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Freedom

A N A R C H I S T F O R T N I G H T L Y

"Of all debts, men are least willing to pay the taxes. What a satire is this on government! Everywhere they think they get their money's worth, but these."
 RALPH WALDO EMERSON

FIGHTING WITH OTHER MEN'S LIVES

CHINA is once again in the news, though the stimulus for renewed public interest is not a broad view of the struggle proceeding in that gigantic country, but the plight of the British seamen on the *Amethyst* caught between the artillery on the Yangtze river. The public is more in the right about this than the politicians of all parties who all seek to make political capital out of the incident, while the sympathy of the man in the street is genuine. We are not at all surprised that the Plymouth crowd went for Harry Pollitt, whose canting hypocrisy about the relatives of the "British boys" was altogether too nauseating to bear. But are the Conservative Opposition much better, with their obvious determination to discredit the government by exploiting this event which has caught public imagination? And can one be sure that the incident itself has not got certain features which are welcome to the government, with the opportunities it gives for glossing further intervention in China? As so often on these occasions, the non-partisan spectator feels sick at heart hearing the candied tongues of official sympathy, well knowing that official policy takes little enough account of the mere sacrifices of life if policy advantages are to be gained.

Impure Motives

One must not overlook the fact that the Government will be on very firm ground when they come to answer their critics. It is indeed their duty to protect the lives and safety of British nationals in Nanking, and it is foolish to suggest that any administration could neglect such precautions. But, unfortunately, a government has not the integrity and standing of, say, the International Red Cross, or the Friends. No-one expects the State to confine itself to humane duties. On the contrary, it is in the position of combatants who raise the white flag in order to go out and collect their wounded, and then use the truce to lay mines. Imperialist policy in the past makes it quite certain

that not merely the lives of British nationals will be protected, but opportunities taken to further British sectional interests in the imperialist struggle between the great powers which passes under the name of "civil war in China". Inevitably therefore, opposing interests will disregard the humanitarian mission, though it seems likely that if the Communists had more experience and finesse they would not have fallen into the trap of providing an occasion for British intervention which would be well supported at home. Actually their actions in the *Amethyst* case provide another instance of Communist love of brutality ("firmness") for its own sake which they share with the Fascists, and which is an important factor in gaining their support among sadistic neurotics.

Power Rivalries

The recent report that one issue of *Pravda* and two of *Isvestia* have been confiscated in Prague because of clear hints that Russia might have to do a Munich towards Czechoslovakia and Poland, also contained a significant passage about China. Russia, it stated, could not extend much help to the Czechs because she needed to concentrate on her own reconstruction and also on new commitments in China. (Continued on page 4)

The Role of Syndicalists in Industry

THE extent to which revolutionaries should allow themselves to get mixed up in reformist activities is always a matter for argument and the question is certainly not such an easy one to solve as appears at first glance.

Our immediate reaction is, as a matter of principle, to state firmly that the revolutionary should not waste his time in any activity which has not a revolutionary end in view and which has not a revolutionary character as to its means. This is the attitude which most individualists take up and which they quite definitely should take up. After all, if you have only yourself to please, and your actions affect no-one but yourself, you can be as intransigent as you like and no-one has the right to do other than praise you for it. If society were composed of such intransigents, it is obvious that governments and all the institutions of domination would not last very long.

Unfortunately, however, society is not composed of such people, and we have to take it as it is. The revolutionary, therefore, has to make a choice: either to cut himself off from all other trends of thought but his own in his determination to prevent any watering-down of his ideas, or to be prepared to enter the melée of day-to-day activity within the context of present-day society, hoping thereby to influence others even at the risk of compromising himself.

Both Sides Right?

The difficulty lies in the fact that there is a lot to be said for both sides, and that those on both sides are inclined to regard the others as

completely wrong. The middle course (horrible phrase!) is that taken by the comrades who produce *Freedom* and—as is usual in such cases—lays them open to attack from both sides. The individualists and intellectuals accuse *Freedom* of being too propagandist and the more syndicalist-inclined comrades say it is too intellectual. As if it were not equally important both to discuss anarchist ideas on all aspects of human existence and at the same time put them over in a vigorous manner in the hope of stirring others to similar action!

However, at the moment we are concerned with the syndicalist side of the argument, for there is a growing interest in syndicalism and a growing desire to see some sort of movement growing which is specifically concerned with industrial activity. This is an extremely welcome trend and one for which the time seems to become increasingly ripe. Industrial experience, in view of the obvious failure of nationalisation, and the growing interest in the idea of workers' control, both help to lay a fertile ground for the syndicalist seed.

Syndicalist Principles

So we come to our question of what exactly is the rôle of the syndicalist today? Perhaps first we had better briefly state the principles of syndicalism (anarcho-syndicalism, that is, although the word is so clumsy that we try to

avoid it where possible), so that we know exactly what we are talking about.

Firstly, then, syndicalism represents a form of industrial organisation which differs from trades unionism in several very important fundamentals:

(a) *It is revolutionary, not reformist, i.e., it is not satisfied to remain an institution within capitalism or governmental society, even representing the workers in that society, but aims at the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of a system of free workers' control;*

(b) *It organises industrially not by craft, i.e., instead of workers being organised in craft unions whereby those in the same industry (same factory!) belong to several unconnected unions, they should organise themselves according to their industry, not their craft, so that no divisions exist within working units. Each industry should have its own syndicate which at local, regional and national levels co-ordinates with every other syndicate for the organisation of production and distribution;*

(c) *It is opposed to the wages system, believing that money and wages represent one of the chief means by which competition and inequality are maintained. Instead, free distribution of goods according to need is proposed, since the abolition of the profit motive and the control by the workers of the means of production would mean abundance of all we need.*

(d) *It denies the necessity of paid officials. Such organisational work as needs full-time organisers shall be done by workers taken from their productive work, either for that specific work or for an agreed short time, and shall be rewarded by no more wages than they were getting before. This prevents officialdom and careerism and ensures that those who take on work for the syndicate do so for the sake of that work and not for personal gain.*

(e) *It demands direct action, not political action. The aim of syndicalism is workers' control of industry, not control of society through the government, so that its methods should be aimed directly at the means of production. That is where the strength of the workers lies. Political activity is mere deviation from the real issue. The methods of direct action are the strike, boycott, sabotage and non-cooperation.*

Syndicalism, like anarchism, has a double function. First, it is a means of struggle in present-day society; second it is a means of reconstruction and organisation in a free society after a social revolution. But syndicalism, it should be stressed, is a means. Anarchism has a wider message, and Anarchy is the goal at which both aim.

A Hard Task

The rôle of syndicalists then, boils down to this: the need to-day is for a vigorous propaganda and educational body to present the case for syndicalism at every possible opportunity and in every possible place. But syndicalists should beware of organising others. They should encourage workers to organise themselves upon syndicalist principles according to the nature of the job. They should be prepared to set an example in militancy and solidarity in their own place of work while at the same time scrupulously avoiding setting themselves up as leaders. As far as the trades unions are concerned, it is up to each syndicalist to make up his mind whether his revolutionary aims can be served by his going into his union or not. It seems unlikely, somehow, but it may bring him into contact with other workers who can also be militant outside the union branch.

