

Freedom

ANARCHIST FORTNIGHTLY

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Threepence

Will the Tide Turn?

THE CONFLICT OF OUR TIME

WITH an increasing momentum over the past fifty years the general trend all over the world has been in the direction of centralization—the concentration of administrative initiative more and more in the hands of the State and its organs. With this trend has gone increasing encroachment on the freedom and scope of individuals, and a seemingly inevitable extinction of much of the colourful features of social life into drab submission to regulations and administrative decrees. In these pages we have often had the dreary duty of cataloguing the steps in this deadening progress, and it may often have seemed as if anarchists had nothing else to do but point to the grimmer aspects of contemporary life. Yet it has not been through pessimism that we have felt it incumbent upon us to rub our readers' noses in the muck: indeed the whole philosophy of anarchism is fundamentally based upon an optimistic view of human nature and human beings which is certainly not shared by political trends which are by no means disheartened by the centralizing tendency of the all-encroaching state.

"WE DON'T WANT A GOOD WORKER."

ONE'S heart sinks at the idea of self-respecting workmen being required to do their job, aware that its first object is to deceive rather than give service, and that any effort they put into it will be wasted. I read the other day the statement of a boy, interviewed for his first job, who said to the foreman, "I'm a good worker," to be told, "We don't want a good worker; we want a fast worker."

"New Statesman & Nation",
22/1/49.

Our jeremiads have been rendered necessary by the fact that you cannot fight against a trend without first comprehending its direction and scope.

It is possible, however, to discern certain contrary trends which give hope that the present trend is not utterly irreversible. Such trends should be recognized and encouraged.

Reaction Against Centralization

First of all, it is perhaps inevitable that as centralization proceeds its disadvantages become more apparent. Thirty years ago the alleged practical advantages of bringing diverse administrative machinery under a uniform centralized control may have seemed quite attractive. As men have increasing experience of the reality these advantages seem rather less telling, and the trend itself breeds the reaction to itself.

Boomerang

Then there is the undoubted fact that a certain boomerang effect returns from wartime propaganda. For such purposes it was convenient to link the brutal aspects of the fascist regimes with their worship of the state, and the immense concentration of power in its hands. The present anti-Russian propaganda makes use of the same facts and draws attention to the advantages enjoyed by those who, like ourselves, are ruled over by an administration in which the centralizing trend, though present and increasing, has not proceeded so far. It is true that such propaganda serves reactionary ends, but it also assists to awaken opposition to native centralizing forces.

The Voice of the Intellectuals

The impact of political trends upon the conscious life of the individual—a destructive one—has now been forced on the attention of some of the best and most articulate minds in the country. Thus, Bertrand Russell and T. S. Eliot, to name but two leading intellectuals,

and two furthermore who are very different in their political and religious attitudes, have felt it necessary to draw forceful attention to the evils inherent in the centralizing spirit of the age, and to reaffirm the necessity to give free scope to human individuality. Anarchists should not underestimate the effect of such intellectuals as Russell and Eliot in this country, Mumford and Reich in America, Camus and Sartre in France—to take names almost at random. It is true that intellectuals can be forced to conform or be rubbed out by established tyrannies, but it is neither an easy nor a rapid process, and is accompanied by increased furtive interest, and increasingly higher evaluation, of the views attacked.

In the past, the Church has repeatedly tried to stamp out views unpalatable to the prevailing trend. Such attempts have failed. To-day, with incomparably greater powers of spreading ideas (though the power of the written and spoken word is undoubtedly a two-edged weapon), it is even less likely that subversive decentralizing opinions will be completely stamped out.

Meaning in Modern Life

This does not mean that we can by any means afford to sit back. On the contrary, for the centralizing trend is still the prevailing one and still retains the fundamentally important support of the economic trends of capitalist modes of production. The decentralizing trend which we have pointed out is a mere voice in the wilderness. It is for thinking men and women who take their lives and their future responsibly to aid and foster such a trend, and many battles lie ahead before the idea of the state is stripped of all its mythical attributes and is exposed as the life-destroying thing it is. It requires an optimistic and buoyant attitude to take up the struggle against it. But the future of life and human happiness lie with such a struggle, and it is fair to claim that in its lies the only meaningful life possible in our grotesque age.

Time, Motion & Craft

THE MARCH of mechanisation and the constant pressure for more production were shown last week to have caught up with one of the few remaining industries where craftsmanship still means something. Not only that, but they have done so with the most demoralising and debased methods—the stop-watch and the Time and Motion Study.

We had occasion to refer to time and motion experts recently (*Freedom* 11/12/48) when we drew attention to the announcement that the T.U.C. had decided to hire "top-flight production experts" to advise unions on how to increase output. With the blessing of Sir Stafford Cripps, these experts have moved into the pottery works and are "revolutionising" the industry, to the great delight of production directors, supervisors and some of the workers.

Pottery is a craft, the best productions of which rank as great works of art, and the humblest productions of which may grace the table of any home. It is considered to be Britain's oldest industry, and since the invention of the potter's wheel, methods of production have not altered fundamentally for centuries. Until 1949, when the demand for dollars takes precedence over craftsmanship, pride in work and human dignity.

LET us make clear our anarchist attitude to mechanisation and modern technology in general. We believe that with the knowledge and technical means at the disposal of mankind to-day, it would be comparatively simple to create an abundance for all, not only on a level of necessity, but on a high level of well-being, including the distribution to all of all the things which have only recently come to be regarded as semi-necessities in modern life and most of those still regarded as luxuries. We consider that the

capitalist economic system, far from being the efficient system its apologists claim it to be, is in fact inefficient and unable to provide a high standard of living for all, because it depends upon shortage to create markets and upon restriction to create shortage. Also, of course, because it demands both a financial system which results in colossal wastage of potential creativity, and privilege and power which result in abuse and irresponsibility.

Human ingenuity, however, set free from economic bondage, could use to the full the technical achievements we have so far made and by the rational and humane use of machinery for the benefit of both producer and consumer, could create an age of plenty and sanity which would make the height of capitalist prosperity look like the depths of primitive ignorance. This abundance we believe to be inseparable from world peace, since inequality and want are used by unscrupulous leaders to foster national prejudice and suspicion and to divide sections of the workers against each other.

It follows that we are not opposed to mechanisation as such, nor that we wish to see society return to primitive simplicity. On the contrary, we welcome any invention likely to lighten labour and release for leisure or creativity the time and energy otherwise spent in a struggle for existence. But we are opposed to mechanisation used for the greater exploitation of workers, used in such a way as to demoralise or dehumanise those workers, or developed so as to destroy what is valuable in the relationship of a man and his work.

IT is precisely because what we are so opposed to in mechanisation is what is being done in the Potteries that we attack it to-day. Experts have moved in and

are timing with their stop-watches every motion of every worker in every stage of production.

We do not pretend that there is nothing that can legitimately be mechanised in pottery. The old "bottle oven" is giving way to the cleaner, labour-saving, thermally efficient continuous tunnel kiln, which has the double effect for good of easing the work inside the workshops and not fouling the atmosphere outside, as the old intermittent coal-burning oven did. Electrically-driven wheels have long replaced the old foot-pedal type, and there are other technical advances with which only the most conservative craftsman would argue. But other things are being done. Every brush-stroke necessary to hand-paint a plate is being timed to the split-second, every movement in picking up and smoothing-off a saucer is being checked and if unnecessary, eliminated. It is not only the industry that is being mechanised; it is the workers as well.

Not that all the workers object. In the Wedgwood factory at Barlaston, Staffs, the speed-up has brought some of them increases in wages by as much as 50%, and to some of them, this is worth the harassing tick of the clock, the working under the watchful eye of the expert. But not all; some of the girls are leaving their jobs, one being reported as saying:

"I do not like this new system. There is too much discipline now. I miss the freedom. I can't talk as much as I used to and there is not enough free time away from the work bench. I know that other girls are earning more money, but I don't want to stay."

