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ANARCHIST FORTNIGHTLY

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Threepence

NEW ATTACK ON TITO v. STALIN MILITANT MINERS

AN ENQUIRY into alleged "go slow" methods in use by miners is to be made by a Joint Working Party set up by the National Coal Board and the National Union of Mineworkers.

In exchange for the five-day week—that "great advance"—the unions had pledged the men not only to abolish all restrictive practices, but to extend the "stint" or daily task wherever possible. That is to say, that although the five-day week, long agitated for, was being granted, the new owners expected the same amount of work, if not more, to be done as in five and a half days before. The advantage was immediately apparent to all!

How some of the men for whom these arrangements had been made by those who know what is best for them felt about this, was made quite clear at Grimethorpe last year. Few of us will forget the fight put up then against an additional 2 feet on the daily stint.

The halt given by Grimethorpe's example to the efforts of the N.C.B.-N.U.M. coalition to screw more production out of the same time, has been ranking in the breasts of the officials, and the increase in absenteeism recently has given them the excuse to get together

to investigate the causes of the (for them) alarming drop in output. We can remember how Sir Charles Reid, before he resigned from the Coal Board, attacked the miners for not producing more. It must have broken his poor old heart, for he quit soon after, only to hear his erstwhile pal, Arthur Horner, General Secretary of the N.U.M., say: "The Coal Board is well rid of him."

Now, however, Horner's Union will work with the Coal Board in probing the areas where unofficial strikes are most frequent in endeavours to uncover the causes of miners' militancy. The Working Party will also examine plans and prospects in the industry to try and put across wage-pegging for a period of two or three years. These proposals may have been discussed at the N.U.M. annual meeting at Whitley Bay by the time this is in print, but our guess is that the Union will accept wage-pegging "in the national interest", but that the miners will not.

Already, as we go to press, reports have appeared of Will Lawther's opening speech at Whitley Bay, as President of the N.U.M. He kicks off by condemning unofficial strikes as "criminal", a word which he has used so often in this connection that we can now expect no other. After that he went on to make some rather odd remarks about "some of the self-opinionated, would-be supermen, of whom the Labour movement always seem to have more than its quota."

It transpired that he was talking about some grades of workers in the industry

who have the colossal cheek to have formed their own organisations outside the N.U.M. "We will not tolerate the mushroom trade unions continually using threats," rumbled Lawther—a case of the pot calling the kettle black if ever there was one.

Now, we do not have much sympathy for the little craft unions which still exist in the mining industry. We believe it is far better that there should be one organisation for one industry—but the National Union of Mineworkers is not the kind of industrial union we envisage. That has simply become a bureaucratic pyramid with the "self-opinionated, would-be superman" Lawther himself sitting on top like an omniscient Nobodaddy.

What we would like to see is a decentralised organisation based on the individuals at the place of work and controlled by them; an organisation created by and for the individuals comprising it and not the other way round as in the N.U.M. Such a miner's syndicate would be of use to them in the coming attacks on their standards, but the N.U.M. will be against them.

A Future for Anarchism?

We reproduce below an extract from the leading article in the Catholic weekly *The Tablet* for June 26th, 1948, referring to the nationalisation of the mines:—

"... The contrast between the vision and the reality has been nowhere more marked. This is not what was held out to the miners during all the long years in which the Labour Party was collecting support in the coalfields. Much more used to be said about direct workers' control, much less about a State monopoly, centralised and remote. When Englishmen hear the word "anarcho-syndicalism" they think vaguely of Spain and violence, for the word is linked with anarchism, and Anarchists are stage figures from the Continent. But there is in fact arising in British industry, if in a less dramatic setting, the same fundamental issue that divided Marx and Bakunin eighty years ago.

"... Men as naturally lawless and anti-Government as Mr. Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells could conduct a propaganda on behalf of bureaucracy with all to much success among an unimaginative proletariat because neither they nor their public had any practical experience of what it would be like. Now the practical experience is beginning, and from now on there will probably prove to be a big future in England, Scotland and Wales for anarcho-syndicalist ideas, for the claim that industries ought to be conducted in much smaller units, by the people actually engaged in them, with only the loosest association one with another."

This comment is interesting for many reasons, not the least that *The Tablet* in company with other journals in this country is beginning to realise that the alternative to the totalitarianism in politics and in the unions to-day is not capitalist democracy.

GOVERNMENT REFUSES DESERTERS' AMNESTY DEBATE

Mr. Rhys Davies leading pacifist on the Labour back benches, and sponsor of the *Freedom Defence Committee*, which has been campaigning for over 2 years for an amnesty for deserters, tabled a motion supported by 102 other Labour M.P.'s calling for "early reconsideration" of an amnesty. Mr. Morrison, however, refused time to debate the question.

"From the moment a people gives itself representatives it is no longer free."

ROUSSEAU.

"Freedom, what sins are committed in thy name!"

Fouquier TINVILLE.

and specifies in this connection such acts as the "belittling" of Soviet military specialists, "discrediting" the Soviet Army and subjecting Soviet civilian subjects in Yugoslavia to a "special regime" which consisted in their being watched by Yugoslav spies and followed! All this, according to the statement, indicates that the Yugoslavs began to identify the foreign policy of the U.S.S.R. with the foreign policy of the imperialist powers and to act accordingly. And finally, the Yugoslav Communists spread calumnious propaganda borrowed from the "arsenal of counter-revolutionary Trotskyism".

Internal Deviations

The third point deals with the Yugoslav Party's policy inside their country and with "their retreat from the Marxist-Leninist position". Fourthly, the leadership is accused of revising the Marxist-Leninist teaching about the Party and is accused of "letting the Party dissolve itself in the non-party Popular front which includes various classes and variegated political groups, among them some bourgeois parties. Fifthly, the "bureaucratic regime within the Party" is ruinous for the Party. "There is no internal democracy in the Party and the type of organisation encourages within the Party military leadership methods similar to those of Trotsky".

They Refused "Brotherly Help"

Point 6 condemns the attitude of the Yugoslav Party to the "brotherly help" offered by the Russian and other C.P.'s and attacks the leaders for being "afflicted by inordinate ambition, grandeur and cunning calculation". The seventh point deals with their refusal to come to heel or in the words of the statement for replying "negatively to numerous proposals of the brotherly C.P.'s to discuss the situation". Eighthly, as a result of this attitude the Yugoslavs have moved "to disassociate themselves from (Continued on page 5)

The Cominform Statement

The statement is a long, rambling document in which the Communist phraseology and slogans abound. It consists of eight points, the first of which reveals that it was the "action of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)" which took the initiative in uncovering the incorrect policy of the Central Committee of the Yugoslav C.P. and above all the incorrect policy of Comrades Tito, Kardelj, Djilas and Rankovich. The second point deals with the "hateful policy" of the Yugoslav Party "in relation to the Soviet Union and to the All-Union Communist Party"

From the Cradle to the Grave ...

IT is possible to discern in the National Insurance Scheme which came into force on 5th July, many progressive trends. It embodies a determined attempt to do away with the Poor Law and "pauperism", and it seeks to ensure that everybody is secured against the disasters of everyday life—accidents at work, unemployment, etc.—and provided for in old age. In its preparation the same general forces have been at work which produced the social legislation of the nineteenth century, and it would be idle to deny the value of those progressive forces.

But it also exhibits the disadvantages attendant upon attempts to operate reforms within a social and economic structure such as Capitalism provides. The necessity to make it a national insurance scheme which is to be comprehensive inevitably makes it very cumbersome to run. When it is in full operation, the scheme will cost twenty-five million pounds a year to operate, and it will employ no less than 40,000 in staff. Then the compulsory nature of the Insurance scheme makes it necessary to have means to enforce its terms; how needful such means are is shown by the fact that out of three million "self-employed" and "non-employed" persons who are supposed to register by April 30th and secure cards to stick their stamps on, no less than 2,280,000 have so far failed to register. The great bulk of the population don't have to do anything—it is done for them in the shape of deductions from the wage packet—and it is at least arguable that if such people had had the opportunity to exercise choice they might well have been just as lukewarm about it.

There can be no doubt that bureaucratic inefficiency and the usual soullessness of State-run outfits will make many flaws in the scheme. But the dis-

advantages of such a scheme lie more in what might be called the philosophical implications. The *Times* remarks that "it was desired, moreover to strengthen the bonds of human solidarity in a complex society by making all citizens without exception 'stand on equal terms' in insurance, pooling their risks, and giving every citizen in his weekly contribution stamp a personal reminder of his obligation to his fellows." But does it really do that? In practice the intervention of the State in these matters acts more to relieve individuals from the obligations of social living. In misfortune, one's fellows will be looked after by the cumbersome machinery of the Acts and the fellow feeling of those around will be rendered unnecessary.

The actuarial nature of the scheme also undermines the social aims behind it. For the right to receive benefits does not rest on simple recognition of the natural needs and therefore rights of every human being; it rests on the fact that a man has been paying contributions. He is held to be buying security, not receiving it as a right. This is shown up in various anomalies; self-employed people are not entitled to unemployment benefit. It is to be presumed that the pinch of hard times will drive such people into employment and the relinquishment of their "independence" which, however illusory, they none the less cherish, through the lack of any benefit when they have no work.

The point here, however, is that it is the actuary rather than the humanist who stands behind the scheme, and lays the chill hand of the State on a matter which should properly engage the warmth of the community. The more the State interferes in such matters, the more fitfully gutters the social flame. There are solid advantages in these acts, but it is impossible not to see also the advance of the soulless State.

THE BIG STICK Dockers Bullied Back to Work

ANY further comment on the London Dock Strike is likely to be purely in the nature of a post mortem or an inquest, now that it is all over. But there are a few points arising out of it and all its echoes that are worth discussion.

There is no need to repeat a description of the cause of the strike, which we gave in the last issue. It was a perfectly simple case of victimisation—in fact the case was so simple that a lot of people did not seem able to grasp it! It is mildly astonishing how all the leader-writers of the national press who incessantly pepper their articles with pleas for respect for the individual and his initiative are immediately alarmed and hostile when a section of the working-class uses its own initiative in defence of a few individuals! Mildly amusing, too, is the promptness with which papers like the *London Evening Standard*—which might be said to have adopted as

its motto the Conservative war-cry "Set the People Free!"—demand action, control, discipline and what-not from the Socialist Government, whose yoke they themselves find unbearable.

We hope the dockers—and indeed the whole working-class—have noticed these points, for while the national press is largely Conservative, the Labour and Liberal papers differed from them in their attitude to the strike only in that they professed regret in no longer being able to support the dockers' struggle. From these examples within our own experience we can assess the value of newspaper comment and remember to take with hefty pinches of salt opinions, "facts", and comment on matters outside our experience, such as foreign policy, the bestiality of our enemy and so on.

Deakin's Dream

Two other institutions, however, have emerged from the dust of battle much shabbier than when they entered the lists—and Christ knows they were not very clean then! The antics of the trade unions—especially the Transport and General Workers'—and the Government, must have completely opened the eyes of the port workers to the nature of these defenders of the "common man". Indeed, Arthur Deakin, boss of the T. & G.W.U., thoroughly gave the game away when, at one dockside meeting where he was having a rough passage, he answered the accusation that he was a dictator by crying, "I wish I was a dictator, then I shouldn't be standing here arguing with you!"

Deakin's stock must be pretty low among the dockers now. I was watching a meeting he was addressing at the Surrey Commercial Docks where, although there were plenty of interruptions, he was getting a good hearing. He spoke for two hours and at the end took a vote on his resolution to go back to work. There was no counting of votes and from where I was standing there were very obviously just as many, if not more, voting against (Continued on page 3)

Only £1,800 Worth of Food Lost in Dock Strike

Dr. Edith Summerskill (Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food), said in the House of Commons last week that the amount of food condemned because of the London dock strike, comprised thirteen tons of Canary tomatoes, seventeen tons of cucumbers, three tons of melons, and half a ton of peaches. The total value of the food was £1,800.

National Insurance Bureaucracy

Mr. T. Steele (Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of National Insurance) told Sir Waldron Smithers that the estimated staff required to start National Insurance operations on July 5th was 32,380. The central office at Newcastle was complete, and head offices had also been opened in each region in England and in Edinburgh and Cardiff. The total of separate local offices open on July 5th would be 992. In addition, especially to cover certain rural areas, some 200 offices would be open on one or more days a week according to need.

THE SCHOOLROOM OF THE FUTURE

AN Exhibition of models and photographs of *New Schools*, in this country and in France, Switzerland and Scandinavia, and of samples of furniture and classroom equipment was recently held at the Royal Institute of British Architects. Though the Exhibition is now closed the R.I.B.A. have issued an illustrated book, of the same title, which may profitably be studied by anyone who was unable to go to the Exhibition.

"The school must express, in architectural form, the culture which is the basis of our society," says the book on page 28. There need be no fear about that: for study of these buildings reveals more of the real nature of the society that the State planners have in mind, than do the utterances of Cabinet Ministers or the statements on the aims of education made by the architects.

The Exhibition shows that the modern state is concerned that a large proportion of its members shall be conditioned to be efficient clerks in the government offices and to take part in the armed forces. Hence education is conceived in static terms: on the one hand the teaching of the 3Rs, and on the other physical development. Emotional development and social responsibility in school are left out. In building plans this means that "the classroom is the unit" for the purpose of oral instruction, and that health must be ensured by the correct amount of sunlight, daylight, ventilation and heat.

The Exhibition demonstrates the ability of the architect to solve the technical problems that are presented to him, and at the same time shows up the limitations of those who set the problems. For example, since it is found that maximum reflection is undesirable on the wall behind the teacher's desk, the architects have come in and said that therefore that wall should be of a deeper colour than the other walls or ceiling. No-one thinks that the best way of learning after the Nursery years, may not be from a teacher sitting in front of a deep-coloured wall, but activity methods on the part of the children themselves. Again, the architect says that "the school must open out to the town and village to invite entry", and that he condemns the "discouraging of parents from entering the school by placing the entrance through the lavatories" (p. 27), but in practice we find designs for shelters for parents at the front gate.