Finally, let no-one think the rôle of the syndicalist any more than of the anarchist, is an easy one. He is faced with apathy and prejudice, and if he is over-impatient may easily become discouraged and cynical. But it is nevertheless essential that the task be undertaken by men of integrity and vigour, and that the opportunities presenting themselves at the present are not wasted.

P.S.

SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICS

THE recent Durban riots seem to have caused some concern outside South Africa, notwithstanding the shaking some people received here. As you know a committee of enquiry was set up, and apart from an initial press report no further information is available as far as I know.

A similar state of Indian exploitation existed here on the Rand; the natives being overcharged on food, paraffin, etc. (In one case, at Orlando location, 2/6 lb. was asked for rice. The price in European shops being 10d. per lb.)

Now the average native wage is about £2 10s. 0d. per week, so that feeling was running high. Another important point was the large number of native women with children having long straight black hair, an obvious sign of Indian fatherhood, and opposed to tribal law. The natives thus held the Indian community collectively responsible for the infringement of racial laws as well.

Recently the S.A. Government has doubled the bounty payable per head for Indians to return to their "own country" with, of course, passage paid. The scheme of repatriation was set in operation long ago, but was never a success; there is no reason to expect £40 to lure them to India now, particularly as their position is now more secure.

South Africa went to the polls recently to elect members to the provincial councils, the underlying motive being to test Government support, with the Afrikaner party abstaining.

The outcome was not conclusive, the voting shows the following:—
 Nat. Party ... 479,000 87 seats
 United Party ... 564,000 78 seats
 (to nearest 100 votes).
 Nevertheless, this does give the

Government control of councils. Donges, Minister of Interior, has since hinted at changes to come in local government. The elections showed up the extremist element, with their storm troop methods, and violent anti-Communist outlook. This brooks evil for Sam Kahn and his followers, and gives an opportunity for attacks on the T.U. movement under the guise of ousting the Communists. This is in full swing with the garment workers' union; its leader being E. S. Sachs. The chief question master of the commission being Oswald Pirow, *per pro* the Government.

Oswald Pirow is well-known as an active Fascist, and his pre-1939 exploits as Minister of Defence likewise. In April last year, he and Mosley formed a

pro-Nazi state prisoners have been released.

Africa's geographical position is suitable for the centre keystone of an anti-Communist southern bloc, and its manganese/chrome deposits are important to the U.S. So important that the U.S. Government has allocated steel to the Canadian Car & Foundry Co. for rolling stock, to be used on South African railways manganese/chrome ore transportation. Russian supplies of 50% of U.S. needs having ceased, South Africa must supply same (50% chrome, 23% manganese). This is for munitions, the supply of steel having been sanctioned by U.S. munitions board. The London conference will, no doubt, result in South

lies in the balance.

Now what does all this add up to?

Well, the way I see it, Malan is likely to come to terms over racial questions, which will not suit the O.B. and extreme Nats. If he does so, it may well happen that a new party will enter the field with the support of Malan's present group. That party being Pirow's contribution to African white supremacy, with an all-out drive against the T.U. movement, Communism, and free speech.

If, on the other hand, Malan does not betray the Afrikaans-speaking section (every man has his price) the O.B. may link with the Nats., if only underground, which would give the O.B. legislative backing in furthering their aims.

Whichever way the cat jumps then, we are in for a sticky time. The small white population of South Africa will certainly not be considered as a menace to war aims by the big powers, and if it suits their purposes, a blind eye will be turned to the suppression of free speech and movement under the hackneyed "You would get worse under Communism" catch-phrase. Communists have little time to get out before the witch hunt starts in earnest. The only hope that we shall be wooed, lies in the important mineral resources here, plus communications facilities.

The people, subjected to Fascist domination on the right side, are unimportant provided they serve the interests of maintaining Western political ideology. The workers, frustrated by the high cost of living, and exhausted in the mad race for survival, will fall easy victims to a scapegoat mentality directed against Communists, and those dubbed as such by "Authority".
 H.M.

LETTER FROM JOHANNESBURG

party called "Enemies of the Soviet Union". At that time, Mosley couldn't obtain a passport for South Africa, but may have done so since, or entered by other means. There is a happy hunting ground here for the new order, and recently the O.B. (Ossiwa Brandwag) has entered the political field, 21 members resigning in protest, leaving the way open for the "My party right or wrong" boys, led by Pirow. Many O.B. members hold prominent positions in commerce and government institutions, which is reminiscent. The F.A.K. (Federasie Van Afrikaanse Kultur) also had a finger in the pie as regards introducing youth service (Ex Nazi Arbeitsdienst) which is being considered by a committee including many O.B. members. On top of this all

Africa's strategic position being strengthened and concession made to South Africa and India; with the Indian question settled and South Africa happy, no doubt Egypt-South African relations will improve over-night, and the stepping-stone in the event of Communist Greek coup be assured.

The financial position of South Africa makes political bribery likely, and I expect large sums of money to change places between here and the United Kingdom. The industrial expansion of South Africa is being held up by lack of capital, but the Communist menace may change the minds of the money men if Malan toes the line. That we shall know after the London meetings; until then what the anti-U.P. groups regards as their betrayal

M. L. B.



Marie-Louise Berneri, September 1948

Photo by V.R.

1936 of the social revolution in Spain. She made several visits to revolutionary Barcelona, where her father had taken up residence (after a short period of active fighting on the Aragon front) in order to edit his paper *Guerra di Classe*, the most far-seeing and clear-sighted revolutionary anarchist paper to come out of the Spanish revolution. Her contact with Spain gave to her revolutionary views an actual and practical quality which stood her in great stead in after years.

From its inception in 1936 she had taken an interest and an important practical part in the anarchist paper *Spain and the World* published from London in English. After her father's assassination, she came to live in London and devoted herself to advancing the cause of the revolution in Spain. Even after the final defeat when the movement generally suffered from the apathy of disappointment, she continued this work, and those who attended the study circle on Spain which she organized in London during the summer of 1940, will bear witness to her thoroughness and her organizing capacity—especially since at that time she had not yet the command of English which she afterwards attained.

At the end of the war in Spain she immediately devoted herself with practical solidarity to the work of looking after those Spanish comrades who escaped from Franco Spain to England in April of 1939. Until they were safely settled she did much of the marketing and cooking for them, and she kept in touch with many of them ever since. In 1945, when over a hundred Spaniards who had spent the war in the German forced labour brigades in France, were brought to England and treated as enemy prisoners-of-war, she not only visited them and organized relief parcels for them, but effectively brought their condition and the injustice of their detention to the knowledge of circles in a position to exert pressure on the government. In due course, and in no small measure as a result of her work on their behalf, they were released either to stay in this country or to go back to France.

Throughout the war, whether she was in the editorial chair or temporarily out of it, she was the principal theoretical influence behind *War Commentary*, and afterwards *Freedom*.

In 1945, she was one of the four anarchists associated with *War Com-*

mentary to be arrested and charged with sedition. She was acquitted on a technical point of law, and did not go into the witness box. But she had wished to defend herself, and only agreed to this more passive rôle on the insistence of comrades. They pointed out that it would be madness for all the defendants to go to prison when technical grounds would free her. She was more than equal to carrying the main burden of continuing the paper until her comrades were released from prison.