WHAT are the dangers to the workers of the new speed-up? Firstly, of course, the danger inherent in any speed-up: that when the employers find out what workers are really capable of, the "norm" is increased, so that for wages to be maintained, output has to be in-

THE LYNKEY TRIBUNAL STORM IN A TEACUP

THE newspapers had a long run plugging the verbose reports of the Lynskey Tribunal, which few people read, and it is instructive at least to know that the complete lack of the various features they consider are news during its duration did not affect anybody very harmfully. Their crazy standard of values as to what is "news" is at least openly disproved by their weeks-long concentration on a subject which long since bored their readers, most of whom had foregone conclusions which are not altogether valid. The degree of corruption revealed is indeed small, and we are far from joining the "moralists" in their hue-and-cry after Belcher and Gibson. The objection to these gentlemen seems mainly that they

were found out, but what they really did is very small and involves only the loss of face involved in associating with shady characters who got pitchforked by accident into the news. To point to anything specific that they did which is by the definition of the term "corrupt" is difficult, and one can even be a little envious of countries where corruption of Ministries is indeed widespread but their powers are considerably less!

If it is difficult to accept the justification that the Tribunal had for condemning Mr. Belcher as a Minister and Mr. Gibson as a public servant, it is certain at least that their devotion to what one supposed were the ideals of the Labour movement are very much in question. Their Park Lane friends may indeed not have specifically bribed them with their cocktail parties and gifts, but the fact that they were with them at all is sufficient to damn them in the eyes of anyone who believed in their socialism and trade union principles. But this is a

trait they shared with many colleagues: the "nine to six" attitude of the professional socialist, a devotee of the old principles of the English Labour movement from Tolpuddle onwards while standing for office, serving in his job or appealing for votes, and a "good mixer" when off-stage, who freely mingles with the managements or the business world with whom he has to deal. Naturally, when these hard-faced gentlemen make their thin jokes about the folly of idealism, the professional socialist and trade union official does not stand on his dignity and get up and protest. He smiles and has another drink. One can cite other members of the Government not mentioned in the Tribunal, who make not even a silent protest at anti-Government propaganda put out by the firms of which they are directors, or who attend businessmen's dinners where they hear constant Tory propaganda to which they utter no reply. Why should they, they're off-duty? They smile and have another drink, and save the fire-eating socialism for the constituency. There is nothing whatever reprehensible about this from the politicians' point of view, and this is the damnable evidence against all the politicians mentioned in the Lynskey Tribunal, of whom, all but two, have been cleared.

The Way Up

The Labour Party are no worse than the Tories or Liberals in this respect, but they have made pretences in the past to be better. At one time they declared they only sent members to the House of Lords to get representation in that body and not for the sake of personal advancement. Now that they are cutting each other's throats not only to get admission to that august body, but also to get decorations and other titles which carry not the slightest political significance, let us have done with that pretence about their disagreement with social snobbery and climbing. Let us have done with their age-long pretence that they do not attend banquets to have a good guzzle; they attend official banquets and celebration dinners to eat well and receive applause just the same as any climber from Carlton House. When one hears protests about the corporation butler from the Labour Parties in the provinces, who haven't yet tumbled to it that their bigwigs enjoy a good tuck-in as much as the City aldermen, it sounds like an echo from the dim and distant past.

Mr. Stanley's line of approach was simple. He got his men through their vanity and their stomachs, by presentation and celebration dinners to which politicians buzzed like bees round a honeypot. By his apparent intimacy with all and very real acquaintance with some statesmen he was able to let his business friends think he was a lot more important than he really was. He was able to act on behalf of the businessmen on whom he preyed as a confidence-man just as they themselves preyed upon the working-class whom they exploited. Mr. Stanley, the shyder who tricked the millionaires, is not the menace to society the Press would have us believe. He is not the mythical exotic figure the Beaverbrook Press would set him up to be. Mr. Stanley is one of a very large number of fleas living on other fleas.

SIR HARTLEY'S GLIBNESS

One figure emerges as a pillar of dishonesty, a monument of duplicity towering over all the petty transactions of sausages and whisky, and that is Sir Hartley Shawcross. One can blame Mr. (Continued on page 4)

WHAT CRAFTSMEN ARE CONCERNED WITH

WHAT all craftsmen are concerned about is the effort to make as excellent things as are possible within the necessarily strict limits of usefulness. The limits also apply to machine-made goods, but the distant control inherent in mass-production combined in the case of safe dividends to shareholders result in things which give neither maker nor user satisfaction.

In the work of the hand-craftsman there is a co-operation of hand and undivided personality which has no counterpart in the work of the designer for mass-production.

In this time of flux and re-organisation we, as responsible craftsmen, have an essential contribution to make in clarifying and fighting for the basic principles of work—that work which is at one and the same time recreation and labour and in which use and beauty are inseparable.

BERNARD LEACH (Potter) 1945.

creased yet again. The introduction of piece-work on the mass-production scale is always the prelude to attacks on wage standards—and with the unions on the side of production-at-any-cost, what are the workers' chances of resistance without real conflict?

When the novelty of the wage increases works off, what is to sustain the workers in their mechanical hell? The satisfaction they used to get out of producing the best possible work they could is obviously going to be destroyed by the insistence on quantity instead of quality, for nobody can convince us that a girl painting a pattern on a plate by numbers with the aim of getting as many done as possible is going to enjoy it as much as the girl free to express her personality and pleasure in her work.

"This is a sincere contribution towards greater production with increased earnings," Production Director Wilson told the Wedgwood workers. "It cannot fail to produce higher wages and output—given a fair test. Its success can only be impeded by determined prejudice."

Well, Mr. Wilson, we plead guilty to prejudice. We are prejudiced against the reduction of human beings to the status of robots in a degraded scramble for dollars. We are prejudiced in favour of human dignity and freedom as expressed through creative work. We are prejudiced, in fact, in favour of humanity. P.S.

ANARCHISM

ANARCHISM is the unifying idea of the Resistance group, but we define it very broadly—in keeping, we believe, with the best traditions of the movement. We do not believe that an anarchist can co-operate with or support a government, or support a war, because anarchism is primarily anti-authoritarian and anti-State; similarly, an anarchist cannot accept the authority of a religious institution. With these two exceptions, we co-operate fully with all those who call themselves anarchists. Anarchists are so few that we cannot afford sectarian divisions; we are sure that a healthy anarchist movement allows abundant freedom for discussion and propagation of all anarchist ideas, and that a single universally accepted doctrine would mean the end of anarchism.

It will not be simple, therefore, to sum up the viewpoint of the Resistance group; but we have reached agreement on a number of basic ideas.

Anarchism as Philosophy and as Politics

The practical action of the anarchists of the First International, and later of Kropotkin, Malatesta and their comrades, has been represented by the following analogy: The temper of the people is like a pan of milk sitting on a hot stove. The milk gets hotter and hotter, but there is no discernible change in its appearance—until, suddenly, it reaches its boiling point, and it boils over. With this perspective, anarchists believed that their main work was to encourage and give consciousness to the mass of the people, so that out of spontaneous revolutionary ferment a free society would come.

Let no one think that the analogy is ridiculous: a powerful logic could be mustered behind it. Nor let anyone imagine that it is unfair: for it comprehends essential points: the chronic misery and slavery of the people, the natural resentment, the inevitable breaking through of inhibitions and restraints, the natural creative force of the people.

To-day is difficult to have confidence that the anger of the people is rising;

and it is hard too to believe that this analogy expresses the manner in which freedom can be achieved. Reliance on the kind of social evolution the older anarchists anticipated runs, in the world to-day, dangerously close to a religious type of faith. If we count on a series of events that we actually have no right to expect, then we may be overlooking significant opportunities that older anarchists were unaware of or discarded because they felt they had a better or quicker solution.

