreed on, and this is divided among the workers according to the "points system". It will be observed, of course, that this system safeguards profits from the outset, since the money available will clearly be calculated so as to leave the employers well on the right side.

In arriving at the share each worker is to obtain, consideration is given to the following factors:

1. Skill, training and experience.
2. Responsibility and mental requirements.
3. Physical requirements.
4. Hazard.

"When all jobs have been rated," we are told, "a differential table is prepared showing the total number of points awarded under the various factors to each

job. The most highly-skilled job with the largest number of points being at the top, and the labourer's job which requires no skill or experience at the bottom."

This, of course, is merely a new variant of the old trick of dividing the workers against each other, and it is clearly hoped that by means of competition to get a better share of the wages pool, the workers will lose their solidarity in the interests of the owners. It is significant that the division of wages is not left to the workers themselves, but to "a small rating committee, composed of persons with an intimate knowledge of the industry concerned, drawn generally from the administrative side."

Division of Workers

Apart from the intrinsic madness of any kind of wage differentiation, since all workers contribute towards the final product and it is impossible to say whose part is the most important in a co-operative effort, it should be realised that the acceptance of any such scheme must necessarily weaken the workers, since, instead of everybody being on the same level and therefore having the same demands and grievances, some will be much better off than others and therefore not so acutely concerned. Moreover, the rating committee, with its more or less arbitrary decisions, will be able to exert pressure on individuals. Clearly, this scheme is hoped to re-establish the old situation where workers were individually at the mercy of the owners and their solidarity stood at its minimum.

The further way in which such a scheme will tie the workers to the owners is shown in Mr. Lidbury's admission that, owing to the fact that only a certain proportional total will be made available for wages, "trades union officials would have a common interest with management in securing increased production, which alone will justify further increases in the

wage-pocket. This policy would not only create the closest co-operation between management and trade union officials, but would also give the workers a 'wage-system based on equity'."

While one may smile at the writer's conception of "equity", by which he seems to mean the maximum lack of equality, it is impossible to disregard the sinister implication of these words. If production rises, the workers will apparently get more—by working harder for it—but what happens when orders fall off, or when outside competition forces the manufacturers to cut prices and thus lower the firm's income and, proportionately, the amount available for wages? Clearly, then, the workers will be the first to suffer, since their wage packets will be automatically affected.

Tied to the Market

This seems to be tying the fate of the workers to the fluctuations of the capitalist market with a vengeance, while insuring the owners against any undue loss, since there will presumably be always a proportion reserved for profit. In other words, instead of—or as well as—being liable to unemployment as business falls off, the worker is liable to receive less wages through no fault of his own.

Such schemes merely place the workers more than ever at the mercy of their bosses, and should be fought wherever they appear, since they merely hide all the old faults of the piece-work system under a veil of new words. No doubt, as Mr. Lidbury suggests, there will be "co-operative and intelligent trade union officials"—intelligent in following their own ends! But the workers should refuse to be led away from militant demands into such specious forms of class collaboration.

G.W.

Rationalising Industry?

IN the leading article on this page is discussed one of the many schemes by which the factory owners hope to get increased industrial production from the workers within the present capitalist system. News of another scheme comes from the factory of Tubes Ltd., at Birmingham, described in an article by Woodrow Wyatt in the *Daily Mirror* on the 2nd April.

The practical side of this particular scheme is not without its wisdom, since it is based on a careful study of each operation in such a way as to reduce unnecessary work and effort and so enable the workers to produce so much more with the same amount of activity. But this is nothing particularly revolutionary in the way of ideas, since in normal industry the workers are always complaining of unnecessarily wasteful methods of working, and are usually over-ruled by the decisions of administrative officials. But, although it had undoubtedly made an improvement in conditions, this particular case of rationalisation retains the disadvantage that it is still in the hands

of the "production experts" and not of the men on the job, who always know best how to do their own work.

Although more attention is now given to the psychological element, since it is found to pay, the emphasis of all these schemes lies on the goods produced and not the men who produce them. The men are only regarded as material to be handled, not as human beings who are more important than the goods they produce. Hence, the insidious nature of the financial basis they operate. In the case under notice, the standard of payment is based on "how long it takes an ordinary worker, working no harder than the average, to do a particular job." Any increased speed of production results in increased wages. But what will happen when all the ordinary workers in the factory are producing, say, 20% more than last year? Will it be held that the "ordinary" standard has changed and a higher target must be placed, as in the old vicious piece-work system? The workers must be on their guard in all schemes of this nature.

"BEVIN BOYS" FLOP

THAT disastrous "Bevin Scheme" for the mines during the war was a gigantic flop as regards getting coal and resulted in hardships the end of which has not yet been seen. The following report speaks for itself:

"Doncaster Reinstatement Tribunal to-day dismissed an application by Ronald Fidler, Askern Road, Bentley, a former Bevin Boy who was seeking re-employment with Briggs Motor Bodies Ltd., Balby, because there was no provision in the Reinstatement Act for Bevin Boys.

"Fidler became a Bevin Boy on December 12th, 1945, and after 18 months' service in the mines was invalided out. Shortly afterwards he received calling-up papers for the R.A.F.

"The chairman (Mr. H. Warren) said he could find nothing in the Act

affecting Bevin Boys, though civil defence workers and members of the N.F.S. could claim reinstatement."

(*Yorkshire Post*, 1/4/48.)

Not only did the scheme not provide for men directed to the mines to be able to return to their jobs, as could men sent to the Forces, but even those sent first to the mines and then to the Forces cannot get their old jobs back. Large numbers directed in this way are now being demobilised or due for demobilisation. They will find the added hardship they suffered in the "national interest"—i.e., going to the mines *as well as* the Forces—makes them ineligible for the benefit they could have got by going to the Forces only. And in spite of the fact that Bevin claimed mining was equally national service it is noticeable that the sneering description—"Bevin Boy"—still attaches to these men, and in respectable middle-class opinion (which so far as getting jobs is concerned matters a good deal) some sort of mysterious stigma attaches to the fact that they were not in the Forces. The victors were those who would not obey the luck of the draw and stood out against it.

ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST.

UNION BOSSES SCARED

SOMETHING of the fear inspired in Trade Union leaders by the threat of unofficial movements of militant workers arising within their organisations is shown by the recent threats made by the Transport and General Workers' Union in connection with a movement among busmen in the Lancashire area to respect the national award of an extra 7/6 a week.

The local executive committee of the Union has sent an ultimatum to its branches, which include 25,000 members, threatening to withdraw "the services of the union" from any branches in which committees for unofficial action are set up, and to require any member who joins such committees to "show cause why he should not be expelled from the union."

Naturally, with this lead on the part of the union officials, the employers find themselves in a stronger position, and a few hours after the Wigan Corporation threatened to sack any employees who took part in a token strike.

All these repeated indications show the sheer selfishness of the present unions as a means of enforcing the claims of the workers, and, more than this, their present functions as buttresses of the employers. More than ever it becomes clear that a new movement of the rank and file must take the place of the official unions, and that the sooner the workers begin this hard and long struggle against the triple alliance of State, employers and unions, the better.

Land Notes

This Labour Shortage

THE present situation as regards labour on the land in this country appears to be what foreign commentators sometimes refer to as "obscure"—that is to say, it is difficult for even well-informed circles to make head or tail of it.

According to *The Observer* (2/3/48): "A census near the turn of the year showed that there were 529,000 regular agricultural workers, nearly 6,000 fewer than a year ago... When the balance sheet is cast the experts find themselves prospectively short of 25,000 to 30,000 men."

Yet at the same time *The Farmer's Weekly* (19/3/48) reports that: "The number of agricultural workers registered as *wholly* unemployed (my italics) in Great Britain at Jan. 12th, totalled 14,610, an all round increase of 1,600 as compared with the figures for the corresponding period last year."

Now, one realizes that capitalism requires a small pool of unemployed if it is to function what it calls efficiently. But if the continued stability of the system necessitates a further potential 25,000 to 30,000 unemployed land-workers in addition to the 14,610 already fulfilling this necessary function, then surely it is about time that a slightly less wasteful system was evolved. Or is there another explanation?

THOUGHT FOR FOOD

BITAIN, we are constantly given to understand, can never be fully self-supporting in food, although it is also usually admitted to possess the most suitable overall climate and soil for mixed farming of any country in the world.

Holland, however, a smaller country with an equal density of population, seems to be able to manage it and have a bit left over for export.

"Value of foodstuffs and agricultural produce to be imported from Holland under the agreement this year is approximately £28,000,000," said Dr. Edith Summerskill, Parliamentary Secretary, Food Ministry (*Daily Herald*, 4/3/48).

The implications of that piece of information I leave to you.

RURAL ECONOMY

SEVERAL weeks ago now, I came across a back number of a little monthly magazine, devoted to the social and political aspects of farming, which I had not seen before and which might interest some readers. It is called *Rural Economy* and published apparently "by the Economic Reform Club and Institute and the Rural Reconstruction Society."

The contents, of this January number anyway, are however not as ponderous and academic as the impressive titles of its joint sponsors might suggest. The point of view expressed therein is, it is true, rather an anachronism since it is largely based on a plea for the restoration of a rural social order that no longer exists and cannot be resurrected—the era of responsible landlordism. That this system had some merits, that many of the old-type rural landlords, despite the limitations of a strictly class outlook, did in fact have a strong sense of responsibility to the land that they owned, it would be stupidly sectarian to refuse to acknowledge. Under that system the land of Britain was in many ways farmed better, that is in a more responsible manner, than it is now. Furthermore, however regrettable it may be, few if any socialist and left writings about the land, based as most of them are on a predominantly urban outlook and on the attempt to apply the standards and values of industrialism to agriculture, show the same knowledge and intimate understanding of their subject as do some of the works of the more enlightened members of the rural capitalist class.

So although the opinions expressed in a magazine like *Rural Economy* are considerably vitiated by a refusal, or a genuine inability, to recognize the contradictions inherent in our present system that make nonsense of the proposals put forward, even assuming such proposals to be desirable, which some of them definitely are not, nevertheless many of these people at least have some some practical knowledge and experience of the job and the people

they write about—which is more than can be said, unfortunately, for some of our detached, but dogmatic, social theorists. Therefore, interspersed amongst much obviously sincere but muddle-headed thinking, one comes across bits of real insight and commonsense.

THE MEANING OF ECONOMY

PROBABLY the most valuable contribution is a short one-page article, "What is Economy?" by H. J. Massingham, valuable because the word economy has in most people's minds become virtually synonymous with the purely arbitrary capitalist interpretation of the word, which is whether it is, or is not, profitable from a money point of view to do a certain thing in a certain way, or whether indeed it is profitable to do it at all. Whereas, as Massingham points out, the Greek from which the word economy is derived means the art of successful management (originally of a household); that is, making the best use for a given purpose of the resources available. It has nothing to do with money. Much that is now done in the name of economy is, in fact, most uneconomic and is, particularly the ruthless exploitation of the earth's surface, due "to a misreading of the word economy."

Two other points that I noted elsewhere: one, that "trade" is not necessarily of itself a good thing. "It can be either constructive or destructive. Every form of trade should be analysed from that outlook."

