

Bishops Rule Ireland

"Faith and Morals" and Infant Sacrifice

THE events leading up to the Irish General Elections illustrate beyond any doubt that the ultimate government of the Republic of Ireland is the Roman Catholic Church, a fact that remains true whoever has topped the poll.

When, after the defeat of de Valera's *Fianna Fail* Party at the elections of 1948, an unwieldy coalition was formed by Mr. Costello, everybody said that it would last three years, as that is the minimum to qualify ex-ministers for a pension.

It did, even though the only aim the parties forming the last government had in common was their opposition to de Valera. They were *Fine Gael* (Conservative), the Republican Party (Sean MacBride), the Farmers Party, Labour and an assortment of Independents.

Fine Gael, when in opposition had always stood for Ireland's remaining within the British Commonwealth, and when Taoiseach Costello made Sean MacBride his foreign minister, that glamorous republican, reassured the public that since they had not voted for his policy of independence, the matter would be "left in abeyance". But then de Valera, freed from office toured the country and even went to the U.S.A. and indifferent London to campaign for the Republic. So Costello stole his thunder and declared the Irish Republic. Whereupon MacBride announced that "the overwhelming demand of the Irish people for complete sovereignty could not be withstood."

Having settled this momentous issue, which made not a ha'porth of difference to anyone, the coalition settled down to a policy very like that of its predecessors, though scrapping as a matter of principle, expenditure on schemes started by *Fianna Fail* and initiating new ones. The resignation of the government (after the appropriate three years!) was because of threatened defeat over the price paid to farmers for milk. But the real cause of the weakening of the coalition was the row over the Minister of Health's Mother and Child scheme.

T.B. and Child Mortality

Before the last elections, Dr. Noel Browne was known only as a campaigner against T.B. He had no interest in politics and joined MacBride's *Clann na Poblachta* in 1948 to further his aims. He was immediately made Minister of Health. He set to work to provide X-ray centres, hospitals and sanatoria, a nutrition survey and a public hygiene campaign. His energy and unorthodox methods were highly successful.

Then, last March, Dr. Browne (who had been dissuaded from resigning last year over the Balinglass post office scandal), introduced his Mother-and-Child Scheme for free pre-natal and ante-natal care and maternity beds. Ireland's record in the reduction of infantile mortality is the worst in Europe. The death-rate is still 83 to every thousand births (as against 30 in England and Wales). The scheme had reached the stage of being advertised in the newspapers when it was announced that Dr. Browne had resigned. The Bishops had decided that the scheme was "contrary to faith and morals". The Minister's resignation was demanded, not by the

COLLECTIVISATION HALTED IN ALBANIA

THE Central Committee of the Communist Party of Albania issued a resolution on May 14th "... not to increase the number of collective agricultural co-operatives, but to consolidate existing agricultural co-operatives." They have thus reversed a decision of a few weeks ago.

Inevitably, one is reminded of the similar reversal of policy forced upon the Russian Government in the spring of 1928 when the policy of collectivising the peasants was temporarily suspended.

No doubt, also, the new directive comes from Russia, for all reports suggest that since the rebellions reported a few months ago in Albania, administration has fallen more and more into the hands of the Russian military "advisers".

As in every other example, forced collectivisation is meeting, in Albania, with the most determined resistance on the part of the peasants.

Prime Minister but by Sean MacBride (as head of Dr. Browne's party).

The doctor then published his correspondence with MacBride, which reached a level of vituperation rare in modern politics. This upset Costello, who said in plaintive speech that he had wanted the affair settled "privately and behind closed doors". Among other things the letters revealed that Costello had known for six months that the Church would condemn the scheme, but had let Dr. Browne take it as far as public announcements under the impression that the whole cabinet supported him. (Was the Taoiseach thinking of those three years?) The letters also disclosed that Dr. Browne had been told off by "broad-minded" Sean MacBride for appearing in public at the opening of hospital with the Protestant Bishop of Dublin.

The Bishops' Object

The Roman Catholic Bishops stated that the scheme would "constitute a ready-made instrument of totalitarian aggression", that (although it was voluntary), "it would deprive 90 per cent. of parents of their rights because of 10 per cent. necessitous or negligent parents, that gynaecological care might be interpreted as including provision for birth limitation and abortion, even though Dr. Browne gave assurances that "education" would be confined to advice about pre-natal diet, etc. Commenting on the Bishop's statement, the *Irish Times* remarked: "A Mother-and-Child Scheme with a Means

Test is in accordance with Christian social principles; a Mother-and-Child Scheme without a Means Test is opposed to them!"

The servility of the Premier when "kindly" sent for by the Archbishop, is almost unbelievable. He denied that he or his Cabinet knew anything of the Scheme—although it had been published and budgeted for to the sum of £600,000.

And Politicians Grovel

Disillusioned, Dr. Browne wrote to MacBride: "I entered politics because I believed in the high-minded principles which you were expounding on political platforms. I do you no injustice when I state that I never observed you hearken to any of these principles when practical cases came before us... I have bidden farewell to your unwholesome brand of politics." But all parties to this slanging match were agreed on the one thing—their unquestioning obedience to the Church.

Mr. Costello said: "As a Catholic I obey my Church authorities and will continue to do so." Mr. MacBride said: "In Ireland, a conflict between the spiritual and temporal authorities is damaging to national unity." Mr. Norton, leader of the Labour Party, and Minister of Social Welfare, said: "There is going to be no flouting of the Bishops on Catholic morals and social teaching."

And Dr. Browne said: "As a Catholic I accept the ruling of Their Lordships, the Hierarchy without question."

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Mr. de Valera, waiting for the election, kept silent. But nobody at all will dispute his loyalty to the Church.

This is why the Irish elections mean nothing at all. For Ireland is ruled by the most powerful political movement of the western world—the Church of Rome.

C.W.

A BIASED REPORT

The Leggett Report on Dock Strikes

by HARRY CONSTABLE

A REPORT of a Committee of Inquiry under the chairmanship of Sir Frederick Leggett, C.B., entitled "Unofficial Stoppages in the London Docks" (H.M. Stationery Office, price 1/3d.), has recently been published. The report has been submitted to the Rt. Hon. Alfred Robens, M.P., Minister of Labour and National Service and will be presented in due course by the Minister to Parliament.

Committee's Basic Aims

The Committee of Inquiry was appointed on the 19th May, 1950, by Mr. George Isaacs, M.P., who was at that time Minister of Labour. The committee was appointed by the Labour Government following the many stoppages in the London docks during the last few years and it was given the task of investigating the problem fully with a view to reporting what steps could be taken to avoid further "unofficial action of the type that has taken place during the last three years and has proved injurious to the trade of the country". The cost of the report is estimated at £1,053 14s. 11d., and it has taken the committee, under the chairmanship of Leggett, a year to make its report to the present Minister of Labour.