It is said that "the regulations covering daylighting are virtually enforcing a single story plan (p. 34). Is it not rather that teaching-machines in a matrix factory call for this

VICISSITUDES OF PROPAGANDA

In 1945 there was published in *Greek Trilogy* a pitiful photograph of a group of starving Greek children, who had barely managed to survive the German occupation. The photograph was taken on their arrival at a clinic.

On May 27th last the identical photograph was published in the Swiss paper *La Voix Ouvrière*; and the caption, in French, was as follows:

"Victims of Athens Monarchofascists. These Greek children have lost their parents, arrested, deported or shot by the Athens Monarchofascists in the pay of the Yankee imperialists."

They were found roaming about the countryside and were saved by detachment of the people's army of General Markos. One can see what they suffered from the miseries they have had to endure. All show signs of rickets.

The committees of help to Democratic Greece look after all the victims of Greco-Yankee fascism. Help them!"

I have before me both photographs. One is an exact replica of the other. The Greek Press Ministry in Athens now threatens to sue the Swiss paper for publishing an appeal based on a fraudulent picture.

—A. J. Cummings in *News Chronicle*, 26/6/48.

design? Were there free activity there would be autonomous units. The headmaster would not need to see down every corridor from his point of vantage.

It is to be noted that the progressive schools' freer discipline has also demanded a different lay-out—not shown in this Exhibition—and our state planners would be well advised to learn from them. At King Alfred, Golders Green, for example, the centres of activity such as the laboratories, the library, the kitchen and hall, the theatre are scattered in separate parts of the site. At Kees Boeke's school at Bilthoven, Holland, there is a German house, a music house, a science house, etc. And though this is a boarding school, where the children live for several months in each house, the project principle, instead of a talk-and-chalk method, is the same.

Designs for multilateral and for boarding schools are conspicuously absent from this Exhibition, though the 1944 Education Act makes provision for both. Here again the progressive schools have already tackled the problem of providing heating from a central plant and cooking facilities for resident children and staff facilities in separate "cottages" (e.g., Baltane, Wiltshire), whereas in a state school all would be herded together in dormitories and a large dining room.

It is forgotten by the planners that young children like quaint buildings or a house in the trees rather than "long, low classroom blocks" (p. 22) reminiscent of the hygiene of a hospital. They need to create; not only to appreciate the beauty of their premises. Internally, however, the primary schools seem designed for greater activity than the senior: "a sink and bench in every classroom" (p. 18), and an all-purposes staff room used as a "dining room and for sewing, mending, toy making and repairing" (p. 17) is a great advance on the usual staff room's bloody ink and crossword puzzles.

The architects, in advance of most education authorities, have seen that alterability of buildings is an essential if a school is to have an organic life. They admit that "many schools built in the inter-war years, often at considerable cost, are now virtually out of date" (p. 8), owing to the new standards set by the 1944 Act. They say (p. 34-6):

"Rapid changes in educational methods are leading architects to use structures which are not too expensive to alter... It has now become the practice to use framed construction or a system of point supports, i.e., posts of steel, reinforced concrete or brickwork to support the roof. The roof structure spans right across from face to face of the block of building. The result of this practice is that the outer walls and the inner partitions merely carry their own weight and do not support the roof."

"This means first that the framework can be infilled with any material which will do its job as outer wall or partition... Second, alteration to meet new conditions, such as come from changes in the population structure of the community which the school serves, can be made equally readily. Classrooms can be converted to special departments—or vice versa—without disturbing roofs, foundations and piped services as was almost always necessary with the old type of traditional structure."

Those readers who have anything to do with school buildings (perhaps as members of Parents' Council), though they may not succeed in getting the layout they want, can certainly insist that the structures used are not too expensive to alter to suit a more persuasive discipline than is allowed at present.

Another good word must be said for the architects in their conception of the school Hall—which must serve for plays, concerts, lectures, cinema, dances and exhibitions, all of which have different needs in acoustics and

Controversy—

THERE has been some recent correspondence in *Freedom* on the subject of the Family. The general idea that anarchists want to 'abolish the family' causes consternation in some quarters, and it seems desirable to discuss more fully what we have got against the institution of the family, and what forms of more desirable relationships between men, women and children, we envisage.

Many anthropologists and historians have investigated the origins of the family, and there is general agreement that the form of family which we know to-day, originates as a property-holding institution. Marxists have put a great deal of emphasis on this point, perhaps to the neglect of other significant facts concerning the institution. To those of us who come of families which have no property, this idea may seem a little far-fetched, yet it is well to remember the true meaning of the term 'proletarian'. A proletarian family is one in which the parents have only one kind of property—their children—which can be sold or hired out as labour-power.

FLASHBACK—8

THE "good" middle-class people of Camden Road, Holloway, have had their feelings shocked by the horrible details of capital punishment being brought under their noses, and they are protesting, not in the name of humanity, of course, but in the name of their own outraged feelings, and the menace to their valuable property!

Since these sensitive people have surrounded themselves with laws for their own protection, and have never raised their voices before in denunciation of the barbarous custom of capital punishment, we have no pity for them. On the contrary, it would perhaps be a good thing if all those "legal" murderers who uphold the death penalty could have a closer acquaintance with the horror of it all. Let them have brought under their view the mental suffering, the agonised suspense of their fellow-creatures waiting for death. Let them meet the hangman face to face—the man they pay to take in cold blood, in the most cowardly fashion, the life of a fellow-being doomed by the law they uphold. Let them see these things, and then if they can give their support to this inhuman treatment they are morally below the level of the victim whose legal murder they applaud.

—"Freedom", March 1903.

lighting. They say (p. 12):

"The chief defect in school halls is, as a rule, the lack of wing space and overhead space for flying scenic units, battens, borders, etc. The T-shaped plan gives ample wing space: combined with the stage proper it makes a good studio or stage workshop. This cannot be had in the old type of platform where hall gangways are carried past the stage as exits."

Imaginatively planned, project work in language, painting, carpentry, electricity, dressmaking can be centred round the theatre, instead of being taught as lessons in the long classroom blocks; and the school hall may become the local community hall as well.

The centre of the Public Schoolboy's life has been said to be the Chapel, and the Grammar Schools are said to ape the Public School. Yet, though scripture teaching and corporate acts of worship are laid down as obligatory in the Act, it is significant that in this Exhibition there is not a single design for a school Chapel nor mention of what sunlight, daylight, heating and ventilation a Chapel needs.

ANTHONY WEAVER.

THE FAMILY

Its Cause and Cure

Indeed, in this century when the aristocratic families have been losing their great inherited property by successive death duties, the aristocracy has become a sort of 'proletariat' breeding 'proles' of both sexes to be sold in marriage to the money-making class of industrialists, usurers and bureaucrats.

As opponents of the property system, therefore, anarchists have always tended to be against the institution of the family on this score. But we are now witnessing new forms of the property system in the world to-day. However, the right of property inheritance and primogeniture may be fostered by those who have a vested interest in it, it is obvious that the forward march of the totalitarian State is doing away with the importance of property inheritance. At the same time the State is anxious to foster the continued existence of the family in its present form, and in considering this problem we must turn to another aspect of the family which is less noticed by the Marxists—the family as an authoritarian unit.

Authority and the Family

The typical family of our civilization is patriarchal and authoritarian; all law and custom takes this for granted. The State fosters such an institution precisely because the State takes over the function of patriarch, and the 'family' then becomes the 'nation'. The child, conditioned by the pattern of conventional family structure from its earliest years, takes the existence of the State for granted in later life. Many people look to the State much as children are conventionally taught to regard their father—as a universal provider, the natural guardian of morality, the indispensable head of the family. If such an attitude of mind persists, how will such people envisage the abolition of the State?

Some correspondents to *Freedom* have suggested that the family would not necessarily disappear with the advent of anarchy, and have indicated that all that is needed is a few improvements in family relationships. But after such reforms as the abolition of inheritance, of parental omnipotence, of monogamy, what on earth will constitute a family—children by the same father or children by the same mother? It would seem that the latter has some natural biological basis in the early years of a child's life. If the children have an equal freedom with adults, however, they will often act (where now they only wish they could) on the old adage—"We can't choose our family, but thank God we can choose our friends."

Conformity or Revolt

Many people are willing to admit the desirability of the break-up of the institution of the family, but they hold that it must wait until 'after the revolution'. They maintain that legal marriage should proceed (or closely follow) the begetting of children, and that ostensible monogamy and all the parental hypocrisies of normal family life should be observed—for the sake of the children. Such people carry out a rignarole which they theoretically condemn for the sake of the coming generation.

This line of action is generally justified in the same way that many atheists justify the baptism and early religious instruction of their children. They hold that not to baptise a child, nor teach it to say its prayers, nor tell it about Gentle Jesus, is to make it different from other children. The fallacy of this idea lies in assuming that there is necessarily any standard to which a child must conform. Obviously a child who has never had the benefit of holy water and who is utterly ignorant of Gentle Jesus, would feel utterly lost if he were sent to a Jesuit school. Similarly, the child of a woman who is neither married nor restricted to one man, might feel awkward if compelled to live in the society of a snobbish little town.

But we do not have to give our children into the hands of god-fearing pedagogues, nor do we have to inflict on them the beastly moral society of the middle-class snobs. The relevant point is, that if we are to break with stupid restrictions in one respect, we must be prepared to follow it up all along.

Apropos of inflicting the "oddy" of illegitimacy on children, it is about time people woke up to the real facts about marriage and sexual behaviour to-day. Nearly 30% of first-born children are conceived out of wedlock anyway (Registrar General's figures for 1938—

1939) and of those conceived by married women who is to declare their paternity too dogmatically? Review the annual divorce figures and make a guess! Under modern conditions the awful sanctity of the institution of marriage and the permanence of the Family, is largely a wishful fancy of the pillars of the Church and State. We do not have to wait until "after the revolution" to give the whole edifice a push.

The Security of the Child

The gravest objection to the break-up of the family is on the score of the sense of security which the family gives to the young child to-day. Children, particularly those in small families, are often nervous about what would happen to them if they lost one or both of their parents through death or other mishap. It is observable, also, that children who have only one parent living with them tend to be lacking in a proper sense of security, and that this sense of security is often best supplied by a fairly large family unit.

That young children may feel terrified by the awful insecurity attendant on the possible break-up of their family, is hardly surprising if they are living in a little, self-contained family unit. In such families the children learn from an early age to appreciate the conditions under which they live—a tiny family unit living in its own little den amid a jungle of every kind of insecurity. Early on the child realises that his whole life depends on the ministrations of one or two people, and beyond is the terrifying world of indifferent strangers.

The separation of parents is often a shock to a child who is brought up to regard the family as a bulwark against the dangers of the world, but the awful insecurity of a union which seems perpetually on the brink of dissolution, is a more nerve-racking condition for a child. Yet often such married partners go on living together, and hating it, for the sake of the children.

Even within the present framework of society one need not inflict children with the awful isolation of the small middle-class family. The neighbourliness of a working-class tenement, or even a street slum, is a far better social atmosphere for children to grow up in. The findings of such social experiments as the Peckham Family Health Centre seem to indicate that the more that families are able to lose their separate little entities in larger social associations, so the individual members are both healthier and happier. In such communal enterprises as the Doukhobor settlements, and some of the Palestinian communities, children are taken from the direct care of their mothers at a rather early age, in order to free the mothers for work. That these children grow up happy and well balanced, must be attributed to the fact that the whole atmosphere of such communities is one of mutual aid, and family security does not need to exist.

Children in the Future

A not unintelligent child of my acquaintance, aged 8, was mildly surprised to learn that adults did not, in fact, copulate in the local church. He had heard that the church was used for marrying, and assumed that the building was put to a sane and practical use by the happy couples.

If children are allowed to develop without any hush-hush about sexual matters, they will naturally connote the word "marry" with "copulate", and will refer to the copulatory act which they observe among animals as "marrying". The legal aspect of marriage is mere nonsense to a child. He will want to incorporate into the family as many adults of both sexes as he happens to like as people—and to exclude from the family any of his own blood-kindred whom he does not like. If he is allowed to be honest, he does not care a rap who begot him, nor who shares his father's or mother's bed, provided they are likeable people.

The over-stress on the necessity of the family as a bulwark against the world, comes about because of the curious conditions under which we live. The system of separate and economically competitive families is more natural to predatory animals like foxes or lions, than to a social species of animal; indeed, it is of comparatively recent aetiology in the human species. When we manage to progress to, or rather return to, a more social manner of living there will be no fear of insecurity arising in the consciousness of the child; the whole community will be naturally supplying all his wants, and the couple who were his biological origin will no longer have such importance. In infancy the physical and emotional bond between child and mother is strong, and who shall say when and if complete weaning occurs? It is by no means proven, however, that the so-called paternal instinct is anything more than man's vanity in his own private property.

TONY GIBSON.

Dockers Back

(Continued from page 1)

the resolution. But Deakin immediately announced that it had been carried—a decision which was not shared by the meeting, which expressed its disagreement in no uncertain terms! Deakin was followed to his car by angry men, and drove off red-faced and embarrassed to shouts of "What a lovely job!" and the like. But the radio that evening announced Deakin's view of what he thought the dockers should have decided, and not the truth!

It is the Government, however, and especially Mr. Attlee, who have come out of the incident worst. After the meeting mentioned above, I was speaking to some of the strikers and one of them said that they knew perfectly well that the first thing a Tory Government would do if returned to power would be to re-introduce the Trades Dispute Act. The very next day the King was proclaiming a State of Emergency on the recommendation of our Socialist Cabinet! Which only goes to show that it is not necessary to have a Trades Dispute Act on the statute book for the Government to be able to outlaw strikes. The State is always protected by its constitution, but political capital can always be made by pretending to make that constitution more liberal by removing the more glaring examples of class legislation. The Labour Party made a great song about their removal of the Trades Dispute Act and omitted to mention that the Emergency Powers Act could do the same work if necessary.