Second point: "What we need, therefore, is not only an agricultural policy, but an economic policy based on agriculture—which is by no means the same thing."

We may indeed need it, but we are unlikely to get it, for it would require a major social revolution. More probable is it that we shall starve while our political leaders continue to shout: "More and more production". For what we are not told. Perhaps nobody knows.

G.V.

1848 IN ENGLAND

(Continued from page 2)

could not reasonably hope to carry to a successful conclusion, which the employers smashed by force, by using numerous blacklegs, and by boycotting men known to belong to the unions. The Government played its part by the transportation of the Tolpuddle Martyrs and other acts of persecution.

Nor, however much one may admire Owen's disinterestedness and his often clear-sighted grasp of social realities, can it be denied that his own attitude towards the capitalists did much to weaken this movement. Having preached ideas which involved the death of the capitalist system, having, more than any other single man, roused the workers to a consciousness of their power as producers, he still imagined that it would be possible to co-operate with capitalists. In this way he helped to weaken that hostility towards the ruling class in general which would have helped to consolidate and energise the working-class movement. He failed to realise that his own example as a purely disinterested capitalist abandoning his own interests for the workers was not likely to be followed by the other members of one of the most rapacious and irresponsible ruling classes in human history.

So, weakened by disillusion, disunity, misguided theories and repression by government and employers alike, the Grand National Consolidated expired by the end of 1834. The constituent unions survived in many cases to become later absorbed into the current of reformist unionism in the latter half of the nineteenth century. And the militancy of the workers was diverted into that pursuit of the mirage of liberation by political means which was represented by the Chartist movement and which absorbed the mass of radical activity until its farcical failure in 1848.

GEORGE WOODCOCK.
(To be continued.)

Letter from

France

The French State Feels Better!

THIRTY years ago, an American psychologist, Randolph Bourne, wrote a memorable phrase about War being the health of the State. I don't know if War is nearer, but, as a matter of fact, the French State feels a great deal better than last month, and this is spreading throughout the upper levels of the nation, according to their patriotism.

The French press feels better. For want of paper, the "Daily Liars" had two-page issues last month. Now they are said to have obtained six-page allowances, as if the necessity has been foreseen for re-shaping public opinion, and for publishing, at any time, considerable international information. (The *Libertaire*, on the other hand, will have to buy its paper on the black market—if it is allowed to appear at all.)

The French Parliament feels better, too. Instead of their anticipated dissolution, our "elected representatives" seem to be confronted with the prospect of long periods of joyful work, free from the uncertainties of forthcoming elections. Their enjoyment is expressed by a jovial exchange of abuse and earboring, which, extending itself from the Chamber up to the Senate, offers to the nation as a whole, the most cheerful spectacle that could be devised for comforting us in our troubles. How good it is to see our *pauvre conscript* behave like drunken young recruits under the latest conscription law, each of them delighting the ushers by his unexpected knowledge of Judo tricks and foul words!

As to the Government itself, it now possesses a stable majority. Since the *coup d'Etat* in Prague and the extension of the American policy of security, there are but two parties in France, the Communists and the anti-Communists. The opposition on the right has said farewell to arms; as long as the government faces the Russian danger, it will support the government. So a happy unanimity reigns, from the *Rassemblement du Peuple Français*, with André Malraux, up to the *Rassemblement Démocratique Révolutionnaire* of Jean-Paul Sartre, and the optimistic climate of this unanimity spreads day by day. The "Third Weakness" as we termed it, has become the "First Force", and leads the country towards its "international destiny".

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BUT to become once more a force in world politics, France is too small: Europe is wanted. Even Charles de Gaulle sings to this tune. "Every week of this month has brought more breath to the bosom of France," said he—keeping his eyes on the broadening strategic area where frontiers and customs-barriers were falling. But the General forgot that the Army, Police and Customs officers were as busy as ever—the re-establishment of Free Trade is not included in the Customs Unions. If de Gaulle is willing to dissolve his own *Rassemblement* into a larger one, he will be War Minister in the next Cabinet, while French politics will be extended by the constitution of a "democratic" super-State in Western Europe.

These are the brilliant prospects open to diplomatic activity! Unwilling to become wholly the tool of Mr. Bevin's own policy, M. Bidault tries his hardest to make France—in words, at least—the Citadel of anti-Communism on the Continent. He wants to erase, little by little, the frontiers dividing France from its neighbours, whose people are as anxious as the French to secure a common protection against Josef Djughashvili and his gang. He wants to call up around the Quai d'Orsay, the representatives of Italy, Spain, Belgium, Holland and so on for "common defence". He found the idea—or was it Molotov?—to offer Trieste to the Italians as a Polling Day present, together with colonies, commercial treaties and so on.

So M. Bidault mistakes himself for a Tallyrand, while M. Depreux poses for a Fouché. General de Gaulle would say that they both need a Bonaparte. We are inclined to admit that de Gaulle is personally a folio edition of the Petain octavo, the text being the same, with a

bigger size—and a smaller number of pages.

THE Army, the Police, the State Department, the Institute for Atomic Research, are now submitted to a close investigation in the hunt for Communist elements. After the war, Communists took possession of many important functions and frequently made the most insolent or disloyal use of their authority. They are still so numerous in office, that such measures like the help to French officials arrested in Czechoslovakia had to be conducted on a private line, outside

government circles. Until now, the task of *épuration* has not been by an official purge, but as a clandestine business of "security", common to anti-Communists of every description. As to the trade union fakirs, who are recognised to be the backbone of every political order (or even "organised disorder")—they are engaged in a very subtle attempt to eliminate one another, according to political affiliations, without giving the rank-and-file any chance of finding out the truth and getting rid of all the wretched crew. This sort of "place-struggle" is fought everywhere, inside the Communist-led

C.G.T., and outside it; inside the Socialist-oriented C.G.T.F.O. and outside it; inside and outside the Catholic C.T.F.C.; and among the independent federations and the unorganised workers. The diminutive C.N.T., whose members number only five figures, is alone to remain unmoved by those political quarrel—because there are no politicians in it.

The way the Communists manage their defensive struggle is confusing. Against the American yoke, they are holding Party meetings in Paris in support of the Independence of Czechoslovakia, and

under the honorary presidency of the late Jan Masaryk! Here and there, they build technical organisations of spies and saboteurs, and call them French Industry Defence Committees, Patriotic Groups of Engineers, Loyal Citizens' Leagues, and the like. They are willing to organise with anybody (or against him), adopt any social or anti-social programme, use any possible language (even a Marxian one). They start any sort of dirty business in order that they themselves shall be in secret control of it. None of their agents can be really safe, he may be denounced at will, as a crook, a stool-pigeon, or a camouflaged Fascist—with concrete evidence at hand. They use poets, heroes, "geniuses", clowns, fools, knaves, and whores, as an old English dramatist would use these people on the stage—but with a contempt for humanity which would make the show unbearable to the spectators. At the end of the game they don't win, because you can't win the world by losing your soul, and such a play does not allow anybody to remain a man or a woman, in the long run.

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I WAS asked if it were true that the C.P. here in France was making anti-Semitic propaganda. I don't think they have done so openly, although there is a latent hatred against the Jews in some Communist agitation (some of the attacks on Blum, Daniel Mayer, René Mayer, Jules Moch, etc., would be found to have racial flavour). Generally speaking, anti-Semitism seems to be virulent only behind the Iron Curtain, offered to the subjects of the Quisling-governments of Mr. Beirut or Mrs. Anna Panker as a relaxation, and to divert opposition from national and social oppression. The results are already known. Firstly, a militant Zionism on the part of the threatened Jews; secondly, tragic attempts to reach the Promised Land; thirdly, conflicts with the Anglo-Saxon authorities (they seem to have made a definite choice of the Arab side by now); fourthly, furious denunciation against the occidental barbarity—the "new Nazism" of an English and American brand; and, finally, anti-Semitic resentment in the Western countries themselves and more

(Continued on page 5)

Letter from

Germany

ALL OR NOTHING

IN the history of the modern workers' movement, there has hardly been any period that could be compared with the present for the wide difference that has arisen between theory and practice. We who, from the pressure of daily life and our own experiences and thoughts, arrived at the conviction that social ills, poverty, servitude, enforced ignorance, arose from an appropriation of the soil, mines, factories and means of production and transport by a small, covetous and cunning minority, know also that the money system by which industrial and agricultural products are exchanged all over the world represents the instrument of tyranny.

This unjust appropriation being consecrated by the Church and justified and defended by the state in its parliaments and courts by means of laws and police, it is obvious that all the present evils will not disappear of themselves. The mere denial of this monopoly being useless, we reached the conclusion that the whole evil tree must be felled so that all its branches may be destroyed. "Everything belongs to everyone" should be the call of the exploited human beings the world over, for liberation from exploitation and tyranny cannot come from God or the state, from parliaments or parties, but only by the direct action of the workers themselves.

What is Socialisation?

Everywhere to-day, at party meetings, in the press, on the radio, there sounds the call for socialisation. According to his own political outlook each of us gives the word a different meaning. The Communists and orthodox Marxists of the Eastern Zone of Germany strive after the nationalisation of the land, industry and commerce, as well as all economic, cultural and financial institutions. They present the state-capitalism of Russia, already thirty years old, as being the form of transition out of which the commune will one day spring. The S.P.D. (Social Democratic Party) in the Western Zone takes pains to find a synthesis between private and state capitalism. In the party programme of the S.P.D. there is the demand for a gradual "socialisation" of the means of production, but not to the extent of including everything.

The fundamental question of nationalisation is still in the parliaments of the Western zones, partly decided and partly under discussion. Greater Essen has, by referendum under paragraph 41 of its constitution, established the socialisation of the land and certain basic industries. In Hamburg, the socialisation of the overland railway company as well as other companies is being decided.

The British Government supports the nationalisation of the mines and heavy industries and, if the accomplishment of this has been retarded up to now, it is due to the fact that this measure would violate foreign financial interests and that the opinions of the governments of France, Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg are not yet known.

But, since the political as well as the economic forms of organisation are based on the Marxist theory of authoritarian state centralisation, with their own pro-

grammes, regulations, constitutions and discipline, the breach or contravention of which may lead to corresponding punishment, reaching as far as expulsion, they can never lead to a true socialism, but only to capitalism of state authority, similar to all other organisations relying on representatives and delegated authority. From experience the Anarchists know that all delegates and representatives represent their own ideas and feelings only, but never the attitudes of their constituents.

Thus, after three years of armistice, we are facing a situation not easy to unravel, and, considering the present situation, it is difficult to say what the near future will be like. The agitation of the working population over the complete failure of the food system has increased throughout the zone. The indignation of the masses made itself evident in strikes and demonstrations in all the great industrial areas. These actions were partly spontaneous, and partly inspired by executive resolutions and under the guidance of local Trade Unions. Almost all these strikes were planned in advance and as a rule timed to last 24 hours. In order to secure unified proceedings in the future, the responsible Trade Union leaders of the D.G.B. of Nordrhein-Westfalen were called together to a meeting on the 30th January at Mulheim. At this meeting, according to reports by the

Trade Union paper of the British Zone (*Der Bund*), 14th February, very animated and passionate discussions seem to have taken place and far-reaching proposals are said to have been made.