The report, and its recommendations, are not only of concern to Port-workers. Every section of the organised trade union movement is likely to be affected by its implications. The first that should be borne in mind when studying the report is that it is not drawn up by an impartial committee, as can be seen from the quoted terms of reference above and the composition of the committee itself. Indeed, the basic assumption of the report is not "how best the interests of port-workers and the working-class in general can be served", but "what steps can be taken to avoid unofficial action" on the part of the rank and file. The main aim therefore is to make recommendations to the Labour Government, the employers, the union leaders and port authorities, on how best to preserve "peace in industry" at all costs, which means in effect, at the expense of port-workers. The report is a biased report, biased against the port-workers, and must be

examined in this light. The Labour Government must take responsibility for setting up an inquiry committee with biased terms of reference against the port-workers.

Restrictive Practices

The inquiry committee says that in London, the outlook of the casual worker still persists and that this is shown "in the continuance of restrictive practices, and in the tradition of unquestioning solidarity in strike action". Readers will note the assumption that "restrictive practices" are a bad thing—but bad for whom? The employers and government who want an increased amount of work without wage increases? Or the port-workers? The committee lines itself up with the employers and government in desiring to break down established customs secured after years of battle and speed up the port-workers so that men

ANTI-SNOOP STRIKE

Drivers Protest Against State Patrols

LORRY-DRIVERS on long-distance transport nationalised under the Road Haulage Executive, staged a protest strike this week against the introduction of official snoopers.

Before nationalisation, private contractors had employed patrols whose job it was to check up on lorry-drivers to make sure they were obeying the numerous regulations laid down by the companies and getting on with the job. But only the biggest firms had been able to afford these unproductive spies and, when the State took over, there were five such patrols on the road.

But the State, the biggest boss of all, can afford more than five. The Executive has decided to introduce another eleven, making sixteen in all. The unions, of course, have agreed to the scheme, which, both they and the Executive are assuring the drivers, will investigate complaints about road hostels, feeding and sleeping conditions, give drivers assistance, and assist in inquiries about stolen lorries and theft of goods. They will, says the Executive, be more like A.A. or R.A.C. men than police.

But that is not all. They will also be expected to report drivers for uncleanness of lorries, defects in the stowage of loads, passengers carried in vehicles, improper parking and excessive speeding and any "unbecoming conduct".

The patrols will have special vans, will be uniformed and equipped with special powers.

It is not surprising that the lorry drivers are protesting vigorously against this imposition, and are not impressed by the Executive's point that the patrols will be appointed from the ranks of the drivers themselves. Most foremen are picked by the boss from the ranks, but they are not chosen for their sympathy with their own ranks but because they have shown themselves to be bosses' men.

One of the drivers' complaints is that the men were not consulted. Arthur Deakin, however, has denied this. "There has been full consultation with the men," he said, "it is nonsense to say there hasn't." But Mr. Deakin probably thinks of himself as one of the men, and it has been painfully obvious for years which side he is on.

At the time of writing, more than

11,000 men are out (the total number of drivers is 40,000) but the Executive are refusing to budge. The strikers are allowing perishable goods and food supplies to go through, and are putting out feelers for support from market drivers and dockers, so far without result.

The drivers are now discovering—the hard way—that nationalisation, which they mostly welcomed as a step forward, is not quite the benefit they hoped for. They are now saying: "Every driver is carrying about ten non-productive officials. We are having to work harder to make up all the extra costs after nationalisation."

And—"Money spent on these patrols would be better employed giving us reasonable subsistence allowances. We get 10s. 6d. a night, but have to pay 8s. 6d. for bed and breakfast and if we are charged 2s. 6d. for parking we have had it. We have to buy our own food during the day. With decent allowances there would be no need for patrols, because men would find no call to crib."

Under workers' control, there would not be those unproductive officials. And the workers would be free to organise their work on a human basis, not under the eyes of snoopers and amateur Dick Bartons. But everything the State touches has to become regimented and dead; the workers become digits to be organised efficiently, no longer human beings doing their job to their own satisfaction. The miners have learnt this, the dockers have learnt it. Now it is the lorry-drivers' turn.

BITTER STRUGGLE IN SOUTHAMPTON BUS STRIKE

YET another example of the senseless structure of the trade unions has resulted in a bitter struggle—literally to the death—among busmen in Southampton.

The negotiating, officially recognised, union for the busmen of Southampton is, believe it or not, the National Union of Railwaymen. The majority of bus workers there, however, belong to a breakaway union, the National Busmen's Association, which seems, to our simple minds, a more appropriate arrangement. The bus company, however, do not recognise this union, preferring to deal with an unrepresentative one.

So the workers, faced with stepped-up schedules are waging a two-pronged struggle: against the schedules and for recognition.

Already a picket has been killed, while cycling in front of a bus driven by one of the members of the N.U.R., who are attempting to run a few of the buses. We gather, however, from an apology the *Daily Worker* made to the N.U.R., that these N.U.R. drivers should not be referred to as blacklegs. This epithet only applies to non-union labour brought in to break a strike. Union labour scabbing on union labour deserves, we suppose, a different name.

Persia: Legality & Power

THE oil dispute in Persia continues its tortuous procedures of nationalist propaganda, diplomatic pressure, and appeals to "legality". The British are handicapped by the fact that for them the continued flow of Persian oil is the most important consideration, while the government of Dr. Moussadek though concerned to maintain the economic value of the company, are perhaps willing to use it as a bargaining lever even to the point of economic chaos. The refusal of American technical help if the British are excluded is however a serious set-back for them, and is expressed in indignation at American advice to seek arbitration.

As we pointed out last week, the British case is legally watertight if the 1933 agreement is accepted as the starting point. Inevitably therefore the Persian legal defence is that the 1933 agreement is not legally valid. Meanwhile, it is pointed out that though Britain received a legal victory at the Hague over Albanian mining of the Corfu channel, no compensation whatever has resulted. A legal victory over Persia may well be just as sterile.

A letter in the *Times* (28/5/51) meanwhile confirms our point about the 1933 agreement having been reached under duress. The writer, Mr. M. J. Sheikh-ol-Islami, quotes Mr. Taqizadeh who conducted the 1933 negotiations and signed the agreement describing the Persian side of the matter. After recounting the pressure which Lord Cadman, the Anglo-

Iranian Oil Company's chief representative, brought to bear on the then Shah, he writes: "Being extremely conscious of the British influence in the League of Nations, he (the Shah) knew that no useful purpose would be served by allowing the negotiations to be switched from Teheran to Geneva or the Hague, having received a most unfavourable report from the Persian delegation to the League of Nations. They had come to realise the difficulties involved in fighting a case, no matter how just, against a great power in the League of Nations. He (the Shah) therefore asked me to summon a round-table meeting to be attended by the heads of the departments concerned; and there, with Lord Cadman taking his due part in the discussions, the company's request was re-examined. It was after this fateful meeting that the Shah gave way and agreed to the concession to be prolonged until 1993, otherwise due to expire in 1961... I am bound to stress the fact that neither his late Majesty, nor any of his Ministers, would have submitted to the prolongation of the concession had the circumstances been otherwise."

This is the Persian side of the case. We quote it with no intention of suggesting that more justice lay with them than with the British. It does however show that appeals to "legality" are not to be taken with any great seriousness; and it shows that, then as now, international agreements are arrived at with full consideration as to where the strength and the power lies.