Her influence in this country was not limited to *Freedom*, for a number of prominent intellectuals both in the movement and outside it sought her advice on such matters as the history of the Spanish Revolution.

In addition, she maintained an extensive correspondence with comrades in Europe and South America throughout the war, and this she extended greatly in the post-war period.

She was the author of what is probably the most influential of recent *Freedom Press* publications, *Workers in Stalin's Russia*. Always an indefatigable student of Russia, she brought to her study exceptional intellectual integrity and penetration, and the book amply illustrates her humane and ethical outlook. As with her knowledge of Spain, she kept a strictly critical standpoint, and never permitted the demands of propaganda to warp her judgment. This quality lends a special authority to her work.

Recently, she completed a book which is to be published this year, entitled *Journey Through Utopia*, and it serves to illustrate her thoroughness. She had been asked to edit a selection from a few utopias; instead she examined some two hundred books and went fully into the whole subject before thinking of preparing the text. During the last few months she had projected a book of unpublished writings of Sacco and Vanzetti, which she hoped to issue both in England and America, and also in Italian.

She was not, however, content to confine herself to the literary work of anarchist publishing, being quite unsparing of herself in the routine work of the movement—office work, correspondence, street selling, contacting potential sympathisers, lecturing to the movement's meetings and to outside organizations. She was at the centre of all the manifold activities which go to make up a movement's life.

Her general grasp of international affairs was informed by a profound internationalism of feeling. Her sympathies were with the oppressed peoples of the world, and she was utterly incapable of that narrowness of outlook that is called patriotism.

Marie-Louise Berneri's interests were not limited to general political matters. She was a keen observer of human individuals and their motives, among her special interests being child psychology, and as always her great qualities informed her discussion of them. When she spoke on Reich's work and the sexuality of children to an Easter Conference of the Progressive League some years ago, many of her hearers spoke to a subsequent lecturer of the remarkable impression this young and beautiful woman made by her calm and penetrating discussion of matters which the majority of intellectuals fear even to think about. And all this with a charm and level-headedness which disarmed hostile criticism.

Throughout the war, she was continually beset with anxiety for friends and relatives in occupied territories, some of them in fascist prisons and concentration camps. Only those who were closest to her understood the courage which lay behind her serene bearing. With the same depth of courage she bore tragedy in her own life.

She was incapable of shams and dissimulations herself, and her outspoken criticism of it in others sometimes earned her the ill-will of less open people. Few possessed greater sympathy or capacity for affection; defections from the high standards of anarchist morality, to which she herself by nature adhered, would earn her contempt, but she was incapable of hatred, and always sought to understand the causes of behaviour which appeared to her to be base, even when that behaviour directly harmed herself.

For her friends and comrades the sense of loss is overwhelming. The writer is conscious of the inadequacy of these lines to pay the tribute which is due. She was the most powerful influence on his intellectual development, and there are many others who owe her a similar debt that can never be repaid. The sympathy of the international anarchist movement goes out to her companion and her relatives; her great qualities can never be replaced.

J.H.

THE death of Marie-Louise Richards, better known in the movement as Marie-Louise Berneri, at the age of 31, is a terrible loss to anarchism. She had already won for herself a high place among present-day theoreticians in the anarchist movement, and exerted an influence usually attained only by much older comrades. This influence was the product not only of her mastery of a number of subjects, but also of her exceptional personal qualities, which lent to her writings, her public speaking and her private conversation a special distinction that drew immediate attention. These qualities caused her opinions to be regarded with respect also in circles which do not share her social and political opinions. Her personal beauty reflected her serene and generous nature, and made her an outstanding figure at any gathering.

Her loss to the anarchist movement is not to be measured but it is also a great loss to the world in general

for it is such rare and exceptional individuals who enrich human life and make of the world a better place.

Marie-Louise Berneri was a member of a distinguished anarchist family which has influenced the movement directly in Italy, Spain, France and the English-speaking countries. Her father, Camillo Berneri, stepped into Malatesta's place as the leading theoretician of the Italian movement. He was assassinated in Spain by the Communists during their counter-revolutionary putsch in Barcelona in the May Days of 1937, when at the height of his powers. Her mother and sister are prominent in the movement in Italy and France.

Born at Arezzo in 1918, she went in early childhood into exile from Italy when her father refused to accept the demands laid upon the teaching profession by the Fascists. In France, her university studies in psychology were interrupted by the outbreak in

Psychology and Ethics

MAN FOR HIMSELF by Erich Fromm (Routledge 12/6).

A NEW book by the author of *The Fear of Freedom* raises one's expectations and it is pleasant to be able to report that they are completely fulfilled. Although this is by no means a large book, comprising as it does only 250 small pages of large print, the vast scope of the subject with which it is concerned makes it extremely difficult to give anything approaching an adequate synopsis of it. Not that the book is overloaded with erudite, but partly irrelevant, information. On the contrary, it is well-written, concise and coherent throughout; the product, it would seem, of a clear, penetrating yet orderly mind.

The value of Fromm's approach lies predominantly in the breadth of its outlook and the scientific synthesis it achieves. He realises that any one branch of scientific knowledge, and psychology perhaps especially, cannot be treated in isolation since one branch reacts upon another and is in turn reacted upon by them. "The divorcement of psychology from ethics is of a comparatively recent date. The great humanistic ethical thinkers of the past, on whose works this book is based, were philosophers and psychologists; they believed that the understanding of man's nature and the understanding of values and norms for his life were interdependent. . . . Psychology cannot be divorced from philosophy and ethics nor from sociology and economics."

Much of the book is concerned with the perennial conflict between Humanistic and Authoritarian ethics and between

Relative ethics and so-called Absolute ethics. For these two latter terms Fromm substitutes the terms "socially immanent" and "universal", and he shows convincingly that every culture evolves a system of social ethics that helps to safeguard its hierarchical structure and to perpetuate that structure with as little change or modification as possible. Thus obedience and respect for one's rulers have always been cardinal ethical virtues—from "the socially immanent" standpoint, while disobedience, self-respect and a critical attitude have always been ethical vices from childhood onwards. Once again the overwhelming importance of early childhood conditioning for the acceptance of authoritarian ethics is given emphasis. It should perhaps be added that, of course, domination of one group over another, of one person over another, of parent over child is not always achieved by the overt use of power. More often, as the animal trainer said of his performing troupe: "It's all done by kindness."

Origins of Love and Hate

This analysis, however, does not lead Fromm to support the negative, "relativistic" approach which seeks to prove that all ethical values are either culturally conditioned or the result of unconscious motivation, or both, and are therefore worthless. Nor does he therefore accept the premise which follows from that, and which is the basis and justification for authoritarian ethics—namely, that man is fundamentally evil, egotistical and anti-social and the group life is only possible by the use of self-control by the individual, by the restraining influence of what Freud

called the super-Ego, and which the uninitiated call simply "conscience". Man is not, Fromm maintains, inherently evil. On the contrary, he has the innate desire, which he shares with every organism from a grain of seed upwards, to achieve growth to realise his potentialities. One of the greatest of his potentialities is the capacity for love, for the expansion of, and from, the self which makes him naturally desire to behave in that manner most conducive to his true happiness and, since the happiness of others is intimately and inevitably bound up with his own, to behave in a socially advantageous manner at the same time. Man is only evil, is only anti-social and given to destructive impulses, when his life is such as to deny him the opportunity of living productively and creatively, when the natural flowering of the personality is thwarted or stunted by external social conditions, or, by what is ultimately the same thing, by internal conditioning, by the attempt, or the economic necessity, to conform to current social norms.