No general strike was decided on, but a series of demands for emergency measures. Here are some of them: Immediate release of a million tons of coal from the Ruhr, for purchase of fats abroad. Immediate release and employment of foreign exchange sums from export for the purchase of victuals. Admission of Germany to the whaling industry and extension of the herring fishery. Immediate formation of Control Committees with executive authority under a more intense co-operation of the Trade Unions. Immediate replacement of the hitherto existing County Food Managements by a Central Food Management, with "reliable democratic forces", under Trade Union control. Acknowledgement of works councils for production reports, etc. In his closing speech, the president, Böcklen, declared that with the Trade Union executives "lies once for all, and must always lie the decision about striking or not striking".

Well, as usual, a series of claims, demanded from above and which, as so often before, will remain on paper if they are not attained by the direct action of the workers themselves.

E.K.

Foreign Commentary

Spain Fights On!

IT is an indication of the militancy of the workers inside Spain and those in exile that Franco's regime with the passage of time—and it is nine years since he seized power—has not succeeded in being accepted as a *fait accompli*. Obviously, political considerations play their part as well; however, in the main, but for the unflagging resistance of the workers in Spain, and the unceasing agitation on their behalf by their comrades in exile, Franco's regime would have by now been accepted by the world very much as Mussolini's castor oil and Hitler's concentration camp regimes were accepted in the past.

This was recently demonstrated when the United States House of Representatives recommended that Spain should be included in the European recovery programme.

In spite of the political opportunism from which the world suffers to-day these proposals have met with disapproval on all sides. Yet the proposals were not unexpected, if one bears in mind that the United States was one of the twenty countries which abstained from voting on the resolution at last year's United Nations Assembly, re-affirming the Assembly resolution of 1946 urging that Spain should not be invited to any U.N. conferences until she had a democratic Government. America's particular attitude to Spain is discussed by the *Manchester Guardian's* diplomatic correspondent (1/4/48) in these terms: "She is to some extent influenced by the attitude of many of the Latin-American States which either support or are not critical of the Franco regime. Among Americans themselves there has been a growing feeling during the past few months that Spain in her absolute opposition to Communism is on the same side as the United States, and that the world situation has become too serious to refuse to accept a helping hand merely because it is not quite clean."

And the opportunism behind the 149 to 52 vote in favour of aid is clearly indicated by some statements made by the Representatives, one of whom in particular, quite openly and brazenly declared that Franco's Government was the "greatest bulwark against Communism

in Europe" whilst another supporter thought that "probably it is bad politics in Western Europe, but the way Spain would be written in would be rather innocuous, so we will go along."

On the other hand, the opponents of the recommendation used such arguments as that "the effect of this action upon the Italian elections will be catastrophic. It is a body blow to Liberalism in Italy," or that the decision "gives the Communists a new weapon to use on the political battlefields of Europe—a new talking policy to lead the people of Italy back into totalitarianism." One congressman actually did declare that the action of the House would shock the conscience of the world. "We in this House have embraced to our bosoms the Fascist Government of Franco," he said.

But, generally speaking, expediency and not conscience decided the issue.

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AT present it seems unlikely that the 16 nations will agree to Spain being included in Marshall Aid, but whether they do or not will not affect the issue so far as Franco and his regime are concerned.

If aid comes Franco will be able to exploit the fact to show the Spanish people that his regime has the support of the "democracies". If no aid comes he can use the fact to his advantage as we saw in the case of Mussolini when half-hearted sanctions were applied to Italy at the time of his Abyssinian adventure. Where a country is sealed off from "contagion" with other countries, the manipulators of propaganda can do what they like.

As in the case of sanctions for Italy, it would appear that Franco can more or less obtain goods from America and elsewhere. Indeed, according to a former official of the Generalitat of Catalonia, Jaime Miravittles writing in *La Hora* of Santiago (and quoted in *Il Libertario*), Franco has declared that he already receives aid from America because they consider Spain a good stepping-off base in the event of a war with Russia. Now, a Californian daily carried banner headlines two inches deep which read "U.S. TANKS GOING TO FRANCO", followed by an alleged eye-witness account of the loading-up of a ship bound for Bilbao, in Northern Spain. The cargo consisted of at least 100 U.S. Army Ordnance tanks. This information was pub-

lished in the *People's World* (3/3/48), which it should be added is the West Coast edition of the American *Daily Worker*. The writer states: "I saw Franco's death wagons myself on the 'Long Dock' in Erie Basin, where they are being hoisted aboard the *S.S. Montomar Sevilla*. 'U.S. Army' labels and 'U.S. Ord.' signs were chalked on the side of the attack vehicles, while the blood and yellow banner of the Spanish waved on the ship, overhead."

However careful one must be of information from Communist sources, the report rings true and is not impossible.

If the relations between the Big Three and Russia further deteriorate every effort will be made to condition the "democratic" peoples to accept Franco as an ally. Mr. Churchill's famous cry that all who fight Hitler are our allies (which he used to welcome totalitarian Russia into the forces of "freedom") will then be used to welcome Franco Spain in the crusade against Russia!

But there is a lesson to be learnt from all this. And it is that the liberation of the Spanish people, (and in fact, all subject peoples) will come by their own efforts, and not by diplomatic manoeuvring. Many exiled Spaniards had hopes that the defeat of Hitler would result in Franco's downfall. And, for them, this speculation was enough to justify the slaughter of millions during the late war. And when the war ended nothing happened. Then they thought that a Labour Britain and a Left-wing France would do the trick. France went as far as closing the frontier with Spain, and the United Nations of withdrawing their ambassadors. And now? The frontier is re-opened and there is talk of resuming full diplomatic relations with Spain.

Fortunately the Spanish workers, judging by daily reports of sabotage and guerrilla fighting in Spain, have little time for the politicians, and are reckoning only on their own strength to bring about their liberation. But that does not mean that they expect us to remain indifferent to their struggle, or that we should not do all in our power to make their struggle and their objectives widely known among English workers, so that when the time comes we shall be ready to show them our practical solidarity.

LIBERTARIAN.

ELECTIONS IN ITALY

(Continued from page 1)

who show thereby that they are unwilling to come forward simply as Communists.

Both Christian Democrats and Communists urge everyone to vote: the former because they think that a high poll will reduce the Communist percentage, and the latter because they think that the waverers will vote for them.

The Italian Anarchist movement has issued a manifesto addressed to the workers which points out that neither the Russian nor the American government cares a damn for the welfare of the Italian worker. Hence the election contains no issue in which workers are interested. Calling on

them to abstain from voting and boycott the polls, it points to workers' control through the social revolution as the only solution which does not play into the hands of one or other of the imperialist groupings or the Church, the only solution which provides any hope of betterment for the workers of Italy.

J.II.

GERMAN FOOD FUND to 7th April:

Anon 2/6; H.A.A. 7/9; H.A.A. 10/-; A.M. 5/-; J.B. 3/1; G.M. 10/-; G.M.D. 5/-; Previously acknowledged: £32/5/6. Total £34/8/10.

(Continued from page 4)

opportunities to exploit the causes of the persecuted Jews and colonised Arabs, in the GREAT FIGHT FOR PETROLEUM.

★

THERE is, in Paris, an expensive 8-page weekly, *La Riposte*, with a considerable free circulation. That paper has been filled with gratuitous apologies for Stern-gang terrorism, with anti-British and anti-American fits of hysteria, with braggart challenges addressed to the nations of the Arab League and to the Islamic countries in general, and even a rather foul abuse of "the Jews" themselves (as the paper professes a wholesale deprecation of "the Jews" as an international population, and refuses to use the word without a sense of utter contempt). They style themselves the *National Hebrew Movement*; they claim a 100% Hebrew Palestine State; they rage against every sort of opportunists. Please note that the Haganah and the Jewish Agency are non-Hebrew! only the followers of the Jabotinsky . . . and Hitler, methods are real men—he-men. The most interesting thing is that the universal war that *La Riposte* wages against everything and everyone that is not "Hebrew" stops precisely at the borders of Stalin's zone of domination, and does not concern Russia, or any of its satellites at all. I don't know whether *La Riposte* was designed in order to support a Hebrew-Russian offensive against the Anglo-Saxons in the Middle East, or to provoke against the Anglo-Saxons and the Jews themselves, an Islamic Holy War in the interests of Russian imperialism. Perhaps both—for safety. But the important thing is that all this war-mongering, functioning in Paris and costing millions—shall we say, of roubles?—was certainly not intended in the interests of the working settlers in Palestine, nor in the interest of any peaceful and useful worker in the world. And though I am an obstinate believer in the freedom of the press, I would not regret the demise of that paper.

We French anarchists are opposed to the anti-Communist purge, as long as it is a governmental and anti-worker business, a patriotic hysteria, a preparation for World War III, but these are absolutely indefensible "Communist" activities, which are poison for the people, poison for the peace, poison for humanity and manhood, the most deadly poison, because it is a new one, and it is proposed as a cure for evident social evils.

ANDRE PRUNIER.

NOTHING MUST KEEP BRITISH IN PALESTINE

THE reversal of American policy over Palestine led to the immediate granting of oil concessions in other Arab countries, and it is clear that the change of mind over partition has demonstrated that commercial interests count more than public opinion. It is debatable whether it was particularly "democratic" for the President to consider the pressure of American voters at all, in view of the fact that there were thousands of American Jewish voters for one American Arab voter; but it is certainly obvious that American oil magnates counted more than the voters anyway.

The British Government has insisted that it will take no part in the debates on Palestine (here again it is an odd idea of democracy by considering that Guatemala and Chile should give "their" views on the situation and the inhabitants of Palestine have to stand by the decision). However, an odd fact is that while in one committee the British Government say they are getting out of Palestine, in another communication they say what they are getting out of Palestine!—in short, they informed the U.N. Palestine Commission that High Commissioner Sir Alan Cunningham has been instructed to grant the Iraq Petroleum Co. rights to build another pipeline across Palestine, for oil from Transjordan, for a payment of £45,000 a year. How does this square with the statement that we are quitting by May 15th? It is said "The money received during the first year will presumably be used to help liquidate the Palestine administration and establish a retirement fund for its officials". (*Daily Telegraph*, 5/4/48.) Rather an interesting way of pocketing the petty cash when you leave the job.

But are we leaving? What is going to happen to the £45,000 during the second year? It should be made quite plain that the workers will not tolerate the

BEHIND THE CZECH PUTSCH

1. Hate Betrayed the Czechoslovak Majority

Post-war Czechoslovakia rested its foreign policy on two pillars. The first was Russian proximity. The second was a fear of a resurgent Germany and an almost universal, indiscriminate hatred of all Germans, including sometimes even demonstrated anti-Nazis.

