

# Freedom

ANARCHIST FORTNIGHTLY

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Threepence

## SACRIFICE FOR WHAT?

### Threadbare Santa

BEFORE going to America a month or so back, Sir Stafford Cripps insisted that there was no question of devaluing the pound. When Mr. Aneurin Bevan announced a week or so back that in making its cuts the government would not lay a finger on the National Health Scheme, the more cynical of us might well perhaps have understood his prophecy. Parents nowadays mostly think it advisable to tell their children a pack of mendacious fairy tales, but the paternal state has not yet got around to these modernisms. Nor, one might add, have the British people seen through Father Christmas... yet.

In his broadcast after announcing the expenditure cuts, Mr. Attlee said that the government had sought to spread the burden over all classes. As the working-class is numerically by far the largest group, the government evidently think it should bear the largest burden. But it is too easy to be cynical, and it does not advance us much. It is not that the Labour Government ("lackeys of capitalism", "socialist turncoats", etc., etc.) deliberately choose to make the workers pay; the workers are the only class who can pay, which is why they always do pay. To waste breath in denunciations of the government is to imply that they—or any other government, for that matter—could do otherwise. And if one thinks that a "good" government would have acted differently, would have protected the interests of the workers, then one votes for such a government. If on the other hand one recognises that there was nothing else to do, then one may begin to become restive about the economic and social framework within which a government casts its actions.

#### Workers tighten the belt

Out of the desired economy of £250,000,000, £100,000,000 come straight away out of cuts which affect workers directly (Housing and control of building, Education, Health Scheme, subsidies on certain foods, and the Agricultural programme). More is expected to come from the by now familiar "produce more and work harder" line, with hints about longer working hours. Now it goes without saying that reduction in food subsidies increases the cost of living. A penny extra on school meals and the proposed reduction in free transport of children to schools are small matters perhaps to the moderately secure incomes, but are of serious concern to the lowest income groups (before the war even the apparently nominal charge of one halfpenny for school milk was shown to be a factor limiting consumption at a level below full saturation).

The shilling per prescription on the National Health Scheme effectively destroys one of its best aspects, the extension of free medical care to even the most destitute social groups. Obviously this fee will be an important matter to a mother with, say, five children—the kind of family which can least afford such a fee, and which stood to gain most from the free medical service. It is not impossible that the new "free" scheme will become more expensive than the old N.H.S. (in which the uninsured members of the family went to the hospitals for free treatment), not counting the increased rate of contributions.

Meanwhile, economies in the Housing programme mean an even more appalling bottle-neck in homes. And on top of this, the workers are asked to work harder.

#### The Alternative?

Yet, if those who complain about the cuts, were in the position of the government, they could hardly have done otherwise. The recent developments illustrate with an increasingly hard light the inability of centralised, governmental society to build up a reasonable life for the people it rules over. It will be the same until a rational society of free and responsible people is brought into being. But that society will never be handed out on a plate; it must receive hard thought, and must be fought for.

### It's Time to Call a Halt!

WITH a frequency which is increasing and a regularity which is monotonous, the distress signals are going up again. Come to think of it, there seems hardly to have been a time when they were not going up, and always in the past, the good old British working man has rushed to the rescue, climbing into khaki to defeat the enemy at the gate, clambering into overalls to save the enemy within.

Practically never, it seems, has he even stopped for a moment to take a closer look at the distress signals, and to make sure exactly who, or what, is in trouble. It is perhaps a good fault of the average bloke that, when help is required, he helps first and asks

questions afterwards.

We believe in mutual aid, but we can become very tired of rendering aid which is purely unilateral, not mutual, i.e., which works one way only. And it seems to us that the worker has been continually going to the

rescue of something which, as soon as it is on its feet again, sets about punishing him severely until it again exhausts itself, collapses, and has to be helped back on to its feet by the jolly good sporting worker, who is very understanding and only wants to help.

Thus it is that when British Capitalism finds its strength sagging, it is to the worker that it turns for help, but when Capitalism is flourishing, the worker can look after himself as best he may. Capitalism, therefore, is

made to look pretty churlish, and the worker pretty foolish.

#### ALWAYS ROUND THE CORNER

For we should learn by experience, shouldn't we? But it can be seen to-day that workers are learning by experience, for there is very little enthusiasm these days for the various sacrifices that are demanded of us. We no longer see the glad rush to the Colours for the defence of King and Country—we have to have conscription, in fact, to rake up enough bodies to fill the ranks.

And there no longer seems very much enthusiasm among rank and file workers in industry to wear themselves out in pursuit of the prosperity which is always just around the corner. Which is all to the good.

(Continued on page 4)

## Terror in Czechoslovakia

NEWS of the purges now in progress in Czechoslovakia has been given in many newspapers, but there seems very little disposition to try and visualise what these upheavals entail for the mass of the Czech people. The Czech people have been through so much persecution and misery since the Munich days, and yet English people seem to be almost hardened to the sufferings of the Eastern European States—just as they were in the main indifferent to the fate of those nations absorbed by Hitler. It is so easy to stand as a spectator to the struggle; the Communist Party is trying to wrest the last vestiges of power and influence from the Catholic Church—well, we have no sympathy with either of them, so who cares? The Communists are split over the nationalist issue—so what? Let 'em fight it out. These arguments are superficially all right, and they bolster up a "no business of ours" kind of attitude; but what happens to people in other countries is our business, and the more we know about it and understand it the better for everyone.

A new law has been established whereby the State, through a new department of State, takes over the administration of church affairs, including such matters as the salaries and appointments of priests and clergy, public and private patronage of all churches, religious foundations and institutes. The Church authorities are ordered to make inventories of all their property. Obviously such a measure will enormously increase the power of the State at the expense of the Church. There seems no doubt that the aim of such a measure is to deprive the peasants of the guidance of the Church which wields great influence in the villages and might provide a rallying point for the very

widespread discontent against the collectivizations.

Actually, the purge is directed at all intellectuals, and is clearly intended to eliminate all those capable of thinking for themselves and influencing others. Among the 5,000 members of the Communist Party who are said to have been purged, are many small shopkeepers, doctors, lawyers, and priests, as well as many government officials. The effect is not merely to eliminate potential sources of unrest, but to indicate to others among the intellectual classes that it is safest to think like the government.

It has been clear for some time that dissatisfaction existed among the highest sections of the Czech Communist Party at the ruthless economic exploitation of the country by Russia. Russian agents interfere in trade relations with other countries, while they buy Czech products at much lower prices on behalf of the Soviet Union. President Gottwald, and even Zapotocki, hitherto regarded as a Moscow adherent, are among those regarded as Nationalists. The purge is

openly said to be against "Titoists", that is nationalists and all others who offer to resent the colonial exploitation of the country by the Soviet Union. These high-ups have not yet been touched, but their position is being undermined by the gradual removal of many of their supporters in the by now familiar technique of isolating the victims before striking the blow.

#### Unrest in the Mines

The miners are indignant because of the government practice of sending people into the mines as a punishment. Furthermore, Stakhanovism has meant the same to them as to the Russian miners; it results in their rates of pay being reduced. Records in production figures of individual miners are exceedingly unpopular for this reason. Stakhanovism also seeks as a secondary objective to set up a labour aristocracy of high-paid workers who can then be played off against other grades in the old old business of divide and rule. In all types of work there is increased absenteeism, accidents at work, more sickness, and failures to increase production.