"Destructiveness is the outcome of un-lived life. Those individual and social conditions which make for the blocking of life-furthering energy produce destructiveness which in turn is the source from which the various manifestations of evil springs."

Original Virtue

It follows, therefore, that what is complacently called "neurosis" is in fact a sign of health in a person, or of potential health in as much as it is the rebellion of the life-assertive energies against socially conditioned frustration. The psychically dead are never overtly neurotic.

They are "normal" and "adjusted" people. One might almost say of a person that while he is neurotic there is still life in him.

Though he approaches the subject of mental health from a very different angle from Reich, and unlike Reich does not attach an overwhelming importance to sex, the conclusions that Fromm reaches are very similar.

"It might seem that the psychoanalyst, who is in the position of observing the tenacity and stubbornness of irrational strivings, would take a pessimistic view with regards to man's ability to govern himself and to free himself from the bondage of irrational passions. I must confess that during my analytic work I have become increasingly impressed by the opposite phenomenon: by the strength of the strivings for happiness and health, which are part of the natural equipment of man. 'Curing' means removing the obstacles which prevent them from becoming effective."

I have been compelled to dwell, in this short review, only with what have seemed to me to be the most important aspects of the book. Much of it I have been unable to make any reference to at all. I have said nothing of Fromm's excellent treatment of the history of ethics, of his study of the problem of hedonism in relation to ethics, of his important differentiation between character and temperament or of his concept and classification of character types. I can only suggest that you read the book yourself. It will be time well spent.

GERALD VAUGHAN.

THE CORRUPTING POWER

I HAVE compared deeds, emergencies I and men; I have seen our friends, the Communards, so honest that, fearing to be dreadful, they were only pitiless in the sacrifice of their lives; and I soon came to the conclusion, I became convinced, that honest people in power would be as incapable as the dishonest would be harmful, and that it is impossible for freedom to ally itself with any kind of power.

Then, I felt that a revolution adopting a government of whatever kind, was only a deception, it could only be an imposture that would not open doors to progress; that the past institutions, which seem to disappear, remain intact, only changing names; that everything is riveted to a chain in the old world and thus, that such government is bound to disappear entirely and make room for a new world, happy and free under the sun.

Indeed, anarchy alone can render man conscious, since it is the only school of thought that will make him free and make a complete separation between the herd of slaves and humanity. To every man who has climbed to power, the State? That's him, he considers it in the same way as a dog looks at the bone it gnaws, and he defends it for his own sake.

Now, power renders man fierce, selfish and cruel; on the other hand, servitude degrades. Thus anarchy will be the end of wretched miseries in which the human race has always groaned; it alone will not be a renewal of sufferings and furthermore, it stirs up, more and more, the tempered hearts for the fight for justice and truth.

LOUISE MICHEL.

(Translated by Jules Scarcieraux from "Le Libertaire".)

Decline of the French Communist Party

THE national conference of the French Communist Party which is holding its meetings in a municipal hall in the centre of Paris will not help to bring the Stalinists out of their present isolation. Most of the speakers have developed the theme, "the Party is suffering from a grave defect"—that of appearing sectarian, of being incapable of appealing to the non-Communist workers, of showing a certain inaptitude for working with the masses.

Since the "liberation", in fact, but particularly for the last fifteen months,

the Communist Party has had a noticeable loss of influence and a decrease in its membership. The central party organ, *L'Humanité*, which had a circulation of over 500,000 copies in 1946, now prints no more than 280,000 copies. The evening paper *Ce Soir* has lost 90,000 readers in a few months. In the provinces, most of the Communist dailies have become weeklies. Subscriptions and collections have gone down.

Their trade-union support is continuously diminishing through successive splits, through the return to political independence of the big federations and through the increase in the numbers of non-union workers. Most of the "fellow-traveller" organisations, the "Union of French Women", the "Union of Republican Youth", and associations of ex-soldiers, ex-prisoners, ex-deportees, etc., have been reduced to shadow organisations with no other life than conferences and resolutions.

The extraordinary gymnastics that the Party has imposed upon its members and sympathisers, have worn out its popular support. In four years the C.P. has been nationalist and internationalist; breaker of strikes and fomentor of strikes; supporter of national unity, and enemy of national unity; author of an emigration plan and opponent of all emigration; destroyer of the 40-hour week and fiery supporter of a return to the 40-hour week. Even for those workers whose memory is short and among whom the taste for analysis is little developed, these contradictions are too flagrant.

In spite of the party's pretensions to a monopoly of working-class action, a Right and a Left have formed outside it. The Right represents the socialist S.F.I.O., certain autonomous unions and the majority of the central *Force Ouvrière*. On the Left you will find the anarchists, the syndicalists of the C.N.T., the left minorities of the F.O., the C.G.T. and autonomous unions, and finally various groups like the *Rassemblement Démocratique Révolutionnaire* and the "Citizens of the World".

The number and variety of the means employed by the C.P. to reverse these tendencies are of little avail. There are certain towns in the South East, on the Mediterranean coast and in the Rhône valley (regions to which no doubt, Soviet strategy attaches great importance) where campaigns of leaflets and posters occur twice a week, yet public meetings get very limited audiences and the active movement is dying through lack of supporters.

The causes of these repeated setbacks are not to be found in the shortcomings of the militant Communists as the National Conference of the Party would suggest, but in the difficulty of defending and supporting Soviet policy.

The struggle against the French Government which might rally together the immense majority of the working-class is, for the C.P., merely an aspect of the cold war against the United States, for which it is much more difficult to enlist the support of the wage-earners.

The resolutions passed by the national conference of the Communist Party are, in fact, merely a series of slogans of Stalinist imperialism: struggle against the Atlantic Pact; no war with the U.S.S.R.; safeguarding French rights to German reparations; re-establishment of commercial relations with Central and Eastern Europe. All this forms part of the campaign "for peace".

Their domestic policy does not escape

from Russian requirements: defence of our industry and agriculture from American competition, and stabilisation of the franc, which is menaced by an alliance. There remain only the traditional slogans—drastic reduction of military expenditure and increase of the purchasing power of the working masses.

Contradictions abound in this policy, following inevitably from the fact that the C.P. is attempting to utilise all the malcontents, including reactionaries, so long as opposition to America is maintained. Thus, the Communists pity the French industrialists who are menaced by American competition, but demand rises in wage rates, although the remedy—in the capitalist regime—would be a reduction of wages to meet the competition of a better-equipped, better organised rival.

It goes without saying that the "pacifist" agitation succeeds in catching a few intellectuals and non-Communist militants who are won by the emotional aspect of the campaign.

But, in general, it is received with distrust. The decline of the French Communist Party marks a definite setback for Soviet imperialism.