Since we live in another century, since the nature of man and society has become better known, it is unavoidable that we should think our situation through again; if the earlier conclusions were wholly correct, we should have no difficulty arriving at them again.

Therefore, we welcomed Herbert Read's effort more than a year ago to initiate such a discussion within the anarchist movement. We disagreed with many of his ideas, but we thought that Read made a number of important points: that anarchist ideas and theory have not evolved significantly beyond where Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid* left them half a century ago¹; that a wide-open field for study and anarchist interpretation exists in psychology, anthropology, sociology, economics, etc. (Kropotkin, for example, seems to have been ignorant of 20th century science, especially psychology); that possibilities for action can be explored more intensively.

Despite the generally cool reaction to Read's article, there is in certain anarchist publications an earnest search for new ideas and methods; and it is encouraging to believe that this reflects a like spirit among many comrades.

The Positive Heritage

We have stated that we believe the basic goals and values of anarchism are sound. Let us be as fundamental as possible.

Anarchism is the one social philosophy that consistently aims at enabling individual men and women to achieve a maximum happiness—that is, maximum opportunity to secure their biological needs, to enjoy love and sociability, to create and learn. This stress on the individual and his well-being—as opposed to the abstractions ("society", "class", "security", "democracy") that are the goals

of other social philosophies, is unique.

It is the anarchist idea, also, that freedom is the core of a society of healthy, happy human beings; that State and Government—that is, law, institutionalised violence; war; individual, group and class domination—are the antithesis of freedom and must be destroyed. We believe that people can (and sometimes have) lived in relatively non-authoritarian societies—we believe that anarchy, peace, successful work, and "human nature", are in full harmony. We believe, likewise, that freedom—that is, successful social revolution—can be achieved only by proceeding directly toward the ends desired; revolutions sustained by governmental authority cannot be libertarian, immediate reforms that strengthen the State are harmful, and the entire political conception of revolution formulated by the Marxists is false.

Anarchism is not, however, merely a theory of a future society. It is exact to say that we would be anarchists even if the social system could never be changed—and not from stubbornness or blind faith, but from belief that anarchism is as true and practical for one man as for a million. We understand three general applications of anarchism:

1. Aside from everything else, anarchism is a "way of life". That is, it is intelligent for a person to rebel against this society and assert his individuality; to reject and resist the demands of social institutions; to behave like a free man; to try to preserve his existence, liberty and sanity in a world that threatens all three. In other words, the first, and primary, justification of anarchism is that by behaving anarchistically we serve our immediate self-interests and the immediate self-interests of our fellow human beings.

2. Because we are anarchists, we join in movements and actions that will improve existing conditions—to give people more to eat, to prevent the worst forms of capitalist exploitation, to free people from prisons, to resist absolute tyranny, and so on.

3. But we recognise that within the existing society, no matter how much it is reformed by direct action or by paternalism, freedom and opportunity for people to realise their potentialities are always impossible. Therefore the achievement of a free society is a major objective.

All these ideas, it is fair to say, are part of the heritage of the older anarchists. With these ideas we are in the fullest agreement.

Ideas of Revolution

In respect to how a free society may be achieved, and in respect to the practical

(Our American comrades of the Resistance group have performed a valuable service by undertaking the considerable task of setting down their considered views on the present position of anarchism in an article upon which they invite discussion and comment. Freedom by no means identifies itself with all their views: but we are strongly of the opinion that a general stocktaking is not only an urgent task of the movement but is also long overdue. With some light omissions, therefore, we are reprinting their article in this and our next issue. Our own comments will appear in a subsequent issue.—EDS.)

behaviour of anarchists, we consider the judgment of the older anarchists to no longer be true.

In the beginning we suggested by an analogy the traditional view of revolution. More specifically, the basic assumptions of the "Bakuninists" of the First International, and the anarchist-communists and anarcho-syndicalists of a few years later, may be summarised this way:

Though they rejected Marxist determinism, they regarded social evolution as an established fact—"Thought is anarchic, and toward anarchy moves history." The French Revolution, the recurring revolutionary uprisings, and the rise of conscious revolutionary movements, confirmed the view that the mass of the people, heretofore resigned to slavery, were coming alive. Not only were education and knowledge spreading, but the theory of mutual aid revealed ethical and altruistic instincts or sentiments among the mass of people; it was primarily the force of the State and the ignorance spread by the Church that suppressed these instincts and kept man in slavery. In economic conditions the lever for social change existed. Capitalism meant wage-slavery and misery that could not possibly be remedied by mere reforms. Mass propaganda was directed at stirring rebellion by workers and peasants against exploitation by capitalists and landlords. It was confidently expected that when the handiest remedies (unions, republicanism, etc.) proved futile, the people would revolt and, if sufficiently conscious of their own abilities, create a free society.

From the perspective of the present, however, it would almost seem that each of these axioms would have to be turned inside out for it to be true.

1. Social progress or social evolution, judged by anarchist criteria and not by technological or political criteria, is a myth. No consistent progress, in terms of human happiness, is visible; in fact, it is debatable whether any real progress has occurred in the era of the State (now several thousand years old). Citizens of western civilisation have probably been worse off, for several centuries, than members of most other communities and civilisations; and if these other people have been dragged down, too, it is the work of European and American man. The evolution of capitalism is in the direction of centralism and destruction: extreme industrialisation, extreme scientific development, increasing-

ly frequent and violent wars. In the 19th century strong counter-forces seem still to have existed; the social forces that determine mass (that is, average) behaviour are now against us.

2. The mass of the people is increasingly indifferent to radical ideas—indifferent even to thinking. Increasing centralism has caused living to be more and more regulated by impersonal social institutions, with the result of less and less personal and group initiative. Mechanical responses, and even apathy (indifference, for example, to the facts of war), are the result of this tendency and of mind-deadening education, propaganda and circuses; so that the man who worked 12 hours a day and went home to educate himself and read radical books, to-day works a 40-hour week and does no such thing.

3. The armed forces of the State, and religious superstitions, are less effective than the attitudes of people themselves—"slave psychology" and vested interests in the status quo—in perpetuating submission and slavery.

4. In America, economic reforms have been successful, and the very logic of the mass-production system has produced an unheard of economic standard of living for the mass of the people, while individual escape from the working-class remains possible.

5. It is not at all certain that we would be able to live in a free society. In every crisis the human race resorts to mutual aid, but a free society, especially if it is to be so complex as ours, requires something different from herd behaviour. It requires individual and group initiative that modern living has all but destroyed. Unless society is simplified, and people

(Continued on page 3)

We regret that, owing to circumstances beyond our control, we have had to hold over the continuation of Kropotkin's article on Elisée Reclus.

We hope to print it next time.—EDS.

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PLAGUE: Midwife of Capitalism

THE Death. It was in the winter of 1348-9, six hundred years ago, that the Black Death strode across England. From the Far East, the black rat carried the black flea, and the black flea carried the Black Death. It arrived in England by way of eastern Europe. Not for the first time, nor for the last, did men of the western world look eastwards with fear and apprehension. This terrible bubonic plague swept right across Europe leaving perhaps, 25,000,000 dead in its wake. In less than a year it killed more people than both our world wars put together, in a world with a very much smaller population.

On August 1, 1348, the Black Death reached England. It came by sea, and first reached the seaport towns on the Dorset coast. From there it travelled north and west to Bristol. The inhabitants of Gloucester closed their gates to travellers from the south—but all in vain. The Death marched on. The population of whole villages vanished overnight. By November, the plague was in London. In January, 1349—six hundred years ago this month—it reached Norwich, a city which suffered even more than most. By the end of 1349, cattle thieves had carried a different kind of plunder back across the Scottish border.