Inquests on British Socialism

"At its annual conference in 1919 the Labour Party took a fateful step when, following the lead of SIDNEY WEBB, it committed itself not only to Socialism but to one particular definition of Socialism which happened at that time to have found acceptance with the Fabian Society. By this definition Socialism is identified with the increase (almost unlimited in the economic field) of the State's power and activity. It is a direct consequence of this decision that an important element among those in the Labour Party who doubt the direction which the party has taken consists of those who looked for more power for the workers and for ordinary people and have been given instead the huge, impersonal and management-controlled public corporation. MR. BEVAN, in his indictment of the "economists", partly voices their vague but real resentment against the State managers who, as they see it, have annexed Socialism. There is nothing in the history of Socialist thought to suggest that the State is the natural and inevitable instrument by which Socialism is to be attained. From PROUPHON to WILLIAM MORRIS to the Guild Socialists, distrust of the State has been a constant element in the development of Socialist ideas. It is the tragedy of the Labour movement that has been so intent on extending the authority of the State that it has overlooked the purpose of its existence."

THESE words are taken, not from an anarchist critic of the Labour Party, nor from one of the many party members who are at last beginning to question the basic tenets of their political faith, but from a leading article in the *Times* (15/5/51). And while we never expected to see that paper in the rôle of an arbiter of socialist theory, its analysis of the tragedy of the Labour movement is undoubtedly correct. And it is what the anarchists have insisted upon ever since socialism became a political movement.

Another interesting post-mortem on the Labour Party's socialism is Mr. D. J. George's article in *Public Opinion* (11/5/51) in which he discusses the political effects of the death of Ernest Bevin and the resignation of Aneurin Bevan. Mr. George considers that Bevin "combined in an uneasy alliance" the two divergent factions in the party, which he calls "the syndicalists and the managers", and he regards the "revolt" of Aneurin Bevan as intended to break up that alliance setting up "the standard of syndicalism to challenge the onward march of the managers". Here Mr. George is crediting Mr. Bevan with ambitions that he certainly does not possess, but further in his article he gets much nearer the truth in describing the development of managerial ideas in the Labour Party, by way of Bevin's admiration for American big business, Morrison's conception of the State-controlled corporation, Attlee's experience as Postmaster-General, and the establishment of the British Broadcasting Corporation.

"There was in none of these conceptions," Mr. George points out, "any elements of workers' control."

"This change in the direction of the Labour movement was virtually complete by 1936. It took place unobserved by the industrial rank-and-file, who continued to believe that the party's objective was a transfer of power to the organised working class despite the obvious evidence to the contrary."

"Managerialism certainly meant an improvement in the life of the working class. This was to be achieved by efficiency of productive technique, not by the transfer to them of power. It was and is paternalistic. The managers also needed the workers as allies in the fight against capitalism. This was the significance of Ernest Bevin. More than anyone he secured for the managerial class the support of the organised working class. He

was unconsciously the most powerful single factor in the process of self-deception which encouraged the working class to believe that the social changes planned and proceeding would eventually bring power to them."

"What has not been appreciated till now in the Labour movement is that, when it comes to an economic crisis, the managerial revolution puts the class interests and objects of the managers first, and those of the workers not higher than second."

"When Labour won power in 1945 the managerial revolution gathered momentum. The awakening of the syndicalists did not begin till later. The Coal Board transferred no power to the miners. If anything, by its centralisation it took power away. This is true of all the nationalised corporations established by the 1945 Government."

In a later article in the same paper (18/5/51), Mr. George declares that "the future pattern of politics will be a straight fight between managers and syndicalists."

The story of the adoption by the Labour movement of the Public Corporation as its "chosen instrument" for the control and administration of nationalised industries is ably described in greater detail by Geoffrey Ostergaard in the current issue of the *Oxford Clarion*, a university magazine. "It is by no means a coincidence," he says, "that Labour's protagonist of the Public Corporation—Herbert Morrison—should also be the most severe critic of any form of workers' control. The idea of the Public Corporation with its board of experts was for him a clever way of by-passing the current claims for workers' representation."

The widespread discussion of the basic issues of the control of industry—for more important than the comments in the *Times*, *Public Opinion* and the *Oxford Clarion*, are the debates of the factory floor and the mine—adds point to the current series of articles on anarcho-syndicalism in *Freedom*. It should be abundantly clear that workers' control cannot possibly be won through a political party, since it is an aim which takes power from the politicians and by-passes the State. None of the "left-wingers" of the Labour Party would acquiesce in so revolutionary a departure from the socialism of to-day. And to those who are pressing for more nationalisation, one might point out, as Mr. Ostergaard does, that "what is wrong with the socialist movement is not its pace but its direction."

BOOK REVIEW

GUNS OR BUTTER

THE HOUSE AND THE FORT, by Charles Humana. (Hogarth Press, 9/6d.)

THE hill jutted out into the sea, with a ruined farm on one side and a ruined battery of two coastal guns on the other. After her younger son had been killed by a bomb intended for the gun-site, old Maria had sent for his emigrant brother, Paulo, to rebuild the house and cultivate the land. A little community grew in the shack on the hillside, animated by the work of reconstructing the farm. There war old Maria, Paulo and his daughter, Lorenzo the war orphan he found in the village, and Robert the British deserter who stumbled up Paulo's hill when fleeing from the police. But other people are interested in the hill. The military authorities have decided that in the interests of national defence the battery must be rebuilt. Disarmament is over, though the scars of war are still open. The Enemy, though a different enemy now, must be shown that the country is prepared. The farm and its inhabitants are merely a nuisance, for the hill must be fortified and barrack huts built.

But, if the little group on the hill held together by their common task of rebuilding, is powerless before the military machine, and if the shack can easily be destroyed, the forces which threaten them are also vulnerable, for they, too, are after all composed of individuals, and the fort is not impregnable from within.

This is the theme of Charles Humana's novel, and its symbolism can easily be seen; but it is not one of those portentously allegorical tales with a "message" and little else. The setting, the dialogue, the simplicity and humanity of the narrative bring to mind the novels of Silone. One need not pay it a greater compliment than that.

C.W.

A NEW MONTHLY FEATURE BY HERBERT READ

KICKS AND HA'PENCE

The bland Very curious are the renegade. justifications which men

now put forward for a change of heart, or for a loss of faith.

It used to be a bold assertion of enlightenment, a confident step forward on to new ground. The socialist, the atheist, the religious convert—all were positive and militant. But now our philosophers and politicians rejoice in mere negation. They renounce their former beliefs as Buchmanites renounce their sins—they shed a burden and step up into the limelight, to celebrate their empty minds. Mr. Joad writes an article (*New Statesman*, May 19th) on what he still believes. He has lost his pacifism ("naïve optimism") and his socialism ("no longer a creed to conjure with. It is like a hat which has lost its shape because so many wear it; rightly or wrongly, few of us now look to it to revivify our early hopes.") He has found a belief in "the Christian doctrine of original sin," which "expresses a deep and essential insight into human nature"—in other words, forbids a belief that "the equality of women, pacifism, socialism or science will bring about the millennium or even markedly improve the human lot". In short, Mr. Joad has substituted a sophisticated pessimism for his naïve optimism. But he "still believes" in two things—reason and democracy. By reason he seems to mean little more than expediency—you can convert people to "reason" if you can show them that a particular policy is to their advantage. As for democracy, that is

merely "the necessary framework" for such a pragmatic process.