S. PARANE.

Dear Sir,

A CORRESPONDENT has sent us the following copy of an exchange of correspondence between the Medical Students' Association in Paris and a local military commander. Fearing that Lord Montgomery would have received an answer in quite a different tone, he finds the incident illustrating well the difference in political temperament between medical students of London and Paris . . .

The following is a recent exchange of letters between Lt.-Colonel Journet of the French army and the President of the General Association of Medical Students in Paris.

X DISTRICT MILITARY ENGINEERS
19th REGIMENT

OFFICE OF THE COLONEL

Lt.-Colonel Journet,
Officer-in-Command of the 19th Regiment of Engineers to the President of the General Association of Medical Students in Paris.

Monsieur le Président,
The Army, because it is derided and misunderstood, no longer benefits from the steady flow of volunteers necessary for the important functions it must undertake.

The short notice herewith enclosed is intended to spread a knowledge of the prospects offered by the Engineers, a branch of the service I know well, since it is my own, and more especially by the 19th Regiment of Engineers, whose Commander I have the honour to be.

I would be very obliged to you for issuing to the members of your association the hundred copies hereto adjoined of the above-mentioned notice. This publicity may perhaps promote some careers, and I can assure you that any young students who decide to try will not regret their decision later: an army career, particularly as a sapper, is worth the experience.

I beg you to accept, Monsieur le Président, my humble respects.

LT.-COLONEL JOURNET.

THROUGH A CHILD'S EYE...

GERMANY YEAR ZERO
(London, Curzon Cinema.
Directed by Roberto Rossellini.
In German, with English subtitles).

THE film is an obvious medium for conveying the situation of post-war Germany, ravaged by twelve years of Hitler's rule, by the Allied bombing and by the economic chaos of occupation. Rossellini has attempted to express in this film something of reality of present-day Germany through the effect of these desperate conditions on a particular family. But actually the theme of the film is narrowed down to their effect on a twelve-year-old boy, compelled to shoulder responsibilities beyond his years in a world in which conventional moral values are as completely dismantled as the gaunt, shattered buildings of Berlin which form the continuous pervading background to the action.

FILMS

Pretending to be fifteen, he attempts to get a labour card in order to earn wages in the clearance squads, he is inevitably detected because the work is far too heavy. At home he hears the moralistic complaints of a sick father, whose confinement to bed prevents him from seeking the reality of the shattered conditions which make nonsense of his moral code, while his able-bodied brother is afraid to register because he was in a Nazi regiment. His sister goes to night clubs to get cigarettes which the Occupation troops give her, but cannot bring herself to follow her friends' advice and embark on frank prostitution. Intrigues and deceptions follow from the family being billeted on a black marketeer's house, and there is a sideglance at the suspicion with which another billetee, a girl who is a displaced person, is regarded. Sneeringly, she is referred to as "the so-called victim of Fascism".

His former schoolmaster, dismissed for Nazi sympathies, provides another sordid episode with more than a hint of paederasty, all the more sordid for being vague and indirect. It is this man's cynical values which put into the boy's head the idea that the weaker must go to the wall that the stronger may survive, so that he acts on the impulse and poisons his sick father, intending to relieve the family's burden. His remorse, only half comprehended, and mixed with childish impulses to play, provides the material for the pro-

The General Association of Medical Students in Paris, to M. le Lieutenant-Colonel Journet.

Mon Colonel,
The human body, because it is derided and misunderstood, no longer benefits from the steady flow of students necessary for the important functions it must undertake.

The short notice herewith enclosed is intended to spread a knowledge of the prospects offered by Medicine, and more especially by gynecology, a branch of Medicine I know well, since it is my own. I would be very obliged to you (and extremely grateful) for printing 2,000 copies of the above-mentioned notice hereto-adjoined, and for issuing them to the sappers of your regiment.

This publicity may perhaps promote some careers, and I can assure you that any young soldiers who decide to try will not regret their decision later: a medical career, particularly as a gynecologist, is with the experience.

[Here follows a succession of unprintable words.]

I beg you to accept, Mon Colonel, my humble respects.

THE SECRETAIRE GENERAL DE L'ASSOCIATION.

longed final sequences which are most feelingly conveyed, and end in the child's suicide.

Rossellini comes near to avoiding the besetting fault of his earlier films, "Open City" and "Paisa"—an obvious fascination for the brutalities and cruelties of his subject matter. In this film this preoccupation comes out only in the schoolmaster episodes already referred to; for the rest the impact of the appalling conditions, the deceit, the pilfering, the garbage-can existence, and above all, the continuous menace of empty ruins and their shadows in the sun, are treated in a highly imaginative manner, and bring the film near to greatness even though the subject matter seems to preclude a full feeling of the tragedy of life after war.

J.H.

THE TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE (Provinces).

THE story upon which this film is based was written by B. Travençolo, with Gustav Landauer and Erich Mühsam, played a prominent part in the Bavarian revolution after the first World War and edited the anarchist paper "The Tilla-Burner", under the name of Ret Marut. He was sentenced to death and escaped on his way to execution, eventually re-appearing in Mexico, where he lives in an isolated town from which a series of novels has come, the best-known of which are "The White Rose" and "The Death Ship". The "Treasure of the Sierra Madre" is the story of three men seeking and finding gold in a remote mountainous part of Mexico, and of its effect upon their characters, for "Gold does somethin' to ya," as the old-timer Walter Huston observes. It is a simple tale with gun-battles, pursuits and summary executions, but is considerably more interesting and original than most Westerns because of its authentic background, the impassive faces of the Indians, the opening scenes in Tampico and the superb acting of Walter Huston. The dialogue is taut and racy, and for those that like him, there is Humphrey Bogart.

W.

THROUGH THE PRESS

UNIVERSITIES OF CRIME

Another group of murders are to some extent the products of our prison system. It is not generally realised how large a group this is. Nearly half the men found guilty of murder every year are persons with previous convictions for other crimes. For example, 14 of the 30 murderers convicted in 1947 already had a criminal record; three of them were old lags with more than five prison sentences each.

—Mark Benney in
Leader Magazine, 23/4/49.

WHAT MAKES BAD BOYS?

At the root of a seemingly incorrigible boy's bad behaviour there is usually some fundamental cause—an unsettled home life, a deep-seated fear or prejudice, mental or physical instability.

—Mrs. F. O'Shaughnessy in
Daily Herald, 19/4/49.

NO CELTIC TWILIGHT

The World has been running towards an ever-increasing degree of uniformity, whether under the rule of some conventionally elected majority or of some ideology.

In this the Celts, whose way is more direct and more human, individually centred and selective, have been estranged; they have not thrived like other races and they have fallen almost into oblivion.

Uniformity, adequate for massive production, smothered human genius and vitality. Ideology and conventional majority rules are now clashing over the apparent wealth brought about by the quantitative returns of uniformity.

An *Aimsair Cheilteach*, April, 1949.

WHOSE TURN NEXT?

Truth comments caustically on the trial of Abetz, former German Ambassador in Paris: "The war with Germany ended three and a half years ago, and the weary series of war-guilt trials still drags on. There is a danger, if the delay is longer protracted, that the trials arising from one war will become mixed up with those arising from the next. Abetz, stumbling down from the dock, will meet Stalin and Molotov ascending, or—for the fortunes of war are never certain—Truman and Bevin."