Not only were pro-Nazi Sudeten Germans expelled from Czechoslovakia; with them were many thousands who had never taken a part in political activity, and at least 100,000 anti-Nazis. This was not only an economic loss, but an opportunity for a bad conscience to propagandize. Whenever some blatant Sudeten voiced a pledge that "some day we will return," his words reached the Czech press. The quiet, constructive work of numerous Sudetens in their difficult new home, where they underwent acute deprivation was little heeded. No one heard, for example, about the Sudetens expelled from Gablonz, who, in their new location at Kaufbeuren in Bavaria, took rubble and miscellaneous scrap and built it into 332 shops where 3,700 workers are producing glass so fine that orders are coming in from all over the globe—and who are doing the whole job as a democratic co-operative. Their project has won warm praise from the International Co-operative Alliance, anything but a pro-Nazi body, and one which had chosen Prague as the centre for its 1948 conference.

German totalitarianism lay impotent, but the Czechoslovaks went on hating it as if it were alive. Soviet totalitarianism was very much alive, but the Czechoslovaks went on assuming it could not be a menace.

2. Was the Crisis Planned at Moscow?

The démarche against Finland has been widely accepted as evidence that the Czech crisis was deliberately engineered by the Kremlin; but there is further, more significant, evidence. The agitations in Czechoslovakia were immediately pre-

DESPITE the millions of words that have been printed about the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia, certain important factors have been too generally ignored. For a comprehension of events as they shape up in Eastern and Central Europe, the following points need emphasis. They are based on material gathered from *Worldover Press* sources in various parts of the Continent.

ceded by a purge in Hungary, where, to pave the way and break down any effective unity between Hungarian and Czechoslovak moderate Socialists, 50 leading Socialists were summarily expelled by a pro-Soviet minority earlier put into their posts for just such a need.

3. Why Did the Politburo Strike?

Chiefly, of course, because in the scheduled elections the Communist minority, whose prestige had steadily been declining, faced a disastrous loss of votes unless it could control the police and state electoral machinery. But there were other reasons, almost as compelling.

A second reason was the damage done to Soviet prestige wherever a reasonably free press existed, and particularly in Czechoslovakia, by the American State Department's publication of seized Soviet-Nazi documents. The Moscow counter-revelations had fallen flat.

4. Russia's Need for Arms

A third reason was Russia's wish to control directly the output of the famous Skoda Works at Pilsen, probably the largest potential arms producing factory in Europe. Normally employing 22,000 workers, this plant can be adapted both for armament and technical machinery, including machine tools. In 1947, under the Czechoslovak two-year plan, it had exceeded its prescribed level, and reached an output of 106.2 per cent.

So spectacular are Russia's few great industrial plants that one fact of the Soviet economy is often missed. It is still primarily a non-industrial state, requiring integration with economies chiefly in dustrial. Czechoslovakia meets that need precisely. As Owen Lattimore, scarcely an anti-Soviet writer, said last September in the *Central European Observer*: "The Russians need every unit of horse-power they can get from Czechoslovakia. They are in that sense more 'dependent' on the Czechoslovaks than the Czechoslovaks are on them."

5. Czechoslovak's Help from Russia Had Proved Disappointing

Nobody could say too much too openly, but economic relations with the U.S.S.R. had not worked well for the Czechoslovaks. There was a growing uneasiness at Prague, and an increasing loss of Soviet glamour, of which Czechoslovakia's enforced absence from the Marshall Plan was only a part. The wheat promised by the Russians had been slow in coming. Though it was harvested last fall, by mid-January only 52,534 tons had reached Czechoslovakia, and some of this was of inferior quality. Other grains had come in from the Soviet union: 26,907 tons of barley, 15,098 tons of oats, 504 tons of rye. But the prices charged were exorbitant.

With outward discretion but genuine dismay, Czechoslovakia's leaders noted that Russia was asking higher prices than those charged on the Chicago grain market during the worst days of its speculation scandal. When wheat was

for themselves. And if people are not sufficiently Christian to go to Church should they be expected to go abroad and die for Christendom? The clerics who advocate a police force or soldiers to guard the relics of a man who once preached non-resistance to evil, are usually prone to admit that this is a 'pagan country'. How do they reconcile this with a suggestion that a 'pagan country' has any responsibility for what it does not believe in? Can they recruit any force out of churchgoers?

Neither oil nor Religion, no hypocritical religious fraud, no pretence at "carrying out the decisions of U.N.O.", should lure us back to the burden everybody wants to lay down, bar those who seek the glory of military adventures, which others carry out, but the credit of which goes to the old men of Whitehall.

It is said the Jews and Arabs do not agree. They agree on one point and in this they are in agreement with all British soldiers: the Army should leave Palestine, once and for all.

INTERNATIONALIST.

selling at Chicago on December 11th for as much as \$3.12 a bushel (by Czechoslovak computation), Russia was getting \$3.32. When Chicago prices for oats reached \$1.25, Russia was charging \$1.62.

6. Russia Was Missing Out on Czechoslovak Exports

Trade experts in the Czechoslovak capital were leaning more and more toward the West. Dr. Hubert Ripka, Foreign Trade Minister, a member of the Czech Socialist Party who was one of the ministers to resign during the crisis, had written for the *London Financial Times* (February 9th) an article stating that his government wanted more trade with the West, though not exclusively with that area. "The many-sided character of our foreign trade," he said, "gives us the greatest hopes of economic stability and of our economic independence as regards external influences."

But Soviet Russia was not getting a very high proportion of Czech exports. Arbitrarily accepting as an exchange rate the value set by the Anglo-Czech financial agreement of November 1st, 1945 (for comparative purposes as good

as any other), and figuring 50 crowns to a dollar, the weakness of Czechoslovak aid to Russia's "Molotov Plan" becomes apparent. During the year 1947, Russia received Czechoslovak goods to the value of \$28,901,660. But three very small countries each received far more. Switzerland got \$58,514,475; the Netherlands \$49,149,000; and Belgium \$36,346,120.

Czechoslovak exports in 1947 to the whole bloc of the Soviet Union and its satellites amounted to only \$110,434,040. But to the non-Russian countries—Austria, Greece, Turkey, the United States and the British Commonwealth—went goods to the value of \$382,473,120. Imports from all external areas roughly approximated exports. Russia cannot furnish all the raw materials needed inside Czechoslovakia for processing, but she will obviously make an effort, and may be able to change the balance markedly in her favour. This is especially true of machinery, arms, and the products of heavy industry.

For the Czechoslovaks, the capture by Russia will inevitably produce lower living standards, even if some attempts are still made to retain a modicum of commerce with non-Soviet countries.

German Anarchist Movement Past and Present

IT must be borne in mind, that even in pre-Hitler days, the anarchist movement in Germany consisted, if we leave out the syndicalists, of a mere handful of people. In contrast to all the political groupings, the anarchists realised the impotence of organisations relying on numbers alone, and therefore concentrated their main efforts on a consistent propaganda designed to contradict the myths, which undermined initiative and self-confidence, and the fatal errors of authoritarian doctrines. They believed, and anarchist history provided evidence enough, that a small minority of seasoned revolutionary propagandists could infect with their own vitality, clear-sightedness and idealism, a considerable number of their fellow men, to establish a powerful movement. Their aim was to awaken the will of the workers for self-determination and to encourage and assist them in direct action.

It is worth while to glance back and give a short review of the past, since most historians have ignored the beginnings of the German anarchist movement, and little is known by most German workers of the struggle in their country, or of the contribution German anarchists have made to the international movement.

Yet Bakunin, who played the leading rôle in the Dresden insurrection a hundred years ago, cannot have been without the support of men of definitely anarchist convictions. Nettlau stated in an article in *Der Arme Konrad* for May, 1899, that there were men in Köthen, Leipzig, Dresden, Berlin and Breslau, who were in touch with Bakunin and in agreement with his insurgent plans. Their aims were not confined to the establishment of a democratic *Reichsconstitution*, they had outspoken social-revolutionary ambitions. How radical they were becomes apparent when we find the *Dresdener Zeitung* rejoicing as soon as Bakunin raised the flag of social revolution and, in his support, declared: "At last we are giving up the stale principle of lawfulness, and hesitation at laying hands on 'private property', and are recognising our revolutionary principles as our only law."

Little is known of the early German anarchist literature, yet Frederick Engels was compelled to enter into controversy with the Proudhonist Dr. A. Mühlberger, in an attempt to repair the damage inflicted on Marxist prestige by anarchist criticism. In 1877, the Social-democrats could not hold a meeting at which the anarchist voice was not raised—and even worse, from their point of view—found a hearing. One of the most effective anarchist propagandists at that time was the typesetter Werner (later editor of *Revolte* in Paris, known under the pen-name Bernstein). Equally well-known was August Reinsdorf.

After Nobiling's and Hödel's attempts on the life of Kaiser Wilhelm I, which caused the introduction of the notorious anti-Socialist law—anarchist propaganda began to draw even wider circles. With the appearance of Johann Most, a lively anarchist movement sprang up in Germany and abroad. Most had to emigrate to London, whence he published his paper *Freiheit*. From this platform he addressed the Social-Democratic Party with the advice that, since the party was deprived of the opportunity of legal agitation, it should renounce political life altogether, taking no part in elections, but instead, concentrating all its energy on preparation for the social revolution.

Meanwhile, the illegal agitation of the anarchists inside Germany, increased to

such an extent that the Social-Democratic Party found it opportune at its Zurich Congress of 1879, to attack the anarchists fiercely, and at its congress of 1890 at Schloss Wyden to expell Most, who had become the life and soul of the foreign anarchist movement in London. While the anti-Socialist law had hit the German Social-Democrat press, Most succeeded in smuggling *Freiheit* into Germany and Austria, where it soon replaced the suppressed Social-Democratic *Vorwärts*, much to the alarm of the Social-Democrats.

The terrorist tactics of the Russian Nihilists captured the imagination of the militant workers in Germany and Austria. The impotence of the Social-Democrats became more and more evident. The "propaganda by deed", defended enthusiastically by Most, was beginning to be considered in working-class circles as the justified answer to oppression. The Austrian anarchists Stellmacher, editor of *Freiheit* and Kammerer, were executed for the murder of a Viennese banker and a police official, who had been killed in attempt to steal money for their press fund. The German anarchist Reinsdorf attempted to blow up the Niederwald Memorial just as the whole aristocracy was assembled around it. The attempt failed and Reinsdorf escaped to London.

The revolutionary attitude of these men inspired not only the workers on the continent to revise their reformist tendencies, but led also the workers of America to establish a powerful movement on anarchist lines. Here again, it was Most whose fiery enthusiasm won mass support for the anarchist cause. We need not stress the fact that most of the Chicago martyrs—Spies, Fischer, Engel, Schwab and Lingg, were German anarchists.

The importance of the early German anarchist movement, which produced such men as Most, can be judged again from the fact that the Social-Democratic party congress at St. Gallen in 1887, devoted most of its energy to denouncing the anarchists in a most demagogic manner (e.g., Wilhelm Liebknecht) and to waste considerable effort in its attempt to justify its own rejection of revolutionary violence in favour of mere agitation and organisation. When the Anti-Socialist law ended, a new Social-Democratic Congress took place at Halle in 1890, where Wilhelm Werner attacked the party fiercely for its corruption and reformism. He published, in opposition to the party, the *Sozialist* which propagated anarchism, but soon had to escape to England to avoid imprisonment. All over the country anarchists were arrested for distributing anarchist papers from abroad. They were charged with high treason and sentenced to inhuman terms of imprisonment.