In England alone the plague probably killed at least one-third of the inhabitants. The population was reduced from 4,000,000 to 2,500,000 in a matter of months. So great was the fear of the people that fathers deserted their homes, and mothers their children, leaving them to die without care or attention. It was much worse, in its effects, this terrible visitation, than the Great Plague of 1665, which you may have seen in glorious Technicolor at the local cinema in recent weeks.

It is obvious that a nation cannot lose a third of its population without its having some effects. Broadly, the England of 1349 was a land of open fields. There were none of the hedges which give the English countryside its characteristic appearance to-day, and the two or three large fields attached to each manor, each field divided up into strips, an acre or so in area, were cultivated in rotation. The manorial system was in its prime. Everyone knew his place. At the top you had the lord of the manor, and a few freemen who held land in their own right. Under the lord you had the villein and the villeins were bound to the soil. Each villein cultivated fifteen or thirty scattered acres, sometimes more. He held them from the lord of the manor, and paid rent—not usually in money, but by working two or three days a week on the lord's land, and by giving a hand at harvest time, a chicken at Christmas, a few eggs at Easter, and so on. Under the villeins, in the social scale, came the cottars or cottagers. Usually, they held no more than a large allotment, and eked out a bare existence by working for the richer villeins and the lord at harvest time, and perhaps one day a week besides. That is why in some districts they were called 'Monday-men'. They worked for the lord on Mondays.

This is a simplified picture—the lord, the freeman, the villein, the cottar. And the Black Death was not the only factor instrumental in the break-up of the manorial system. Already some money rents were being paid in lieu of labour services, and there is little doubt that, Black

IT is interesting to note how, in this century of man-made disasters, the thoughts of many are returning to the natural disasters of the past. Albert Camus' book, *The Plague*, has received wide attention, and we reprint here a broadcast given recently by Ronald Hope which spotlights an aspect of our history all too often overlooked—the relationship between the Black Death of 1348-9 and the birth of Capitalism, the Black Death of the 20th century.

Death or not, the system would not have lasted for ever. No system ever does. But it is no coincidence that, in the century which followed, the old order disintegrated rapidly.

How did this come about? There was not much call for money, where most manors were largely self-supporting and where most rents were paid in kind, and there was not much money about. But modern England could not develop out of Merrie England without a wider use of money. By destroying one-third of the population, the Black Death had nearly doubled the supply. And prices rose rapidly, as they do in any age when you increase the quantity of money per head—as they have in our own day, for example.

Then again, men did not move about much in the Middle Ages. As the economists say, labour was immobile. The villeins and cottars were tied to the land. But as a result of the Black Death, England was suffering in 1349 from that modern phenomenon, an acute shortage of man-power. Labour was scarce and wages went up. And what was more important in the long run, men began to move about, to go to other manors, to migrate to the towns, looking for the highest wages. Earlier than this they would have been sought out and brought back, and probably branded with a red-hot iron into the bargain just to teach them not to try it again. Now there was a man-power shortage; there were two employers for every employee—and they were not brought back, because few people were willing to give them up.

Furthermore, in the England of the Middle Ages there was no competition. Everyone kept his place. But now, because nearly half the ploughmen were dead, it was possible for the richer villeins to rent the deserted acres of their neighbours. It was possible for the more active cottars to go elsewhere in search of land or higher wages. Nearly every medieval peasant had at least some small stake in the land. In the centuries which followed the Black Death, the weak went gradually to the wall and became landless labourers, while the strong added to their farms and became well-to-do. The landless labourer, however, was not an immediate product of the Black Death. The immediate result in some places was that the lord of the manor was less willing to take money rents in lieu of the old labour services or, where he was

willing or was forced by pressure of circumstance, he tried to raise the rents paid. It is true to say, though, that the plague stimulated the stock and land lease system and the enlargement of holdings, and out of these grew the modern system of tenant farming.

The competitive spirit, the free movement of the men, the widespread use of money: three things essential to the growth of industrial England, and three things to which an impetus was given by the Black Death. In vain the government tried to legislate against the rise in wages and prices. In 1394, the government of the day passed something akin to an Essential Works Order to keep labour on the land, without success. Like our own government it tried to peg both wages and prices. But sad though it may be, it is rare indeed that the politician proves stronger than economic forces. How modern all this sounds: rising prices and rising wages, a shortage of man-power, particularly in essential industry.

But who suffered as a result of the Black Death? In the first half-century, the landlords and also the richer villeins, the middle class of the Middle Ages. Does that strike a bell in modern ears? The cottar, the unskilled labourer as it were, he was better off with the rise in wages. The lord had few claims on him. But the villein—as I have said, in some cases the lord of the manor did not want depreciated money, or where he did accept money rents, he wanted to raise them at a time when the villein found all his costs rising.

No wonder then that the second half of the fourteenth century was a period of deep social unrest. John Bull found ready ears for his jingle:

When Adam dived and Eve span

Who was then the gentleman?

But don't run away with the idea that this was socialism. Things came to a head with the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. But the leaders and the rank and file of that movement were freemen, the lower clergy and the villeins. They objected to the rise in prices because they often hired labour. They objected to the taxes which were being raised to pay for the French wars and an incompetent court. But most of all they objected to the rise in rents, and to the attempt of the lord of the manor to make them work their old labour dues. Like all English revolutions, the Peasants' Revolt was largely a middle-class affair. The Revolt did not immediately achieve very much, but it was symptomatic of the changes which were taking place. Out of the disruption of the manor grew the modern system of agriculture, and so did the freemen of England. With the later enclosures for sheep-runs, the cloth trade replaced the trade in wool, and out of the cloth grew industrialism and all it stands for.

The Black Death was a disaster of the first magnitude. The years which followed 1349 were years of agricultural depression, years of diminished national wealth, and years of social turmoil. Nevertheless we owe much to it, and I would not hesitate to say that the England which eventually grew from the loins of those left behind by the plague was a better place than it had been before.

But then of course it is easy to take a broad view when you were not personally involved. We of this generation may well have to face the atom bomb.

Condensed from *The Listener*.

(POST) WAR CRIMINALS

IT has never been the policy of *Freedom* to suggest that sadists and cruelty are to be found only in Germany and Japan. On the contrary, we have always attempted to show that no one people has the monopoly of cruelty and sadism, but that wherever there is government there must be power and in the maintenance and defence of this power the use of force must be admitted. And if Government can only be maintained by brutality and torture then these methods will find their supporters in all countries.

The trial of the Germans responsible for the Malmedy massacre in December, 1944, is a tragic example of what men drunk with power will do to those before whom they pose as "liberators" and "upholders of justice".

In 1944, 160 American soldiers were lined up in a field and mowed down by machine-gun fire. There was one survivor. Since the end of the war,

73 Germans were brought to trial for this brutal act, and forty-three sentenced to death. The Germans were defended by an American lawyer, Willis Everett, who, in the course of his duties, uncovered some ugly facts about American methods for obtaining confessions. The report which he submitted to the highest American authorities charged that to extort confessions (to quote from a *Time* report, 17/1/49), U.S. prosecution teams "had kept the German defendants in dark, solitary confinement at near starvation rations up to six months; had applied various forms of torture, including the driving of burning matches under the prisoners' fingernails; had administered beatings which resulted in broken jaws and arms and permanently injured testicles."

He also charged that false confessions were obtained in mock trials, at which "the . . . plaintiff would see before him a long table . . . with candles burning

at both ends . . . and a crucifix in the centre . . . [The Germans] were informed or led to believe that they were being tried by Americans for violations of international law. At the other end of the table would be the prosecutor, who would read the charges, yell and scream at these 18- and 20-year-old plaintiffs and attempt to force confessions from them . . ."