Well, it was expedient to cease being a pacifist in 1940, as it was expedient to cease being a communist a year or two later. But what has such expediency to do with reason; and by what process of reasoning does Mr. Joad arrive at a belief in the doctrine of original sin? Twenty years ago, did Mr. Joad base his pacifism and his socialism on expediency—or on reason? If his reasoning was at fault twenty years ago, on what grounds must we conclude that it is now in working order?

Expediency is a betrayal of reason, and Mr. Joad must know it. If socialism is now a shapeless hat that no longer looks well on Mr. Joad's head, the explanation may be under the hat. If socialism has failed, it is because Socialists like Mr. Joad did not reason clearly enough thirty years ago. To be specific, they surrendered their reason to the most irrational concept that has ever entered the brain of man—the State. Mr. Joad should not be blandly celebrating his lost innocence, he should be trying to recover his common sense.

Picasso paints This is surprising a bad picture. news, but there seems to be no

doubt about it. It is inspired by the atrocities in Korea, and has been reproduced in some French periodicals. A friend who had seen the original told me that it lost nothing in reproduction, being painted in dirty

greys. It represents a shooting squad on one side, a group of civilian victims on the other side. The composition is crude, the distortion ineffective even as a caricature. If the subject were not so tragic, we might say that it was a piece on the level of the comic strip.

One feels as if an innocent man had been compelled by mental torture to tell a lie. Picasso has always been an infallible artist—his merest scribble betrayed his subtle sensibility, his unerring grace. *Guernica*, a great painting with a political purpose, is still first and foremost a painting—a composition of great complexity but of overwhelming unity of effect. Picasso painted it spontaneously, with strong but controlled feeling. I do not doubt the genuineness of his sympathy for the massacred Koreans. But I do doubt the spontaneity of this gesture. It almost looks as though the Party had commissioned it—it almost looks as though the Arts committee of the Council of Ministers in Moscow had dictated how it should be done. Some power not Picasso has inspired its hatefulness; and the pity it induces is not for the victims of war, but for an artist who has lost his integrity.

Picasso's Gift. "The British Peace Committee announces that Pablo Picasso has given a painting to help the work for peace in Britain. It shows a faun's head." A faun, we hope, dishorned.

OBSOLETE IDEAS

WHAT is needed is a change in the ordinary out-look of ordinary people. The change that is wanted is sometimes thought to be a moral change, but my own belief is that nothing is required beyond a just estimate of self-interest. I know that it is difficult to rouse enthusiasm for such a view. Suppose you said to a population: "If you pursue course A, half of you will die in agony, and the other half will live in squalor; whereas if you pursue course B, you will all prosper." And suppose that on this basis you conducted a great political campaign. What do you think would happen? All the earnest moralists would rise up and say: "Sir, your aims are base. There are more important things than material prosperity. Should a great nation shrink from suffering if it is incurred in a noble cause? Was it by such degraded self-seeking that our ancestors made our nation great? Perish the thought! Away with money grubbers. Let us live like heroes, and if fate so wills it, die like heroes." You will find men pointing the finger of scorn at you as a coward, and you will be lucky if your "cowardice" does not lead to your being lynched, while the thousands who are lynching you contrast their inflexible courage with your base poltroonery.

The popular fear of intelligence is one of the great dangers of our time. If teachers and educational authorities had more understanding of the sort of person the modern world needs, they could within a generation produce an outlook that would transform the world. But their ideal of character is an old-fashioned one. They admire most the sort of character which would give a man leadership in a gang of pirates, and if you say that commerce is a different thing from piracy, they think you soft and hope you are mistaken. All this is due to the persistence of old martial ideas that have descended to us from earlier ages. These ideas, I repeat, were appropriate to an age of unavoidable scarcity, but are not applicable to our own times, when whatever scarcity still exists is due to human stupidity and to nothing else. Although this is the case, most of us still prefer passion to intelligence, we like to have our feelings roused, we like to cheer and boo, we like to admire and we like to hate, we like to see things in black and white. Our whole mental apparatus is that which is appropriate to sending us rushing into battle with hoarse war cries.

—BERTRAND RUSSELL (from a broadcast in his series "Living in an Atomic Age," *The Listener*, 24/5/51.)

CAN IT!

In the small rivers flowing from Bulgaria into Yugoslavia, sardine tins containing anti-Tito propaganda were found.

—P.I. Agency, 10/5/51.

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

Anarchism and Industry

IT was a pleasure to see such a rational attitude to "the workers" in the first of the series of articles on "Syndicalism—The Workers' Next Step". We have so often met people, usually from what is called the "lower middle-class", who, because of the political cause they have espoused, talk in a generalised way about "the workers", as though they were a vast dumb and down-trodden mass, whose instincts were invariably right and who were on the verge of revolutionary action—just waiting for the right lead—from the talkers, of course. When these people come in close contact with "workers", and find that the realities of working-class life differ from their picture, that the "workers" are people with a variety of aims and interests of their own (and are not particularly interested in the ideas of their self-conscious saviours), they frequently recoil from their political enthusiasms, and from the glorification of a myth turn to a contempt for the reality. Think of the private school proletarians of the Communist Party in the 'thirties with their intellectual slumming! On the other hand, we know readers of *Freedom* who disclaim any interest in industrial struggles, "the workers, and that sort of thing". But we have yet to hear of their leading Robinson Crusoe lives independent of the labour of others.

"P.S." points out what ought to be obvious, that "all wealth is produced, and all social services rendered, by these productive workers, and it is no glorification or flattery to state quite bluntly that they are therefore the most important section of the community". It has been suggested that as anarchist propagandists, our approach is to individuals regardless of what layer in our class-divided society they occupy, and this is true, but by far the most effective resistance to authority would come from the industrial workers who could control and revolutionise the whole economic structure if they exercised their own strength. That is why we must bring our integral conception of freedom to their notice, not to lead them, nor to patronise them, nor plan for them, but to work with them.

If we are honest, we recognise that a paper like *Freedom* tends to circulate among, and be written by, people who have had the advantage of more formal education than the majority of manual workers and who are more often to be found among technicians, traders, teachers, clerical and "self-employed" workers, etc., (for "education", the mark of social status, rewards its recipients by taking them out of the ranks of the socially indispensable). The working-class household is not to any extent a book-reading household nor one which subscribes to magazines and papers which are not readily available from the newsagent. Consequently, the anarchist point of view is least accessible to those on whom any hope of a free society most depends. It is thus more than ever to be

hoped that *Freedom's* industrial readers will do their best to bring anarchist ideas to their workmates and make anarchism what it traditionally was—a working-class movement. The series on *The Workers' Next Step* provides a grand starting-point. London. C.

BAKUNIN

THE front-page article of *The Times Literary Supplement* (25/5/51) is devoted to a study of Michael Bakunin's influence on "The Pan-Slav Tradition", reviewing *Bakounine et le Pan-slavisme Révolutionnaire*, by B.-P. Hepner (Paris: Marcel Rivière, 600 fr.)