Despite all the persecutions, the anarchist could not be stamped out. At the end of the 19th century *Der Arme Konrad*, and at the beginning of the 20th century *Der Anarchist*, were published in Berlin. New names came to the front: Nettlau, Landauer, Mühsam.

Each did his share in keeping up the revolutionary tradition and teachings. The German anarchist movement of the past, however small in numbers, has contributed enough to the development of the international revolutionary movement to secure a lasting memory in generations to come. Is the German anarchist movement of the present capable of continuing that tradition?

JOHN OLDAY.
(To be continued.)

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OSCAR WILDE

THE SOUL OF MAN UNDER SOCIALISM by Oscar Wilde (Porcupine Pamphlets, 2/6).

THE average Englishman knows two things about Oscar Wilde—one, that he wrote a certain play called *The Importance of Being Earnest*, which, despite what certain critics have said about it, is generally considered to be very amusing, and—two—that he was sent to gaol for being a homosexual. Actually there is more to him than that.

The English hate to take their intellectuals seriously and, if they are given the slightest chance of being able to regard them as a glorious joke, they eagerly make the most of the opportunity. This has applied to Oscar Wilde more perhaps than to most. Because he chose to express many profound truths in a flippant and epigrammatic manner, the English people have been only too pleased, indeed quite relieved, to regard him as a witty and entertaining clown. It was left to foreigners to appreciate the horrible and alarming fact that he was one of the most penetrating and far-seeing thinkers of his age.

Wilde once remarked that in order to live superficially it was necessary to feel deeply, and of all his literary works *The Soul of Man under Socialism* shows that he did indeed feel very deeply. So much so, in fact, that his sophisticated witticisms, and his deliberately acquired pose of ironic amusement, were at least in part what would now be called a defence mechanism against his acute awareness of the essential tragedy of human life. The other two leading factors in his make-up were a hearty zest for, and joy in, life and an overwhelming desire to deflate the smug complacency of English capitalist civilization, which at that time was

at the zenith of its power.
Social Background of the 'Nineties

IN this connection Gerald Brennan, in his book *The Spanish Labyrinth*, has a paragraph which is of interest as providing a connecting link between Oscar Wilde and his anarchist contemporaries. Says Brennan:

"The nineties were everywhere a period of anarchist terrorism. We have seen how the loss of its working-class adherents and the stupidity of police repressions led to this. But there were other causes as well. The reign of the bourgeoisie was now at its height. Their meanness, their philistinism, their insufferable self-righteousness weighed upon everything. They had created a world that was both dull and ugly and they were so firmly established in it that it seemed hopeless even to dream of revolution. The desire to shake by violent action the complacency of this huge, inert and stagnant mass of middle-class opinion became irresistible. Artists and writers shared this feeling. One must put such works as Flaubert's *Bouvard et Pechuchet* and Huysman's *A Rebours*, Butler's and

Wilde's epigrams and Nietzsche's savage outbursts in the same category as the bombs of the Anarchists. To shock, to infuriate, to register one's protest became the only thing that any decent or sensitive man could do."

Seen in that context, Wilde's arrogant individualism, his exasperated contempt for what he felt to be the insensitivity and sheer damned stupidity of the Great British Public, his, to us, seemingly child-like delight in, and pre-occupation with, the game of *épater les bourgeois* becomes more understandable.

This weakness, if such it is, is evident in this essay which, however, contains so much devastating common-sense that a few quotations, selected, as reviewers are wont to say, more or less at random, are probably worth while.

"Starvation, and not sin, is the parent of modern crime. That indeed is the reason why our criminals are, as a class, so absolutely uninteresting from any psychological point of view. They are not marvellous Macbeths and terrible Vandrins. They are merely what ordinary, respectable commonplace people would be if they had not got enough to eat. When private property is abolished there will be no necessity for crime; it will cease to exist."

"People sometimes inquire what form of government is most suitable for an artist to live under. To this question there is only one answer. The form of government that is most suitable to the artist is no government at all."

"Disobedience, in the eyes of anyone who has read history, is man's original virtue. It is through disobedience that progress has been made, through disobedience and through rebellion."

"It is clear, then that no Authoritarian Socialism will do. For while under the present system a large number of people can lead lives of a certain amount of freedom and expression and happiness, under an industrial-barrack system, or a system of economic tyranny, nobody would be able to have any such freedom

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The editors of Porcupine Press are to be warmly congratulated on this valuable addition to their current series of pamphlets, and I only hope they will find sufficient paper to produce the many reprints which this work deserves.

LAURIE HISLAM.

[*It is not our practice to annotate book reviews, but whilst Laurie Hislam has a clear understanding of the writings of Leo Tolstoy—and for this reason he was asked to review this pamphlet—he undoubtedly has quite mistaken ideas on Anarchism, and we cannot allow his remark to pass unanswered. Anarchists urge workers to organise to take over the means of production in order to produce for use and not for profit. They offer no standards of "comfort and security" in the new Society. That is a matter which will be decided by the consumers and producers when the time comes.—Eds.]

TOLSTOY

THE SLAVERY OF OUR TIMES by Leo Tolstoy. (Porcupine Pamphlet Series, 2/6).

IT is extraordinary that in these days of political bankruptcy, when the vast majority of people are wandering in an intellectual and spiritual wilderness, so little is heard of the moral, religious and sociological writings of Leo Tolstoy. Living as we are to-day under the shadow of the most catastrophic destruction in man's history, his teachings possess a startling relevance. I became more than ever conscious of this when, moodily browsing in a second-hand bookshop in a Leeds suburb during the war, I picked up a copy of *The Slavery of our Times*, and was so struck by the crystal clarity of Tolstoy's arguments in relation to government and violence that I was convinced that none could deny the truth of his conclusions without the aid of prejudices or casuistry.

In these times it is popular to adopt the attitude that whereas Tolstoy's 'artistic' writings—his novels and descriptive essays—are considered to be of the highest literary merit, his later works on the moral, religious and social plane were not only inferior from a literary point of view, but are also inapplicable and impracticable so far as present-day problems are concerned. When, however, we observe that those who accept this view are acting in a manner which can only exacerbate the evils of the day, this contention must be viewed with a sceptical eye. Further, when we realise that an acceptance of Tolstoy's teachings involves not only an intellectual acknowledgement of their truth, but also a revolutionary change in one's mode of existence, behaviour and habits, a complete break with preconceived notions of life, work, happiness and everything upon which the lives of most of us are built, we can then understand why his views are generally met with prejudice and distortion.

What was Leo Tolstoy's fundamental conclusion? Simply that all evil follows from the preparedness of men to use violence one against the other. Government is itself organised violence, although "people are not now subdued by direct violence, but by fraud". This fraud consists in making the people believe that the acceptance of government, involving the sacrifices of part of their incomes and entering its armies, is necessary for their safety and well-being, whereas the truth is that these are but means of enslave-

ment. But Tolstoy exonerated no-one who accepts this fraud in order to pursue his own gain—a voluntary slavery. Nor is the claim that certain circumstances merit the use of violence ever justified, however good the intentions. Although Tolstoy was himself an anarchist, he condemned without reservation the willingness of the "revolutionary anarchists" in Russia to use violence in order to overthrow the Czarist regime. Apart from objections arising out of his belief in Christianity, he also maintained that

"All attempts to get rid of governments by violence have, hitherto, always and everywhere resulted only in this: that in place of the deposed governments, new ones establish themselves, often more cruel than those they replaced."

It is scarcely necessary to add that this has been tragically demonstrated by the substitution of a totalitarian state for the old Czarist hierarchy.

In my view, the value of this sixty-page pamphlet is incalculable. It should be read by everyone who, in Tolstoy's words, is "trying to elucidate his position in society", and who is not satisfied with the facile theories of economists and scientists. The style in which it is written is of such lucidity, and the arguments propounded with such irresistible logic, that it would seem impossible to fail to understand the propositions and conclusions, and equally impossible to avoid an immediate adoption of Tolstoy's views.

There is, unfortunately, a slight error in the introduction to the pamphlet, which states that Tolstoy died in 1901 at the age of 73, whereas he actually died in 1910 in his 83rd year. The only other minor criticism is that I do not think it quite accurate to suggest that *The Slavery of our Times* was written from a social standpoint. It should be understood that, whereas Tolstoy discussed the structure of governmental society and enumerated its evils, his words were always a call to individual action based upon moral conviction. He also makes it clear that this work is the result of his understanding of the Gospels, upon which his repudiation of violence is based. It is therefore important to realise that Tolstoy would have found himself in complete opposition to the anarchist movement in this country—particularly in its appeal to the workers to organise themselves in order to obtain a greater share of the material benefits of modern society, since in this desire for comfort and security Tolstoy perceived one of the main causes of the slavery of his age.*

Book Reviews

at all . . . But I confess that many of the socialistic views that I have come across seem to me to be tainted with ideas of authority, if not of actual compulsion. Of course, authority and compulsion are out of the question. All association must be quite voluntary. It is only in voluntary association that man is free."

Space makes impossible any further quotations but enough, it is hoped, has been given to show the relevance of Wilde's social ideas to those of the Anarchists.

Writer and Thinker

AT a time when attention to style, that is, taking the trouble to say what one has to say in readable English, is frequently considered unnecessary, and by some even as a form of affectation and insincerity, it is a pleasure once again to read Wilde's lucid and easy-going, yet succinct prose. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that, like many artists and craftsmen who become intoxicated by the pliability and potentiality of their material, his style tends sometimes to become over-ornate and to leave an impression of a rather hard and false glitter.

The few Notes at the end of this new edition are what Notes ought to be but only too often are not—namely, brief and to the point and they, and the short introduction, help to emphasize that aspect of Wilde's life and thought which the society he so castigated has found most convenient to ignore: his fundamental libertarianism; almost, one might say, his essential anarchism.

GERALD VAUGHAN.

SHELLEY

THE DEFENCE OF POETRY by Shelley (Porcupine Pamphlets, 2/6).

SHELLEY'S answer to his friend Peacock's attack on poetry was to have been composed of three parts; only the first was written, and even this was not published in the poet's lifetime. It has since become famous as the *Defence of Poetry*. The circumstances of its conception are reflected in the work itself. On the one hand, the necessity of answering specific charges has weakened the form of the essay: it consists of intermittent statements of a general and a particular kind; as if Shelley had felt his friend's grip on his elbow, continually pulling him back from the grand to the trivial. On the other, Shelley was never stronger than when being attacked (his whole life may be regarded as a disturbed passivity—hence the frequent accusation of femininity, as well as the accretion of negatives in certain passages of the poetry), and his indignation on this occasion resulted in one of the most magnificent and convincing pieces of impassioned reasoning—as distinct from rhetoric, which may be better seen in the *Letter to Lord Ellenborough*—in the English language. The argument of the essay suggests, if it does not contain, an almost complete aesthetic of an anarchist kind.