The E.P.A. was last used during the 1926 General Strike. It enables the Government to take any measures it considers necessary to deal with an emergency, such as to:

Prevent sabotage; deal with attempts to persuade troops from doing civilian work; try sedition charges in magistrates' courts instead of only in the High Court.

Billet troops; take control of ports; give orders on the turn round of ships and the handling of cargoes.

Arrest without warrant; control unlawful public meetings, processions; use police outside their own areas.

Attlee's Speech

Mr. Attlee's part in the whole affair was deplorable. He gave Cabinet backing to Deakin's refusal to meet the unofficial strike committee, and after refusing to intervene as an arbitrator he first sends the troops in, then declares a State of Emergency and then broadcasts a speech to the nation and the dockers which as an example of puerile sentimental nonsense could hardly have been bettered by Churchill himself.

The worst of winning any sort of reform is that you are expected to be satisfied with it for the rest of your days. Because the dockers have their decentralisation scheme they are now to be labelled as ingrates and irresponsible hotheads if they want anything else. Instead of answering any point of the dockers' case, Attlee turned on the emotion about the "bad old days" of casual labour, how much better it was now, and so on. In point of fact the dockers are beginning to realise now that in order to gain the (very comparative) material security of the guaranteed week, they have had to be prepared to accept shackles they would have thought unbearable before.

Bosses never give anything away. In exchange for the guaranteed week they have made the union promise them guaranteed discipline over the workers. So when the workers strike now the union automatically lines up against them in order to justify its own existence with the bosses, and London's dockers could hardly have had a better lesson on union function.

"The State bullied the dockers back to work. Raising the usual parrot-cry about political agitators and how the Communists were behind the strike (they were—a long way behind!), the authorities and the Press had a lot to say about the strikers blackmailing the community. In point of fact the introduction of the

ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM AND THE WORKERS

IT cannot seriously be argued that to-day at any rate the question of workers' organisation is paramount, since never before have the masses been so well organised, ticketed and docketed, and duly accredited, and what was once a joke is now in many places fact—namely, the employer demands that his men be members of a trade union which theoretically is opposed to his interests but in practice is his way of ensuring that the men are organised—that is to say, disciplined—by an institution built with their own money and in which they have confidence.

E.P.A. was a first-class example of blackmail and coercion by the State against the dockers, and although it seemed a pity, the dockers were right to call the strike off when they did. There is only one answer to the E.P.A., and that is a General Strike, and obviously there was no likelihood of that at the moment.

It is heartening to know, however, that although the dockers went down, they are not out. Their action has caused prompt enquiry into the offensive clauses in the Dock Labour scheme, and one docker, when asked if they went back because they were afraid of Mr. Attlee, was reported to have said: "We're not afraid of a thousand Mr. Attlees—and if there's any victimisation, there'll be another strike—bigger and better than ever!"

I have the feeling that we have only just witnessed another round in a contest which will take a long time to finish. But I also have the feeling that among the dockers are men who know what that finish must be. And that is encouraging.

P.S.

What really raises his indignation is the men's acting according to their own wishes and not according to the officials of the union who in theory are their servants—this is what is called "industrial anarchy" and that is just what it is. Democracy implies in its true and uncorrupted sense representative government; but anarchy implies a much greater vision of freedom than that, namely direct participation.

Basically, the idea sometimes put forward of delegates elected for specific periods and drawing the same pay as given for the job and subject to recall at any time, although a great advance on syndicalist lines from the idea of trade-union official representation, is not anarcho-syndicalism at all. It is democratic all right, but it tends to take away the feeling of responsibility and direct action, and to create apart from the workers a class of militants, who inevitably begin to think of themselves as superior to the rest of the workers, and hence we get the rise of such workers through the shop steward movement and suchlike to positions of trade union responsibility and eventually labour politics, leading finally to the very position they themselves had attacked. Or alternatively, to the "vanguard party" idea, of a party setting itself above the workers, taking it upon itself to use their struggles to boost its name, and, whether setting itself the responsibility for organising them or merely taking credit for the struggle which got along without them, acting as a lever for personal power for certain politicians.

At the present time, the workers are turning away from reformist organisation. Should we build a new organisation? Nowhere could the workers have been more completely or thoroughly organised than in pre-Hitler Germany, but the centralising of authority into such organisations was of immense aid to the Nazis who had only to remove the leaders; and for that matter there could not be again a movement so revolutionary and highly organised as the anarcho-syndicalist movement in Spain, which nevertheless eventually receded, even before the Franco victory. Experience everywhere tends to show that organisations are frail institutions at the best of times; they can be liquidated or penetrated, and as a matter of fact it is a foregone conclusion that there are plenty of would-be vanguard-leaders of the workers ready to penetrate any potentially influential organisation that might be set up. But what cannot be liquidated or penetrated is the idea in the minds of the workers. If they have the ideas of workers' control and action—no matter whether crystallised into an institution or not—dictatorship cannot suppress nor political illusions dispel that great potential which alone can transform society.

Hence anarcho-syndicalism cannot set itself above or apart from the workers but be of them. There is a very old gambit of the anarchists in dismissing any talk of organising with the words "The workers will decide that for themselves when the time comes" which never fails to annoy the authoritarian theorist because there is no possible answer to it; but actually it is what happens, although it could be expressed better. All the invented theories in the world are tossed aside in moments of social reconstruction; but in the revolutionary situations of modern times the workers have turned to the idea of workers' councils. Whether these have been thought of as "free soviets" or as component parts of a union, in every country, both in actual revolutions and times of social upheaval, the idea comes forward, because it is the only possible alternative both to State control and to capitalism. The anarchists advocate that these councils shall be linked together in the free commune and continue with the direct participation of the entire community, without any control from above, whether that be from the State or any political party whatever it might call itself.

The germs of such councils are already seen in the decaying society of to-day; sometimes they exist on a temporary basis, but in some places, with a strong decentralist influence, they exist more regularly. But inevitably the idea of workers' councils, not the militant committees of "organisers" seen by the politicians, but the whole of the place of work, is bound to spread as nationalisation continues and it is seen that this political illusion is no substitute for workers' control. As the trade union movement becomes more bound up with

the ruling-class, the class struggle intensifies rather than alters. It is not just an economic material struggle as some may claim; the sacrifice it inevitably entails is answer to that. The class struggle is one of the manifestations for workers' control, and no political theory can alter that fact.

In spite of the attempts by political parties to capture every such movement for their own ends (and the fact that workers' control is understood dimly and without any clear idea as to its possibilities), the workers are far and away ahead of political theorists in their methods at the present time. In spite of the backwardness and bourgeois character of the movements allegedly representing the workers in this country, the workers themselves have in many places advanced methods of decentralisation and class struggle which is the basis of anarcho-syndicalism, and the attainment of such a movement in time of social change is not an improbability.

That is not to say, of course, that the workers are anarchist; there is not sufficient understanding of anarchism and a considerable way has to be gone before its meaning is even dimly perceived. In fact, an anarchist society implies a good deal more than industrial reorganisation or even the abolition of the State. But anarcho-syndicalism is not anarchism. It is a step on the road to it. Its object is that by creating a society in which the State is unnecessary (capitalism has been abolished, and people are directly participating in their own destinies and relying on no other person, whether an appointed ruler or elected representative, to do it for them), it will be possible for the anarchist society to be born.

A.M.

Land Notes

RURAL LIFE IN U.S.A.

FARMING, though the most universal and fundamental of trades, is also the most localized and relatively few farming folk have much knowledge of farming conditions, social and technical, outside their own counties let alone in other countries. Their knowledge tends to be intensive rather than extensive and their experience of life on the vertical rather than on the horizontal plane. That is to say that their experience, though limited, is often deep. Their outlook therefore, sometimes narrow, also sometimes possesses a richness and stability that is lacking in the varied, but essentially superficial attitude of more travelled and cosmopolitan people. Variety may be the spice of life but when it becomes an end in itself it produces a hard core of emptiness in the personality. Nothing is quite so tedious as constant change.

Nevertheless, knowledge and experience can be, and amongst country people often is, unduly restricted and many such people could benefit by reading a book I have just finished about farming conditions in the U.S.A. during the depression. It is called *Seven Lean Years* by T. S. Wooster and Ellen Winston and published by the University of North Carolina Press.

English people are apt to think of America in terms of New York and Hollywood, and while this is very understandable, in as much as these two limited localities are probably fairly representative of the acme of American civilization, it is of course a somewhat narrow and distorted picture.

The Necessity of Radical Change

This book purports to deal with rural America from what is called the human standpoint and was written just before the war. Hence much of the information about conditions contained therein may no longer be accurate. Yet apart from its value as a social history of a particular period and a particular class of people, there is reason to think that, while many details may have changed and mostly for

better, due almost entirely to the fact food is now a more easily marketable product than it was before the war, the overall picture remains much the same.

As the authors remark at the end of the book: "The temporary return of prosperity in both agriculture and industry would have but slight effect on the hard core of rural distress and disadvantage. Obviously some very fundamental planning is required. No programme based solely on land tenure, or tax adjustment, or redistribution of wealth, or any one factor whatever will meet the need."

Since no "fundamental" change has in fact occurred it would be safe to assume that this unwitting indictment of the American social system still holds good.

I should make it clear before continuing that I am not in a position to give a critical assessment of this book since I have no first-hand experience of the subject and such knowledge as I do possess about it, which is not much, is all secondhand. All I can do is to give my impressions and reactions for what they are worth.

It is, in a way, a difficult book to read, since it is so packed full of factual information that the mind soon becomes numbed by it and, after a relatively short session, is incapable of assimilating it. At least, my mind is.

Urban Wealth and Rural Poverty

America is the richest country in the world in terms of money, but what perhaps stands out most clearly in *Seven Lean Years* is that the wealth of industrial America, and the relatively high standard of living of its urban working-class, has been superimposed on a rural destitution and squalor that exceeds anything this country has known for very nearly a century. Though, as is pointed out, the term peasant seems to be looked upon with disfavour in the States, it is difficult to see in what way the position of a very large proportion of the rural workers of America is in any way superior to that of the despised European peasant.

"A review of the foregoing pages," say the authors, "indicate that a majority of the 2,700,000 wage labourers, at least 1,000,000 tenants and croppers, probably 750,000 subsistence and part-time farmers, or nearly 5,000,000 farm families are suffering from definite handicaps and living at an income level below the minimum subsistence level in cities as defined in recent budgetary studies."

It is probable that the position of these 5,000,000 farm families is now somewhat improved, though the great discrepancy between urban and rural living standards is bound to remain.

The real cost of the cheap food that England used to import before the war, and would still import if it were possible, is not however to be counted solely in terms of human exploitation, but enough though this has been. The exploitation of the soil has also to be taken into account and, because much of the damage is irreparable, this exploitation is, in its long-term effects, probably the more serious of the two.

"According to a recent report of the National Resources Board, unwise agricultural practices have resulted in the complete loss for farming purposes of thirty-five million acres. The topsoil has been entirely or almost entirely removed from between three and four times that acreage, and another one hundred million acres is showing increasing signs of deterioration."

The Economic Man

Naturally enough the authors of *Seven Lean Years* think that something ought to be done about all this, but the main reasons that they give for not allowing this state of affairs to continue or, once temporarily abated, to occur again, appear to be largely economic ones. Any approach that might possibly appear to be tainted with a now outmoded humanitarianism seems to be sedulously avoided by nearly all contemporary writers on social and political matters. The final, unanswerable objection to poverty seems to be that ultimately it is unprofitable and a potential threat to the economy of the country concerned. That it should also make people's lives much more miserable than they might otherwise be is always a secondary consideration.

"Even disregarding the human privation and suffering involved it would be cheaper from an economic standpoint to spend modest sums on prevention in good times than to be compelled to make such vast outlays after acute distress has developed. It is also healthier for the industry and trade of the nation to keep workers engaged in productive enterprise and to maintain purchasing power, for when the incomes of the rural people shrink the purchasing power of the nation is greatly impaired."

At the risk of being called sentimental, I would venture to assert that rural people, and indeed all people, have a right to a decent existence quite irrespective of what influence a decent existence has on their purchasing power. When people come to be considered to exist in order to buy commodities instead of the commodities existing for the benefit of the people, then surely it is about time that someone thought again.

G.V.

THE DARKER SIDE

True, there are modern factories in Lancashire, but there are many more which date almost back to the industrial revolution, with no canteens, no crèches, and as for "Music while you Work"—anyone who has been through a weaving- shed, where the operatives carry on a conversation through lip-reading, will smile to think of a radio being heard above the noise.

Lunches are usually taken from home if the worker cannot return home for a meal and, more often than not, eaten among the dust and oil of the workshop. Married women who want to return to industry usually have to find a "baby-minder" who takes charge of the children from morning, until the mother returns at night. In some of the older mills there are no washing facilities or even cloak-rooms to hang the much despised shawl in at all.

Housewife, July, 1948.

INDUSTRIAL PROTEST

Up until a year ago, red-headed Garry Davis was a gay dog. New York's bars and bistros knew him well. He was the son of Meyer Davis, bandleader to the famed and fashionable. A bomber pilot in the European theatre during the war, he returned to Broadway and a promising career on the stage. Then, said his father, "he turned 100% serious". He organised a chapter of World Federalists, kept away from the Sardi set. A month ago he sailed for Europe.

Last week Garry, now 26, walked into the U.S. Embassy in Paris and renounced his U.S. citizenship. He explained: "I can no longer give my sole loyalty to a sovereign nation state . . . I love the U.S. and want to see . . . the democratic principles on which it was founded extended to include the whole world."

Garry planned to go to Germany, because "I am responsible for some of the damage there." There he might meet another citizen of the world, 24-year-old Harvardman Henry Martyn Noel, Jr., who renounced his U.S. citizenship three months ago, is now a bricklayer in Kassel, where he lives over a pigsty.

Time, 7/6/48.

"I LOVE SHOREDITCH"

Lady Cynthia Colville, lady-in-waiting to Queen Mary, said: "I just love Shoreditch." Remark was prompted by local council decision to name a new block of flats "Colville Estate".