FREEDOM PRESS

M. BAKUNIN : *Marxism, Freedom and the State*—paper 2/6, cloth 5/-

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MATERIALISTIC VISIONARIES

IN the century since the 1851 Exhibition, capitalism—in England at all events—has made a strange about-face. Whereas the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park celebrated an enormous expansion of the power of production, and that expansion continued until a few decades ago; to-day is signalled as the Age of Austerity, almost everything, down to the simplest necessities, being in short supply.

It is that paradox of economics, that the more we seek to defend our way of life, the more attenuated our way of life becomes.

Of course, if society takes the long view and follows the advice given regularly year after year in successive Budget speeches, the paradox disappears. For the total volume of production continues to rise; only consumption is unevenly distributed so that the armed forces are provided with an unfair share of tanks and aeroplanes, bullets and bombs, which are denied to the civilian citizens.

Of course, the socialist of to-day would retort that it is our army, our bombs. And that anyway equal participation in the good things of latter day capitalist production is democratically ensured by conscription. Every able-bodied male (and women, too) can enter the ranks of favoured consumers of to-day's wealth—at least for eighteen months.

If we look at America, however, we can leave such sophistry (?) aside. For there the expansion of productive power is still visible in goods consumed by the unarmed citizen. Reflect, for example, on the fact that there are no less than 40,315,175 privately owned motor cars in the United States. One for every 3-and-a-bit members of the population.

Anarchists are often asked whether material luxuries will increase "after the revolution". In America already even the capitalist system can provide enough motor cars anyway. If we are materially minded we may be tempted to echo a New York leader writer's proud boast: "America's motor vehicle figures would give *Prauda* cause for comment. The capitalist system is not so inequitable but that 40 million families will take the old or new family bus any Sunday this summer and be as happy as the kids who will, in countless cars, be eating jam sandwiches along roadsides of a green, free world." Inspiring words, heartening visions!

Austerity should not blind our judgment however. Maybe we are not so green as that leader-writer supposes, and we may well be disposed to demand a more free world rather than more and more flivvers—with the more oil, more steel, more coal and all the rest that lie behind them.

From the purely material standpoint, and compared with the capitalism of the Soviet Union, the American capitalist system may perhaps look rosy—especially from our own outpost of austerity. But America, is, after all, only the last glimmer of a bygone age—and even if we forget that time moves on, the rosy vision also looks rather tarnished, rather jaded.

Surely we may well look beyond a mere loosening of the belt (as important as that is for many, many families). Instead of gratefully consuming what the capitalist, with the aid of the advertiser, can find a ready sale for, may we not widen our vision? May we not look to the possibility of being able to produce, in a manner that suits us, what we need, and what we desire, and what gives delight?

Intellectual Thought in War Atmosphere

(From our New York Correspondent)

A GAIN and again, anarchists have pointed out how the mobilisation of the nation for war stultifies thinking and distorts information, not only on the immediate issues of the war but in all areas. Passions are excited, lies are stated and believed; but in addition the effort to coerce and persuade the population to national militaristic unity brings in its train a fear of the results of any rigorous critical thought, and avoidance of questions that may have any meaning or consequences not known and approved beforehand.

That this is the case now in war-time America is clearly brought out in two articles in the *New York Times* of May 10th and 11th, by Kalman Seigel:

"A study of seventy-four major colleges in the United States by the *New York Times* showed that many members of the college community were wary and felt varying degrees of inhibition about speaking out on controversial issues, discussing unpopular concepts and participating in student political activity, because they were fearful of:

"(1) Social disapproval; (2) a 'pink' or Communist label; (3) criticisms by regents, legislatures and friends; (4) rejection for further study at graduate schools; (5) the spotlight of investigation by Government and private industry for post-graduate employment and service with the armed forces.

"Such caution, in effect, has made campuses barren of the free give-and-take of ideas, the study found. At the same time it has posed a seemingly insoluble problem for the campus liberal, depleted his ranks and brought to many college campuses an apathy about current problems that borders almost on their deliberate exclusion."

From many sources, the *New York Times* found that "censorship, wariness, caution and inhibition" had led to the following results on many campuses:

"(1) A reluctance to speak out on controversial issues in and out of class; (2) a reluctance to handle currently unpopular concepts even in classroom work where they may be part of the study programme; (3) an unwillingness to join student political clubs; (4) neglect of humanitarian causes because they may be suspect in the minds of politically unsophisticated officials; (5) an emphasis on lack of affiliations; (6) an unusual amount of serio-comic joking about this or that official investigating committee 'getting you'; (7) a shying away, both physically and intellectually from any association

with the words 'liberal', 'peace', 'freedom', and from class-mates of a liberal stripe; (8) a sharp turning inward to local college problems, to the exclusion of broader current questions."

As Mr. Seigel points out, it is not McCarthyism alone that is to blame, but also—

"The times"; the probable inevitability of the draft, the fear and uncertainty of national life and a fatalistic and frustrated conviction that little can be done in the college area to alter international developments; "a mature awareness of the true nature of Communism, with the result that it has lost much of its former fascination, and the feeling that under present conditions a firm, unswerving allegiance to established concepts is in the national interest and should be accepted."

Or—as we would say—McCarthyism is one system of a prevailing atmosphere that spawns witch-hunts and self-repression.

Municipal colleges, and large state universities in large cities, says Mr. Seigel, have been affected most. Among the examples he cites are the following:

"At the City College of New York, a student leader said he was 'extremely reluctant' to express any opinions that might be considered left-wing, even when asked to write a theme in class on a political issue.

"A student editor held that his fellow-students were unwilling to speak out, particularly in engineering, where, he said, 'the wrong word at the wrong time might jeopardise their futures'. He said agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation were constantly inquiring about students applying for Government jobs, and that some graduate schools, with Government-classified projects, were extremely reluctant to accept students who

PROTEST IN ICELAND

IN Iceland the Trade Union of General Workers has passed a resolution condemning the occupation of the country by American troops. The Federation of Socialist Youth has also expressed concern.

In a newspaper article by Sigur Bjoer Einarsson, Professor of Theology at the University of Iceland, appeared protests against the occupation of the country and condemning the methods by which the American Government acquired bases.

Peace News, 26/5/51.

The Coloured Franchise in S. Africa

(from a correspondent in Cape Town)

IN the Cape, the government is busy passing a Bill to place the non-Europeans, or should I say Coloureds (not to be confused with the Africans), on a separate voters' roll. The object of this is to limit the non-European's voting power to four European candidates in the lower house of Parliament, the Assembly. Up till now the non-Europeans have been able to vote in any Cape or Natal constituency in which they lived. This fight for their franchise, although meagre, as I will explain later, has been going on more or less actively since 1936, when under Gen. Hertzog, the Afrikaner Party removed the Africans from the common voters' roll. Then the fight was taken up by a few European progressives and liberals and, of course, the African National Movement, but it was lost.