Shelley begins by distinguishing between imagination and reason. The former, he thinks, is "the principle of synthesis, and has for its objects those forms which are common to universal nature and existence itself"; it colours thoughts with its own light and composes from them new thoughts having individual integrity; it perceives value, and it uses reason as an instrument. The latter is the principle of analysis, that observes the relations between things simply as relations, and enumerates qualities already known. Poetry, in a general sense embracing all the arts, is "the expression of the imagination"; education and philosophy are the work of poets, who are also, in the proper meaning of the word, prophets. For in the infancy of society, Shelley argues, every man was necessarily a poet (or an artist) since language itself was the expression of the imagination. Poetry expressed and enriched a communal life. In any age, the poet has such a relationship to the community, and because he is able to abstract, from the many possible mores of expression, that one giving the highest delight, a poem becomes "the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth", and as these images are timeless, the poet perceives in the present the future and the past.

Narrowing his definition to the poetry of language, Shelley discusses poetry and prose and claims that poetry makes for moral improvement. Here he appeals to history, using Greece and Rome, the rise of Christianity, the Age of Chivalry, and

Dante and Milton as examples of his theme. He is careful to point out that by moral improvement he does not mean the utilitarian improvement associated with reason; poetry improves by stimulating the imagination of the reader and thus enlarging him as a person. The 'function of art', as we would say to-day, is to create artists: to make manifest the latent artist or whole imaginative man in every person. Shelley then gives his well-known description of the creative process, and concludes with a peroration on the greatness of the derided poets of his own time—a greatness which now needs no champion.

No summary could do justice to the force and economy of this essay, to its richness of matter or its nobility of style. Shelley grasps nearly every fundamental subject relating to poetry, subsumes them under a common principle, and joins them to an implicit philosophy of society—the anarchist philosophy. The essay is as fresh and necessary to-day as when it was written: necessary, for the atrophy of the imagination has become the distinctive brand of the twentieth century. It is not usually noticed that Shelley was, like Keats, indebted to Coleridge: nowhere more than in this primary concept of the imagination. "The Imagination modifies images, and gives unity to variety, it sees all things in one . . ." said the chief proponent of the Imagination in Shelley's time, meaning by his concept roughly what Plato meant by the Soul. In our day it is possible to accept the concept without being committed to the mysticism of Plato and Coleridge. For just as Plato's Ideal Forms (and it seems clear that in speaking of the 'highest delight' and the 'eternal', Shelley is referring to the Platonic conception) may be regarded as being the archetypal images of Jung, and are thus given a phylogenetic rather than a mystical origin, so the imagination may be regarded as the "principle of integration" of the same psychologist: the whole of Shelley's argument may be supported by present-day psychological findings. There is not space in this review to develop the theme, but these hasty notes will indicate both the suggestiveness of Shelley's essay and one direction in which it may be linked with contemporary and anarchist thought.

The *Letter to Lord Ellenborough*, which was written when Shelley was eighteen, provides a useful contrast to the *Defence*. It is an untidy and not very logical piece of polemic, but it represents the sincerity and the generosity of the writer, and says a number of things about the institutions of law and religion that still need saying to-day. One hopes that the *Letter* will prompt some publisher to reprint Godwin, and that letter and essay will remind readers that Shelley was by no means an ineffectual angel, but one of the foremost thinkers of his time. The present reprint, with its excellent production and low price, is very welcome indeed.

LOUIS ADEANE.

Letters to the Editors

PRIVATE PURGES ?

In the announcement that M.I.5 and the Special Branch, the local Gestapo, are to investigate the politics of Civil Servants, it is pointed out that Communists and Fascists will not be dismissed arbitrarily, but that there will be special hearings of each case and so forth; that they will be transferred from security departments to other departments, and so on—it will all be done in a nice genteel sort of way.

A Labour M.P. hit on one objection when he asked for an assurance that this would be in the hands of people who knew the difference between Socialists and Communists. The Opposition thought this a great joke. But it is true as anyone who, to their misfortune, has had any dealings with the local Gestapo knows. They have not that much knowledge. One of them once asked me if anarchists had any connection with the Trotskyists. I said, "No." He replied, "Oh, well, you're against the war—and against the Communist Party—so we lump you all together." They would probably know the difference between a Labour M.P. and a Communist (although in certain cases there isn't much difference, it's the respectability that counts) but not between a socialist—even a Labour Party agitator—and a Stalinist.

Now, this is all very well in the Civil Service, particularly in the higher grades, but who can doubt that private employers will not follow the State's example? Many firms at the beginning of the war dismissed Communists and Fascists from employment. Innumerable firms dismissed opponents to the war, and conscientious objectors generally. While in peace and war the victimisation of militants has been going on ever since the earliest days of the labour movement.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IN THEORY

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4. Each contracting State to grant other States the same freedom to seek information that it granted to its own nationals.
5. The encouragement and facilitation of interchange of correspondents.

Manchester Guardian, 8/4/48.

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They had been told by the chairman, Mr. D. Walter, that they could remain if they would allow their reports to be censored. They refused, and left.

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The committee deprecated the association's reported intention to refuse to accept any change of retailer which consumers might wish to make.

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Evening Standard, 8/4/48.

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"To what extent," he asked, is it legitimate or desirable for members to accept presents from foreign Powers?"

He also asked whether "gifts of a selective character to Members of Parliament may or may not raise questions of privilege?"

News Chronicle, 8/4/48.

I know personally of many anarchist comrades who have gone from job to job, continually blacklisted, because of their opinions. And it is not much use to tell the employer that the denouncer, private or police, is wrong, and that one is not a Communist but an Anarchist. (You know the answer—"That's worse!")

Undoubtedly, anarchists have had the worst of such attempts at bludgeoning free speech by depriving the militant of his livelihood. Since the war, we have been joined by many others, war-resisters of all kinds. It is especially worse in small towns, but it happens generally everywhere. The lead of the State in switching the Communists and Fascists from one department of State to another will give an impetus to private employers to vent their prejudices by real sackings. It can only be defeated by solidarity at the places of work.

INTERNATIONALIST.

ANARCHISTS AND MARRIAGE

DEAR COMRADE,

While valuing highly Herbert Read's powers as a writer and thinker, I should like to raise an issue concerning essential features of a natural society about which he wrote in his essay *The Politics of the Unpolitical*. Therein he lists eight basic principles upon which such a society could be based and it is concerning the first two of these that I should like to write; these are (1) the liberty of the person and (2) the integrity of the family. If our comrade means by this the maintenance of the monogamous family then he is contradicting the all-important anarchist principle of the liberty of the person and, therefore, I must protest and point out to him that fully 95%

of marriages to-day fail because of the futile and stupid system of monogamy, which system is more conducive to the extension of neurosis and other psychological diseases than any system previously tried by man.

In dealing with this subject, anarchists must realize that our emotions cannot truly be controlled by anybody, or anything, and it is simply because monogamy is essentially dictatorial and exceedingly narrow in its application that genuine freedom of action within a monogamous society is impossible. Therefore, I cannot understand how an anarchist can regard the integrity of the family as conducive to the liberty of the person, as Herbert Read evidently does.

Devon.

JOHN STEPHENS.

Reply by Herbert Read

I do not believe that there is any essential contradiction between the liberty of the person and the integrity of the family—or between the integrity of the person and the liberty of the family. My plea for the family as an organic unity in a free society is based on the psychological evidence which has been so unanswerably presented by such authorities as Ian Suttie, Edward Glover and Anna Freud. It may be that the family need not be exclusively monogamous—I have not expressed any opinion about that, and some societies manage to maintain a family system with some degree of polygamy. But the man consideration is the development of the individual, and all the evidence seems to suggest that the growth of a balanced integrated personality is not possible without the protective love which is provided by a happy family life. Love and freedom are mutual and interdependent. There may be little love and therefore little freedom in modern family life, but we know that the causes of this unhappiness can be traced to social injustice, and it is our first business to remove those causes and then see to what extent the family system needs reformation.

CHRISTIANITY AND HANGING

DEAR COMRADES,

Charles Duff's interesting *Handbook on Hanging* brings to mind an anecdote I once heard about Mordecai Manuel Noah, a well-known figure in American journalism one hundred years ago. When he stood for election as sheriff in New York, his opponent raised the objection that "in a Christian country no Jew should be put in a position where he might be called upon to hang Christians." Mr. Noah's answer was brief, witty and to the point: "Fine Christians to hang!"

London.

M.

HOLY CITY

DEAR COMRADES,

In many periodicals one is beginning to see pictures of the present Arab-Jewish fighting in Palestine with some such caption as "Jerusalem—1948", Bethlehem—1948", etc., the fairly broad insinuation being that after all those years of "Anno Domini" look at the "Holy Land" to-day. What a difference from when Jesus preached the Gospel of Love in those parts, they suggest. And Dr. Garbett, Archbishop of York, declared at Easter: "Let us very literally, in the words of the Psalmist, 'Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.'" He urged the saving of the "Holy Places" from destruction by the Jewish or Arab armies.

This is all very well, of course, there is nothing to object to in any of it, and many parsons are becoming so smug about being, for once, on the side of the angel of peace, by pointing out that Christianity is neglected by both sides in Palestine, that Christianity's Holy Places are endangered by them, and so on. In the course of nearly two thousand years of Christianity the majority of the wars in Palestine have been caused by Christian crusades which endangered the Holy Places and the peace of Jerusalem. There is in fact a famous story of Frederick II of Sicily, who led the Sixth Crusade. Frederick was somewhat of a sceptic and saw no point in the continual bloodshed of the crusades ordered by the Popes. When the Pope ordered him on threat

of excommunication to rescue the Holy Sepulchre from Saladin, he went to Saladin and discussed frankly what worth this patch of ground was. Saladin—equally sceptical—made a commercial bargain with him and Frederick concluded a bloodless crusade with victory. The Pope was so indignant that he excommunicated Frederick anyway for not shedding enough blood in the capture of the Holy Sepulchre. For generations it continued to be the source of wars, until the final subjection of Palestine to Turkey. Under Turkish rule, the Holy Sepulchre was guarded by a Moslem family (their descendants are still its gatekeepers) in order to have an impartial body to prevent the Christian sects from fighting each other in its precincts. This is still not unknown.

It is really rather late in history for Christendom to start praying for the peace of Jerusalem.

London.

K.A.B.

KROPOTKIN BIOGRAPHY

COMRADES,

I am engaged in the initial stages of preparing a full-scale biography of Peter Kropotkin. A life of this man who was important alike as revolutionist, scientist and writer, has long been needed, and, in order that my book may fill this gap as adequately as lies in my power, I should be grateful if readers of *Freedom* who possess letters or documents by or concerning Kropotkin, or who can give biographical information about him, would assist me in my task. Letters or documents which are loaned to me will, of course, be treated with care and returned immediately after copying.

Yours fraternally,

GEORGE WOODCOCK,
c/o Freedom Press.

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He also asked whether "gifts of a selective character to Members of Parliament may or may not raise questions of privilege?"

News Chronicle, 8/4/48.

LAND OF FREE AND EQUAL

Negroes to-day threatened a campaign of civil disobedience to force the U.S. Army to give Negro soldiers equal rights with whites. Philip Randolph, Negro head of a union of sleeping car porters, warned Congress that they will refuse to register or serve under the call-up in present conditions. And Congress warned him that if they do the Negroes will face treason charges. Replied Randolph: A price we have to pay to get our democratic rights.