#### In the Villages

The purge also extends to the villages where those who oppose the collectivizations are being denounced as "kulaks" or class enemies. Arrests also entail the confiscation of the victim's house within 45 hours and its handing over to a "worker". As in Russia, collectivization means the destruction of the independence of the peasant and his effectual bondage to the State.

The purge give opportunities for a display of power on the part of the government. House searches are carried out by committees of "trustworthy people" with the object of finding out whether the residents are politically reliable, or are living at too high a standard, or have rooms to spare. Some of the shopkeepers have been denounced as "capitalist hoarders" and have been made to sit in their own shop windows to be stared at by the passers-by. Such methods recall only too clearly the methods of the Nazis.

#### And in Yugoslavia

The official bogey is "Titoism", but by an irony the same situation exists in Yugoslavia and the government there is resorting to exactly similar measures to crush the recalcitrant peasants. In Croatia it is reported that the peasants are resisting the government's compulsory purchase of the greater part of the grain crop. Dr. Bakarić, the Premier of Croatia, declares that the Communist Party should not be afraid of using the police against the peasants, and if necessary the land of recalcitrants should be confiscated.

It cannot be too often repeated that the Cominform countries and Yugoslavia alike model their procedures on the Russia of the 1930's. The British government supported the Czechoslovak government's claim to a seat on the Security Council of the United Nations, while America supported Tito. There is not much difference between their attitudes and that of Chamberlain eleven years ago. Meanwhile, the terror proceeds.

## WAR A Cause . . .

AMERICA is to undertake at once a major expansion in atom bomb production which will cost £107,142,000. New improved weapons, many times more powerful than that which destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki, will be made. They were tested early this year.

The results—they are said to have startled the select body of admirals and atomic experts who saw the explosions—have ever

since been top secret.

Announcement of Truman's step-up order came to-day a few hours after Russian Foreign Minister Vishinsky had again declared that Russia had the atom bomb in 1947.

#### Months Ahead

Senator McMahon, chairman of Congressional Atomic Energy Committee, said the

President had authorised the committee to spend reserve funds.

And the committee want another £9,000,000 to spend on the Hamford atom plant. Oak Ridge, Tennessee, will also be expanded.

The new programme will put America three or four months ahead of her original time-table.

Evening Standard, 19/10/49.

## . . . and an effect . . .

HOWARD B. Unruh saw a good bit of combat as a tank gunner in Italy and France. But unlike most front-line soldiers he never smoked, swore or chased girls. He drank a little kummel, but only as an experiment. He was a slender, shy, high-domed youth with dark hair, pallid skin, thick lips and sunken cheeks.

When he got back to his mother's second-story flat on River Road in Camden, N.J., after the war, he set up a basement target range, collected pistols, knives and bullets, and spent hours pouring over the Scriptures. He was not popular, seemed unable to stick to a job. The neighbours in the little business block around his mother's flat decided he was a "religious nut".

The 28-year-old ex-G.I. said little. But he brooded over the "derogatory remarks" of the neighbours. One morning last week he slipped a loaded clip into his Luger pistol, filled his pockets with ammunition, and went out to the sunlit street.

He opened the door of a shoe-repair shop, silently entered, and killed Cobbler John Pilarchik with two thunderous shots. The street was still quiet as he got out to the sidewalk again.

Nobody paid any attention as he sauntered, pistol in hand, into Clark Hoover's barbershop. Inside, a six-year-old boy with a white apron around his neck was sitting astride a raised hobbyhorse. The barber stood beside him clipping busily. Wordlessly, Howard Unruh aimed his pistol. He shot the boy on the hobbyhorse through the chest and head, then fired again and killed the barber.

As he walked back out, screams and yells began to break the morning quiet. Howard Unruh did not seem to hear the noise at all. He walked slowly on the Maurice Cohen's drugstore.

#### "Excuse me, Sir"

The door burst open and a 46-year-old insurance agent named James Hutton hurried out. Unruh spoke for the first time. "Excuse me, sir," he said quietly, and tried to brush past. The insurance man stood motionless. Without another word, Unruh shot him, first in the head, then in the body. He walked into the store and mounted the stairs to Cohen's apartment, where the druggist's family were frantically hunting hiding places.

Cohen's wife ran into a closet. Unruh fired twice through the door, then pulled it open and shot her through the head. He cornered the druggist's 63-year-old mother in another room, and killed her. He trapped Cohen outside on a roof and shot him; the druggist fell to the pavement and the killer aimed, fired, hit him again.

After that, for nightmarish minutes, he stalked the street like a murderous mechanical man. He shot at passing motorists, killed three people, wounded two more. He saw a two-year-old boy in a window, aimed, fired, killed him.

He moved on to a tailor's shop, opened the door, and murdered the tailor's screaming wife. He pushed into a neighbouring house, found a fear-stricken woman and her 16-year-old son, shot both of them with his last bullets. Then he went back to his

upstairs bedroom, leaving twelve dead, one dying and three wounded in a scant twelve minutes that had no counterpart in U.S. crime history.

#### "A Pretty Good Score"

By this time, Camden was noisy with the sound of sirens and the screech of skidding police cars. More than 50 policemen surrounded the Unruh home and began firing with pistols, rifles and sub-machine guns.

But when the telephone rang in the midst of the uproar, he calmly picked up the receiver. The man on the other end of the wire, a fast-thinking Camden newspaperman named Philip Buxton, said: "I'm a friend . . . how many have you killed?"

"I don't know yet . . ." said Unruh, in a matter-of-fact voice, "but it looks like a pretty good score." "Why are you killing people?" "I don't know," he said, "I can't answer that yet—I'm too busy. I'll have to talk to you later."

#### "You a Psycho?"

Outside a policeman lobbed a tear-gas bomb through a window. The choking fumes drove Unruh downstairs. In a few minutes he opened the back door and came out, hands high, apparently completely unconcerned. A cop scrambled forward, handcuffed him. As he was hurried off, to be questioned by police and psychiatrists, a harried and sweating cop snapped:

"What's the matter with you? You a psycho?"

"I'm no psycho," said Howard Unruh with injured dignity. "I have a good mind."

Time, 19/9/49.



# A Doukhobor Community

FOR many years I have been interested in the Doukhobors. A study of Tolstoy and Kropotkin had given me some idea of their communal forms of organisation and their resistance to church, state and militarism in Tsarist Russia, while I had later heard a great deal of their somewhat dramatic forms of resistance to what they considered the unwarranted encroachments of the state since their settlement in Canada. Certain aspects of their activity had puzzled me, particularly the campaigns of incendiaryism which the Sons of Freedom, their radical section, had directed, not only

against the state, but also against other Doukhobors with whom they disagreed, and I was always rather disturbed by the apparent inconsistency between the strongly anarchistic elements of their beliefs and the presence of certain figures, like Peter Lordly Verigen and his son, who seemed to hold a relationship towards the Doukhobor movement of combined leaders and "prophets".