Mr. Everett pleaded his case—at his own expense—for two years. Finally, an army commission was set up to investigate the allegations. According to *Time* the commission corroborated Everett concerning the mock trials and did not dispute or deny the rest. General Lucius D. Clay had already commuted the death sentences of 31 of the 43 condemned Germans. In Washington last week the Simpson commission recommended clemency (commutation to life imprisonment) for the remaining twelve.

Luxemburg and Liebknecht

WE are accustomed in the West to the spectacle of men being honoured long after their deaths by an officialdom to which they would have been anathema during their lives. The Communists speed up this *post mortem* recognition—we have already seen them try and pass off Sacco and Vanzetti, and even Durruti as their own. But they have far surpassed the Western governments in hypocrisy in a recent demonstration in "honour" of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, the German anti-militarist revolutionists who were killed by the German reaction with the connivance of their former comrades of the Social Democracy in January, 1919—just thirty years ago.

Luxemburg and Liebknecht were the central figures in the abortive Spartacist uprising at the end of the first world war, and had taken a most courageous anti-war stand throughout the war. Rosa Luxemburg was the most influential figure among those theoreticians of the revolutionary Marxists who had not joined in the patriotic nationalist fervour of support for the war, and her influence was probably considerably greater even than Lenin's. She was by no means anti-Authoritarian but believed that full freedom of discussion should precede the taking of a political decision, though the majority decision should be rigorously

enforced after discussion. From this point of view she became the most formidable critic of the Russian revolution within the ranks of Marxism. Criticising the trend introduced by the Bolshevik suppression of all opposition on the left, she wrote that "without unlimited freedom of the press and of association, without the free discussion of opinions, life ceases or becomes a fictitious life in which bureaucracy alone is the active element."

Her horrible assassination—she was clubbed to death by the revolver butt of a German officer, and thrown into a Berlin canal—removed a formidable potential opponent of Bolshevik policy, and one who would have been difficult to silence in the early congresses of the newly-launched Third International. The German delegates who in fact carried her views posthumously to Moscow kept silent and were easily disposed of.

Now, her place among the revolutionists of the past is employed by the heirs of the policy she so bitterly criticized to bolster up the very achievements against which she had already declared her determined opposition. Not the least sickening feature of the business was the presence among the celebrators of Friedrich Ebert, son of the first Social Democrat German president under whose connivance she and Liebknecht were murdered.

ANARCHISM

(Continued on page 2)

become much more self-assertive and independent, "workers' control of industry" or any similar arrangement would be another disguised form of bureaucracy and slavery.

6. Due weight must be given to economic factors, but it is evident that a thousand years of technological and economic revolutions have not altered the central social fact: slavery. During years of slavery, institutions and psychological traits conditioned by it have become a part of human culture and thought, and the true foundations of slavery: the tradition of authority; nationalism and patriotism; racism; institutionalised, politicalised religion; economic centralisation and population concentrations; the authoritarian, paternalistic family; the Christian morality and sex codes; the worship of law—the list is a long one. As long as these factors remain unchanged, slavery can merely change its form.

Now it would be easy—and false—to pass from these conclusions to an extremely pessimistic view of man and society: that human nature has been permanently corrupted, that the idea of a free society is hopeless. We draw no such conclusions. We believe the potentialities remain: only they are more firmly blocked than we had imagined. Two main inferences are, we think, logical.

First, we must recognise the probability that we will live the rest of our lives in a society of slavery, regimentation and war. We can hope to make real progress against these conditions, but our philosophy and practice must emphasise those aspects of anarchism that are a guide to self-preservation in the broadcast sense of the term: survival, and preservation of human sentiments and best instincts. The personal and group aspects of anarchism have increased significance.

Second, we should accept the fact that the free society is right now a Utopian idea—not that it is impossible, for we believe it is possible, but we know no direct road to it. Social liberation will almost certainly be revolutionary, almost certainly violent; and since we aim at an anarchist society it would be foolish to reject the idea of revolution; on the road to freedom there will be barricades and heroism as in every struggle. But the revolution is not imminent, and it is senseless to expend our lives in patient waiting or faithful dreams: senseless because the revolution of the future requires active preparation: not the preparation of conspiracy and storing of arms, but the preparation of undermining the institutions and habits of thought and action that inhibit release of the natural powers of men and women.

It is not the idea of revolution with which we find fault; it is the absence of a bridge between the present and the future, not the bridge of Marxian "transitional periods", but the bridge of direct anarchist action. The revolution as a "final conflict" exploding out of the condition of man is an illusion; revolutionary growth is necessarily the hard-won learning and practice of freedom.

(To be continued)

MUTUAL AID IN JAPAN

IN a wireless talk on "The Occupation 'Face' of Japan", (reproduced in *The Listener*, 20/1/49), the speaker, Miss Honor Tracy, in trying to illustrate her point that though the Japanese have put so good a face on things, there has not been a real change nor have they undergone the greatest spiritual revolution in history, actually quoted a case which is of very great interest to anarchists, for it is a perfect example of mutual aid and the kind of organisation which springs up spontaneously amongst ordinary people when required and without the need for leaders and pep-talkers referring to "finest hours" or giving V-signs and the like.

It was at the time of the Fukui earthquake last summer. "The disaster was a horrible one: thousands of dead had to be disposed of, thousands more wounded to be cared for, food and water supplies to be arranged, the ruined dykes to be built up. And, nobody quite knew how, an army of Japanese volunteers sprang up to attend to this. They needed no guidance, they apparently had no organisation, but simply came flocking in from all the

country round about and went off each man to his post. For once the occupation authorities were almost enthusiastic, and there were no complaints of either inefficiency or stupidity. What had happened was that the *tonari gumi* had taken charge. The *tonari gumi* is a household and neighbourhood association, based on a theory of collective responsibility, which has existed in some form for centuries, and was of the greatest use to General Tojo during the war. It was one of the first Japanese institutions to be condemned in the post-war reform. But the earthquake at Fukui was a Japanese catastrophe, and had to be dealt with in a Japanese way: there was no time for fooling about: and so the *tonari gumi*, which as anyone in General Headquarters will tell you no longer exists, quietly took over and did what had to be done."

And the American colonel in charge apparently came to the conclusion "that there was stuff in the Japanese people after all." And that's about all this moving example of human solidarity could mean to a military blockhead.

SLAVE LABOUR IN TANGANYIKA

A RECENT issue of the weekly *Illustrated* (25/12/48) contains a picture story of what is described as the "richest diamond deposit the world has ever known". Describing the working conditions and the precautions taken (not for the workers' health, of course, but to be sure that no diamonds go astray!), he writes:

"Each process of diamond extraction is watched by a silent, keen-eyed Askari in a red fez. There are 150 on duty at the mine. One stands guard by the excavators, another by each concentrating pan. As the coco-pans are dragged to the sorting shed, Askaris march either side and, inside the sorting shed, there are almost as many Askaris as sorters. It is necessary to take these extreme precautions against theft when one small stone the size of a pea, and as easily concealable, may be worth

many hundreds of pounds.

"In the sorting shed the supervision is strictest. A worker leaves his clothes outside and enters the building naked. An Askari then helps him into overalls which have one sleeve closed at the cuff. Only one hand, his right, is left free to pick the diamonds from the gravel and this hand, as he works, is watched carefully by an Askari."

What do our labour leaders say about such conditions? Or, indeed, that department of the United Nations which deals with labour conditions and prepares high-sounding Charters on the dignity of Labour, etc. What does it say about miserable human beings working with a guard at their heels and one arm incapacitated by order of the boss? Is that an example of the "dignity of Labour"?

LIBERTARIAN.

Roumanian Anarchists

VERY rarely did one hear any mention of an Anarchist movement in pre-1939 Roumania, and it is not surprising that very little news succeeds in penetrating the iron curtain of post-war Roumania. However, *Unitatã Nova* the Anarchist weekly published in Rome, prints (16/1/49) an interview with a young Roumanian anarchist who managed to escape from that country and is now in a D.P. camp in Italy.