Daily Express, 1/4/48.

DOING WHAT YOU'RE TOLD

I have just received my form for registration under the National Insurance Act. It reads thus:—

The National Insurance Act will come into force on 5th July, 1948 . . .

Later, it reads:—

I hereby apply . . .

It would be more appropriate if it read:—

I hereby comply . . .

Letter in *The Leader*, 3/4/48.

RESISTANCE

Two brothers, Richard and Brian Rowland, of Dorset-street, W.1, have formed a Citizens' Retaliation Bureau to bombard officials who send imbecile questionnaires.

Daily Express, 22/3/48.

ECONOMICS

Three hundred Norwich building workers want jobs: 7,000 Norwich people want homes.

Daily Express, 22/3/48.

GENERAL TAKES NO RISKS

General de Gaulle is forming strong-arm squads in case of trouble at his meetings.

"Each squad will be a commando of eight men, mostly ex-soldiers," said an official at the general's headquarters to-night. "They will be experts in unarmed combat and will wear armbands on civilian coats."

Daily Express, 3/4/48.

WITCH HUNT PROSPECTS

From Columbus, Ohio, to-day came a warning of what can happen when a democracy takes up witch-hunting.

A fortnight ago, Frank Hashmall, a 29-year-old ex-New Yorker, proclaimed himself a Communist. Whipped up by their local newspapers, the people of Columbus decided to "purge" him.

They telephoned him night and day to heap him with abuse. That failed because they got the wrong number and spoke their insults to an outraged Tory.

Then they started throwing stones at Hashmall's home.

Hashmall asked the sheriff for police protection for himself and his wife and child. Said the sheriff: "I am going to see if I can have you declared a public menace and run out of town."

To-day, Communist Hashmall got his police protection—too late. He and his family escaped just ahead of a gang which entered his house after a barrage of stones.

They smashed his furniture, but left intact four bookcases filled with Communist literature.

Amid applause for the gang's display of "patriotism", there was some doubting among the burghers of Columbus to-day. "This," said Police Captain Joseph Tibe, for example, "is just what the Communist people want."

Daily Express, 1/4/48.

BARRICADES—UP-TO-DATE

Egyptian troops and armoured cars were sent to-day to Kasr el Ainy Hospital, in Cairo, after male nurses, who are on strike, had successfully resisted a police attempt to remove them from the hospital.

The strikers, from "positions" on the roof of the hospital, used stones and buckets of water as weapons against the strong police force which tried to restore order. The police fired and injured a number of the strikers, and later used tear-gas bombs, but when they failed to move the strikers the Army was called in. The strikers electrified and locked all the hospital doors, preventing doctors and surgeons from entering the building.

Manchester Guardian, 8/4/48.

Through the Press

POUND OF FLESH

I have more to add about money-lenders and their security from a personal experience. I got into debt in a small way and I pawned my rings. This was twelve years ago. I saw an advertisement in the newspapers, and I thought if I could borrow £5 I would be able to redeem the rings and have a few shillings over to give me a start. All this was done without my husband's knowledge.

I applied, and was told that someone would come and interview me at home. All the furniture, including a piano, was paid for, and the interviewer said everything was satisfactory and I was to go to the office. I went and after waiting my turn for an hour and getting all worked up, I was called into an office. After taking particulars as to where my husband worked, I was lent £2. I signed a paper and was handed £1 4s.—16s. being stopped for interest (8s. in the pound). I was now £2 in debt. I had to pay this back 5s. per week. I paid it, but never went near the place again.

—Mrs. MUGGINS, née CAUGHT.

Letter in *The Leader*, 3/4/48.

UNDER THE COUNTER

"Doubtful books" in Acton Public Library are to be removed from the public shelves and made available only to applicants at the counter.

The Star, 3/3/48.

PEACE(FUL) PROSPECT

We are to have the biggest peace-time Army ever, and to train it the War Office may seek to take over a portion of the National Parks, said Mr. Shinwell in the Commons yesterday.

"Present plans," he continued, "do not contemplate taking more than 5 per cent. of the total area of the Parks, with due regard to objections."

Daily Herald, 16/3/48.

"JOLLY GEORGE"—NEW VERSION

The Soviet 17,870-ton liner *Rossia* sailed from here to-day without cargo because dock workers refused to load goods for Russia.

News Chronicle, 8/4/48

TOO MUCH CAVIARE—

Photographer Lee Miller gives advice to expectant mothers in current *Vogue* magazine. She counsels "Get your eyelashes dyed dark a few days before the event", suggests using liquid rouge on cheeks and lips because "it'll keep the pillows as well as junior's cranium clean."

Lee Miller suggests menu supplements such as smoked trout, paté de foie gras, caviare; and recommends having a bottle of gin for visitors.

Lee Miller, wife of surrealist painter Roland Penrose, had her first child last year, lives at Hampstead. It was a boy, weighed 7 lbs.

"Londoner's Diary,"

Evening Standard, 6/4/48.

—AND NO CAVIARE

A midwife who has brought more than 1,000 babies into the world, has refused to attend a miner's wife because of the "appalling condition of the slum in which the mother-to-be is living."

Nurse Sophia James, 52, midwife for the Welsh mining village of Blackwood, will in future refuse to attend all other expectant mothers who live in slums. "It's a miracle some of the babies ever live, considering the insanitary hovels in which they first saw the light of day," she told the *Pictorial*.

The miner's wife, Mrs. Florence Jones, of Cwmpennain, lives with her husband, two miner sons, two young girls and a boy, in a rat-infested two bedroom cottage.

"I cannot fight the slums any more," said Nurse James.

"The strain and risk have grown too much for me—the responsibility must now be taken by the authorities."

Sunday Pictorial, 11/1/48.

CIRCUS EXPERTS

The Serbian Regional Government will shortly establish a State circus and menagerie which will be the first of its kind in Yugo-Slavia.

News Chronicle, 1/4/48.

BOYS WILL BE BOYS—I

Chinese M.P.s pressed too many buttons when they used a voting machine for the first time to record a decision in to-day's preparatory session of the National Assembly here. The voting was on a proposal to permit the election of more than 25 members to the Presidium.

The figures first produced by the machine led to protests and expressions of doubt about their accuracy and there were demands for a new vote by a show of hands. The chairman, however, insisted on a fresh vote by machine. He urged members to take more care when pressing the buttons. This time there was a majority for the motion proposed.

The chairman said it could only be assumed that in the first vote members had pressed buttons "merely out of curiosity".

Manchester Guardian, 1/4/48.

BOYS WILL BE BOYS—2

Herbert Charles Wimberley (36), Director of Education for Westmorland, was summoned at Sedburgh Magistrates' Court yesterday for assaulting a nine-year-old boy, Colin Breaks, of Havera, Sedburgh, by striking him with a stick.

It was stated that when Wimberley was out walking with his wife the boy shouted, "Funny face." Wimberley chased him. The boy's father took him to a doctor.

Dr. T. Thistlethwaite said that the boy had a six-inch weal across his buttocks. If a child were of a nervous temperament such an injury could have repercussions when he was older.

Wimberley, who admitted striking the boy, said he would feel justified in repeating his action in similar circumstances. Children who were offensive needed correction straight away.

Manchester Guardian, 8/4/48.

EXTREME MEASURES

A one-armed man blew himself up with dynamite to-day in the office of the State Accident Commission, after trying for over a year to get compensation for the accident which cost him his other arm.

News Chronicle, 8/4/48

Is Democracy Liberty?

OWING to the unfortunate habit of some people in persisting in thinking of "democracy" as something to do with liberty of opinion, a demand has often been voiced by modern democrats for a re-definition of the word "democracy", showing that it will not mean the granting of liberty to unpopular minorities.

The latest "democrat" in search of a definition of democracy is Frederic Mullally, now political commentator for the *Sunday Pictorial*. He invited his readers to send in their own "original definitions of democracy" and gave the prize to a reader who submitted the following:

"A free parliament to implement the true wishes of the majority of the people, and to apply such restraints to minorities as their philosophy shows they would apply towards minorities, if ever they became the majority."

(*Pictorial*, 28/3/48.)

Well, to start with, they had better restrain Mullally from writing, for the whole point is that he wants to stop minorities such as Fascists and Communists. But what a stroke of luck for Anarchists if ever this unlikely definition were adopted literally. Believing in no government and no restraint of any kind whatever towards minorities (or majorities who are sometimes overlooked) presumably we should be free of all restraints, such as sedition, libel, etc., as well as all the other criminal laws which our philosophy shows we would abolish. Does that hold good for us, Mr. Mullally? Or does it only hold good for repressive measures and not the reverse?

Meetings and Announcements

UNION OF ANARCHIST GROUPS: CENTRAL LONDON

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

APRIL 18th Allen Smith
"Nihilism"

APRIL 25th Lecture to be announced.

BIRMINGHAM

Regular fortnightly discussion-lectures are held on Sunday, 7 p.m., at Dick Sheppard House, 36, Holloway Head. All readers are cordially invited.

Sunday, 25th April: Discussion on the N.E.L.A.G. (N.E. London Anarchist Group) Manifesto.

Sunday, 9th May: "The Anarchist Struggle." (Speaker to be announced.)

KINGSTON, PUTNEY, HAMMERSMITH

Discussion group in above area meets alternate Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at Dorick House, Kingston Vale. (85 and 72 buses to Robin Hood Gate stop 100 yards up Kingston Vale on right side.) Next meeting, Thursday, April 29th. Variety of Subjects. Bring your friends.

GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP

Public Meetings at
MAXWELL STREET

will be held every Sunday evening.

Speakers:
John Gaffney, Frank Leech, Eddie Shaw.

OXFORD

Anyone interested in the formation of an Oxford Anarchist Group should get in touch with John Larkman, Ruskin College, Oxford.

BRISTOL

Anyone interested in the formation of a Bristol Anarchist Group should get in touch with Peter Wilcox, 73, Whitehall Road, Bristol, 5.

Books for Sale

We have received from a friend a number of second-hand books for sale in aid of the German Food Fund. The following are still available and can be obtained from Freedom Press:

Descent of Man (illustrated). C. Darwin. 4/6.
Evan Harrington. George Meredith. 3/-.
Herman von Helmholtz. J. G. McKendrick. 3/-.
Actions and Reactions. R. Kipling. 7/6.
Traffics and Discoveries. R. Kipling. 6/6.
Paris. Sidney Dark. 6/6.
Mazzini. Edyth Hinkley. 6/6.
Memories of Life and Art. Walter Shaw Sparrow. 5/-.
Slump (a study of stricken Europe). H. H. Tiltman. 5/-.
ANARCHIST.