Daily Express, 16/6/48.

A lady in waiting for a Shoreditch flat suggested to us that Lady Cynthia swap residences.

CLERMONT-FERRAND: A Communist Setback

HAVING suffered a severe setback from its defeat in November-December, 1947, the Communist C.G.T. was forced to throw itself into a new movement in order, on the one hand, to profit by the difficult situation of the Radical-Socialist-Christian government, faced by the problems of the permanent rise in prices, and, on the other hand, to make the weight of its forces felt in the debate regarding the future of Germany.

Violent, and at times assuming the character of civil war, the operation was conducted in conformity with orders received, with the participation of special formations. The conflict, born of a question of wages, rapidly reached its high point following the decision taken by a civil tribunal to clear the Bergougnon bicycle factory occupied by the strikers.

The affair might have dragged on, and ended in one of those numerous transactions of which the public authorities and trade union executives have the secret. But the Communists required an atmosphere of violence, an example of disturbance for the whole

country. On the governmental side, the Minister of the Interior Jules Moch (a Socialist) had given strict orders that "strength should remain with the law."

The repressive services and the organisations grouped around the Communist Party wished to measure the power of their resources. The experiment has shown that the Stalinist organisations are losing their agility.

Admittedly, the struggle was hot. But it lacked background. The Christian Confederation and the "Workers' Strength" Confederation had no desire to lend themselves to the Communist tactic. Even at Clermont-Ferrand, the general strike which followed the fight between police and strikers was only of short duration. The printing workers hesitated, the government employees stayed at work, the majority of the postal workers remained at their posts.

While making his Republican Security Companies act energetically, Moch succeeded in avoiding the employment of firearms, raising an

effective sentimental argument against the Communist agitation in the country. His troops made an unhesitating front against the fighting workers,

Letter from France

while six months ago they had been riddled with Stalinist cells.

Over the whole of the territory only a few factories came out in solidarity. And in order to hide its defeat, the C.G.T. issued the order for a general strike for Saturday—a workless day for many firms—and from eleven to noon only. That symbolic demonstration itself was poorly supported. As for the meetings organised in the great centres, they gathered only very reduced audiences.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the Clermont-Ferrand operation is that the Communist Party and its Trade Union machine have suffered a setback.

A less obvious but undeniable symptom, the Communist apparatus itself showed no eagerness to generalise the struggle outside the rubber town.

PERHAPS we shall be blamed for giving this account in terms which recall those of the governmental services. To those we shall reply that it is not necessary to fall into the traps which are laid for us at regular intervals (and more precisely each time the internal or international situation is tense) by the

general staff of the Communist Party, but to keep a cool head.

When the workers are fighting against the Republican Guards, they have all our sympathy; that is to say, we are with them and among them. But when these workers fight against the Republican Guards in order to replace them by the G.P.U., we give them neither our support nor our participation, just as we gave neither support nor participation to the Nazi workers who fought against the police of the Weimar republic.

The appeal to solidarity put out by the C.G.T. was a ruse of warfare, an odious exploitation to the feelings of mutual aid, coined in some international conference or traded in corridors of the Chamber of Deputies.

When the Communists protest against the arrest of their members, they forget that they themselves demanded sanctions against the strikers of the years 1945-6, at the time when the Communist ministers were in the government.

If the bourgeois press underlines the fact the some dozens of foreign workers are among the men arrested and exploits this for xenophobic ends, that reminds us of the chauvinistic campaigns of the Communists against the "dirty foreigners" and against German prisoners of war.

Our rôle is not to take a position in favour of one or other of the clans struggling for power and for the interests of an imperialism, but to carry on our own struggle and denounce the falsification of revolutionary aims.

FOR it is in fact high time to profit by every experience and every event in order to enlighten the working class on the part it can play. The concentration of all social forces around the American myth or the Russian myth involves an extreme confusion in the ranks of the workers. Some adhere to the "Workers' Strength" for hatred of the Russians, others remain in the C.G.T. for distrust of Jouhaux and hope in the Red Army. But rare are those who endeavour to see clearly, to understand the state of capitalist decomposition; or the advance of state-power, or what are the means to

be employed so that the efforts of the manual and intellectual workers shall contribute to creating a new social structure.

The gymnastics to which the Communist bosses and the Reformist leaders have given themselves up are rapidly exhausting proletarian combativism. Weariness, disorder, defeatism made rapid progress in the trade unions. The reactions which are let loose by the words of socialism, of solidarity, of freedom, become daily more feeble because they are too often employed without valid reason.

The C.G.T. asks for rises in wages without ever denouncing the true cause of inflation: the vast expenditure of the state. The Workers' Force demands a lowering of prices but omits to call the wage earner to action in order to suppress the parasitical commercial middleman.

The executives of neither organisations any longer represent their rank-and-file. Far to the contrary, they make use of them for ends foreign to the unions and utilise their functions to exert pressure on the employers and public authorities with a view to operations that can only benefit the class of bureaucrats and technicians and their masters of the Kremlin and Washington.

This, the working class feels obscurely and confusedly. Its reaction, in the absence of an authentic and powerful revolutionary movement, is to desert social action, to take refuge in the deceptive security of the law or in individual escape.

When the anarchists, and with them, in growing numbers, syndicalists, old opposition communists, groups of militant socialists and christians, endeavour to regroup the workers on immediate issues, like direct circulation through the creation of a distributive network in the hands of the consumers, like the administrative strike in transport services, like the refusal to pay taxes, they know they are struggling not only to assure the dignity of daily life, but also to develop the spirit of initiative, to democratise the union organisations, to prepare them for their rôle as administrators in the new society. 22/6/48. S. PARANE.

Divided & Ruled

THE solution of "partition" so freely advocated nowadays, is no solution at all to conflicting national problems. Nationalism itself is a false god, but partition so far from solving nationalist problems, merely serves to keep them alive and continue to embitter relationships quite as much as the other "solution"—holding on by main force to national minorities, as is seen in Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, etc. The experience of Ireland proves that amply, and that of Palestine tends the same way, while in India it has been a ghastly failure. In India there was really no clear-cut national division; the idea of Pakistan was based on a mere assumption which is only being proved conclusively wrong as time unfolds.

The fact is that India is a cross-current of completely different "races" and religions, quite as much as Europe. One need merely start off by saying that the original settlers of India—the Adibasis, number at the least (not counting converts to Hinduism, Islam or Christianity) thirty million, and these are not taken into account when talking of Hindu-Moslem divisions, and the aboriginal peoples are at last beginning to assert their demand for free tribal republics. One can go on to enumerate 172 other tribes, which mere division into Moslem and Hindu nations tended to overlook.

The All-India Congress numbered in its ranks all castes and creeds, including Moslems, and Maulana Azad was its (Moslem) President, but with the enforcement of communal division when Mr. Jinnah's idea of Pakistan triumphed, the Moslems faced a very crucial period. On the one hand, militant Moslems had from the very first co-operated with Hindus in the Congress organisation, and fought with them against British imperialism; they attacked and disliked the Pakistan idea. But when Pakistan came into being they had to swim against a terrible current. There was bloodshed and rioting, forced conversion and attacks on refugees, homeless wandering and frenzied escapes all over the sub-continent, on both sides of the artificial frontier. Moslems in India were attacked "in retaliation for Hindus in Pakistan" and even though they were not followers of Jinnah they found themselves the victims of race riots directed largely by the right-wing elements such as the Hindu Mahasabha and its extremist wing. Willy nilly many of them fled to Pakistan where they would not be attacked as Moslems, although they had not previously supported the idea of a Moslem state; Gandhi, who spoke in defence of Moslems in India, was murdered; many of the Moslem leaders who urged their followers to stay in India, flew to Pakistan themselves and left them behind; those who did stay urged loyalty to the Indian Government and attacked Jinnah & Co. still. But it is doubtful to what extent they succeeded in gaining the trust of the Congress supporters. Probably the greatest moderating force on their behalf was Maulana Azad's influence in Congress; and likewise the decision of (Moslem) Congress leader Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, to continue to stay and work in Pakistan, but not to support the Pakistan idea, which required considerable moral and physical courage.

The fact is that with the nationalist hysteria almost at war pitch it is very difficult for Moslems to favour the united India idea, in Pakistan, or to continue to live in India, which so many have to do in any case. And the fact is that there is a very poor case put against the idea of communal division since the idea of India as one nation can never be one that will appeal to all its thousands of differing groupings. The only idea that can enable people to live in peace is that which abolishes such divisions and thinks of India not as one nation, but as a particular part of the world where millions of people need to live together in peace, and where it really matters very little what one's neighbour believes or does not believe so long as he does not require to impose it on anyone else. So far from this being a far off chimera, it is precisely what was the case at one time, before British Imperialists utilised communal divisions for their own ends, and as it was at another time, when all were united in a common enmity to imperialism.

War between the two "dominions" over Kashmir or anything else, would be a serious setback to the ambitions of the common peoples of the Indian sub-continent, and one of the most regrettable of all occurrences. But only the breakdown of both nationalism and communalism can prevent it.

K.A.B.

Foreign Commentary

WHO'S FOR LIBERTY?

THE effect of reading newspapers and periodicals from all parts of the world is to make one really depressed at man's inhumanity to man, as well as at man's indifference to the fate and suffering of his fellow-men. We do not conclude from this that "human nature" is bad; human nature has nothing to do with the question. Rather is the reason to be found in the fact that men in official positions must lose their humanity in operating the "machine". And how many people would remain sane if they did not succeed in building up some kind of resistance to the mass horrors that have taken place in the world during the past ten years?

But that there are men and women throughout the world who refuse to become indifferent and who feel a desire to do what they can to right a wrong is also clear from one's reading of the international Press. Of course, one must distinguish between those people who defend Civil Liberties because they believe in freedom and those who do so when it is politically expedient. Thus one reads of the Communists defending freedom of the Press in one country and denying it in another, and here we have the amusing spectacle of the Tories defending the rights of the individual since they became the opposition in the House of Commons, and the Labour Party, opponents of conscription and other measures restrictive of man's freedom of action when in opposition, supporting these very things when in power.

It is not a very profound conclusion to reach that only those individuals and organisations who do not aspire to power can really believe in freedom, and that therefore the defence of Civil Liberties must spring from individual effort.

It might be said that there is in fact recognition of the Rights of Man by the United Nations. We believe a Committee meets sometimes somewhere and that they discuss Human

Rights. But the men sitting round the conference table are representatives of governments, and Government is the negation of Civil Liberty.

The initiative, the agitation, has always come from men and women, some of them quite ordinary people, others famous names in the world of letters and the sciences, but never from governments. It is these people in all countries who must again come forward in strength to defend those hard-won rights which, with the excuse of "emergencies", are being everywhere snuffed out one by one.

The foregoing is in fact a plea for more organisations of individuals, such as the *Freedom Defence Committee* which, in spite of its defects and serious limitations, keeps a watchful eye on general attacks on civil liberties and what is equally important takes up individual cases where the "Machine" attempts to crush the individual. This is a real problem not only in this country, where there are more organisations and money to defend our dumb friends than there are for their two-legged cousins, but also abroad where in most cases there are neither!

IN the last issue, under the heading "Set this man free", we dealt with the case of a comrade who was sentenced to 2 years 8 months' imprisonment for distributing anti-militarist propaganda. We can give yet another example, that of an Italian Anarchist who has been held in prison in Sardinia for nearly 18 months without any charge being proffered against him. Police enquiries have been going on regarding comrade Pasquale Fancello during all this time and they can still find no crime with which to charge him! And yet they will not release him. The Italian Government must be well aware of this case but in spite of the United Nations Human Rights Committee and other such high-sounding names, they condone this police action. The agitation must come from men and women from all walks of life, and it must be above politics; and why should it not come from outside Italy as well?

FROM *Le Libertaire* we learn of a case which ended with the release of the victim but not until he had spent twenty years in a penal settlement. In

1912, Jean Duval deserted from the French army on grounds of conscience. He was arrested and sentenced to 18 months in prison. In prison he was provoked and ill-treated by his guards and by officers and N.C.O.'s. As a result of a mutiny he escaped but in the process wounded two of his former guards as well as a captain. Duval then attempted to commit suicide but only succeeded in seriously wounding himself. He was nursed back to health and then sentenced to *hard labour for life*. After ten years he succeeded in escaping from the penal settlement and settled in Belgium. He proved to be a good worker, well-liked by all, and felt that at last he had been forgotten by his persecutors. But in 1936 an informer denounced him and he was once more locked up in the central prison of Fontevault. "As a result of an energetic campaign on his behalf—writes *Le Libertaire*—and as a result of numerous petitions, he has finally been released."

Is it generally known, for instance, that Conscientious Objectors are still held in French prisons? What is the use of Human Rights Committees of U.N. discussing Conscientious Objectors' rights in World War III, when those of War II and who knows perhaps there are still victims from War I in French penitentiaries? (See *Freedom*, this column, 18/10/47.)

AND this example from *Open Forum* 12/6/48), organ of the Los Angeles section of the American Civil Liberties Union:—

"That police brutality must stop in Los Angeles was shouted aloud by the award of a jury in a Superior Court last week. A verdict of \$35,000 for humiliation and shock resulting from unlawful arrest speaks loudly enough to be heard by regular police as well as by such privately paid men as Wendell Clay of the Union Station force, who with his employers, the Santa Fe Railway, the Union Pacific Railroad and the Southern Pacific Railroad are now expected to pay the damages.

Nearly two years ago, Ernest Haeckel, a Los Angeles artist and manufacturer of woven fabrics was arrested while seeking to deliver a package to the Railway Express office at the Los Angeles Station. Attempts to explain his purpose were met with rough stuff by a man in uniform who evidently felt that the common citizen has no rights to be respected by police officers. Mr. Haeckel reported the unfortunate results of his encounter with the law to the office of the American Civil Liberties Union.

LIBERTARIAN.