I was therefore very glad of an opportunity to pay a visit to the Doukhobor community at Hilliers, on Vancouver Island, and gain some first-hand information and impressions.

## Contraceptives from Slot Machines

FOLLOWING up their indignation about the sale of contraceptives from slot machines, the moralists have now carried the battle into Parliament, demanding legislation to put down this "mischief". They base their indignant protests on the possible corruption of the morals of the young; and as we pointed out in an earlier issue of *Freedom*, are careful to avoid any mention of one of the main functions of such contraceptives—the precaution they provide against venereal infections. It is obvious that their indignation would sound less high-toned if they were to say outright, "Take this protection against V.D. out of the hands of the young, or else they will not be afraid of sex."

Not merely do they conceal the prophylactic aspect of these contraceptives, but they even pretend that they are actuated by concern for health. Sir H. Morris-Jones asked the Home Secretary "what steps he was taking to draw the attention of local authorities to the urgent need of counteracting the danger to the health of our people contained in this open invitation to juveniles to indulge in indiscriminate sexual intercourse?" And another moralist spoke of the possibility of such machines doing harm to the youth of the borough.

### Sexual Needs of Youth

Now, anyone who looks at life with open eyes, and who studies his fellow men and women, knows well enough that the frustration of sexual needs is going on all the time and is doing untold harm. The sexual misery of youth is a very real thing, and a very terrible one. And anyone whose vision is not blinded by moralism knows what a horrible thing venereal disease is, and also knows of the misery and suicides which result

from the excessive fear of these diseases. Moralists, however, in their blind hatred of sexuality, forget all this. For them venereal diseases are a god sent agent of fear with which to poison the sex life of multitudes. The rational advocacy of simple precautions against V.D., such as are a commonplace in army life, seems to them the grossest immorality. Yet moralists are sufficiently strong numerically to outvote reason, and ensure that governments carry on their "campaign" against V.D. by such ineptitudes as "Clean living is the only safeguard".

### Pusillanimous Governments

Needless to say, the Home Secretary, was not equal to the task of displaying real human morality against the hypocritical moralising of the indignant ones. Oh, no, as a right-thinking person, he naturally shared the indignant horror of the defenders of youth (and V.D.), and duly agreed to take the necessary steps to make the contraceptive slot machines illegal.

The Royal Commission on Population had the courage to demand an extension of the availability of contraceptive advice. But no government has ever dared to risk losing the Roman Catholic and obscurantist vote by taking a positive stand in this matter. Hence V.D. flourishes, unwanted pregnancies are dealt with by abortion, or proceed to unwanted children who go to swell the ranks of those whose lack of affection in childhood makes them lacking in socially desirable qualities as adults, besides filling the public institutions. These results are well enough known; it is time that the moralists began to take cognizance of the evils they are responsible for.

The atmosphere of this settlement of forty or fifty members, which we reached during the time of annual festival, was very different from that of the ordinary Canadian village. The bright, pleasant dresses of the women, the neat layout of the low wooden houses, the semi-Asiatic chants sung by the lines of men and women grouped around the table bearing bread, water and salt (the symbols of brotherhood and hospitality), the bath-house with its steam-laden air, reminded one of descriptions of Russian villages in the nineteenth century novelists. But there was also a mixture of apocalyptic enthusiasm and practical communism which created an atmosphere very similar to that which must have existed among the more radical sects of the Reformation.

The Doukhobors are at present split into a number of factions, between whom there seems to exist a bitterness which is somewhat incomprehensible to the outside observer. There are the Independent Doukhobors, who have mostly withdrawn from communal activity and taken to independent farming; there are what might be termed the Orthodox Doukhobors, who live in settlements and practice varying degrees of communal enterprise; there are the Sons of Freedom, who refuse any co-operation with the state. The group which I visited is a dissident section, which, while advocating extreme communism, rejects the incendiaryism of the Sons of Freedom, contending that their function should be the practical achievement of true equality in groups which will form nuclei for a general transformation of society. Despite these differences, there are a number of common beliefs which all Doukhobors share, and the most important of these are their rejection of war and their general desire to oppose, or at least to ignore the state.

The group at Hilliers had achieved a high degree of practical communism. This they base philosophically on a contention that Universal Brotherhood, at which they aim, implies the need to abandon selfishness, and that this can only be done when property has been wholly eliminated. The destruction of selfishness, they emphasise, is not meant as a threat to individuality, since this is a natural expression of life, and its development is essential for the attainment of true universality. The desire for property, on the other hand, in any form, is hostile both to the true development of personality and also to the equality and respect for each other which the Doukhobors regard as the only true basis for freedom.

For this reason, communism is extended to its extreme. The farming, which is of a very high standard, is carried on communally, and the produce is either consumed by the community, or sold to provide for the goods needed from outside, of which all share according to their needs.

At the Hilliers community, the members have embarked on a radical departure, in the relinquishment of the family unit. Doukhobors have been traditionally opposed to marriage in its usual legal and ecclesiastical sense, but, so far as I can see, they seem usually to have lived in separate families. The Hilliers community, however, regards the family as just another form of property relationship, and wishes to get rid of the idea, implicit in any form of marriage, that one person can belong to another. This departure has naturally led to the usual newspaper sensationalism and to exaggerated stories of sexual licence, which in fact give a totally false picture of the community and its aims.

Separate family houses cannot of course exist, and the members of the community live in large houses where they have separate rooms, and feed at common tables.

The dissolution of existing family units has presented some problems, but there seems to be almost no favouritism shown by parents towards their own children. Children born in the community from now on will cease to bear surnames, and will become the responsibility of the whole community.

The settlement, though only three years old, has already its own school, which is attended not only by the resident children, but also by those of the local Doukhobor farmers who have not actually joined the commune. Teaching is at present carried on by two women members and an effort is made to give a general instruction, without the patriotic element introduced in ordinary Canadian schools. Considerable stress is laid on the need for an integration of mental and manual instruction, and a workshop is being built in which the children will learn wood-carving, shoemaking, etc., while every

effort seemed to be made to interest them in the practical work of farming, building, etc.

Naturally, it is a little difficult for an outsider to follow at all clearly the religious attitude which seems to be mingled inextricably with the practical life of the Doukhobors. Like all the Christian radicals of the middle ages and the Reformation, they reject any organised religions, and their only ceremonies which might be called religious are devoted primarily to reaffirming their brotherhood and reconciling differences between each other. Like early Quakers, they believe that religious experience is each man's personal affair, but that Christian ethics imply equality between all men and the eventual establishment of a world brotherhood, without distinctions or authority.

So far, I think, there is little in what I have said about these Doukhobors which the anarchist would condemn, even though he would probably reject the religious basis. But there is one aspect of the Doukhobor movement which I find disquieting, and that, as I have already indicated, is the presence of the "leaders".

As on many other subjects, there are differences among the Doukhobors themselves on this matter. Some reject the "leaders" altogether; others go to the farther extreme contending that Peter Lordly and his son were Sons of God; others take the middle course of regarding them as inspired prophets. But even these more extravagant ideas are complicated by the fact that according to Doukhobor philosophy, every man is the son of God and carries the divine within him. In practice, the "leaders" wield a great deal of influence; theoretically they have no actual authority, since the Doukhobors make their own decisions as free and equal people, but in fact, if a "leader" expresses an opinion it is unlikely to be disputed, although it will go out as the free decision of the community.