In 1938, when the government, then under a Hertzog and Smuts coalition, attempted to place the non-Europeans on a separate roll, the non-Europeans showed a certain amount of militancy, and as a result of this, and the war situation, the issue was shelved. During the war, the government under Smuts, instituted what was called the Coloured Advisory Council on which they placed a number of Coloured 'quintlings'. This was the first step to the removal of the coloured peoples from the common roll. This body, as a result of its complete uselessness died a natural death. Now again the Nationalists who got into parliament on their policy of racial segregation (*apartheid*), have decided to place the coloured people on a separate roll. This time the people seem more militant and a Franchise Action Council has been set up with the support of a large number of bodies. A conference was held and subsequent to that, a mass rally and march through the town took place. Altogether about 20,000 people participated. At the next conference it was decided to hold a one-day protest strike. This took place on Monday, May 7th.

Approximately 50-60% of the workers (i.e., Coloured) in Cape Town did not go to work that day. About 7,000 out of 9,000 stayed away in Worcester, a large number of factories in Paarl were closed, and similarly in Port Elizabeth and Somerset West. Because it was not a 100% strike, the capitalist press tried to make out that it was a failure. Dr. Malan rushed into print on the day fol-

lowing the strike, calling it "a successful failure". He even went so far as to claim that it was a mandate on which to carry on with his suppressive measures, forgetting to admit the intimidation from the police and threats from government ministers of wholesale sackings. All this time the United Party (Smuts's successors) who now occupy the Opposition benches, were "bravely" fighting the Bill on intricate legal grounds. Their policy is that the Nationalists can put the Bill on the statute book as long as they can get a two-thirds majority in both houses, otherwise it is unconstitutional. They never mentioned any moral grounds, firstly since most of their morals are made up to suit the situation of the moment, and secondly because they would not be against the Bill but for the fact that the non-Europeans now have the sway in 56 constituencies and in most cases, since the contact is between the Nationalist and United Parties, the non-Europeans always voted for the United Party. There is to be another conference on June 10th to consider the third round of the struggle.

The United Party felt slighted that certain people who were not its members were doing so much to organise the coloured people. So it gathered together a number of ex-Servicemen (under Group-Captain 'Sailor' Malan), and told them to organise a mass-torchlight rally. Now I have nothing against the support of the ex-Servicemen in mass, but I dislike some of their leaders who are now shouting about general elections, democratic governments and defence of the constitution. Most of these guys don't care a damn about the coloured vote.

To explain why the coloured vote is so meagre anyway, it is necessary to give a few figures. There are 40,000 voters out of the 1,000,000 non-Europeans. These figures are kept down by literacy tests, and wage or ownership-of-property requirements. And there is no female non-European franchise. The Europeans, men and women, automatically become voters at 21, notwithstanding whether literate or not, and with no income or property qualification.

N.C.

had committed themselves to an unpopular point of view."

"Student leaders at Hunter College [another New York municipal college] were fearful of signing petitions, because they were reluctant to get their names on 'any list'. Letters to the editor of the undergraduate paper, they said in explaining the greater caution, now open with 'It appears that', rather than with the 'I think', and 'I believe', of years ago.

"A number of teachers offer qualifying apologies during their lectures, particularly when they move from the black-and-white realm of the textbook, to analysis and interpretation, saying, 'Don't get me wrong', and 'Don't think I'm a Communist'."

"At the University of Michigan, Dean Erich A. Walter explained—that students were quite obviously more careful in their affiliations, recognising that Federal security officers were making careful checks of the membership of liberal organisations."

At the University of North Carolina, "John R. Harris, assistant attorney-general for the student body, said that while the student newspaper was free to say what it pleased, there was an atmosphere on the campus, 'as in most of the country, which tends to equate criticism with disloyalty and liberalism with Communism'."

It is interesting, finally, to note that:

"At the country's leading Catholic colleges, deans and students explained that any pressures toward conformism were virtually non-existent because student and faculty thinking and action were consistent with the Catholic point of view.

"At Manhattanville and Fordham, students reported that the current pressures had resulted in a more militant Catholicism, and in a growing awareness of social and economic problems with which most of the colleges were now dealing. They said that rare expressions of extreme liberalism might bring social disapproval and 'constructive criticism'."

"The sameness of background and belief almost erased the area of debate on most controversial issues of the day, but did not preclude discussion."

Soviet State Lottery

(from an East European correspondent)

PROPAGANDISTS and apologists of the "Socialist fatherland" have boasted many a time that it is only within the frontiers of the U.S.S.R. that exploitation of man by man has been destroyed and that the workers there, unlike those in the capitalist West, are able for the first time in modern history to enjoy the full fruit of their labour. It is understandable that these twisted minds should pass over in silence various shameful features of the Soviet régime such as concentration camps, "socialist competitions" and the enormous power of the secret police, yet it is rather surprising that they should almost ignore an aspect of life to which the Soviet press devotes a large number of enthusiastic articles.

A few days after the military parade on the First of May, the U.S.S.R. Finance Minister, A. Zverev, launched the sixth State loan since 1945. Its target is 30 billion roubles redeemable over 20 years with lottery prize drawings equivalent to a rate of interest of approximately four per cent. The basic bond unit is 100 roubles, but there are smaller and larger ones available to suit all pockets. Lottery drawings—40 in all—starting next year will be held twice yearly. Redemption drawing starts in 1957 and the whole loan should be redeemed by 1972. By that time 35 per cent. of the unit bonds should have won prizes (the highest are now 25,000 roubles), equivalent to an overall rate of interest of 4 per cent. The remaining 65 per cent. will be just redeemed at par. (*The Economist*, 12/5/51.)

There is little doubt that the loan will be subscribed very soon. The same pressure and regimentation which gives to Generalissimo Stalin every single vote in his electoral district and forces millions of workers to promise many hours of "voluntary" labour in honour of some important anniversary in the Marxist calendar will be applied again on the long-suffering Soviet citizens. Soviet newspapers can therefore print resolutions that in all industrial enterprises the workers are "unanimously" deciding to buy bonds for the equivalent of their monthly wage, the payment to be spread

Gift to a Comrade

CAIRO, Monday.

Stalin sent Queen Narriman of Egypt a magnificent sable coat as a wedding gift.

Daily Herald, 8/5/51.

Mr. Seigel hopefully refers to the existence of a "small but alert and growing army of defenders of free inquiry and speech, pressing with increasing vigour against repression" (as at Buffalo, Colorado, Chicago, Chattanooga), but it is clear that what is in question in these colleges is a vigorous faculty, and occasionally student, resistance to McCarthyism; it is not accompanied by any conspicuous growth of liberal or radical sentiment and activity. And the *New York Times* must be right in its editorial definition of the two tendencies:

"There can be no doubt that two distinct trends are showing themselves, not merely in educational institutions but in our entire cultural life: first, a real fear of the results of experimental thinking; second, a reappraisal of our social and economic traditions. The first tendency is certainly weak and hurtful. The second is, we believe, a sign of intellectual health. The national mood is against a purely destructive criticism, less intent on evils and scandals, more devoted to functional improvements in the way democracy expresses itself."