In Brief

Portugal to Try 108

Officials set July 6th as the day for the trial of 108 Portuguese accused of political crimes against the regime.

Young Finns Underfed

Between 70 and 90 per cent. of Finnish children are suffering from rachitis and around 8 per cent. of them are undernourished, according to a report issued by the Finnish People Relief Organization.

The Boys Get Together

Principal Nosey Parkers of two countries, Sir Percy Sillitoe, head of the British M.I.5, and Mr. Edgar Hoover, who leads a similar sinister outfit in America, met in Washington on Tuesday, 15th June. It is reported "they pooled plans for tackling any Communist Fifth Column in another war".

But aren't they running ahead of themselves? Is it then taken for granted that the next war will be against Russia? Because when Russia happens to be an Ally, the Gestapo-Ogdu of the two 'democracies' finds the Communists very handy stool-pigeons.

Approach to Politics—I ILLUSIONS

READING a Bombay paper recently, I was struck with a very interesting essay on Communism which said that if Communism triumphed in India the same moment would note its demise, based on an analogy of what happened to Congress. "There was a time when that blessed word summed up the alpha and omega of our national hopes and dreams. To-day it has been captured by the black marketeer, the exploiter, the speculator, the communalist, the tuft-hunter and the turn-coat who profited under the old regime and who by seasonable and zealous recantation also hopes to profit under the new." This echoes the disillusion of many progressive Indians who suffered for years in the cause of "Congress", the magic word that would solve everything, and find that Congress was a focus of unity and struggle against the British but in power behaves as every other party seizing power has done. And precisely the same thing with Communism has already been seen in Eastern Europe where Communism has been a hope and dream during the years of reactionary landlord dictatorships and the Nazi nightmare, but which has now got power and is wielding it in the same way that everyone uses power—namely, abuse of power.

Strange how these illusions persist. And actually some publicists seem to have a vested interest in illusions; they are honest enough to recognise their faults when the illusion becomes reality, but in the meantime they wish to foster an illusion. Looking at it from a materialist point of view, the hard fact is that they merely accept the *status quo* but want to colour it with their own imaginings. As *Freedom* wrote of the liberal pro-war elements in its last issue, they wanted to disguise the real motives of the imperialist war "which they themselves had not the courage to oppose, but wished to show in a more favourable light so as not to expose themselves as mere agents of imperialism." These include not only the liberal elements but also ex-revolutionary sources such as certain Spanish emigré groups, some of whom wished to avoid public commitment of their pro-war line, which would indelibly compromise them with the Spanish workers at home, but at the same time joined in all the pro-imperialist-war activities in an endeavour to act as propagandists for Allied Imperialism, hoping this would stand them in good stead when

the Allies came to unseat Franco. But this was yet one more illusion, which only they themselves were to blame in fostering, because the Allies never at any time intended to do that, only the propaganda they broadcast themselves claimed they would, and the only thing that could have made them do it would have been Franco's actively entering the War, in which case they would have imposed a different government, perhaps with one of his pro-British supporters such as the Duke of Alba. Now they join in the talk of "betrayal" but who are the real betrayers: the Allied Imperialists who acted as Imperialists, or the "revolutionaries" who acted as Imperialists?

In Germany the position is very similar; while in another corner of the globe we find a fresh illusion shattered: Zionism. Those who put forward the impossible theory (anti-Semitism reversed) that because the Jewish people in Europe had suffered so much under Hitler there should be no criticism of any Jewish policies in Palestine, must have had a rude shock when they read of civil war in Israel between Jews, the Jewish Government and the fascist Irgun Zvai Leumi, when the latter tried to land the *Altalena* at Tel Aviv. (Yet another shock to the anti-Semites who claimed "the Jews always worked together" but they unfortunately are too dumb ever to learn a lesson.) Arthur Koestler, who once helped to foster the Soviet illusion, saw through that, supported the war, and saw through that (at the finish), has since the war been a supporter of Zionism and is beginning to get the old disillusion urge, as he turns Rightwards to the Irgun. In the *New York*

Herald Tribune (29/6/48) he writes: "I spoke to a group of five Jewish boys and girls, *Altalena* passengers from France. One girl, a student of mathematics and physics at the Sorbonne, said, 'I gave up my studies to help defend the Jewish state. Approaching the shores we were received by the fire of Jewish guns and four of us were killed. This ends all hope.' Well, what did she expect?—she wanted a Jewish state, Jewish police, Jewish army, Jewish authoritarian apparatus, and she got it. What was there to complain about? The only logical alternative is to say that any State, whatever nationality, whatever its liberal promises, acts as a State. It is not a question of changing a State but abolishing all States. Maybe she ought to go back to the Sorbonne and drop maths and physics in favour of history—preferably that of Italy or any other such oppressed nations who achieved their independence and won the glorious advantage of being able to oppress themselves."

A. MELTZER.

IT was this way, though maybe you won't believe it. The military car was crowded, and as we steamed out of Munich, through the "scorched and crumbled masonry, the G.I.'s in the compartment opened a friendly conversation. There was a round, courteous lad from New Jersey, who was quiet until you mentioned his home town. There was a blond young fellow, about 28, from West Virginia. There was a dark-haired, bronzed young sergeant from Oklahoma. There was a silent, uncommunicative youth from some unrevealed state. And there was an altitudinous 34-year-old corporal, five years in the army, from Alabama.

West Virginia was loquacious. You have never heard a human being talk so

constantly, and in such detail, about a single subject. His whole life (since the age of four, he convincingly showed) had been devoted to research on the amount of alcohol a body and mind can take—his body and mind. He had been drunk every minute of duty (and in this his New Jersey buddy unhappily confirmed him), and often on duty had pressed his luck. He had been frequently in the guardhouse; on his last home leave, his mother had had him put in jail for 48 hours to get him sobered up for his birthday; he had been for one short, blurry period a sergeant, soon reduced to a private.

At every stop West Virginia frantically left the train. "If I can only get a bottle," he explained, "I'll feel a whole lot better. I get nervous if I can't get it." Station after station turned up no chance, but at every disappointment he had solace—a bottle of cola and a couple of aspirin tablets. Toward the end of our journey he ran across a generous corporal who tipped a bottle in his direction, and his joy increased, along with the width of his grin and the shrillness of his continuous laughter.

★

ALABAMA was the earnest type. His mind was broader; he had two interests in life. "I've been drunk practically all the time for five years, too," he ruminated, "but I've never been in a fight or any kind of trouble. I know how to handle myself. Many's the time I've staggered out of a place and run into an M.P., but I can always give 'em a line they seem to swallow." During one of West Virginia's absences we asked Alabama, "You've been here a long time. Have you had any chance to get acquainted with the Germans, to see what you think of them?" He pondered: this was obviously a question out of his routine. "Well, yes," he finally replied. "I have a German girl. We've been going together pretty steadily for three years. I've had two children by her. I don't know if I'll ever marry; I'd kinda like to go to Panama and see that part of the world. But the girl goes with me here whenever I'm on leave. We've had some nice trips."

Two WACS passed the door, followed

by a trio of soldiers, the lot of them "high". Alabama was contemptuous. "They're not one whit better than the German girls!" He pointed at the passing green woods. "It's pretty country, though." At this, Oklahoma roused from deep perusal of his comic book, *Gang Busters*. "Yeah," he declared, portentously, "but I don't think we'll ever get it outta these people. They just seem to have it ingrained in their natures."

Alabama seemed to agree. "Well, some of 'em sure get you down. No morals at all. I can't be with my own girl all of the time, and of course you always want a woman. So one night, believe it or not, when I went home with one, and woke up around daylight, there were three of 'em tucked in with me. I'd been drunk as usual the night before, and the other two just fastened to me somehow." West Virginia couldn't let the mention of being drunk slip past. He told with relish of how, near Forbach, shortly before V-E Day, he had gone into a big house to see what he could steal. "We thought there might be something valuable hidden down the cellar, and there sure was. Gallons of champagne and cognac and wine, and our whole unit practically lived down there when we could make it."

★

THE youth from Nowhere was stabbed out of silence. Two coloured soldiers had gone laughing down the corridor to a compartment filled with other Negroes. "There goes one of the troubles over here," he groused. "Shouldn't have sent them over. They got more rights than a white man!" "Oh, I don't know," chipped in Alabama, "last year I took a long trip after I was sick, and because I'd done pretty well with marks and other rackets, I blew in my whole roll, all of \$3,500, and I came back broke and tired, and a coloured corporal came up to me in the station where I was waiting, and said, 'Look Corporal, I got a bottle, whaddya say we finish it together?' I told him, 'I never drink after any black man. He said, 'I know you're white, I'll go and get another bottle, okay?' He did, too, and we had a good time. If they just know their place, they're not so bad." Long before he got that far, the silent youth had become embedded in his comic book. Oklahoma, bored, pulled one out of his pocket, too, and went to work on it.

Said Alabama suddenly, "Getting back to Germans, you got to be tough with 'em, that's all, when you know they are real Krauts. One time I was looking for a place to sleep, up beyond Strasbourg, and my buddy and I came into this village, see, and we found some Krauts, a family that wouldn't give us a room. Said they hadn't any space, but we were tired, and didn't believe 'em. So I pulled the pin on a grenade and let 'em have it right through the window, where they were sitting. Killed 'em, just like that." West Virginia couldn't match that one, but he tried. He had done a lot of pretty bad things, he guessed, one time at Bremerhaven, after he'd mixed up some denatured alcohol and whisky, and aspirins, to stretch it out.

Alabama had been wounded in the fighting just before the end of the war, and he had only one lung. But he was nonchalant about it. As we came into Nuremberg I asked him, "Would you mind straightening me out on your service stripes?" Obliging he pointed to his breast. "This is for combat in the European theatre, this for being now with the European command." He modestly stopped, but New Jersey helped him out. "The other one," New Jersey explained, "is for good conduct." With kindly courtesy, all the boys started swinging down our heavy bags. "Yeah," said Alabama, as we went down the steps, "for five years in a row they got nothing on me. You remember, I told you I always went straight and kept out of trouble."

(Worldover Press.)

Federalism Gone Wrong The Lesson of Switzerland

1848, among other things, is the centenary of the present constitution of Switzerland—the legendary land of freedom, and the event has been celebrated with the usual pomp attributed to such occasions.

Switzerland is, in theory, and even, to an extent, in practice, a country which practices federalism. A man is a citizen, first of his commune, then of his canton, then of the confederation; the electoral system is based on this theory, and the cantons in fact carry out much more of the administrative work than county councils do in England.

But, in reality, Switzerland is no more free from centralisation than we are, and in some respects the state is even more exacting. To give only one example, in spite of the great Swiss parade of individual freedom, conscription is universal and there is no provision of any kind for conscientious objectors. A C.O. can be sent to prison for a period which in times of mobilisation may reach three years, and in addition may suffer loss of civil rights, which can be quite serious, since it involves not merely the loss of a vote, but may also include expulsion from his native canton and an attempt to gain admittance to some other canton which is not always successful. Cases have been known where war resisters have been forced to live abroad because they could get no permission to live anywhere in Switzerland unless they would renounce their objection.

This is only one example of the way in which the Swiss system militates against the individual; particularly in times of war, there is little real freedom of propaganda, and the identity card system has for many years been as regular a feature of life there as it is here to-day.

Switzerland, in fact, illustrates the anarchist contention that federation

is only valuable when it is combined with a genuinely free social system. A federation of governments can be as tyrannical as any centralised state. And, indeed, such a federation, if it attains any permanence, tends to take on the attributes of a centralised state. This is illustrated in the history of Switzerland.

The original Confederation was formed in 1291 of three cities, and seems to have had no centralising authority. During the subsequent years cities and cantons were added, until eventually Switzerland reached its present dimensions. At first there was much freedom within the confederation, but without a consciousness of the evil of authority. And as authoritarian ideas grew, encouraged by religious influences (particularly Calvin's rigid rule in Geneva), there was a greater tendency to centralisation.

The independence of the cantons

virtually disappeared in 1848; in the revised constitution of 1874 the cantons were reduced to glorified county councils; in recent years the speed of centralisation has been much greater, encouraged particularly by the military influence during the last war.

To-day, the centralisation has reached the extent where the freedom of the cantons and the principle of federalism itself have fallen so much in jeopardy that wide sections of the Swiss are being roused to the danger. But they have so far displayed so little consciousness of the real issues that the federalist cry has been taken up mostly by the right-wing, who will merely lead back on the old path of authority towards centralisation. A real and enduring federalism, in Switzerland as elsewhere, can only appear if it is united with the spirit of freedom and the abolition of governments, whether local or centralised.

Tito v. Stalin

(Continued from page 1)

the United Socialist Front against Imperialism and set out on the road of treason to the international solidarity of the working people and of transition toward the position of nationalism" and consequently they have put themselves outside the family of "brotherly Communist Parties and outside the United Communist Front and thus also outside the ranks of the Information Bureau".

This, very briefly, is the charge sheet which sounds too good to be true. It contains everything from the charge of Trotskyism and deviation from Marxist-Leninism to the classic personal attack—"inordinate ambition, grandeurism and cunning calculation". The document also reveals that Tito's major crime is that for one reason or another he has refused to be dictated to by Stalin. Perhaps Tito fancies himself as a second Stalin (and the *Daily Worker*, for one, did much to build up that myth around Tito) and is

blind to the fate reserved for those who show themselves too independent where Moscow is concerned. Or perhaps Moscow has shot her bolt for such a document as the Cominform statement, in our opinion, presupposed the grovelling acceptance by the guilty party. Instead, all the Communist Parties have paid lip-service to Moscow's pronouncement except Yugoslavia!

Now one must await events. Will Moscow accept defeat or will the Red Army bring a little concrete "brotherly help" to Tito and his friends? Only when the answer to this question will be given will the politicians be able to draw conclusions for the next move in their game of power politics.

For us the scene is unchanged. Or should we revise our opinion of Tito if he successfully resists Stalin, and say that there are now two Stalins in Europe instead of one Stalin and a stooge?