The authority of the "leaders" seems therefore to be of a moral kind, but it is authority nevertheless, however, its effect may be mitigated by the lack of coercive institutions or methods, and much of the bitterness which has marred the history of the Doukhobor movement might have been eliminated if its members had always taken the logical consequences of their own beliefs and carried their equality to its extreme.

But, despite this important criticism, I must add that among the Doukhobors I did find a sense of social realities which I had certainly not found elsewhere in Canada, while their community had an atmosphere of happiness and carefree efficiency which I did not encounter in all my experience of community ventures in England.

GEORGE WOODCOCK.

## SPANISH EXILES IN FRANCE SEEK DRAMATIC MATERIAL

FOR some time now a group of Spanish anarchists in France have been producing plays for public performance in Spanish, and by choosing material with social themes have managed to combine education with economics, since they aim also at raising funds for their organisation.

Now they have written to us saying that they are in need of further material to produce. They are prepared to do all necessary translation, and if any readers have copies of plays "of social significance" which they can spare, our Spanish comrades would be very grateful to receive them.

Send your copies to Freedom Press (marked "Spanish Theatre"), and we will forward them.

## THE ANABAPTIST OF THE 16th CENTURY by Ernest A. Payne. (Carey Kingsgate Press. 1/-)

THIS pamphlet, which is the printed form of a lecture given during 1948, does little more than draw attention to the fact that recent historical research has proved the Anabaptist movement to have been of wider influence in its own time, and of greater importance in the development of social and theological rebellion, than is generally supposed, and those who are anxious for really substantial knowledge of this subject will find more guidance in the bibliographical notes than in the text itself.

In his lecture, Mr. Payne was dealing with Anabaptism from a religious rather than from a social point of view, and here the point which will make most appeal to the general reader is the substantially just claim that the Anabaptists introduced into modern European thought the concept of religious and ideological tolerance. He also makes the important contention that the Anabaptists in general must not be identified with those who founded the famous Kingdom of Münster and who, in their authoritarian excesses, showed a completely perverted image of the anti-militarism and the primitive communism which the mass of the movement advocated. Unfortunately, he does not go into any detailed discussion of the organisation of the Anabaptist communes, nor does he deal at all thoroughly with the interesting relationship between the Anabaptists on the one hand and Thomas Münzer and the peasant insurrectionaries of the sixteenth century on the other. But it is perhaps unreasonable to expect this of a short essay which is, after all, intended rather for the religious than for the rebellious.

G.W.

## Dear Princess...

An Open Letter to Princess Elizabeth—who may, or may not, be a reader of this journal

YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS,

In these days of almost universal apathy towards official unionism, it must be a source of great encouragement to that great neglected body of long-suffering mortals, the British housewives, for them to know that you are interested in their appropriate Union—the Mothers' Union. I know, of course, that it is only one of the many such organisations to which you must be—shall we say, "affiliated"?—for your functions are so many.

It must also be very encouraging for them to be given to understand that you have thought deeply and long over the human problems confronting husband and wife, and that in your capacity as wife and mother you hold decided views on the sanctity of marriage.

At a rally of young wives organised by your Union, you were reported to have claimed that divorce and separation are responsible for some of the darkest evils in our society to-day. It is a Christian doctrine, you are reported to have said, that the "relationship of husband and wife is a permanent one—not to be lightly broken because of difficulties or quarrels." That you have experience, Your Royal Highness, of the difficulties facing young wives to-day, the whole world knows. All of us humble, ordinary people, felt such sympathy for you during the difficult time after your (quiet) wedding when you were sharing a house with the old folk, and we all knew that it was because you were such a Christian family that you were able to rub along with so little friction (as far as one could see from the outside) in the cramped conditions that must have obtained during those months before your own house was ready.

And your young husband; we know that it was because he has so absorbed the Christian, English way of life, that he was able to get along with the in-laws so cheerfully, so that there were practically no family quarrels at all.

So we know that your statement to the other young wives was based on experience—and not only on your own. We know how often you visit the homes of your more humble subjects (cynical people say your are "going slumming"),

but we know you never really go near the slums) in the course of your official visits to newly-opened housing estates, when thousands of happy, cheering people show you only too clearly that nasty quarrelling and difficulties really have no part in their lives.

It is hard to understand other people's quarrels, isn't it? After all, if a man has a job to go to, and can give his wife a regular income, and the children go to Sunday School regularly, what real effect can it have on their happiness, or the permanence of their marriage, if they have only one or two rooms to live in, sharing a gas-stove with another family, and a lavatory (excuse me, Your Royal Highness) with the rest of the house? Even if they haven't got a garden for the kids to play in, even if they do have to look twice at the tomatoes when they go more than 1/2 a lb, even if hubby's job at the factory is monotonous and tiring and the young wife's struggle with the soot from the passing trains does get her down occasionally, even if a younger sister is in the family way because the slot machines have been taken away and has come to share the "flat" because the old man has thrown her out—well, these are not reasons for taking the Christian doctrine of marriage lightly, are they? One should be brave, shouldn't one? These are things which anyone (even a Princess?) might have to bear for the sake of our Western civilisation—oh, yes, we've heard you talk about that, too!

So, Your Royal Highness, please accept our humble thanks for your message of encouragement. In your own life, we have a fine example of consistency and bravery in the face of difficulty. We are glad to see your own marriage—a romance that won all our hearts—lasting so long, and it only remains for us to ask God to watch over you, whether you are Colonel of the Guards, or Chief Browie, or smacking a bottle of champagne across the bows of a new atom-proof aircraft-carrier, and also over your dear little baby, safe in the arms of his various nursemaids.

Yours humbly,  
ANOTHER YOUNG WIFE.

## A Tang in the Air...

The first smells of Autumn... dead leaves crunching underfoot... the nights drawing in... the first fire to settle down beside with a good book. For people like you, *Freedom Bookshop* caters especially...

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## BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS...

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# GERMANY 1949-4

## THE LIBERTARIAN MOVEMENT IN GERMANY TODAY

The libertarian movement of Germany reached its pinnacle after the first world war when it influenced hundreds of thousands through its press. Since then its influence has diminished in the face of increasing reaction.

Twelve years of Nazi dictatorship, including the years of total war, have on the one hand made it impossible to foster the libertarian idea amongst the youth, and on the other hand decimated the old militants. The best of the movement perished in the concentration camps and in prison.

The division of Germany and the rule of occupational absolutism have demanded new victims.

In East Germany some hundreds of known comrades have been arrested by the Soviet authorities and languished in prison camps.

In West Germany, the authorities tolerate the propagation of libertarian literature, but render its publication and printing in Germany itself impossible.

Frequent attempts at the legislation or licensing of libertarian organisations and organs remain without result.

Nevertheless, there are libertarian groups in all parts of Germany, more or less united. Those in Western Germany are all occupied in bringing libertarian ideas to the people by word and writing. They give out small laboriously-prepared pamphlets, forwarding and distributing them among circles of friends or openly; and go to their opponents' meetings in order to speak.