The Individualist, April, 1949.

MUST WE CONFORM?

It is a fact known to naturalists that if you were to catch a sparrow, dye its feathers bright colours and release it, it would probably be pecked to death by its fellows.

This very primitive—but still powerful—instinct to destroy any member of the herd that differs from type is, in man, a survival from our millions of years passed as apes. Then it was vital to the survival of the race that every member looked, behaved, fought, thought and ate in the same way. The trouble in our present-day schools is that the masters look on and approve this animal hostility to any individuality or original development of a boy's personality.

If every boy conforms rigidly to herd customs it makes things easier for the masters. That is the secret. The same applies to nations, of course.

Letter in *Illustrated*, 16/4/49.

A LESSON LEARNT

Some 600 students of Delhi University threaten to go on hunger-strike to-morrow because their demand for postponement of examinations has been turned down.

In the goals of East Punjab a large number of members of the Militant Hindu organisation have been hunger-striking and forcibly fed.

When a group of refugees in a Delhi camp went on hunger-strike police removed them to a village where they were given land. The number of hunger-strikers immediately increased.

Scarcely a week passes without some individual deciding to starve on the doorstep of the home or office of some leader.

News Chronicle, 18/4/49.

NEW EDUCATION FELLOWSHIP

IN the summer of 1946, a small group of anarchists proposed to issue a quarterly journal devoted to the interchange of ideas and experience in progressive educational work in order "to establish a body of factual information from which educational principles might be formulated". Some of the questions which it was felt needed clarification were:

- Respective merits of boarding and day schools.
- Rôle of academic and of social education.
- Sexuality in infancy, childhood and adolescence.
- Collective staff responsibility or authority vested in a headmaster.

Nothing came of the proposal. It is one of the objects of this monthly column in *Freedom* to concentrate discussion on such question, and the editors welcome contributions from readers.

Four out of six of the progressive schools approached in 1946 replied that the New Education Fellowship seemed to cover the ground.

Founded in 1915, the N.E.F. is now a world movement of 17,000 members. Its aim is "to promote the exchange and practice of ideas that strengthen the foundations of peace". That it is non-

governmental gives it freedom to act swiftly and independently (though at the same time it has a consultative status in UNESCO), and through it one may, in Mat Kavanagh's phrase, "talk to people who have never heard of us", and who are working in some branch of a state educational system or in a private progressive school.

Such members as Kees Boeke of the Children's Workshop Community, Hol-

EDUCATION

land; Adolphe Ferriere; Prof. Saiyidain of Bombay; Minna Specht of the Odewaldschule; Henri Wallon, who succeeded Paul Langevin as president of the French section; and Carleton Washburne of Winnetka, U.S.A., may indicate the complexion and type of educational experiment to which it gives expression.

The main activities of the N.E.F. are: 1. The monthly publication of the *New Era*, which is one of the few educational magazines owned and directed by an international body. It is also exceptional in that it emphasises the importance of the emotions and social living in human development.

2. The running of a Book Club which, in association with Messrs. Heinemann, publishes three books a year. Examples are: W. B. Curry of Dartington's *Education for Sanity*; Miss Bazeley's *Homer Lane and the Little Commonwealth*; Jean Piaget's *Play and Childhood*.

3. The organization of Research. A project just about to be begun by a Pilot group in London is to discover the basic prejudices amongst teachers that militate against education for a world community.

4. Conferences. About twenty world and regional conferences have been held since 1921. The next European one is to be held near Cirencester, Gloucestershire, from 4-12 August, 1949. The theme will be "The New Education and World Peace". There will be a number of lectures, but the main work will be carried out by leaderless discussion groups concentrating on questions of (a) attitude change and (b) personal frustrations and group tensions within the school community.

Further details about any of the above may be obtained from the International Headquarters, 1, Park Crescent, London, W.1.

ANTHONY WEAVER.

FREEDOM PRESS

27, Red Lion Street,
London, W.C.1.

C. Bonneri: KROPOTKIN—HIS FEDERALIST IDEAS	2d.
Errico Malatesta: ANARCHY VOTE WHAT FOR?	6d. 1d.
M. L. Berneri: WORKERS IN STALIN'S RUSSIA	1/-
F. A. Ridley: THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE MODERN AGE	2d.
Gaston Laval: COLLECTIVES IN SPAIN	1d.
Charles Duff: A HANDBOOK ON HANGING John Olday: THE MARCH TO DEATH THE LIFE WE LIVE, THE DEATH WE DIE	2/- 1/6 2/6
A. Ciliga: THE KRONDSTADT REVOLT	2d.
Icarus: THE WILHELMSHAVEN REVOLT	6d.
"Equity": THE STRUGGLE IN THE FACTORY	3d.
McCartney: THE FRENCH COOKS SYNDICATE	3d.
William Godwin: SELECTIONS FROM POLITICAL JUSTICE ON LAW	3d. 1d.
P. J. Proudhon: GENERAL IDEA OF THE REVOLUTION IN THE 19th CENTURY	Cloth 5/-

UNREST IN INDUSTRY

FROM many industries comes evidence that a sense of frustration and grievance is deep-seated and growing. While this is sometimes expressed in the way we have referred to so often—the growing demand for workers' control, or at least, workers' participation in management—we must admit that the main sense of grievance is bound up with nothing more radical than the desire for more wages.

Even this, however, in to-day's circumstances, can lead to more radical developments. The demand for more wages is in direct conflict with the Government's present policy of wage-pegging, but the recent Budget and continued rise in the cost of living is so discrediting that policy that many an erstwhile Labour supporter is looking around for an alternative.

The trades unions, it goes without saying, are not looking for alternatives, except those which are C.P. dominated and so already think they have found one, but they are in a quandary. Following the Budget, the T.U.C.'s Economic Committee met and, of course, announced that they gave their support and would continue to support the Government's wages policy. The individual unions, however, are free to agitate for wage increases and even to criticise the White Paper, and it may be taken that they even welcome the opportunity to appear militant and to rally some support where they had been steadily losing it for years.

There is a limit, though, to how far they will go in criticising the Government, and a few emotional appeals to loyalty will still do the trick at election time.

THE RAILWAYMEN

ESPECIALLY peeved with the wages question are railway workers, still one of the lowest-paid sections of the community. Their recent claim for a 12s. 6d. a week increase (via the N.U.R.) was turned down flat, and the refusal has already led to at least one strike in the North and go-slow movements elsewhere. Real trouble can be prophesied for the railway bosses if substantial satisfaction is not given the railmen before long.

BETTESHANGER

FAR more important fundamentally are the recent events at Betteshanger Colliery, Kent, where all the men were sacked because the Coal Board is "not prepared to lose another penny" in continuing to run the pit." Betteshanger is a highly mechanised pit, and on paper should be both productive and profitable, but the Board claim there is strong Communist influence and that the men have been going slow.

We are not in a position at the moment to deal thoroughly with this case, but certain features betray themselves whether the C.P. is at work or not. The first of these is that the National Coal Board is in a far stronger position to

fight working-class action than individual mine-owners ever were. If the workers look like being successful in their struggle at any one point of production, the Board can simply close down that particular plant and the workers are sunk.