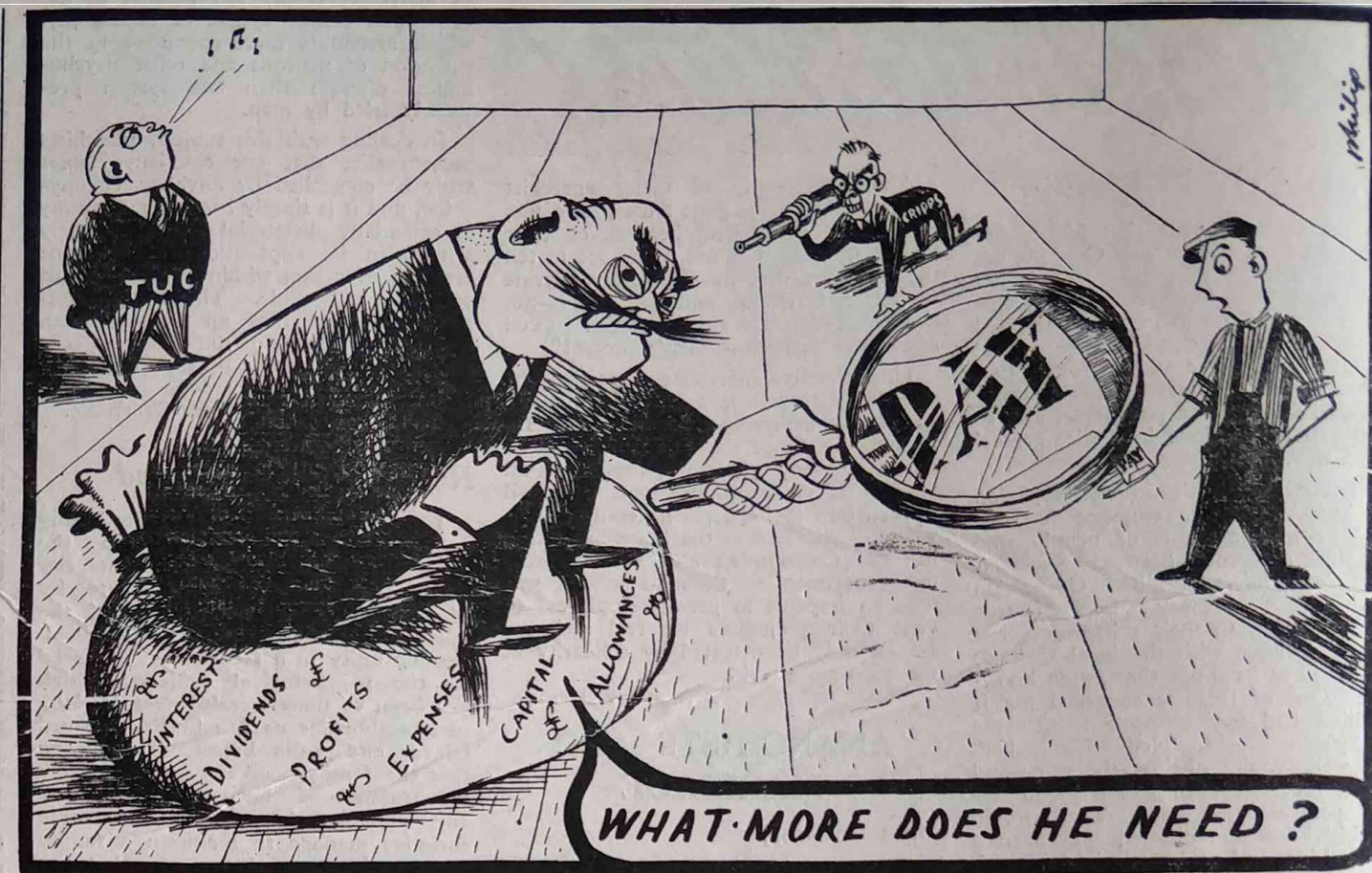
Liberty?

Let us assure the "democrats" they need not worry about a new definition. During the repressive measures in France in 1940 (which subsequent events proved contributed to the situation in which collapse was possible), M. Leon Blum defended suppression of all minorities (both anti-war and Communist and Fascist "pro-the-other-side") in the name of good old-fashioned democracy itself. Addressing the British Labour Party conference, he derided those who stood for "doing as one wished". That is not democracy, that is Anarchy," he said. He was perfectly correct.

The Press

But on the issue of democracy and liberty, Mr. McNeil lost an argument with M. Bogomolov, Soviet Ambassador in Paris. Mr. McNeil showed the British Press as an example of democracy, and asked for "freedom of the press" but stated it was necessary to restrain it from "obscenity, blasphemy, defamation and incitement to revolt". These restraints precisely mark the limits of freedom. If the press in Russia cannot "incite to revolt" it cannot tell the people to get rid of Stalin any other way. Obviously, the only opposition to Stalin must be one that incited to revolt. And this is a safeguard Mr. McNeil wants to retain. If he had any conception of what liberty meant, he would have welcomed obscenity, blasphemy, and incitements to revolt. The test of a free press is not whether one can be conventional and instruct people to obey but whether one can flout conventions and incite to rebel. The Russian press is free insofar as it can tell Russians to obey Stalin.

But M. Bogomolov rather slipped up when he said, "If the Press should be



restrained in these respects, why not control also incitement to war, hate propaganda and deliberate distortion of news?" He has evidently forgotten—conveniently—the syndicated features of M. Ilya Ehrenburg, calling for "extermination of Germans" during the war and his incitements to war and racial hatred between 1941 and 1945, fostered by the Russian propaganda machine and its auxiliary departments, the national Communist Parties.

A.M.

I.L.P. Conference

AT its recent conference at Southport, the I.L.P. decided (by a majority of one vote) to abandon its policy of acting as a political party and putting up candidates for parliament. Instead it will "become a propagandist and educational organization, simply and solely, concentrating its day-to-day activities on socialist ultimates and, in particular, its primary activities on (externally) the United Socialist States of Europe Campaign, and (internally) on propaganda for 'Workers' Control and against the current drift towards 'The Managerial Revolution'."

It might be thought that the I.L.P. had learned some hard lessons and had realized that political activity was an obstacle to the advance of the working class. But this step has come only after the complete disintegration of the parliamentary group of the I.L.P. by death (Maxton) or resignation into the Labour Party (McGovern, Campbell, Stephen and Carmichael), and the complete fiascos of recent by-elections (e.g., Annie Maxton at Camlachie). It is obvious that the step is a tactical revision rather than an advance in theoretical understanding.

Similarly with the propaganda for workers' control. I.L.P. spokesmen flirted with this conception during the Spanish war, and it was resurrected in a half-hearted way during the last war. But the I.L.P. have never shown any indication that they understand the implications of workers' control. Such a syndicalist and decentralist conception is only compatible with an anarchist position regarding government and the State, for decentralized control at the places of work excludes centralised control by a government, even a "Workers' government". Yet the I.L.P. spoke of workers' control while they were supporting the Caballero government in Spain, and while they were carrying on full-fledged parliamentary propaganda through their M.P.s and at by-elections. That they now advocate it at a time when they have, of necessity, abandoned parliamentary action is probably no more than a co-incidence.

Nevertheless, the realization that the bureaucratic methods of official socialism are essentially capitalist modes of administration is very welcome. And it is good to see the I.L.P. denouncing both the capitalist Anglo-American block and the Russian Eastern bloc.

It remains to be seen how the new political attitude of the I.L.P. will affect its future. It is to be hoped that it will still remain a repository for ethical socialism, and that the abandonment of political red herrings will allow of a theoretical advance along libertarian channels.

Press Fund

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ANARCHIST.

Comments—In Brief

POOL WINNER

Picture Post recently enquired into the effects of large wins in the pools on the lucky ones, and found that unhappiness

and discontent were the usual result. A man who won £55,000 odd the other day seemed to think that the possession of large funds necessitated a certain mode of life even if it was distasteful. He disliked champagne and cigars, and remarked as he stepped into a hired car with chauffeur, "I used to enjoy walking 20 miles every holiday. Now I suppose I'll have to ride." He expects other misfortunes: "I'm going to be lonely. I'll lose my old friends and will have to watch the new ones."

A good summary of money morals.

Defending Civil Liberties

THE latest issue of the F.D.C. Bulletin shows, once again, the usefulness of this organisation which receives all too little of the support it deserves. There is a history of the incredible case (incredible to those who are not familiar with the activities of the British secret police), of Norman Baillie Stewart; some disquieting information about "Our Obedient Servants", the anonymous, unapproachable port and immigration officials who subject foreigners (underprivileged ones at least), and "stateless persons" trying to get in, or out of this country, to interminable delays, indignities and harassing uncertainties; and a useful critical survey of the Criminal Justice Bill, which deals especially with the inhumanities and abuses which the Bill ignores completely.

The centre pages of the Bulletin are devoted to the Deserters' Amnesty Campaign, a review of the contradictory and contemptible policy of the Government, with an anthology of parliamentary replies on the subject.

At the same time, the F.D.C. have published a pamphlet on this theme: 20,000 Outlaws, *The Case for a Deserters' Amnesty*, by J. Jacobs. This is a humane, and unanswerable argument, and we hope that it will be given the widest possible circulation, since as Mr. Jacobs says, after exposing the evasive and untenable official excuses, "One suspects that such reasons are only used as a cloak to hide the Government's concern over the ineffectuality of its peace-time army plans, and their mistaken notion that the remedy lies in harsh and irrational discipline, and the intimidation of that section of the public most directly concerned. This attitude is reminiscent of the smoke-screen of statements which were issued after the release of the Malayan parachutists. If public opinion had not breached the unfeeling official defences, and the Press had not reflected the general indignation, then those men would still be cooped up in a tropical prison. The present situation calls for similar action, similar solidarity, similar determination.

The pamphlet costs 4d., and it can be obtained from the F.D.C. at 3/- a dozen, post paid, and we suggest that all our readers who have opportunities to distribute it (and who haven't?) should order at least a dozen straight away.

FREEDOM DEFENCE COMMITTEE BULLETIN, No. 6.

Spring, 1948. 8 pages, 4d.

20,000 OUTLAWS, by J. Jacobs. 16 pages, 4d.

Published by the F.D.C. at 8, Endsleigh Gardens, London, W.C.1.

(Copies can also be obtained from Freedom Bookshop.)

LOST WEIGHT ON GERMANS' DIET

The vicar and parishioners of a church in Bolton have tried the experiment of living for a week on the same diet as the Germans have. Most of them have lost weight.

They intend to send the food they have thereby saved for German relief. The money they have saved will be sent to the Lord Mayor of London's Fund for children. This example will perhaps serve to encourage readers of *Freedom* to send rationed foods to make up parcels for Germany.

REFORMISM

The idiocy of the law is well illustrated in the case of Frederick Havell, summoned at Dartford for failing to send his 14-year-old daughter to school till she is 15. He told the magistrates: "I have spent nearly all my life in public service and hold very strong views on education. I have done all in my power to get Maureen to go to school and to convince her that it is for her own benefit, but when she is sent she always goes somewhere else." He had sought the aid of the Education Committee and of a psychiatrist, but without avail.

It is difficult to see what else he could do, but the Court fined him 10/- just the same and warned him that Maureen must go to school. When he said he would have to give up work and take her to school by force, which was an impossible state of affairs, the magistrates helpfully told him that he could bring her before the court as being beyond his control.

Maureen's reasons for not going to school may be good or bad; but that is not the point. What is happening here is an insensitive attempt on the part of instituted authority to break a child's spirit, regardless of the seemingly moderate views of her parents.

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