The division of the land into four zones, the division and occupation of Berlin, the 12 year lag in the development of the libertarian movement and the replacement of the Hitler dictatorship by the occupation dictatorship, have made it impossible to form a national federation. There is, however, a gradually-growing co-operation be-

tween the various libertarian groups.

If we now give a picture of the better-known libertarian groups in Germany, the reader must take into account that all is still in flux and that many groups and people work anonymously, and that the various groups and federations do not know each other very well, if at all. The after-effects of what has happened as well as the distance, zonal boundaries, material difficulties makes cohesion difficult, as well as often old prejudices.

The comrades of the Federation of Free Socialists (F.F.S.) who designate themselves Anarcho-Syndicalists, are chiefly those who have formerly been members of the Free Workers' Union of Germany (F.A.U.D.—the anarcho-syndicalist union in pre-Hitler Germany). They are strongest in South and West Germany and up to now publish a monthly, *The International*. Although they are affiliated to the I.W.M.A. (Anarcho-syndicalist union international) and devote themselves to syndicalist problems, they are not in fact a union but a libertarian propaganda organisation. They are actively supporting the new libertarian international.

Calling themselves Anarcho-Communists are the autonomous groups *Free Worker in Berlin* and *Liberation in Mulheim-Ruhr*. Both bulletins appear once or twice a month. They take a revolutionary position but remain sceptical of syndicalism. They are chiefly in the Ruhr, Berlin and East Germany.

Comrades coming from Marxism and now known as revolutionary Spartacists, have developed a libertarian position. These are represented in the *New Beginning* (International Socialist Pages) and a Spartacus group in the Ruhr.

The aforementioned groups, F.F.S., Anarcho-Communists, Libertarian Group, Spartacus Bund, as well as the Culture-Federation of Free Socialists and Anti-Militarists in Dortmund, held a conference of Western German groups in Dusseldorf recently and planned active co-operation.

A number of further groups stand on the threshold of libertarian ideas, for instance the Culture-Federation and Youth-Federation in Hamburg, that published the *Free Socialist* for a long time until prevented by the authorities, and the Book Guild in Bremen, which has published a number of books, including *Rocker's Nationalism and Culture*.

Youth influenced by libertarian thought are to be found in the World Citizens' Movement, which is growing strong in Germany, in the Esperanto movement, and in the German section of the War Resisters' International.

We have here in no way exhausted the number of autonomous and local libertarian groups, nor have we described all the particular points of interest about the libertarian movement in Germany. But we believe that as a first picture of this movement, newly-created and developing under great difficulties, this will serve.

It is going forward under great difficulties. The greatest hindrance of all is the splintering and lack of a libertarian press in the German language.

Contrary to most other countries, in which a regularly printed libertarian press appears, nothing has appeared in Germany since 1945. There is up to now no regularly produced organ. There are only small books appearing with libertarian context.

The press of the occupation dictatorship is prodigious and the material means to answer it are lacking for our comrades, who by reason of war, destruction, currency reform and unemployment are at the end of their material tether.

In outstanding contrast to this material weakness is the thirst for new libertarian literature, a thirst which cannot be quenched. We have tried to appease this thirst by information bulletins, leaflets, etc., but it has only been a drop in the ocean.

There is an absolute necessity for a regularly appearing organ. Such an organ and above all the dissemination of libertarian literature in Germany would greatly influence the situation to our credit. The groups and individuals would have something in their hands when on the streets, in the factories and at their opponents' meetings. A libertarian paper could be sold in the streets and newspaper kiosks. These possibilities exist to-day in Western Germany. But from there libertarian literature would penetrate Eastern Germany and bring great hopes and help there.

A sufficient quantity of libertarian literature would raise our movement in Germany not only in breadth but also in depth, for there is the possibility of bringing the developments and ideas that have been lacking in twelve years to the youth, and giving the older generation the possibility of finding out what happened in those twelve years of terror. In short, the 12 year gap of Nazism would be closed, and our movement would have the opportunity of becoming a bulwark against nationalism and against the new fascist reaction.

Do not say that it does not affect you. The future fate of Germany can and will be the fate of all men. A new reaction or forward to a libertarian development—help us in the name of freedom!

MARTIN BUCHER

## Australian Workers Look to the State

THE author of *Michael Bakunin* and *Karl Marx* has sent us the following letter from Australia. Comrade Kenafick is Secretary of the *League for Freedom*, an anti-war, anti-conscription organisation. If any readers in Australia are interested, we will gladly put them in touch with the organisation, which is one of the very few not relying on the State—for obvious reasons!

OUR great coal strike has finished and everything is back to normal—with this difference; that the Communists have succeeded in dealing an almost mortal blow to the tactics of direct action and repudiation of arbitration.

Before the strike the miners themselves were very much for direct action and "fed-up" with arbitration, but the result of the strike was such a disastrous and humiliating defeat that any large-scale industrial upheaval for a long time to come seems impossible. By the Communists' own tactics, direct action has been discredited among the workers and made to appear merely as a Commie method of sabotaging Australia's economy. Apparently the Communies touch nothing that they do not defile. The bulk of the workers are solidly against them now, but also, unfortunately, solidly against methods of direct action which they have brought into discredit.

### Workers Not C.P. Tools

The Labour Government seized upon the Communist leadership to discredit the strike, and that same leadership was sufficient to turn most workers against any support for the action. They did not feel inclined to be made tools of C.P. political stunts, though they recognised that there was a good deal to be said for the miners' case.

The Australian Council of Trades Unions (A.C.T.U.) Congress has just concluded. It was a trial of strength between Labourites and Communists and resulted in victories for the former right through, mostly on the issues of the coal strike. Direct action was condemned and arbitration supported.

It is very regrettable that to all intents and purposes there are only these two schools of thought in the

working-class movement in Australia to have any real influence. There is, of course, the Socialist Party of Australia (corresponding to the (S.P.G.B.) utterly without influence or fame of any kind, and the Trotskyists who are very few in number. You can see from their paper that though much of their criticism of both the Government and the Stalinists is correct, their remedy is: "Let the Governments nationalise industry and operate it under Workers' Control"! Comment on this weird proposal is, of course, superfluous!

### Reliance on the State

Yet this is really the most advanced political standpoint available to Australian workers to-day. When Comrade Dawson's paper was circulating it could do something to provide a better insight, but even then no organisation or movement had resulted. Our League is confined to Victoria, far removed from the great coalfields and in any case, is primarily anti-war. The tendency of the workers to rely on the State for social justice has never been so strong as it is to-day, and the Labour Government holds their support, though much of this is due to the pernicious influence of the C.P., whose tactics have caused workers to react into the arms of the Labour Party.

Melbourne.

K. J. KENAFICK.

## LABOUR CAMPS IN SOUTHERN RHODESIA

WELL may Britain's pious colonial administrators throw up their hands at the iniquities of Dr. Malan in his treatment of the natives of South Africa. From Johannesburg comes a report that in Southern Rhodesia a parliamentary committee has proposed the establishment of conscript Labour camps as a solution of the country's "Labour problems".