NEW DEFINITION

"Blackleg" used to be a term for a man who defied his union in a strike crisis. Now it is being used for any man who obeys his union.

Daily Express, 24/6/48.

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In Brief

Moslem Girls Abducted

The Pakistan Minister for Refugees, Ghazanfar Ali Khan, told a press conference that 50,000 young Moslem girls had been abducted during the past year's troubles in India. Only 8,000 had been recovered so far, he said.

Libertarian Co-operative Community

According to the American monthly *Resistance*, a libertarian co-operative community, *La Famille Nouvelle*, composed of men and women of all nationalities, is being formed in France. Agricultural workers and artisans of all fields are invited to write for information to Louis Radix, Bascon, Chateau Thierry (Aisne), France.

Police Held Russian for 14 Days

When Mr. Chuter Ede, the Home Secretary, told the Commons last week the Col. Tassoyev was at Hammersmith police station from May 6th to May 20th—when he was returned to the Soviet authorities—Mr. Piratin complained that the information was at variance with that given last week.

Mr. Emrys Hughes asked if Mr. Bevin had been consulted about the desirability of issuing a connected statement, adding: "To whom should we recommend the Nobel Prize for fairy tales—should it be given to the Home Office or the Foreign Secretary?"

Mr. Ede: There are no fairy tales about this, and this man is no fairy. (Loud laughter.)

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Some new periodicals:
Resistance (U.S.A.) May-June, 1948 3d.
E. Armand: The Future Society.
Paul Goodman: The Food We Eat.
etc.

The Glass, Summer 1948
Stories and Poems.
Contributors include James Kirkup,
Derek Stanford, Henry Treece,
Ethel Colquhoun, Mary Wykeham.

Poetry London, June-July 1948, 2/6
Poems, Criticisms, Designs, Points of
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Contributors include G. S. Fraser, Francis
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THE PROBLEM OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN AN ENGLISH MIDDLE- TOWN, by Hermann Mann- heim (Routledge, 12/6).

A CONSIDERABLE literature has grown up in recent years on the subject of juvenile delinquency—chiefly as a result of the great increase in juvenile crime during the war and post-war years. It is a subject which has considerable interest for people of progressive outlook, but the very investigation of the subject is really a fundamental criticism of the ideas of punishment inherent in the system of law. For as soon as one begins to probe into the factors which cause juvenile crime one has already begun to abandon the idea of individual responsibility in these matters which provides the sole philosophical and logical justification for punishment.

For it is clear that if the environment in which these young delinquents have been reared is partly or even mainly responsible for the crimes they commit, then it is the environment, not the individual delinquent which must be "punished". It is necessary to say at the outset that none of the investigators of delinquency proceed to this logical position. They seek means of mitigating the circumstances which enquiry after enquiry has shown to be the causal factors, but they always seem to see these circumstances as special and peculiar ones, instead of regarding them as the extreme manifestations of faults which run through the whole social structure.

The present study was an intensive examination of a number of delinquents in Cambridge before and during the war, whose object was the elucidation of certain environmental factors, such as the effect of size of town, of the nature of the

housing, etc. But its chief interest for readers of *Freedom* lies in the general questions raised.

First of all the nature of the crimes: the huge majority—94 per cent. before the war and 93 per cent. during the war—were offences against property. In the pre-war group 74 per cent. of the objects stolen were valued at less than 20/-; the figure falling to 42.9 per cent. during the war (one wonders if this fall is merely a reflection of the rise in prices occasioned by the war?).

Then there is the nature of the delinquents. This enquiry, like so many previous ones, shows that the majority of juvenile delinquents come from broken or unsatisfactory homes, many of them being illegitimate. The problem has indeed been spoken of as the problem of the "affectionless" character. The case history of many individual instances shows the same pathetic facts; a child whose emotional stability has been sapped by a lack of love in his upbringing; who feels himself to be outside society, and has no feeling of membership of or solidarity with the community; whose "crimes" (it seems absurd sometimes to describe their petty offences in such a strong term) are sometimes consciously recognised by the child to be an expression of hostility towards society, and then the pitifully inadequate means of redemption for these lost children.

There can be no doubt of the good intentions of the probation officers and welfare workers and even of the juvenile magistrate's courts—for who could deal with children's offences with the unsympathetic attitude of the religious approach which regards each offender as strictly responsible for his offence? But the sorry decline from the probation officer, the welfare homes and Child Guidance Clinics whose aim is clearly to help the child, to the Remand Homes, the Borstals and finally the prisons, whose aim is equally clearly to protect society, shows only too clearly how inadequate are the means of reclamation available.

And in all these studies, the child delinquents may be the "offenders" but it is society which comes up for indictment. Once again the preponderance of property offences shows how powerfully rooted is contemporary crime in the property structure of society. One cannot but recognise that the majority of these offences would automatically disappear in a society which did not express its value through individual property.

Much more important, however, is the inability of society to provide the atmosphere of love which could counteract the absence of love in the upbringing of these delinquents. And what a reflection on society is it that to the misfortune of a loveless childhood the courts can usually only add some form of additional legal punishment. The alleged need to protect society only too clearly aggravates the lovelessness at the bottom of the delinquent's situation, and confirms his progress from juvenile to adult crime and the ghastly waste of lives in prison sentences and careers of crime.

Again and again, the investigator un-

covers unsatisfactory home conditions, only to find that progress is blocked by the refusal of the parents to co-operate. And since their own unsatisfactoriness is presumably the product of their own emotional and social difficulties, this refusal is more likely to be an inability to co-operate. If the home is hopeless the next resort is to the Home. And even the most exceptional of these cannot adequately—in existing circumstances—replace the lacking parental love, while the majority must offer the cold and disapproving touch of institutionalism.

In conclusion, one feels all the time the unreality of our society, its complete absence of community feeling. No doubt each of these children has been observed by a sympathetic neighbour; but our economic and social structure makes it impossible for these to take over the responsibilities of the inadequate parents. Indeed, if they tried to do so, the law, in its determination to protect society (which in this case means protecting the state from having to shoulder economic responsibilities for children which in law rests on the shoulders of the parents, however inadequate) would obstruct such

a social and humane endeavour. In practice the care of the delinquent child lies between its unsatisfactory home, and the equally unsatisfactory Home.

But in a free society, not split by class differences, and in which the individual is not overburdened by the need to look after himself and his dependents in competition with his fellows, communal feelings would have free play, and a child which lacked love at home, would almost certainly receive some measure of compensation from those individuals whose sympathy and love for children is seemingly boundless even in our society. Indeed, such an integral society would do much not merely to repair and reclaim the delinquent child; it would also strike at the root of delinquency itself by removing many of those problems which make for unsatisfactory homes.

That these studies of the sociologists disclose the inadequacies of society in relation to juvenile offenders is clear. It is for anarchists to point the way to a social structure which meets these criticisms.

J.H.

THE IRISH

THE IRISH, by Sean O'Faolain
(Penguin Books, 1/6).

MR. O'FAOLAIN deserves gratitude from the Irish as well as from the English and everybody else for writing a book about the Irish which is not the usual sordid history of political events. Sensitive people refrain from reading Anglo-Irish political history just as they instinctively turn their eyes away from human suffering. It is an understandable form of selfishness. Anyhow, the Anglo-Irish political problem is claimed to be almost "solved" and, as a fellow-countryman put it to me last summer: "We have got rid of foreign rule. Now we have to deal with our own bastards." The book is not about all that sort of thing!

It is a fresh, new sort of history, the theme being the growth of the Irish mind from remote times and its contribution to the general stream of "Western" civilization. Thus, it does on a small canvas for the Irish what Henri Hubert's monumental works do for the 'Rise' and 'Decline' of the Celts in general—a subject of great interest to readers of *Freedom* if for one reason only—that until the Irish Free State came into existence there is not a single case on record of the existence of a Celtic State! Until the coming of the Normans, the Irish had no 'government', they elected or sacked their kings on a basis of convenience, and the nearest thing they had to a legal system was not a system but a semi-poetical, idealistic code (the Brehon Laws) which aimed at high ideals of justice which the communities of families making up tribes 'administered' without the use of a prison service—about the worst punishment being banishment from the community or death in extreme cases, which were somewhat rare. This did not mean an absence of occasional rows! The pictures of that old civilization—c. 300 B.C. to c. 500 A.D.—given to us by native chroniclers much later tend to be what many of us consider to be just a little too pleasant! On the other hand, there seems to be no evidence that the self-working, governmentless communities did not on the whole lead a happy existence. A really good account of them has still to be written.

It is a great pleasure to read O'Faolain's clear exposition and interpretation of this very long history and his remarks on Irish 'dualism'. An old West Cork woman when asked whether she believed in fairies said: "I do not, but they're there." How very Irish, you may say! And I remember in my youth an old woman who used to go home from market slightly exalted with whiskey and who would shout when passing our garden, "Stop that noise!" to which we replied, "There is no noise," and she immediately shouted back, "Well, for fear!" Taking everything into consideration, the Irish seem to be (and to have always been) conservative, anarchist pagans with a sense of the supernatural and an odd sort of 'superiority complex' as Herrenvolk of personal freedom. "We'll do what we like with ourselves, but let others leave us be"

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A Sociological Novel from America

KNOCK ON ANY DOOR

KNOCK ON ANY DOOR,
Willard Motley. (Collins,
10/6)

THIS book is another of those immense sociological novels which emerge from America periodically, wrapped up like fiction and usually written by John dos Passos or J. ("Studs Lonigan") Farrell, a hybrid of the documentary and the entertainment. Though the message Mr. Motley wants to put across is one which many people will be glad to accept again, that does not excuse his bludgeoning of the reader with crude sentimentalities, repetition of the obvious, blunted characterisation, capital letters when his writing itself fails to convey sufficient emotion and, the playing yet once more of an old, noisy and intolerable record of background detail—in short his lack of artistry and his bad craftsmanship (though admittedly it is not bad craftsmanship by what are now ordinary standards), the ugliness and therefore the untruth of his novel considered purely as a novel and not as a piece of humane pleading. It is a gripping story, a compelling story, "an outstanding novel of 1948" as a reviewer all too truthfully says, and if you have not already read the innumerable novels of the same type you may get a thrill of horror from the scenes in the reform school and the death-house with which much of this book is concerned. In brief, as a novel this book is quite good as they go. It is precisely because of this that it deserves denunciation, for whereas the least practised reader can tell that the work, say, of Miss du Maurier, Mr. Chase, or Mr. Horler is bad, contributing nothing to his experience of life, enriching his imagination in no way at all but simply depleting it, the chorus of praise that invariably rises from the compromised press when a good piece of kitch appears may bamboozle him into believing that a novel such as *Knock on Any Door* has some living connection with literature, that it

mirrors, that is to say, and reflects back to illuminate the writing of Shakespeare and Swift; or again, the undoubted sincerity of the writer and his laudable indignation at social injustice may carry the reader away into supposing that this sincerity and indignation have been adequately expressed as literature, instead of serving to blunt that instrument. It is the duty of a critic to point out these things; admittedly it is a pleasurable duty, for after being knocked about by Mr. Motley's five hundred pages one emerges feeling rather resentful.

From a different point of view the book is excellent. The time taken by the writer to amass his facts, the six years devoted to their deployment in this exposé of American social tiredness, has been spent rewardingly. The story deals with a sensitive, religious boy named Nick Romano, whose family suffer in the Depression and have to move to a poorer district, where Nick finds it easy to express his disillusionment by minor delinquency. Reform school fixes his hatred of authority and makes it the motive for nearly all his subsequent behaviour. Then comes Chicago and more efficient crime, the first alley-girls, the poolrooms, the robbery with violence, the homosexuals, the marriage wrecked by impotence, the night-murder of a policeman, the well-lit trial, the electric chair, guilt, dirt and defiance; the darker side of the American dream. Everything is here: shoddy living conditions, sadistic reform school, corrupt police, crooked legality (Nick's defence advocate is almost as dishonest as his prosecutor), and the good citizens watching the execution through plate glass. The book should be recommended to the good citizens, but for most anarchists it will seem only a highly-coloured reproduction of what is already a well-known black and white picture.



Behind all this is Mr. Motley's thesis: that life is deterministic, human beings only samples for the behaviourist; Nick has no choice. This simplified view of life is the foundation for the artistic failure of the book. Since there is no room for play between freedom and necessity, there is no room for irony and no possibility of tragedy. Hence, perhaps, the introduction of false tragedy; the piling on of emotion; the prolonged fingering at the single string of Nick's experience in the death-cell (and sometimes one feels that the author is enjoying this primitive music); a crudity quite unjustified by the adolescence of the main character. Admirable as this book is as an indictment, it is a pity that it possesses no quality likely to give it permanence.

L.A.

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BERDYAEV v. BAKUNIN

DEAR FRIENDS,

Might I be allowed a little space to comment briefly on two points regarding Nicolas Berdyaev which were raised by P. Huggon in your June 12th issue?

An anarchist reader of Berdyaev's criticism of social movements would probably find some difficulty in assessing his position in relation to the anarchist philosophy. Your correspondent is perfectly correct in saying that Berdyaev's personalism differed fundamentally from anarchism—since personalism is concerned with freedom as a first reality, whilst anarchism is concerned with freedom as a necessity. What I attempted to point out in my short essay of some weeks ago was that anarchism is impotent unless its supporters can come upon a realisation of the true character of freedom and creative power—which now, since they live and think in a realm of necessity, they tend to objectify wholly. In short: if anarchism is to mean anything for me it must be reborn of that freedom which is the source of all creation, human and divine! A spiritual undertaking which, as I pointed out before, must prove difficult of acceptance for most anarchists.

It must be stressed that Berdyaev did not rule out the need for social struggle. What he feared was the triumph of the "herdsman"—the proletarian—as opposed to the worker, who has a sacred significance, and is potentially an aristocrat of the spirit. Berdyaev saw the seeds of an intolerable mass tyranny in the collectivist doctrine of Bakunin.