Arising out of that, we see the growing, rather than decreasing, importance of the more revolutionary approach to working-class struggles. While individual strikes or other forms of struggle can be crushed by a ruthless state, the widespread or general strike still leaves odds-on for the workers if they are sufficiently determined and prepared.

Further, incidents like Betteshanger only prove more conclusively that nationalisation is no panacea, but that the only solution is workers' control.

We hope to come back to this subject shortly and deal with it and all its implications more thoroughly.

THE DOCK STRIKE

THE recent unofficial and illegal London Dock Strike was also said to be Communist-inspired, and certainly Dick Barrett, the leader of the "Blue-Ticket" union—the National Amalgamated Union of Stevedores and Dockers—is a Communist.

Equally certainly, however, the dockers' action is based on no particular expediency, but on a real defence of their economic standing. 32 men were being dismissed as redundant because, it was claimed, they were no longer fit for the work. The dockers thought men should not be cast aside just like that when they are no longer strong enough for the dockers' heavy work.

At the moment of writing, the men are back pending the giving of the statutory 21 days' notice of strike—to make it legal. We hope to be able to deal more fully with this also in our next issue.

Kid Gloves Off!

DEAR COMRADES,

I have read with interest the recent controversy over "workers' interests" and agree to a large extent with what you say concerning the importance of sex and education (though it must be said that because anarchists give these two items more attention than is given to them by other revolutionary movements, this in no way diminishes the importance of working conditions, since, after all, the worker usually spends some third of his active life in such an environment). However, though both the letter of C.W. and your reply succeed in making their points, I think far too little attention has been given to the question of how we are to propagate our ideas in such a way as to hold the interest of the "casuals" and I would therefore like to put forward the following suggestions as a tentative solution of at least part of the problem:

(1) That in order that the worker may fully understand the anarchist case, our ideas must be stated in a manner as simple and as fundamentally as possible. This is by no means the position with regard to sex and education with existing F.P. publications. If we wish to interest the worker in the libertarian approach to sex-relationships it is no use commencing with a treatise of the character and, at times, obscurity of Alex Comfort's essay—apart from its definitely partisan approach to anarchism. It is obviously much better to start with a work which gives the postulates and justification for the principle which has the adherence of all genuine anarchists—i.e., the rejection of any legal or ecclesiastical sanction or co-ercion, in the relationships of men and women. In other words the belief of anarchists in free union as opposed to co-ercive marriage.

So far as I know, the only available work of this nature is Shelley's *Essay on Marriage*, which is perhaps too brief for this purpose, but the fact remains that we must state our fundamental premises

before indulging in speculations concerning monogamy versus promiscuity—selective or otherwise. The same applies to Herbert Read's pamphlet on education.

(2) One of the reasons for the lack of appeal to the work of *Freedom* is that its publishers apparently cannot make up their minds as to whether it should be a predominantly theoretical or a predominantly propagandist paper. At present it is an uneasy compromise between the two. A possible solution to this would be to issue both a theoretical and a propagandist journal. The advantages of such an arrangement are obvious. Not only would the casual reader be no longer put off by some important but, to him, obtuse article on a subject whose appeal is limited to the fully conscious revolutionary, but the theoretical journal would provide the space for translations of the work whose ideas the editors so rightly deplore. That there are difficulties to this proposition I fully realise. The most apparent is, no doubt, money, but I see no reason why the publication of one or other of the papers should not be the responsibility of

another group—in the case of the theoretical journal it might possibly be advantageous to make it an international publication. Another objection will no doubt be made by those comrades who profess an abhorrence for "propaganda"; but because "sloganised and agitational" writing is irritating to the matured revolutionary, it in no way means that it is not of vital importance.

These, then, are my suggestions. And may I say further than in my opinion our propaganda should henceforth take off its kid gloves and aim at "infuriating" the workers out of their bourgeois stagnancy? I have no doubt that such an idea is extremely distasteful to those "anarchists" whose conception of direct action appears to consist of lying on a nail-bed of metaphysics and contemplating the eternalness of their navels, but if we are to make anarchism a force to be reckoned with in the horrors of the bourgeoisie our adherent must be recruited from thinking men not automatons, and you'll never make the worker of to-day think by describing the doubtful benefits of belief in a world-soul, only by shocking him into opposition to his hitherto-accepted prejudices.

Yours fraternally,
Birmingham. S. E. PARKER.

That Word Again!

RECENTLY I have been pleased to see an increasing use of the word "Libertarian", in lieu of the word "Anarchist", in Libertarian publications. As K. J. Kenafick said, in his extremely erudite book *Bakunin and Karl Marx*, it would be better for all parties if Bakuninists had continued to describe themselves as "Revolutionary Socialists"—instead of adopting the term "anarchists" to describe themselves; for not only do most people think only of anarchy as meaning "anarchy", in the vulgar sense of the term, but the word "anarchist"

usually calls up the image, in the hearer's mind, of a sinister-looking figure wearing a black cloak and carrying a large bomb. In these days the term Communism is loosely used to describe that hodge-podge of Blanquism and early Marxian authoritarianism which is the theoretical basis on which the so-called "Communist" parties, of the Cominform, are built. For this reason the term "Anarchist Communism" causes many misunderstandings; some even look upon us as another brand of Stalinist. It is time we stopped describing ourselves as anarchists and re-adopted either the term "Revolutionary Socialist" or the term "Libertarian Socialist".

Yours fraternally, FRANCIS KING.

Letters

A Modern Conception of Anarchism

ANARCHISM is before all other things a social theory. It concerns itself (in a thoroughly workmanlike fashion) with the status of its lowest common factor (the individual) within the social framework.

Clearly and unassailably it establishes a sound scientific formula for the continued development of the human race by postulating only those fundamentals concerned with the healthy growth and maturing of the individual within the species.

And always there has been attracted to it the sharpest minds and fearless spirits within an outworn and outmoded social system. The very grandeur of the idea and the poetry of its form has much to do with its present lowly status as a beacon of attainment. "Not for us the ultimate," cry the many, "one step enough for me" the expression of the masses and thus in a tangle of political makeshifts, the voice of *Freedom* is stifled and evolution meanders into the cesspool of stagnation.

Anarchism suffers thus; born as a virile reaction to insufferable iniquities in the dark womb of time, it has remained as it was genited—a sharp challenge and complete answer to the social inequalities of

its conception. Life flows ceaselessly on. Generations arise and seek to grapple with its immediate problems. The fashion of exploitation changes form. Our ideas of things and our relationship to things are transformed in great measure.

The dialectic of motion is ceaseless and we would fain join issue armed with the semi-obsolete conceptions of a more rugged and heroic age.

Bakunin with the answer to a savage and ruthless capitalism even as the scholarliness and patience of Kropotkin was counterpart of a more sedate and urbane exploitation.