These camps are to be run under military discipline, and conscripts would serve periods of two years. The committee says there is no real labour shortage in S. Rhodesia, but the "apparent" shortage is due to the laziness and inefficiency of the natives, which are themselves partly due to the lack of education, undernourishment, poor living conditions and inherent diseases.

Surely the better way to solve the problem would be to eliminate these latter factors rather than to set up concentration camps—for that is what they are. But Colonial governments do not think like that.

## THROUGH THE PRESS

### WE CAN

Who can believe, even when he reads it, that less than sixty years ago Sir Charles Warren, then Commissioner of Police, so literally obeyed the instructions of the Government to suppress a meeting of the unemployed that he drew up plans to fire artillery across Trafalgar Square to disperse the mob?

—Hannen Swaffer in

*Illustrated*, 15/10/49.

### AGE OF INNOCENCE (I)

Showing of all sex films and film strips has been banned in primary and secondary schools under Leyton (Essex) Education Committee.

*News Chronicle*, 20/10/49.

### (II)

No-one can travel through English villages without noticing the astonishing beauty and health of the new generation of English infancy. . . . What happens to them later I don't quite know.

—Christopher Morley in

*The Listener*, 13/10/49.

### WAR IS RIDICULOUS

Bewitched with scientific jargon they cannot understand, bewildered by the publicity experts, and belaboured with the unsolved problems of yesterday's war the people again see the handwriting on the wall, and dimly comprehend its meaning. May they have the piety and wit to change a word of it. Instead of "war is inevitable" let them make it: War is ridiculous.

—S. L. Solon in

*Leader Magazine*, 15/10/49.

### WARNING—PLEASE NOTE

The Board of Trade said this afternoon:

"In view of Press rumours about an impending reimposition of clothes rationing, Mr. Harold Wilson, President of the Board of Trade, said to-day that there has never been any question of reimposing clothes rationing, and the rumours to the effect that rationing would be announced over the week-end are a complete invention."

*Evening Standard*, 21/10/49.

Mr. Ness Edwards, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Labour, said at a National Savings campaign at Bargoed, last night: "There is no intention on the part of the Government to introduce compulsory savings or freezing present savings."

*Reynolds News*, 23/10/49.

Whenever officials begin making denials, we always feel suspicious that they are planning to do the very thing they are denying. We'll see . . .

## TWO VICTORIES FOR REACTION

THE Communist witch-hunt in America reached its climax last week when eleven leading American Communists were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment having been found guilty a week earlier of "conspiring to advocate and teach the duty and necessity of overthrowing and destroying the United States Government by force."

The trial lasted nine months, and during that time thirty-five defence witnesses were heard (and their testimony took four months) as well as fifteen government witnesses (two months), 150 exhibits were handed to the jury and the trial record runs to no less than 2,000 pages. So much for the "scale" of the trial, which lives up to the American tradition of doing things in style, including Communist trials.

Ten of the defendants have been given five years' imprisonment and \$10,000 dollars fine, and one, because of his war record, had his sentence reduced to three years and \$10,000 fine. Much to the disappointment of the prosecution—and the judge—it was discovered after the trial had started that the Smith Act, 1940 (under which the men had been charged) was one of the laws revised by Congress last year and its maximum sentence of ten years was amended to five. Otherwise, to quote the judge, "I would be thinking in terms of more than five years."

However much we dislike Communist ideology and practice—indeed, precisely because we dislike them—we protest at the whole trial and the vicious sentences imposed. Democracy and free speech have for long been slogans in America, and we are not surprised by the verdict, nor at the general reaction in America to the verdict. Alastair Cook in a dispatch to the *Manchester Guardian* says that:

"There is no denying the general satisfaction over the verdict and the vague universal feeling that the deadliest snake in the political zoo has been scotched and that Americans are now one solid step removed from the possibility of Communist seduction. Most of the comment in Congress, and the congratulations being poured on Judge Medina, are in this vein of gratitude for a heroic rescue. And although Mr. Truman says that his eleva-

tion of the prosecuting attorney in this trial, United States Attorney John McGohey, to the Federal Bench has nothing to do with the result of the trial, nevertheless the appointment was announced the day after it was over and it will be popularly received as a reward many who fear that the verdict, whether for services rendered.

But he also points out that "there are or not it is upheld by the higher courts, will touch off a national witch hunt as virulent as Palmer's Red Raids of the nineteen-twenties. And there are many sober citizens, not all of them professional Liberals, either rampant or querulous, who see in the verdict a challenge to the very first amendment to the Constitution, which promises that "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble."

The case is now being passed to the Supreme Court since there is doubt as to the legality of the Smith Act 1940, and only then, writes a *New York Herald Tribune* correspondent will we "have a final answer as to whether a political party can be deprived by law of the constitutional guarantees of free speech and free thought that are part of the American system."

We console ourselves with the thought that throughout history whether the rulers grant or refuse the right of free speech, there have been men and women who have fought for freedom irrespective of the dangers and threats.

The second victory for reaction occurred in Sydney, Australia, where the general secretary of the Australian C.P. was last week sentenced to 3 years imprisonment for having "uttered seditious words during a newspaper interview on March 4." As in the American trials, the sentence was the maximum. The terrible "seditious words" uttered were: "If the Soviet forces in pursuit of aggressors enter Australia, Australian workers would welcome them as the workers welcomed them throughout Europe when the Red troops liberated the people from the power of the Nazis."

The judge gave his definition of freedom of speech in these words: "Every

man is free to speak as he thinks fit, but he is responsible to law for what he does speak. He is not—under the mere spurious pretence of freedom of speech—to invade the rights of the community; or to violate the constitution; or to endanger public peace or national security; or to create seditious discontent and class hatreds.

"Statements of a political or party nature, when confined within proper limits, are in no way punishable by law but rather are protected for public good."

"Your words, it is very obvious, were spoken in anticipation of wide publicity being given to them and, under the conditions, apt to create the greatest possible mischief."

Which reminds one of the father who gave his son a drum but refused to let him beat it!

When will we all realise, once for all, that freedom is not a commodity which is granted to us by benevolent rulers—but instead start from the standpoint that Freedom is part of civilised man, that no one grants freedom and that it has to be jealously defended from all who would place limitations on it. The argument that freedom in America and Australia is being defended by the imprisonment of Communists who if they were in power would destroy even the few freedoms that at present exist, is untenable. As the Home Secretary, Mr. Ede once put it so well: "You can only destroy a bad idea by putting better ideas in its place," or words to that effect. (But needless to say, so far as Mr. Ede is concerned, they were only words, yet we subscribe to those sentiments.) And where are the better ideas? Where are the voices appealing to and co-ordinating the aspirations of the ordinary people. When will the Orwells and the Silones, the Picassos and the Russells, the Robesons and the Einsteins stop playing at politics and that age-long game of choosing between the lesser and greater evil, and come out on the side of what is right and good. Their voices would be so much more effective as representatives of the social conscience and aspirations of mankind than as tools of power-drunk politicians.