The Roumanian anarchist movement dates back to the 1880's, with the formation of groups around such figures as Bakunin, Paolides and other members of the First International. Up to 1939, the most representative figure of the movement was Panait Muscioiu, an ex-socialist who received his political education outside Roumania. He was joint editor of the magazine *Ideii* and was in touch with the International movement. Through his efforts a number of Anarchist "classics" were translated into Roumanian, and indeed, right up to the outbreak of war, groups functioned and publications were issued regularly. But everything was suppressed with the Nazi invasion of the country and Muscioiu was arrested. He died three months after the Russians took over.

Unitatã Nova's correspondent points out that it has proved impossible to reorganise the movement under the new regime, and the Communists, commenting on the death of Muscioiu in their paper *Scanteia* (Spark), pointed out that with him died the Anarchist movement in Roumania. That they don't really believe it is shown by the fact that the Communists miss no occasion to attempt to discredit anarchism. And our young Roumanian comrade gave us an example

a film on the Russian Revolution in which the anarchists are depicted as a gang of drunkards who were singing songs in the public square of a small town at the height of the popular insurrection. And from the film's sound track one heard the comment, "This is how anarchists make a revolution." Our comrade also spoke of the "humanitarian" movement which was very close to anarchism and which was led by Eugen Relgis, now living in S. America. This movement has also been destroyed by the regime of Anna Pauker.

Anna Pauker, in his opinion, is typical of the present leadership in Roumania, and though she is neither Premier nor President, she is in fact at the head of Roumanian political life.

THROUGH THE PRESS

B.B.C.'s DILEMMA

British Broadcasting Corporation officials sat in judgment to-day on the recording of a script which contains sex words never before used on the radio.

On their decision depends whether 18,000,000 listeners to-night will learn the whole story of the ductless glands or only their functions in "safe" areas.

The script is part of a series on scientific subjects called "Look ahead". It was written in consultation with leading scientists and all facts have been checked.

However, the problem of how much of the work of the ductless glands is fit for family consumption developed because of the importance of the glands in reproduction. Even the scientific words for certain organs caused B.B.C. misgivings.

It was decided therefore to empanel executives to listen to the recording and decide whether the words in question ought to be eliminated.

N.Y. *Herald Tribune*, 19/1/49.

PROGRESS!

Singapore employers now realise the day of coolie labour is over for ever, state the Labour Annual Report of Singapore for 1947, now available in London. A summary of the report, issued by the Colonial Office Information Department, says:

"Humanitarians have greeted with enthusiasm the abolition of the rickshaw. Alternative transport has been supplied by licensing 8,000 trishaws (rickshaws pulled by a cyclist instead of a running man)." The report states, however, that it is open to argument whether pedalling the trishaw causes less physical strain than did rickshaw pulling.

Manchester *Guardian*, 11/1/49.

MAN HAS NO RIGHT TO PIG FOOD

William McSweeney, the man who "disturbed" a dustbin, has been released from Canterbury prison after serving half his sentence.

He was sentenced to seven days' imprisonment by Chatham magistrates because he could not pay a £2 fine imposed upon him for taking a piece of bread and a rasher of bacon from two dustbins in Gillingham.

A cheque for £2 10s.—£2 to pay the fine and 10s. to place in McSweeney's pocket—was sent to the governor of the prison.

McSweeney appeared before the court under a Gillingham borough by-law which says that the contents of dustbins must not be disturbed. He said that he was hungry.

News Chronicle, 24/1/49.

THE WINNETKA SCHOOLS

READERS of *Freedom* may be interested in the lectures delivered by Dr. Carleton Washburne, formerly Superintendent of the Winnetka State Schools, for they have shown the lengths to which a modern state, such as U.S.A., allows a group of enlightened and energetic parents and educationalists to go. The lengths are certainly great. So great that the supporters of private education must seriously ask themselves what it is that they are providing that the state cannot.

Winnetka is a suburb of Chicago. In the early 1920's the elected school board, together with the parents, decided to make the free public schools of the neighbourhood provide the best possible all-round education that they could think of. The local citizens voluntarily increased taxa-

tion for this purpose. The establishment now consists of a Nursery, three Primary schools, High School, Child Guidance Clinic and a Teacher's Training Department. The Superintendent has complete administrative and financial powers, and

EDUCATION

is free to select staff independently of the board. It is claimed that given adequate internal organisation a "Comprehensive" establishment of these numbers—1,500 pupils—need not imply regimentation.

Dr. Washburne's first concern was to organise the administration so that each teacher should be able to contribute his thought and experience to developing the programme, and so that the teachers with an intimate knowledge of a particular group of children should make the major decisions concerning them. They worked out a hierarchy of committees; Dr. Washburne constantly taught and took part in the activities of the children at various age levels. An example of their method was the planning of a new school building. A young architect was chosen, and he spent three months living in Winnetka, observing the life and discussing the plans and models with all concerned. In the end a building such as they dreamed of emerged, to the last detail—the studio had its long sink, the boiler man had his shower bath, and hot pipes were led under the front steps so that the smallest children would not slip on ice.

The Winnetka schools have developed into a centre for educational research. Specialist teachers investigated what things should be taught; how they should be taught; and at what stage. To help each child to develop his own potentialities to the utmost and to adapt school work to suit the capacity of each boy and girl, teachers prepared much material: for example teach-yourself books which the pupils could work at, if necessary at many different levels in the same classroom,

with a minimum of supervision.

A basic principle of the schools is that children should not have to learn things which are unlikely to have value to them as children or in adult life. Mental training in one subject has not been shown to be transferred to another. The acquisition of skill in the 3R's and a common basis of knowledge in history, geography and science, after a certain age, are compulsory. But experiment has shown that children for whom there are no compulsory lessons in formal subjects until the age of eight and a half later progressed rapidly and overtake average standards. Projects are used, not as an end in themselves as in some so-called free activity schools, but to awaken interest. Emphasis all along is on creative activities: there is much dramatisation, singing, painting and sculpture. Besides keeping their own animals and staffing the canteens, the children run a co-operative store, and build large-scale models of factories and housing estates.

The goal of education, as defined at Winnetka, is "to help each child to develop fully his own potentialities, both as an individual and as a participating member of an organic democratic society." The child's social consciousness, they say, must be extended from the small intimate group until it becomes world embracing. To this end the school should provide for many co-operative group projects and observations of man's inter-dependence, so that each child fully realises that his personal well-being is an integral part of the well-being of all mankind.

The phrase "democratic society" has many meanings. Winnetka pupils fit admirably into American life. They joined the armed forces in 1941 as readily as those from other schools. Did they do so in order to defend this way of life, or were they unable to withstand the flood of propaganda, released at that moment, which portrayed the attack on Pearl Harbour as a threat to the well-being of mankind?

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Collapse of the WFTU

THE purpose of a world organisation of labour is to serve workers. It is not to serve Governments, or politburos, or political parties, or any other group. A world organisation of labour must be free and independent of these influences. With these high-sounding phrases, Mr. J. B. Carey, secretary-treasurer of the C.I.O. led his organisation out of the World Federation of Trade Unions in the company of the T.U.C. and the Dutch trades unionists.

That the Communists sought to dominate the W.F.T.U. and to use it to further their own ends, goes without saying, but it also goes without saying that trades unionists from the Western powers sought to do exactly the same, and the fact that it is the Westerners who have withdrawn, leaving the Communists and their sup-

INDUSTRIAL NOTES

porters (i.e., Russian, Italian and Chinese members of the executive committee of seven) in complete control simply means that the Commies have won. Had they lost, the above quotation might—we say *might*!—have dropped from the lips of Mr. Kuznetsov as he walked out followed by his stooges.