Of course, Berdyaev's philosophy of Personality has its source and fulfilment in Christ. In a living and dynamic Christ, Who reveals personality as a reality interactive between God and Man—and Who has little or no meaning for anarchists and others who can only bring themselves to tolerate a purely historical figure; an enlightened teacher, about whom several quite untenable myths were woven. Herbert Read has called Jesus "The Great Insurgent"—but is only adapting Him to suit his own politics, and will not realise that Jesus has no revolutionary power for man unless known as a living Person!

The other point about Berdyaev—that he was, in fact, a member of the Orthodox Church—is also important. He was always an intensely critical member, but clearly realised the dangers attached to forming or joining dissident factions merely to suit one's own particular perception of truth. It is this tendency which has made of Christianity the well-nigh impotent hotch-potch which it is to-day.

Letters to the Editors

All organisations and counter-organisations carry the germ of their own collapse. Something more personal and subversive is called for.

Sincerely yours,
ERIC THACKER.

A "SHALLOW" AGNOSTIC REPLIES

As a person who professes to adhere to "shallow" agnosticism may I be allowed to attempt a reply to some of the points raised in P. M. M. Huggon's letter? His letter is typical of that point of view which, whilst admiring its own profundity, does not in any way attempt to answer the criticisms of the agnostic (incidentally, Mr. Huggon, Herbert Read calls himself an agnostic, too), the atheist and the sceptic, but talks in derivative tones about "nineteenth-century shallowness", "side-whiskered atheism" or, in a more sepulchral tone, "degrading materialism". I agree that simply to propagate the creed of Bradlaugh and say that it is the last word on the irrationality, or otherwise, of religion is somewhat obsolete, but to attach the label "shallow" to the philosophies of Huxley, Spencer, Proudhon, Bakunin or any of the other nineteenth-century freethinkers is not only prejudice but nonsensical.

Perhaps it is fortunate that your correspondent is not an anarchist, since to take the somewhat dogmatic statements of Eric Thacker, dress them up in a platitude about "an act of faith concerning man's nature" and put them forward as a contention concerning the attitude of anarchism towards religion would find very little sympathy in a movement whose very diversity of opinion constitutes its unity. If we agree with an adaptation of a remark of Ibsen's that "what you call truth I call truths" then that attitude, which has, unfortunately, been expressed in previous issues of *Freedom*, of "the anarchist view should be this" is deserving of strong condemnation.

Incidentally, why is Mr. Huggon so derisive concerning nineteenth-century (sic!) agnostics when his own creed is at least nearly two thousand years old? One would imagine from his letter that the only criterion by which to judge a philosophy is its newness!

S. E. PARKER.

RELIGION AND THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION

DEAR COMRADES,

May I ask F. A. Ridley a question about religion and the social revolution? In your last issue he writes: the main function of present-day religion "is pre-eminently, a political one, that brings religion and its churches into the orbit of the Social Revolution as one of its most ubiquitous and dangerous enemies. I hope that this undoubted fact justifies the publication by a Social-Revolutionary journal like *Freedom*, of the present article!"

It certainly does; but what I cannot grasp is why it does not equally justify its publication in a social-revolutionary journal like the *Socialist Leader*, of which Ridley is co-editor? I welcome seeing Ridley write in *Freedom*, but what I would like to know is how he can justify the silence of his own paper on this vital topic, because only too often one sees in the *Socialist Leader* support for the ubiquitous and dangerous enemy of social revolution insofar as support for certain Christian Socialist bodies goes, and also open support for what Ridley accurately describes as "Zionist Imperialism".

I realise, of course, what Ridley's position is; like a number of other sincere and revolutionary-thinking socialists, he finds that the I.L.P. programme is written by socialist thinkers and its membership consists largely of older social-democrats belonging to the early I.L.P. and the Keir Hardie tradition, with some younger pacifists with no background in the working-class movement. Hence the socialist thinkers find themselves writing a programme in advance of the membership, and for that reason, I suppose, they tend sometimes to go a bit easy on them. But isn't it better in those circumstances to go back "in the wilderness" and not devote one's energies to keeping the party alive?—now that the more opportunistic leaders of the I.L.P. have gone over to their natural home in the Labour Party, why exactly do the intelligent socialists like Ridley write a progressive programme of workers' councils, anti-imperialism, revolutionary attitude to religion, &c., for a party which is really a long way behind it?

London.

K.A.B.

THE CASE OF PETER GREEN

DEAR FRIENDS,

I have read in to-day's paper of the case (the first in the National Press) of a young fellow of 17, whose address is in East Ham, having been given 3 years' Borstal for refusing to submit to an army medical exam. The Mayor of West Ham is apparently to be petitioned. I hope the Freedom Defence Committee takes up the case.

By the way, only a small paragraph is given to the case of a deserter escaping from escort at London Bridge Station and being cornered by a gang of platelayers—I ask you, has not the State enough weapons with which to enslave citizens—Prisons, Glasshouses, Police, Soldiers, Civil Servants, M.I.5, Special Branch, etc., that workmen have to do their part in destroying the liberty of others?

I should point out that I was fined £5 or a month and ordered to be detained till I submitted for a term not exceeding three months. I gave in after 14 days—was dragged into Army—discharged on medical grounds six months later—during war. Am not proud of record but cannot bear militarism to this day—now we have Labour Government doling out 3 year Borstal sentences to lads of 17 in peacetime, because they will not tolerate unreasonable demands by the State. Is not the State manufacturing criminals? I have written to the person concerned and am going to write to Home Secretary.

P. C. OSMOND.

THE FATE OF RUSSIAN ANARCHISM

DEAR COMRADES,

The attitude of the Russian authorities as regards the famous pioneers of Russian Anarchism is very interesting. It is obviously impossible for them to expunge all memory of such men as Bakunin, Kropotkin, &c., so they enshrine them into classical antiquities and stop the circulation of their anti-authoritarian writings. Tolstoy in particular has been the victim of a gross fraud, in that during World War II his name and memory were invoked as a symbol of Russian patriotism against the invaders, when Tolstoy actually was an extreme pacifist and never a patriot.

It is interesting to read in *Freedom* that the street where Kropotkin was born was named after him and housed a museum, now removed and existent no longer. It is interesting to note how sympathisers

with the Russian Government have done the same thing in this country. Whilst in London recently, I visited a well-known "left" bookshop, namely, Collet's of Charing Cross Road, which decorates the walls with pictures of "great pioneers of socialism" and, lo and behold, who should I see but Peter Kropotkin. I asked the assistant if they stocked any of his books or pamphlets. Oh, no. Sort of 'you look but you mustn't touch' style!

T. HART.

A DREAM REVOLUTION?

DEAR COMRADES,

I found George Melly's article on the "Revolution of Desire" quite poetic (modern style) but it is, I think, advisable to know what you're talking about before gush so much.

It sounds quite romantic to refer to the "anarchist who knows Bakunin by heart, and has never examined the inside of a flower or the sex of a woman", but obviously Melly just thinks of anarchism as a written creed, set down in the writings of a theorist like Marx, for whom he substitutes his contemporary Bakunin. Whoever has heard of anybody knowing Bakunin by heart? What collection of theories did Bakunin write out that one could read?

George Melly finds "many anarchists think that the replacement of parliament by workers' syndicates will solve everything" but men form the syndicates, etc. He must find his anarchists in the dreams he writes about. To replace parliament by workers' syndicates would only turn such from being revolutionary to being authoritarian. Surely anarchism is based on the knowledge that we cannot trust men in places of high authority.

Up to a point he may be right that "the poet or artist can be a revolutionary of the greatest importance—but I suppose the accent is on the word 'can'". So many are obsessed with an intellectual snobbery that they are somewhat apart from us ordinary mortals, that—like himself—they want to deny the possibility that any workers can be libertarian instead of authoritarian—individual instead of collective—just as capitalist or working-class poets and artists (for they do come into one category or another however much they want to deny it) can act according to themselves individually. I think if he examines his secret world a bit more he will find his misinterpretation of anarchism somewhere mixed up with the class division of society.

Yours fraternally,

London.

J.F.B.

PROTECTING INNOCENTS

In Boston last week, Ginn & Co., largest publisher of schoolbooks in the U.S., rushed a revision of its best-selling *World Geography* by Geologist John Hoddgon Bradley, Texas, which would use 10,000 copies of the book, had objected to some of the nice things Bradley (an ex-marine) had to say about Russia when he wrote the book in 1945. The new *World Geography* for Texas, with the author's consent, would call Russia the "biggest" instead of the "greatest" nation in Europe, reduce the Soviet government's achievements from "mighty" to "considerable", downgrade Russia's claim to warm-water Baltic ports from "desperately" to "very much needed".

II

On the wall hung a picture of Stalin. With passionate feeling and extravagant gesture a schoolboy declaimed an epic poem in praise of *Tovarish Stalin*. This happened in Washington, D.C.

In this schoolroom in a converted rooming house in the capital, Stalin's praises were still being sung last week—but not for long. The Kremlin had ordered the Soviet School closed, and the 45 school-kids (children of Russian diplomats and clerks) returned to Russia. In New York and London, other Soviet youngsters had also received their marching orders. By keeping them in separate schools, the Soviet government had tried to insulate their innocents abroad from corrupt and corrupting Western ideas. Apparently Moscow now thought that the only place they would really be safe from capitalist contamination was back home.

Time, 28/6/48.

KEEP THE PARTY CLEAN!

Mr. Attlee, addressing 20,000 agricultural workers at Skegness yesterday, described the Communists as people who have a "vested interest in chaos".

"We shall not accept the Communist doctrine," he said. "That doctrine springs in the East. Oriental in its conception, it does not belong to the main stream of democratic thought."

"We in this country have our own democratic Socialism in which we believe, and we have a higher standard than they have in the East with regard to human rights, and, I think, their way of life altogether."

News Chronicle, 28/6/48.

As Mr. Attlee has previously described his Party programme as one

Through the Press

based on Christianity, ought we to accept that Oriental doctrine as part of the main stream of democratic activity? It springs further in the East that Mr. Attlee despises.

CHRISTIAN MORALITY

Sponsors of the annual West Virginia beauty pageant have asked Pope Pius XII to express his position on Bishop John J. Swint's ruling that any Catholic girl entering the contest faces excommunication.

The appeal was made in a cablegram addressed to the Vatican by William J. B. Miller, public relations man for the pageant.

Two Catholic girls withdrew after the Bishop of Wheeling denounced such contests as "totally pagan" and "absolutely immoral" and said "if nakedness were eliminated the whole thing would fall to pieces."

N.Y. Herald Tribune, 29/6/48.

COMMONSENSE IS CRIMINAL

Two South London families who "swopped" pre-fabs have had quit notices from their landlords, Camberwell and Deptford Councils.

The families were friends and were allotted pre-fabs about the same time, but Mr. Thomas Funnell (38), sweetshop manager, who qualified for a Deptford Council pre-fab in Bolina Road, South Bermondsey, S.E., had to spend time and money going to work at Nunhead.

On the other hand, Mr. Stanley Young (27), docker, given a pre-fab in Kimberley Avenue, Nunhead, S.E., travelled to work less than a quarter of a mile from the Funnell's home.

So they swopped.

That was 18 months ago, and for a year they paid each other's rent, but now they have been told to quit.

A Deptford housing official commented yesterday: "The council was granted a 28-day possession order against Mr. Young at Lambeth County Court in April, but it has not yet been enforced."

A Camberwell official told me: "A notice to quit has been served on Mr. Funnell and a county court application for possession is down for hearing on September 13th."

New Chronicle, 25/6/48

HUSH!

A sure way of preventing leakage of secrets is to take the Press into one's confidence and say, "This is off the record," declared Mr. T. Driberg (Lab., Maldon) in the Commons last night.

Mr. Driberg was calling attention to the recent prosecution of Mr. Atkinson, a journalist, at Driffield, Yorks, who was alleged to have obtained from a telephone operator information about two crimes—one a "murder" invented by the police to trap him.

Mr. Driberg suggested that the Official Secrets Acts were not intended for this kind of case.

Sir Hartley Shawcross, Attorney General, replying, said these Acts were not limited to cases of spying.

It was contrary to the public interest that those who sent messages by telephone or telegraph should run the risk of having their messages disclosed.

News Chronicle, 25/6/48.

This does not, of course, apply to the Police who have the right to open letters and "tap" phones.

PHILADELPHIA CIRCUS

The Republican Party convention here was in full swing. Very soon the nominating speech for Harold Stassen was made.

Mr. Stassen's campaigners were the most healthy and vigorous and spirited and self-conscious people in Philadelphia, and there was no question of not being able to see the demonstration they made—it came right in and saw me.

It rioted over the floor, from which thousands of coloured balloons rose and floated among the flags hanging from the roof; it ran up the walls and invaded the gallery with banners; it filled, but did not distress, the ears with its deep, passionate, happy cheers; and it took forms which I hesitate to describe lest they should be misunderstood.

On the platform there appeared a beautiful golden-haired young girl in garments less slack than slacks but not so tight as tights who, waving a long trumpet, danced a rumba.

Evening Standard, 25/6/48.

OLYMPIC GAMES—A FORECAST

Who will win the Olympic Games? Britain, of course. We always do. In the years gone by we had the best athletes. So we won that way. When other countries got too good for us, we astutely decided to win behind the scenes. We announced that the competitors of other countries were all professionals who actually took their training seriously and were paid out of State funds. Anyway, they were unsporting and they were not gentlemen. This last made us victorious, in our own eyes, anyway.

But you can't always use the same technique. You can blame the weather once. You can blame mysterious illness once. You can say your opponents are cads, several times.

But in the end you have to develop something new. It'll be no use this time trying to blame it on the food. The Americans used that one in 1930. No, we must try something else.

Quite simply, just before the Games proper begin, we must announce that we don't intend to try. If we then win on merit, it makes our opponents' defeat even bitter. If we lose, as we will, we are covered and the victors look silly and shame-faced. For they are labelled before the world as spivs and drones and butterflies who have wasted precious time in training, which should have been used in production. Our teams, on the other hand, will appear as men who were too busy digging coal for a war-shattered world to bother about discs or javelin or silly little balls.