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## SOCIAL CREDIT IN ALBERTA

I SHOULD like here to be allowed to reply to George Woodcock's comments on Social Credit in Alberta (*Freedom*, Oct. 1st). He starts by saying that the functions of the provinces in Canada are being reduced by the centralist tendencies of the Ottawa authorities. This is true and it explains why Social Credit, in the fullest sense of the term, has not been allowed to function in Alberta. The provincial government's Social Credit legislation has been declared *ultra vires* many times by the Ottawa authorities, and the provincial government has, therefore, been compelled to compromise and improvise. But the improvisations have all been towards the ultimate aims of Social Credit, namely, the liberation of the individual as declared in the second paragraph of the provincial government manifesto: "To make secure the right of each citizen to exercise freedom of action and individual initiative and enterprise, free from bureaucratic state interference and the domination of any form of monopoly control." This is a very different aim from any expressed by any of the Tory or Socialist parties in any country.

George Woodcock's next point gives me my case. He says, "Since 1938 the province has been going through a steadily mounting boom unparalleled in other Canadian provinces." Of course it has, because the Social Credit government went into office in 1935. Mr. Woodcock should know the U.S.A. also had a boom—and a mighty great steadily mounting debt. For it is quite impossible in orthodox financial practice to sustain a boom, either by means of organised war or "planned investment" without, at the same time, piling up a monument of tax-begetting debt. That is, precisely, where Alberta is different from any other state in the world. It has sustained a progressive boom in industry, material achievement, and increased personal spending power for all, while, at the same time, reducing the total of debt payable by its people.

This is a quite unprecedented phenomenon. It is one which all other economists strongly deny and all political parties plan to thwart.

I reiterate, therefore, my plea that the anarchists abandon the futility of apostrophising a nebulous freedom in vacuo and adopt the only mechanism which can possibly set men free, namely, a financial system which eliminates Debt. For it is by the use of debt that a few men can gain and maintain dominion over the liberties of the many.

The curse of all progressive action has always been the hot-air demagogue. Since the days of John Ball (to go back no farther) the poor and suffering have been led up hundreds of garden paths by ignorant fanatics waving their arms and shouting "no more grading of incomes", "no more power politics", "no more dividing and conquering", "no more war",

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

etc., etc., after the manner of far too many of *Freedom's* writers and correspondents (and not only on the subject of Social Credit). Meanwhile, the bosses get on with practical machines for pinching their wages, under nice names like "national insurance", "dollar gaps", "inflation", or "revenue for social services", etc., etc.

Your second correspondent's (*Freedom*, Oct. 15th) abysmal ignorance of both the philosophy and technique of Social Credit cannot be amended in a letter. But let it suffice to say that Social Credit is the only suggestion yet educed to provide the means to establish personal freedom for all, and it is the only economic proposal that is based upon a mathematically equal dividend, on the security of the co-operative social credit (a very different thing from "capital", by the way) for every man, woman and child. Both Kropotkin and Edward Bellamy were the forerunners of Major Douglas in the conception of the socialisation of the people's credit as the only economic basis for the building of an intelligent society of free individuals in co-operation, and, up to this moment, there is no vestige of such a basis either in anarchism, socialism, communism or any other ism.

GLADYS BING.

## HELPING THEMSELVES

MY wife has recently been in a very efficient maternity home under the N.H.S., for her third child. Some of her observations may interest your readers.

A woman brings round newspapers and magazines ("Whatcha want, duck?—Miracle or the Oracle?") and numerous parsons are allowed free access. One parson gave a small ward of women (defenceless) such a prayer walloping that he made four cry and the particular woman for whom he prayed had a subsequent still-birth. But, of course, the parsons have it both ways—if the mother and child are healthy and happy, then God is Love and Good and what-not; if the woman has a bad time, the child still-born or a freak, then there's little doubt left that the parents are wicked sinners deserving a good dose of God's wrath!

In my wife's ward were six women. The nurse asked if they all wanted 'churching' and my wife just said, "No, thank you." However the C. of E. parson entered and after a few conversational frivolities such as, "How nice, that we have a little Mary!" he then proceeded with a churching service—reading a portion, and requesting all to say "The Lord's Prayer". Then he went from bed to bed so that coins could be placed in the book he held!

I consider this sort of thing a great impertinence, especially as most women do not feel like arguing against such religious conventions at the time.

VICTOR E. RICHFORD.

## "OBSTRUCTION"—by the Rich or the Poor?

IN the last issue of *Freedom*, we reported that our comrade, Leah Feldman, had been arrested on two successive Sundays for "obstruction" at Hyde Park. The charge of "obstruction" is one of those convenient fictions whereby the police are enabled to make nonsense of the idea of freedom of opinion. Any newspaper seller on the pavement or kerbside can be called in on such a charge, and from time to time the police make swoops on the familiar band of newspaper sellers of every brand of minority opinion who are to be seen every Sunday at Tyburn Way.

The writer has experience of this kind of petty persecution. When he asked the magistrate to define "obstruction", he was told that if the police thought there was obstruction, then there was obstruction. When he went on to enquire what was the purpose of the police court proceedings if the guilt was established simply by the policeman's opinion, he received no answer. Nor did the magistrate have anything to say when it was pointed out to him that a seller of one of the capitalist Sunday papers was selling on the pavement itself, surrounded by his wares, while the minority seller stood in the gutter, but that the police had shown no dis-

position to molest him. Instead of drawing the obvious conclusion that the police discriminated against certain political trends, the magistrate complained that the accused was "making speeches at him"!

Leah Feldman was fined £2 or a month's imprisonment on the first occasion, 10/- on the second. The police and the magistrates may think these are small matters, small fines. In fact, however, a serious principle is at stake in these discriminatory actions by the police. They constitute a denial of freedom to propagate one's opinions in a peaceful manner. And it cannot be healthy that magistrates act on the supposition that policemen never tell lies, never commit errors of judgment, and are incapable of political motives, or even of political instructions.

### Throgmorton Street is not Hyde Park

The following passage in Parliament requires no further comment:—"Mr. Fernyhough (Jarrow, Lab.) asked the Home Secretary why an estimated crowd of 4,000 men was permitted to block Throgmorton Street on Monday, September 19; what prosecutions were pending for obstruction; and why the police failed to take effective steps to deal with the situation."

"Mr. Ede (South Shields, Lab.)—I

have no direct responsibility for police arrangements in the City of London, but in reply to inquiries made of him the Commissioner of Police for the City informs me that the crowd at its peak did not exceed 1,500 persons, including sight-seers, and caused no serious inconvenience to the general public. The Commissioner informs me that the situation did not call for any drastic action by the police, who, in his view, carried out their duties adequately and no prosecutions are pending for obstruction."

"Mr. Fernyhough.—Does my right hon. friend realize that that reply of his will cause great disappointment to millions of workers—(Opposition laughter)—who will naturally feel that there is one law for the rich and one for the poor, and will he consult the Chancellor of the Exchequer with a view to endeavouring to collect what we feel ought to have been collected in the police court in additional taxes on the ill-gotten gains they made that day? (Ministerial cheers.)"

"Mr. Ede replied that it was impossible for him to do other than get the information from the Commissioner of Police. He had no power to instruct him."

Mr. C. Poole (Lichfield, Lab.)—Would not the Home Secretary have been rather amazed if the Commissioner of Police had made any other statement than that—(Opposition cries of "Oh!" and "Withdraw!")—and does he not consider the diversion of traffic something in the nature of an inconvenience to people who desire to use this street?