This, then, fills in the picture: first, a rising fear of being victimised or of finding oneself in a condition of heresy; and a conviction of helplessness, hence apathy. Second, a general acceptance of the American system, intellectual freedom viewed in the light of "constructive criticism" (the companion to the Catholic phrase!); that is, what will make this system work better (but no Socratic criticism!); thus a liberal minority which takes its stand on "freedom", but has no positive programme.

Now, there is not really any satisfaction in merely reporting that the gloomier prophecies of anarchists have been fulfilled. Let us see if something more can be extracted from this situation, even if Mr. Seigel's hopes for liberal resistance seem negative and futile.

It is doubtful if any group is potentially as radical and intellectually daring as college youth. Adolescence is intellectualistic, and inexperienced, and its enthusiasms are not reliable, we are told. But, also, it is the nature of things that membership in an economic class, except when the class senses itself utterly deprived of opportunities to achieve traditional goals, is of conservative influence; economic interest dictates that each

(Continued on page 4)

over 10 months. By next spring new sums will probably be needed for some high-sounding project and an excuse found to fleece wage-earners again.

What is certain, however, is that these yearly "loans" are by now a definite part of Soviet economy, helping the swollen bureaucracy to remain in power and live in relative comfort and increasing the strength of the armed forces while at the same time tending to relieve the inflationary pressure caused by the serious lack of consumer goods. They also afford yet another example of "double think" and show how little attention is paid by the so-called workers' government to the real needs and desires of those whose sole representatives they claim to be.

I.A.

Civilising Mission

The following letter (from Alex Comfort) appeared in last week's *New Statesman*:

It has been publicly laid down that the American objective in Korea is now to kill the maximum possible number of Chinese. Gen. MacArthur amplified the attitude, though perhaps not the policy details, when he said:—

"A rifle kills a single man, a machine gun kills them by the score; heavy artillery and bomb kill them by thousands, the atomic bomb may destroy them by hundreds of thousands. But when you put your blockade on them and prevent them from getting food... you threaten the life of the entire group. A blockade threatens destruction by the millions."

He then proceeded to advocate such a blockade.

Apparently it has not taken very long for genocide, which MasArthur is advocating, to become part of the strategy of the United Nations, a development which the founders of that body can hardly have envisaged. It would be naïve to suggest that, if other considerations did not deter them, moral or ethical arguments would operate in the Pentagon to prevent the implementation of the "D.D.T." policy over large parts of China. I think it is a good thing, when we speak of a "United Nations war against aggression", that we should bear in mind exactly what and who we are allied with.

INTELLECTUAL ATMOSPHERE IN AMERICA

(Continued from page 3)

individual attempt to secure his welfare within the status quo, and he usually has no energy for challenging it. The college student, relatively uncommitted to the economy, with no sort of vested interest, part of a very peculiar community, can afford to speculate, to be daring (he is not risking even chains). Hence the European tradition of the revolutionary university youth. In America, the commercialisation and technology-practical bent of American education, fostered by industrialists intent on training engineers and managers, has tended to modify greatly the pattern handed down by the aristocratic-monastic tradition: in a sense, the 20th century American student is already committed to the economic system, as an administrator or engineer in training, as a future professional, etc. When to this is added the impact of war, the sense of helplessness, and the harrying of the politician-patriots, we have a dark, dark picture.

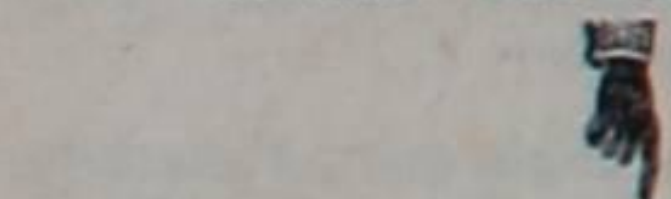
But the power of American capitalism, has always resided in its flexibility, in its ability to tolerate, and even utilise, rebelliousness. The thirties were characterised by the utmost political activity on the American campuses: anti-war movements, socialist and stalinoid movements, New Deal sentiment and "liberalism". But where did this lead? Precisely to intellectual acceptance of the second world war. The anti-war movements fostered the illusion of safety in mass; student strikes symbolised the methods by which the threat of war could be met; and when nothing materialised, the young man, swept up in these traditions, prepared for no individual action, succumbed. More, the liberal and radical activity had committed the student to the slogans of "democracy", "anti-fascism" and the New Deal, and—thus—eventually to the war so sloganised.

At present, the case is this: the student is offered no convenient radical or liberal movement pretending to give solutions and security; he is face to face with the brutal fact—ignored in the thirties—that he is an individual in an atomized society, threatened by the State, the economic system and the system of wars. When he does speak, therefore, he may be more reliable; when he says he will not be drafted, this is perhaps something more than the 1939 talk of "going to the hills", that pure romanticism.

In effect, the power of the American system has resided largely in its ability to channel the individual into its service, utilising his rebelliousness in institution-alised mass movements. Through the madness of McCarthyism, and the inevitable spread of patriotic and anti-critical notions, the system attacks one of its own basic supports. More and more it must rely on coercion; more and more, we may hope, it will throw up serious rebels, free of old delusions. For the loss represented by the declining level of academic thought and student opinion, this is hardly compensation: as, in general, the sharpening of the conflict between State and individual crushes many more persons than it makes aware of the conflict. As the individual rebels fail to discover their friends, as they feel utterly cut off from society and community, they will be weakened. (But perhaps some of them will find each other.) In any case, it will be interesting to see if the American system, in the atmosphere of permanent war, will be able to negotiate the transition from flexibility and tolerance to intolerance and intellectual (and in some areas physical) violence. Let us hope not!

D.T.W.

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THE LEGGETT REPORT ON THE DOCKS

(Continued from page 1)
Unofficial Movement

The committee claim that the Portworkers' Committee has disrupted the work of the Port by unofficial strikes and has undermined the constitutional methods of the unions. The report ignores the fact that the unofficial movement, which came into existence in 1945, was initiated because the unions had failed to carry out the wishes of the members. By making "unconstitutional use" of the constitutional machinery of the union, the union leaders have, in one concession after another to the employers, undermined the achievements secured over a long period of struggle. The report goes on to comment that "certain leading members of the Portworkers' Committee are members of the Communist Party", but it completely ignores the fact that many of the London Committee, including myself, are not members of that Party. Further, we can point out that we originated the Committee in 1945, when the Communist Party stood for a Coalition Government and opposed our strike action.

Dock Labour Scheme

The inquiry committee states that the Dock Labour Scheme "has left the organ-

isation of employment much as it was in the days of casual labour". This is a serious admission. It is also pointed out that the Dock Labour Board constitutes a third party between employers and workers and that this has "increased the impersonal nature of their relations", and they want "more stable and direct relations...". Their solution to this whole problem is the extension of permanent employment, but we reject this proposal as it is an attempt to build up a body of men on whom they can force worsened conditions as they have attempted in the past.

It should, however, be pointed out that the main aim of the inquiry committee is to tighten discipline, and advice is given to the Labour Government, port authorities and union officials, how this can be done. Totalitarianism is their aim. They want to use the unions even further for this purpose.