Our moral victory will be complete.

—J. P. W. Mallalieu, *Lilliput*, July, 1948.

OVERDUE REMORSE

A grant of £100 is to be made to the 80-year-old widow of ex-Inspector Syme, Mr. Chuter Ede, Home Secretary, has revealed in a letter to Mr. Ronald Chamberlain, Labour M.P. for Norwood.

Police arrested two men in 1909 for "unlawfully knocking and ringing at a door". Syme found it was the door of the men's house and refused to charge them.

He was criticised and he made various allegations against his superiors. Then he was dismissed. For 35 years he campaigned against his dismissal. He died in 1945, aged 73.

Daily Herald, 17/6/48.

FAUX PAS

When a coloured man was turned away from a West End restaurant, Mr. Strachey warned: "It is within my power to withdraw catering licences as a penalty."

Recently, a coloured man was turned away from a Piccadilly bar. He was an official of the Colonial Office. A prompt protest was made.

After apologising, the management explained they had been having trouble with toughs who had created a disturbance on their premises. Unfortunately, the bar tender had confused this highly respectable Civil Servant with one of these people.

A landlord has the right to refuse any customer who behaves badly.

Sunday Pictorial, 27/6/48.

WELCOME TO "INDIGENOUS GUESTS"

Fraternization has come of age. The United States Army now tacitly permits "indigenous guests" (official language for young female residents of this country) to share bachelor billets with American and Allied personnel stationed in Frankfurt.

The June monthly information letter issued by the Frankfurt military post engineers points out that "routine checks of billets reveal that on occasions occupants are sharing their billets with indigenous guests for a limited period of time. Investigation shows that these guests are in the possession of the necessary passes and papers authorising their presence in the billets. However, investigation has invariably embarrassed the occupants and it would be advisable to notify the local zone office when you share a billet with such a guest," it was stated.

Coupled with the recent removal of a four-mile fence surrounding the European Command Headquarters compound, it now appears that the American and "indigenous" populations will become acquainted as never before possible.

N.Y. Herald Tribune, 23/6/48.

WANTED: MAN WITH EXPERIENCE

With 13 convictions, Frederick Dennis Beverley went to a Labour Exchange to find a job, was offered one as prison warder at Wandsworth Jail...

News Review, 24/6/48.

Socialists Support Anarchist Resolutions

AN interesting conference entitled "Socialism and Peace" was held in London on the 26th June. The conference was convened by the "1948 Research Group" (a somewhat obscure socialist body) and attended by individuals and delegates from many organisations, including: Commonwealth, the I.L.P., Amalgamated Union of Foundry Workers, Women's Co-op Guilds, the R.C.P., World Government Crusade Committee, The P.P.U., and The Spartacus League. The London Groups of the Union of Anarchist Groups were represented, and some anarchists attended as individuals.

The conference opened in the morning with a Labour M.P., George Rogers, on the platform plugging a strong line for the "Crusade for World Government". This line was supported from the floor throughout the day by other World Government enthusiasts, who held that the extreme centralisation of power was the panacea for war and all other social evils. Our anarchist comrades strongly attacked this line, and tried to show the assembly that the drive towards World Government was likely to be a potent source of war, and was in itself a most reactionary ideal. They were successful in bringing the conference to pass the following emergency resolution:

"We, present at this Conference, condemn unreservedly the Crusade towards World Government as a powerful and insidious danger to world peace."

So much for the drive for Bigger and Better Government!

Most of the set motions before the conference were pretty woolly, and there was much talk of "True Socialist Agreement", "Socialist Unity", "Socialist Principles". The anarchists pointed out that the word "Socialist" meant precisely nothing in the general context of the meeting, as so many different and contradictory socialist trends were present, each talking in terms of their own brand of socialism. A Commonwealth delegate rose to the occasion, and regretted "that the net had been flung so wide" as to include anarchists in the conference, and he questioned whether they should be participating. Tom Collier, of the I.L.P., thereupon made a strong speech against any attempt to exclude or muzzle the anarchists, to whom he paid a warm tribute concerning their excellent record in the working-class movement. The Commonwealthist then said he did not wish to exclude the anarchists, but rather to appeal to their consciences. (So our unrepentant and conscienceless comrades were not kicked down the front steps after all.)

The Trotskyists performed their usual filibustering antics, and said a lot of unkind (and true) things about their blood-brothers the Stalinists. The Stalinists were not present to say as unkind (and true) things about the Trotskyists. The Rev. A. D. Belden (Pax Christi League), chairman of the afternoon session, said that if Mr. Stalin were to walk into the conference, he would welcome him in the name of socialist unity. Happily for the sanity of the con-

ference, Mr. Stalin did not walk in; but some cynic asked whether the National Socialists of Germany would qualify under the banner of socialism.

Considering the mixed bunch of organisations present, our anarchist comrades were extremely fortunate in bringing the Conference round to a direct anti-war line through the maze of party lines that were being plugged. They were successful in gaining the support of the majority for the two anarchist emergency resolutions which they brought forward at the end of the day. The first has been quoted above; the second is as follows:

"This Conference pledges itself to concrete action to oppose war:

1. By propaganda designed to make people aware of the cause of the present war-tension.
2. By unremitting anti-militarist propaganda.
3. By assisting and encouraging those who resist military and industrial conscription.
4. By acts of sabotage against the whole war machine of the State, both now and in any future war."

We wonder how far this pledge will be honoured by those organisations whose delegates supported it.



Labour, Life and Poverty

PERPETRATORS of Gallup Polls, Mass Observers and questionnaires—and all others who seek to research on that most elusive of all specimens, Man in Society, would do well to learn by heart a paragraph from Professor Zweig's Introduction to his *Labour, Life and Poverty* published by Victor Gollancz (1948).

"When I started interviewing people," Zweig said, "I sometime mentioned in the course of conversation that I was doing a piece of research work and was interviewing them for that purpose, but I met with an icy reception and regret that I wanted to treat them as objects of study," and in the two hundred pages of his book which records his observations of four hundred males (mostly Londoners met between Aug. 1946 and Feb. 1947) Zweig reveals himself as a sociologist who has quickly realised that any man deeply resents being treated as a means to an end. Above all things he desires to be valued as an individual, known and appreciated for his personal qualities. That most of the workers are not individualists in their social behaviour (partly, Zweig concludes, because they lack privacy at home and at work) but have a strong communal sense, in no way contradicts his finding in them this basic urge for personal expression. News-vendors, window cleaners, stokers, sailors, vagrants, gamblers, family men and single men, boys and the old, one and all wanted to talk to Zweig as one person to another wherever he met them. And he met them in a fascinating variety of places—in pubs, stadiums, canteens, on the road. In reading the seventy-five selected case histories which form the Appendix to this book one feels oneself catching the enthusiasm of the author who says "For me, the inquiry was like a fascinating film of life, a new adventure and experiment in living... sometimes when I was tired and worn out by this exciting labour, and needed a change in the evening at the last minute, I preferred my work to a theatre or cinema or book, because the book of life was much more fascinating than either printed words or a film could be."

Three Impressions

And what emerges from his "random study" of "Labour, Life and Poverty"? I shall give my general impressions first in order of their strength—what I, as an ordinary reader "got" from the book as I sat down to read it in an armchair. Foremost was the impression that each man's desire to be recognised and valued, is a manifestation of his urgent need for his own particular kind of freedom. There is not one freedom but many freedoms. And social reformers (and Atlantic Charterists) can no more thrust something called freedom (or four freedoms) on people than they can thrust equality or fraternity. But the urge to "do what I like with my own time and my own money" constantly reiterated by these men (and to hell with moralists who tell us not to waste ourselves in gambling, smokes and drinks) reveals, as Zweig points out, a deep-seated dissatisfaction with modern working conditions. There is no freedom in work for these people. More and more they feel themselves cogs in a great State machine.

Some of the best chapters in the book are on the workers' sources of pleasure—public houses, dog racing, football pools.

These are sought not merely as recreation or relaxation after an exacting day's work, but as a source of excitement and an escape from a job where they feel time-bound to an employer, and from family life, which is to many of them (except in old age) another limitation of their freedom. A surprising number of them are single and not only single but without sex life. For as one of them puts it "the worker soon becomes less interested in sex because his work leaves him very little surplus energy." The interest in sex and especially the highest manifestations of sex are really a matter for the "leisured classes... the working class knows little about the highest flowering of sex."

The second thing which emerges as clearly as the first is the deep sense of insecurity which pervades the poorer part of the population. This is obvious, of course, but nevertheless, it is necessary to stress it again and again. For as long as this exists the urge for freedom can only express itself in the meagre spare hours of these people. For insecurity which springs from a fear of the future, devitalises a man more quickly than anything else.

And the third impression—and one that might be misunderstood (so please read the book for yourselves) is delightfully present not only in the chapter "Personal Happiness and Unhappiness" but in the detailed case histories. It is the simple observation that some people are born happy—that poverty and unhappiness are not necessarily synonymous. The causes of misery—loneliness, frustration, personal discord all are aggravated by poverty but the basically unhappy are those who are resigned and helpless, while the basically happy are able to triumph over circumstances.

"A pavement artist in colours in the West End—he makes the pavement look brighter and gives the people something to think about and they can drop a penny in his cap if they like it..." or "A

messenger in a Ministry in Whitehall, sixty-three, whose wife of seventy is bed-ridden and who does all the shopping, cooking, cleaning and even knitting, told me he is quite content and does not need any pleasures."

Happiness and Authority

But Zweig does not leave it at this. His survey is really much wider than his "four hundred chance encounters" for one cannot encounter any human being singly. The four hundred were in contact with employers, wives, children, pub pals and so on and it appears to be a general finding amongst them that unhappy, quarrelsome, hysterical people, especially if they are in the boss position—foremen, managers, owners—can ruin the working lives of employees and reduce output. Zweig concludes that the "capacity to radiate happiness" which some people possess naturally and others achieve, is far more valuable to the community than any other and he even hints at a society where only the happy are allowed to be in positions of responsibility. Perhaps anarchists may deduce more than Zweig does, and add that such people are invariably non-authoritarian.

With closer study of the book (at a table instead of in an armchair) the important sociological deductions which become clear, are, first, that in spite of a higher standard of living for all which is characteristic of the "modern welfare State" primary poverty (i.e., insufficient earnings) still exists, and secondary poverty (caused by spending habits) is widespread. Two-thirds of Zweig's people earn between £4 10s. £6 per week, nevertheless, owing to spending habits, family responsibilities, uneconomical ways of living, many of them are poor. Zweig points out that in modern England time means money—a woman worker with house and children (and too often an improvident husband who spends his wage packet and some of hers as well) cannot live economically for she has no time to select the cheapest and best shop, or to wash, mend and cook properly. Secondly, there is very little social or structural poverty (due to unemployment or starvation wages) but there is "natural" poverty, due to bad health, emotional instability, and old age.

"I was astonished to find how many among the men I interviewed at random were broken in health, mind and spirit, or else emotionally unstable or maladjusted and who felt themselves outside the normal framework of society."

Artificial Poverty

In his concluding chapters Zweig gives as a test of a progressing society the narrowing gulf between the conditions of the poor as existing at a given time and the minimum requirements as accepted at that time, and he believes that in our society the gulf is not closing but is widening, and it is widening owing to secondary poverty.

Much of this secondary poverty there need not be. It arises from the workers' basic dissatisfaction with his work. To Zweig the "forces in modern society tending towards disintegration, disruption and decay" can be offset only by a "new spirit"—a new attitude to work. No amount of social welfare, social security, will be able to stop the final disintegration although "Industrial society without the

modern system of social welfare would not have been able to survive." To work again with joy and delight is the only remedy, Zweig thinks, but he is by no means sure how that can be brought about.

It is clear that he thinks that "the workers" must be accepted as they are. No use to preach or to urge revolutionary change. They like competition. Then offer prizes and bonuses for output. They like gambling, drinking and smoking. Then give them cheaper cigarettes, tobacco and papers so that chain smokers can roll their own. Give them better beer, better films, better pubs. "Grapes of Wrath", he says, has done far more than Hyde Park orators and pamphlets. One might add so has Charlie Chaplin in "Modern Times" and "Monsieur Verdoux". You can only rouse the workers, he seems to suggest, through their pleasures. When they are young they like hobbies—if you want to educate them do it via their medium of interest, and above all "the school should pay greater attention to the likes and dislikes of young children and should help them to get the kind of jobs they prefer."

Too many philosophies and religions of the past have taught that man learns by suffering. We are only just beginning to realise that he learns by happiness. We may disagree with some of Professor Zweig's deductions but his main conclusion seems to be that the good society can be brought about only by the happiness of its individual members. Can any kind of State system achieve this or must such a happy, free society arise as a natural growth?

M.E.M.

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

The South African Minister of Labour announced last week that the training of natives as artisans would cease forthwith. This training, undertaken by the previous Government against some trade union opposition, was to enable natives to help in filling the country's urgent needs in native housing.

Times Weekly Edition, 23/6/48.

143,000 Homeless Children

In the Commons debate last week on the Children's Bill, it was revealed that there are 143,000 homeless children in this country.

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Meetings and Announcements

CENTRAL LONDON

Comrades living or working in reach of Central London are invited to get in touch with the Central London Anarchist Group, which is carrying out indoor and outdoor activities throughout the summer months. The next group meeting will be on July 15th at 8 p.m.; anyone wishing to attend should contact Freedom Bookshop for place of venue.

BRISTOL

An Anarchist group has recently been formed in Bristol. Any enquiries to Peter Wilcox, 73, Whitehall Road, Bristol, 5.

NORTH EAST LONDON

JULY 27th Alan Smith
"The Prospect Before Us"
Comrades interested should ring WAN 2396

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, July 22nd Variety of subjects Bring your friends.

GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP

Public Meetings at MAXWELL STREET are held every Sunday evening. Speakers: John Gaffney, Frank Leech, Eddie Shaw.

Press Fund

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