"Mr. Ede.—No, Sir. I have every confidence in the Commissioner of Police for the City of London to give me a truthful reply to the question put to him. (Opposition cheers.)" *Times*, 21/10/49.

## NO MORE SACRIFICE!

(Continued from page 1)

For there always seems to be another corner. Two years ago, industry was being plastered with targets, and all we had to do was to hit them. To-day all those targets have been hit, so we don't hear anything more about targets, we just hear about dollar gaps and other things that the vast majority cannot see, but which we are just told about. A target—30 per cent. more production, say—can be measured by the worker who knows when he's producing 30 per cent. more goods. But who can measure a gap that only S. Cripps can see? Obviously, only S. Cripps, and so we are entirely in the hands of that gent, as far as any information is concerned. The worker therefore is rather in the position of the oarsman who strains away at the oars while Cripps does the steering. And for all the good it will do the worker might as well be going round in circles in a fog—for he's just not getting anywhere.

### Is It Worth It?

Isn't it about time we called a halt? Isn't it about time we took stock of our position and weighed up what is being done to us, and for us, and by us? Isn't it about time we realised that we are just being sacrificed once again for something which just is not worth it?

The potentialities of the world have never been as great as they are to-day. The forces of production have never been so powerful as they are now; and yet there was probably never a time in our history when that potential has been so geared to useless and destructive ends as during the last ten years. And the cumulative effect of the last two wars and the break-up of the British Empire has been that the British worker,

once, believe it or not, enjoying one of the highest standards of living in the world, is now rapidly sliding down the scale.

His high position in the past has been due to Britain's premier position as a producer nation and to the fact that whereas once her ruling class were able to meet working class demands by greater exploitation of colonial labour; to-day those ungrateful natives, like their British brothers, are not so keen on being exploited by British bosses, and have developed their own means of production for their own use instead of for the great sahib. Which is also all to the good, for now the general world potential has increased.

What we have to learn from the present situation then, is that, as British workers, we are worse off than before with only the prospect of getting still worse off in the future, because British economy has been based upon her position as a manufacturing nation—a position she has long since lost to America—and has not been for centuries an economy balanced with the needs of the people. Cripps and Co., for all their brilliance in juggling with figures and other things, cannot see the solution because they are blinkered by patriotism.

The workers, however, who should long ago have slung patriotism out of the window, should by now be realising that all the sacrifices they are being called upon once more to make are

### HOW DO THEY MANAGE WITHOUT IT?

FRANCE has been without a government for two-and-a-half weeks.

*News Broadcast*, 23/10/49.

completely futile because they are being made in a vain attempt to maintain Britain in a position in which it is now absolutely impossible for her to remain. And whereas we can always expect the Churchills and the Attlees of the world to be prepared to sacrifice us time and again because they have a stake in this stupidity, we think it is time we called a halt.

### Let it Collapse!

But he who calls a halt must be in command of the situation and nobody can say that we are in command of anything at the moment. All right, then, let's dig our heels in on this question of sacrifice. Let's make quite clear that there must be no lengthening of working hours, no increase in production without increase in rates of pay, no increase in prices without increases in wages, no sacrifice for the sake of capitalism!

This, we shall be assured, will lead to a collapse of our economy. Good. Let it collapse. What has it ever brought us but, in the old windbag's phrase, blood, toil, sweat and tears?

Let it collapse; it will save us destroying it. And while it is collapsing, let us, as workers, organise and educate ourselves for the purpose of running the factories, the mines, the railways and the farms. For they will not collapse. Though the pound be devalued a hundred times, the land will still be fertile and the worker skilful. Let the superficial economies of governments vanish; the reality, the real wealth is man's labour applied to the raw materials of the earth.

There lies our well-being. Let there be no more sacrifice!

## AMERICANA

1.

THERE have been two vicious "anti-Communist" riots at Peekskill, N.Y., which is a small town about 25 miles North of New York City. Paul Robeson was scheduled to sing at a Stalinist Defence Fund concert. The local black hundreds, led by G.I.'s set upon them twice. The first scheduled concert was broken up. The second was held, but in spite of hundreds of "workers' defence guards" and N.Y. State Troopers (policemen) those returning home were set upon by the "patriots" and over 100 injured, many hospitalized in a savage attack upon cars filing past a defile. Rocks were thrown and cars overturned with the people still inside. There were anti-Negro and anti-Jewish expressions. Most of the concert-goers were from New York City. There are supposedly going to be prosecutions in the case. This is the first mass violent demonstration the writer can remember in this area. I wonder how the people of Germany felt in 1933?

A touch of humour: the Stalinist

organisation of Westchester County formed to protest the riots is called The Committee to Preserve Law and Order. As I write this, news comes of the hanging of Rajk.

2.

News that Russia has the Atom Bomb has hit America like a . . . feather. The first production of the military mind gave this forth (at a Congressional hearing): "It will take ten years before Russia will be able to mass produce them on the scale we can now." What a comforting thought. However, its truth was violently and almost hysterically denounced by top scientists. There have been rumours that now "you" (the British Government) can have the bomb. I am sure you will be delighted to hear this good news.

The whole psychology as revealed by the above quote is not to avoid war, but to win it. As if anybody can win anything but death and shambles. But the idiotically complacent American public goes on its way and the World Series hysteria reached a new high pitch this year. Even in the middle-toned Liberal press you could find nothing but baseball news until the fourth page (which was something of a relief after all.)

3.

The recession seems to have stabilised itself over the summer. (Seems to). With employment rising. But why, after all, should there be unemployment for cogs in a great rising war machine? Come on, you cogs! There's bloody enough work for all of you. Enlistment in the army ground forces has dropped off (another sign of prosperity) to such an extent that Gen. Hershey fears he may be forced to institute the draft again. Surely this great country can supply more than 1,500,000 volunteer mercenaries?

4.

1,000,000 men are on strike now in the great coal and steel industries of this country. The issue: old age pensions. Hardly a revolutionary issue. Hardly one to make the young workers boil with anger and enthusiasm. (Incidentally, Federal old age pensions start at 65. The average life expectancy is around 63.5 years.) The Negro life expectancy is 10 years less than the white.

5.

The Stalinists in N.Y. are running their own mayoralty candidate: Vito Marcantonio. (They were "misled" by Bil O'Dwyer, Democrat when their votes elected him last time.) They are always ready to holler that they have been misled but they never bother to explain why they are always being misled. A *Daily Worker* street poll interviewer has produced some interesting results. They are here before me; I quote two: (1) "What the hell, they're all politicians. Promise you the sky to-day and run out after Election Day. I work hard 10 hours a day, what'd a politician ever do for me?" (2) "What the hell, I never vote. What good does it do me?" This is called "cynicism". The interviewer hurries to assure us that everybody: "the barber . . . the owner of a clothing store . . . former G.I.'s" are all for Marcantonio.

6.

I see a half-inch item in the *Post* advising us that a leader of the Australian Communist Party has been sentenced to three years in prison for seditious utterances over the telephone.

We are not alone. JACK GALLEGOS.

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