In point of fact, Mr. Deakin has acted, as usual, in a very high-handed manner in withdrawing from the W.F.T.U. as he has. He was on the executive committee as a delegate from the British Trade Union Congress, but no attempt was made by him to ascertain the feelings of British workers in the matter. Not, probably, that British workers are very interested in the whole business anyway. Certainly they have no reason to shed tears over the demise of an organisation consisting of organisations which are already in their own countries divorced from their interests.

When the workers again get around to creating their own organisations, expressing their own viewpoints, and get so far as to create a new international, then will be the time to have concern for its welfare—but when Mr. Arthur Deakin, C.H., is concerned with anything—that is the time for workers to keep away.

HOUSEWORKERS AND CLEANERS

THE cleaners of Whitehall must have looked twice at the recent announcements about the activities of the National Institute of Houseworkers.

Meetings and Announcements

UNION OF ANARCHIST GROUPS: CENTRAL LONDON

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

FEB. 6 Margery Mitchell
"D. H. Lawrence"

FEB. 13 F. A. Ridley
"Conflict of European Ideologies"
(Postponed from JAN. 16)

FEB. 20 Albert Meltzer
Building a Free Society

HAMPSTEAD

Informal meetings for discussion, so far without Chairman or any predetermined subject, are held every TUESDAY, at 7.30 p.m., at:

5, Villas-on-the-Heath,
Vale of Health,
Hampstead, N.W.3.
All comrades are welcome.

NORTH EAST LONDON

The next meeting of the NELAG will be held at Wanstead House (two minutes from Wanstead Tube Station) at 7.30 p.m.

FEB. 15 F. A. Ridley
on Bakunin

BRISTOL

Public Meeting
Kingsley Hall, Old Market Street, 7p.m.,
MARCH 1st Keith Greenslade
"Architecture and Society"

BIRMINGHAM ANARCHIST CIRCLE

Regular fortnightly discussions are being held without premeditated subjects. All comrades and readers of "Freedom" welcomed.

S. E. Parker, 72, Coldbath Road, Billesley, Birmingham, 14.

GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP

Indoor Meetings,
CENTRAL HALLS, Bath Street,
every Sunday at 7 p.m.,
Frank Leech, Willy Carlyle, John Gaffney,
Eddie Shaw.

SEX EDUCATION SOCIETY LECTURES

Monday, Feb. 7th 8 p.m.
A. S. Neill:
"Sex and Self-Regulation"
Admission 2/-
CONWAY HALL,
Red Lion Square, W.C.1.

This body has been in existence for some time, but has received very little publicity, and has as its aim the training of "intelligent and well-educated young women who choose domestic work as a career." Once trained they will form a pool of qualified domestic workers, prepared to tackle any job in the house, who may be hired for 2s. 6d. an hour by any hard-pressed housewife.

That many housewives are hard-pressed is undoubtedly true, but many are probably just sorry for themselves for having to do housework, and especially may this be the case in the districts where the first of the Institute's centres have been established, which are predominantly middle-class districts, like Harrow and Croydon.

But what probably caught the eyes of the Whitehall cleaners, still arguing with the Treasury about their demands for a raise, is the price charged for the domestic service—2/6d. an hour. The cleaners are considered by the Treasury to be worth not more than 1/8d., but of course any business man will tell them that every commodity has two prices—the buying price and the selling price.

This scheme is operated partly with the intention of allowing more women to go into industry, by relieving them of their home ties. But it is fairly obvious that if one woman takes a job and then another has to do her housework for her, little is gained. And, as already mentioned, the first two centres in the London area have been opened in middle-class areas where wives do not go to work in factories anyway.

Nevertheless, although middle-class wives tend to exaggerate the difficulties of running a home in "Socialist" Britain, the seed or the idea is a good one—that of having a certain number of people ready and capable of giving a helping hand where necessary. And it is only in middle-class districts where such schemes have to be officially organised, because of the insularity and disintegration of community life. In working-class areas a much greater degree of mutual aid is practised among neighbours and is done spontaneously and freely, according to neighbourly need and does not have to be either government sponsored or paid for.

DOCKYARD SABOTAGE?

TWO incidents of suspected sabotage took members of M.I.5 down to Devonport Dockyard recently. An oil pipe in the steering machinery of the submarine *Trenchant* was found to be blocked up with a piece of rag, and a motor vessel was found making water.

The Dick Bartons of M.I.5 do not seem to have been very successful. The only theory they have so far managed to squeeze out is that the action might have been taken by workmen who feared that reduced work in the dockyard would mean dismissals and a general tightening up of discipline. They have asked the dockyard authorities to prepare a "slackers' list" in order that "go-slow" men can be weeded out.

Their theory might be right, of course. In fact, we might almost say we hope it is...

A DOUBLE

The *News Chronicle* presents its readers with the views of outstanding people in different walks of life.

In Monday's issue, Mr. Arthur Deakin, C.H., the nation's leading trade unionist, makes an important statement on the need for a new trade union outlook.

Also in Monday's *News Chronicle*—a new and enlarged crossword.

News Chronicle, 29/11/48.

ILLUSIONS ABOUT REVOLUTION

A RECENT correspondent of *Freedom* (8/1/49) provided knock-about fun with some anarchist Aunt Sallies under the title "Objections to (some) Anarchists". And it is true that few figures are more absurd than the earnest intellectual whose preoccupation with progressive trends of thought is employed to excuse him from considering the practical problems of the social revolution. But as one was shown the ridiculous figures which the writer dangled before one—the Reichian, the student of psychoanalysis, the rural Taoist and the vegetarian—one became uncomfortably aware of the figure between the lines who provided the implied anti-thesis to these ineffectual stuffed dummies. For the implication seemed to be that the "true" revolutionist was a man of action impatient of all this preoccupation with intellectualist trends of thought—the revolutionary "whose objective was—whisper—A Revolution!"

No, it is perhaps unfair to say that one was reminded of Goering's famous remark that when he heard the word culture he reached for his gun; but surely we are perilously near that concept of efficiency in revolutionary matters which was introduced by Lenin, that cult of the matter in hand, of satisfying the revolutionary urge by "immediate tasks", without too much dwelling on the end in view and the philosophical questions surrounding it. Have we not here as legitimate an Aunt Sally? The earnest intellectual may be a figure of fun, but the man of action scornful of intellectual problems of the revolution is surely no less fundamentally absurd, and is certainly more dangerous.

The Revolution is Beset with Problems

The history of anarchism is by no means lacking in men who knew the use of action, who were not afraid to seize initiative or take decisions. But it is also true that one of the most striking things about such men was their reflective capacity, the breadth of their minds. Bakunin knew the barricades on many occasions, but he was generous in his praise of his theoretical opponent Karl Marx for his knowledge of economic forces; Kropotkin is an outstanding example of the combination of militancy and reflection, and he believed that hand and brain must not be divided but must go together. A most striking example is provided by Durruti, outstanding as a militant, but one whose utterances show him to have been far from unconcerned about the intellectual currents of our movement. And one should never forget that the Spanish anarchists, even in the midst of the anti-fascist struggle, carried on a most vigorous campaign for the rights of women and children, for education, and for revolutionary conceptions in the field of sex.

Revolutionary Clarity Requires Hard Thinking

We cannot afford to ignore the fact that despite outstanding militancy and heroism the revolutions of the past have failed. It

Readers Write on:

• Jehovah's Witnesses

DEAR COMRADES,

In connection with the concluding paragraph of J.S.'s letter in the latest *Freedom* (22/1/49), I would suggest that the non-violent training received by the children of Jehovah's Witnesses from their parents is not, primarily, in order that they may take up a pacifist position in adult life, but so that they may enter into the preaching work.

This can be undertaken at an early age if the necessary aptitude is apparent.

I would emphasise that the training is, in no sense, authoritarian but is motivated entirely, I believe, by natural love.