Is it any wonder that terms like "Freedom" and "Liberty" are incomprehensible to a proletariat conditioned to long years of subtle and astute exploitation masked within a shrewd sop of social service. Freedom and liberty, these well-loved phrases of the militants, are overdue for a reevaluation. The phrases as well as the tactics of struggle must take on a modern meaning. Constructiveness usurp destructiveness. Not so long ago, the "strike" meant to withdraw from production with its commitments, starvation and too often sub-

mission. To-day, the tendency is to remain at the seat of production. Not too remote is the will to lock-out the owners of industry. This changing nature of things must find reflection in ethical concepts. The "positive" nature of factory occupation gives the lie to our old-fashioned idea of negative freedom. Freedom to-day, it is becoming increasingly known, means the shouldering of the burdens of social-economics.

In its slow and maddening way, the entry of worker elements into Joint Industrial Boards and so on, indicate the responsibility complex is maturing. Within certain limits, much scope exists for building up a requisite alternative to the doomed present. He who in scorn would deprecate or withhold participation in these activities are the veriest types in revolutionary tactics. Infiltration in class war is as well-established as its counterpart in military spheres.

Deceased, too, is the notion that our "Freedoms" can be granted through Parliaments. The long years of fruitless political activity is giving place to a sharpening tempo in industrial conflict in which the workers (Tory, Liberal, Labour and Communist) achieve a natural unity against a common enemy—the State.

The anarchist rôle to-day means standing four-square with the worker in his day-to-day struggles, accepting existing organisational forms as a preference to the isolation eventual in new "Left" organisations. The sorry state of the onepowerful I.W.W. surely stands as a lasting warning against further division. One merely moves the "Left" into opposition to the "Ponderable" masses.

If one is sure of himself and is cognisant of the historic rôle of Labour he need not fear "contamination". Real freedom in a modern sense means the ability to create and consume, the cycle being complementary. The absolute freedom of another generation is as obsolete as the mechanics of its age.

The strong social ties (a necessary alternative to compulsion) decree that freedom aligns itself to society at a given stage in development.

How true is the concept "Nothing is! All things are becoming!"

For the anarchist, there is no rest, no laying down of arms, no finality! only an endless chain of "Ever Becoming" in which ultimately (through its exercise) the individuality of its components become rooted so that one may truly say, "I am unique."

Thus, through dialectic motion, the philosopher's seemingly futile speculation achieves validity. A Stirner at one pole and a Marx at the other will be found to be just facets of the one great drama of life in which living one's life boldly and fully is the philosopher's stone absolving all contradictions.

D. E. PUDE.

THE WAR IN CHINA

(Continued from page 1)

This open admission only confirms the point that *Freedom* has been making from the start of the new civil war in China—that the struggle is basically one between Russian Imperialism on the one hand, and Anglo-American imperialism on the other. The question of help for South China has once more become a subject for political debate (coloured, needless to say, by the Republicans' desire to discredit the Democratic policy of Truman) in American government circles.

Now, American aid to Chiang Kai-shek ceased when it became apparent that it went into the pockets of the incredibly corrupt administrators of the centralist government of the Kuomintang. Liberalistic critics urge that help to be renewed, but that it should be conditional on certain land and administrative reforms designed to make the Kuomintang regime "worth fighting for". Needless to say, any reformism urged by the Americans can only be for the purpose of protecting their interests, and achieving democratic support for their nominees may be incompatible with the property interests involved. In any case, the good faith of the American government does not exist, any more than it does for any other imperialism, for they aim not at "right relations" in the human sphere, but at their own power or the curtailing of that of their rivals.

Internal Resistance Hamstrung

If American liberals are unrealistic in their faith in the good will of their government, what more practical alternative can be advanced by more clear-

sighted people who put the interests of humanity in general and the Chinese people in particular in the forefront of their proposals? Distaste at American imperialism and the scheming of perfidious Albion should not mask the fact that Communist (that is, Russian Imperialist) domination of China is no more attractive a proposition—it is permissible to regard it as a greater evil. Nor can support logically be extended to the former dictatorship of the Kuomintang, or the rule of the landlords and Chinese Banking interests.

Again, if it is impossible—as it clearly is—to support any one of the present active protagonists among the Imperialists, are there any alternative forces in China to-day which contain the possibility of social justice and human fulfilment for the Chinese people? The answer is, yes—the Chinese people themselves; but their effectiveness in the struggle is only potential at the moment. As always in such struggles, the mass of the people are apathetic about supporting any of the forces whose main attribute is the one which they possess in common—the desire to exploit them. If the people of China would follow their own interests and place themselves on a firm economic base by seizing direct control of the land and industry, they would be in a more powerful position than any of the interventionists and their various puppets. The vicarious war of foreign powers, waged with Chinese lives, for other than Chinese ends, would fade into the background and be consumed in the flame of the social revolution.

Now, it is clear enough that this solution can be the only radical one; all

others involving the victory of one of the imperialist camps must only prolong the agony of the Chinese workers, while the prolongation of the struggle through the failure of any one group to exclude its rivals would be the worst outcome of all. No amount of "practical politics" of the kind that says, "Yes, but what we have to deal with is the situation here and now in China", and get over the fact that when that situation is "dealt with" the plight of the Chinese millions still remains unsolved. This lesser evil argument only "solves" the problem from the imperialist angle—the safeguarding of various property rights, economic spheres, market advantages and the like.

The Practical Alternative

To be really practical, therefore, one must fan the flame of the embryo Chinese revolution along anarchist lines—that is to say, lines which do not lead to more leaders and more bondage at the end of the struggle and the sacrifice. Further intervention by the British or the Americans can only increase the apathy of the Chinese masses, and set back the cause of revolution. Opinion in revolutionary circles in England and America should therefore be directed towards making it impossible for governments to secure popular support for more imperialist adventures at the expense of Chinese life and happiness. And this humane and forceful public opinion must be achieved without falling into the error of implying support for the Communists and their masters in the Kremlin. Hands off the Chinese people's struggle to free themselves from all imperialist exploiters!

Meetings and Announcements

UNION OF ANARCHIST GROUPS: CENTRAL LONDON

MAY 1st 5—8.30 p.m.
Open Air Meeting at Hyde Park

MAY 8th Philip Sansom
Art, Sex and Syndicalism

MAY 15th Albert Meltzer
The U.A.G. & the Anarchist International

MAY 22nd Carl Robert
Theoretical Foundations of the Third Camp

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

SUMMER SCHOOL

will be held this year in Liverpool on Sat. 30th, Sun. 31st July, and Mon. 1st August.

Accommodation and meals available. Will readers who would like to attend, assuming the cost to be reasonable, please write to:

Joan Sculthorpe,
Flat C, 45, Catharine Street, Liverpool, 8.

WEST YORKSHIRE ANARCHIST GROUP

A Public Meeting will be held in Room 3, Laycock's Chambers, Albion Court, Kirkgate, BRADFORD,

at 3 p.m. on Sunday, May 1st, 1949. Questions invited. All welcome.

BIRMINGHAM ANARCHIST CIRCLE

PUBLIC MEETINGS Saturday, 30th April 7 p.m.

Anti-Militarist Meeting in the BULL RING.

Sunday, 1st May 6.30 p.m.

May Day Rally Speaker: Mat Kavanagh

GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP

On and after April 24th: Outdoor Meetings MAXWELL STREET,

every Sunday at 7 p.m., Frank Leech, John Gaffney, Eddie Shaw.