In addition, I would remind readers that, in the event of international conflict, Jehovah's Witnesses are not to be found in opposing armies, so that they may kill their brethren, as is the case with "Christendom" and the other religions of the world.

Finally, the wartime example of Stanley Hilton shows clearly how a Witness will maintain his integrity when his right to preach the gospel is challenged by authority.

JOHN STEVENS.

• Direct Action

DEAR COMRADES,

The reflections of Sean Gannon open out a wide field for deep and earnest investigation. The unending struggle of humans of varied class and colour in their endeavours to attain an estate of human worth is actually most ludicrous and fantastic. The would-be reformer or revolutionist of to-day whose whole being longs to enter into the fight for emancipation finds that the highways and byways to freedom are congested by innumerable signposts each directing to some alternative venue for battle. There is always a deafening babel of voices created by a host of advisers whose contradictory utterances confuse and frustrate the ardent reformer or revolutionist.

"When do we start?" and "Where do we go?" are surely the chief questions that confront the entire army of revolutionists. We are trifling with a great cause if we ask, "How do we dress for battle?" The intellectuals have paraded their views upon this latter question for many, many generations past, yet it is still unanswered. "Direct Action" is the slogan for all of us, delay only gives the enemy the time to strengthen their defences. The modern revolutionary tendencies are stemmed at their sources by the philosophical idealisms of those who, though professing anarchism are but intellectuals seeking to make fame in the spheres of mental greatness. It is useless to preach of the glory

is not courage that is lacking, but sureness and clarity about the goal to be aimed at. And we shall not secure that necessary clarity by neglecting the intellectual problems of the revolution, still less by dressing them in fancy dress for the purpose of ridicule. To be sure, the letter referred to most probably did not intend to do this; but the dangers of a too easy admiration for the man of action are there. And it is fatally easy to see the revolution as a dream ideal to be attained simply by agitation *alone*; such a conception is hardly more than an escape into wishfulness. For the social revolution requires hard and energetic thought, and the most determined imaginative effort. The French revolution drew on the intellectual fruits of half a century, while many a non-revolutionary Russian writer of the nineteenth century contributed to the intellectual background of the progressive thinkers of to-day in the struggle for the revolution of to-morrow.

J.H.

and beauty of the "finer arts" to the masses of workers, until the sordid environments of present-day "ways of life" are swept away, and a new foundation laid upon which to erect a more realistic structure of human civilisation. The Western forms of democracy are based upon devilish autocratic standards that continually befool the unwary and unenlightened proletariat into a sense of civil and political security. History has clearly shown how the masses of working-class people have been taught to revere the "Crown", the "State", and the "Church", yet throughout they have always had to struggle piteously to exist upon immoral and degenerate standards of life, ensured and sustained by the subtle cunning of the "Upper Elite". To resurrect our finer human elements of real worth so that we shall be given the widest choice to develop the more excellent characteristics of human life, we must propagate a surge towards "Direct Action" against the minority of autocrats who disgrace the whole conception of human worth.

ALBERT E. DENT.

• Education

COMRADES,

I am glad to answer J.S.'s letter of January 22nd, in order to try to make clear what I have been putting forward in *Freedom* for several months.

If I am an anarchist, it is because I regard warfare, whether national or revolutionary, as obsolete.

I want to make plain, and to get children to adopt, certain intellectual and moral values. Every teacher, who does not deliberately neglect his pupils, in fact takes this for granted in his own case to a greater or lesser extent. Most people would regard a school whose pupils became cannibals or slave owners as a failure.

Under state educational systems, thanks often to the pioneer demonstrations of private schools, "progressive" methods, projects, Dalton plans, environmental studies, etc., not to mention plentiful equipment, are now in use. Winnetka, U.S.A., or St. Georges-in-the-East, London, where there are no punishments, are examples. But however happy the state's pupils may be later as participating members of existing adult society, they are also, as a rule, prepared to fight to defend it.

In my opinion, the function of private progressive schools now is to discover, and make known, methods of bringing up children fully developed who do not need to rush into uniform for any psychological satisfaction, and who understand that there is no longer any reason that gives economic justification for doing so. The family background, literature, films, press, etc., only makes the task of the teacher more urgent.

To take a less dogmatic view than the above seems to me to be irresponsible and a legacy of *laissez faire* attitude. Open Mind has failed as a private school teacher. If she did not object to her pupils becoming minions of the state why did she not work in a state school?

As to J.S.'s remarks about the animal nature of man, and also with regard to Philip Sansom's statements in *Escape* is no *Escape*, that there is no such thing as altruism, is it not the case that man engages in activities that are unpleasant in themselves because they are the means to ends that he desires? Birds may build nests and beavers build dams—but from instinct. Animals do not practise foresight or restraint of impulses by the will. Human beings do; and are also capable of creating art and science.

ANTHONY WEAVER.

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STORM IN A TEACUP

(Continued from page 1)

Stanley most for his involuntary part in advancing this gentleman's career. Perhaps here we speak with a certain amount of prejudice: it was rather noticeable that Sir Hartley publicly apologised to one or two business companies whose names were somewhat similar to the names *correctly* given of companies controlled by Mr. Liversidge, the alleged share-pusher. When it came to naming the paper Mr. Gibson ran with others at Transport House, to "fight Communism", and for which Mr. Stanley collected funds which had a way of straying, Sir Hartley on several occasions gave the name *incorrectly*. It should have been *Freedom and Democracy*; he gave it as *Freedom*; his general line of duplicity in questions makes us wonder if this was just an accident. When he questioned Mr. Belcher about his relationship with Stanley, he asked him a series of questions as to whether he really thought that was his correct name, whether he asked him if he had been naturalised, and so on, which were adding up to an attack on Stanley not because he was a shady character but because he was of the Jewish faith. When he questioned Mr. Stanley he questioned him about his brother Marcus Wulkan, and said as plainly as could be that he must be anti-British because he

was a Zionist, and this was repeated in questions to Mr. Gibson, that he must have known Wulkan was a Zionist and therefore anti-British. Could a discreet hint have been given Sir Hartley by the party leadership, not committed to anti-Semitism, at any rate from nine till six? (The reference in Gibson's letter to Glenvil Hall about Wulkan's "characteristic racial arrogance" lends point here.) Sir Hartley later denied that he meant that a Zionist need be anti-British, which was just as well since, as the recent debate on Palestine showed, the Government to which he belongs is dependent on the parliamentary votes of Zionists and their supporters. He also at another point retracted the anti-Semitic inferences made in his earlier questions.

Careerism

Finally, one can praise Stanley on one point: he protested against Sir Hartley's question most effectively, and if the Tribunal took little heed, the public did. Most lawyers, and especially the clever ones who command big salaries from looking after the rich man in the Courts and the poor man in Parliament, are very adept in putting questions to which there is only one possible answer, and appealing to the court to force the witness to answer

it. This putting of statements into people's mouths is one of the shoddiest features of the administration of justice, and it is a sad reflection that it has taken a Park Lane spiv to kick against it.

There is only one last comment to make. Since the growth of the Labour movement, working-men have become M.P.'s, but M.P.'s have never become working-men again. Mr. Belcher has done his best to shock everybody into sympathetic silence by his defiant announcements that if the worst came to the worst he would become a railway clerk again. In theory, of course, he has never been anything else, since he was supposed to be representing his union. What gets us puzzled, however, is when they expect us to show sympathy because their careers have been ruined. It is very hard on them, no doubt, but the poor, doped electorate might very well begin to ask why, when anybody goes into Parliament, he never shouts for joy that he has started a career, but declares he is making a sacrifice to represent, etc., etc., but as soon as he goes out in a cloud he finds that it wasn't a bad business, after all. We are not puzzled by their attitude. What puzzles us is why the people who put their backs into getting them elected still fall for it.

A.M.