Comment is made on the dual position of union officials who sit on the Board and help the employers discipline us, and it is insisted that this "joint responsibility" must be strengthened! An implied threat is made in the report that the "continuance of unofficial strikes and other unconstitutional action may compel the

suspension of the scheme... a policy which has already come from employers' circles who want a return to the "good old days". Victimisation of rank and file militants is also implied in the recommendation when it states that "Individuals who persistently show themselves unwilling to observe the conditions of the Scheme or who persistently incite unconstitutional action should be dismissed from the industry...". We must fight such attempts with our usual solidarity and the wider industrial movement must give us their support in their own interests.

The Trade Unions

The Leggett Committee says that the friction between the T. & G.W.U. and the N.A.S.D.* is a "source of trouble and a closer unity between the two unions is desirable". The employers and prominent officials of the T. & G.W.U. would like the "Blue" union liquidated for obvious reasons, as this union's constitution and its general working is more democratic than the "White" union and constitutes a threat to totalitarian control

* i.e., the Stevedores' and Dockers' Union, the smaller "Blue Card" union for port-workers only.

SYNDICALISM — THE WORKERS' NEXT STEP—3

The Syndicalist Alternative

UNLIKE trade unionism, Syndicalism has not been developed merely to "represent" workers within capitalist society. It can do that, and do it far more effectively than trade unionism, but that is not its main object, for its real aim is the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of the free, classless society. The defence and improvement of our standards of living as long as the existing systems last are, of course, vital, but the Syndicalists long ago realised that under the capitalist state there is no lasting security, no permanent peace or prosperity.

Capitalist states, forever struggling among themselves, also wage ceaseless war against their own subjects. Externally they wage economic or military wars; internally, the class war. For the workers, life is a perpetual struggle, and it is from the working-class struggle that ideas of syndicalism have sprung. Like Anarchism, Syndicalism is not the product of one man's academic theories. It has been hammered out in countless actions against the boss and the State, against oppression, exploitation and political trickery; it was not just thought up in the British Museum. But it is one of the many tragic aspects of the situation to-day that the reformist and pseudo-revolutionary theories of the political parties of the "Left" have created such confusion that the simplicity of Syndicalism seems too good to be true!

For, although the task which faces a Syndicalist movement is colossal, the approach we make to that task is the straightforward and direct approach of the class struggle. We reject—however plausible and attractive they may seem, because they represent the easy way out—the arguments of those who think in terms of political tactics, rather than face up to the reality that working-class strength lies at the point of production and not in the seat of government.

In fact, most of those who use the political arguments very often see that truth clearly enough, but for their own interests—i.e., because they want to get into power—and put forward the well-known lines ("We've got to get our own men into Parliament," etc.) for which the workers have so long fallen, but which are wearing a bit thin now. Let us look, then, at the Syndicalist alternatives.

INDUSTRY, NOT CRAFT

Syndicalists maintain that the workers should so organise themselves as to get maximum effectiveness with the minimum of effort. To achieve this, it is necessary in the first place to organise on an industrial basis and not according to craft. I showed in the last article how craft organisation tends to split the workers rather than unite them. By organising themselves according to industry, workers can come together on a much more solid basis, and their identity of interest becomes much more apparent. Within the same factory, there may be workers carrying out half-a-dozen different kinds of jobs—engineers, electricians, "unskilled" labourers, clerks, maintenance men, drivers, building workers—all of whom at present may belong to different unions. In a syndicalist organisation they would all belong to the syndicate for the particular industry of which that factory is a part. From this it would automatically follow that whenever any section of the workers in the factory had to take action to defend their interests, all the workers would take action with them. That often happens to-day, of course, but it does so only as a result of the natural solidarity of the workers and against the pleas of the trade union branch officials. Clearly, the workers should create organisations to foster that natural solidarity, not stifle it.

NO PERMANENT OFFICIALS

Coming together by industry and not by craft would also greatly simplify the work of organisation. Instead of the hundreds of unions claiming membership—and often competing for it—something like twenty-five or thirty syndicates would cover the necessary industries and services. This would immediately cut down the vast number of organisers which trade unionist workers have to carry on their backs, but that number would be cut down even more drastically by the fact that Syndicalism aims at an absolute minimum of organisers.

There are two Syndicalist principles which apply to this. One, that no organiser shall be regarded as permanent; two, that no organiser shall be paid more for his job as a Syndicalist than he would get at his work.

Remember, that a syndicate would exist by, and to express, the will of the rank-and-file of the workers. If some action is

determined upon—a strike, for example—a committee would be delegated by the rank-and-file to carry out their wishes. If this entails a loss of wages greater than that of the other workers, the delegates' expenses could be refunded—but why should they get more than if they had remained at the bench? And when they have fulfilled the function delegated to them, why should they not return to the bench? And next time, somebody else can do the job. In this way, no privileges are accorded to those who, for whatever reason, are given an organising job to do by their work-mates.

If a delegate does not carry out the job in accordance with the workers' wishes, he must be subject to immediate recall, to be replaced by somebody else. There must be no privileged jobs in the syndicates, or their holders will begin to think more of defending the jobs instead of the interests of the workers. Don't just hope your organisers will not be led astray; make sure your form of organisation does not allow them to be. Don't trust your leaders—don't have any!

INTERNATIONALISM

Since Syndicalists are opposed both to Capitalism and to the State ("the executive committee of the ruling class"), it follows logically that they are prepared neither to use them nor to defend them. Socialist arguments that the State can be used for the emancipation of the workers have been shown to be false. Patriotic arguments that the workers must defend the "British way of life" (i.e., capitalism) have also been shown to be false. For the workers have no interest in common with their rulers, who manipulate wars in their struggle for power but who do not themselves fight them.

Syndicalists do not look for allies among any ruling groups; they know their real friends are among the workers of other nations. British, American and Russian workers have more interests in common with each other than they have with their own ruling classes, and the internationalism of the Syndicalists is based on the knowledge that fundamentally only international action by workers everywhere will rid the world of the shadow of war and the disease of capitalism.

ANTI-WAR

For wars are fought by workers. Battleships, tanks, guns, bombs and bombers are all made by workers—and used by them against the workers of other lands. But there is much truth in the old saying—"Whoever wins a war, the workers always lose!" and the Syndicalists ask the question: "Is it not about time we stopped sacrificing ourselves at the behest of our rulers? Wherever we go nowadays, we hear the same remark: 'The ordinary people don't want war.' The question then is: 'Why on earth do they continue to fight them?'"

The productive capacity of the world to-day is greater than it has ever been. But we don't benefit from that because production is geared for war, and it is no longer possible to think of war as an isolated accident in the capitalist world. It is not. It is part and parcel of that world. We are on a permanent war economy.

Syndicalists long ago realised the inevitable conclusion: that who opposes capitalism must oppose war, who opposes war must oppose capitalism. Trade union leaders in all countries lead in the cries for more sacrifice from the workers in peace and in war. But the Syndicalists urge that the workers in all countries should refuse to make armaments for their own destruction, and should join hands across the frontiers in the common struggle against their rulers. They should refuse to fight for those who exploit them.

NO POLITICAL ACTION

This cannot be done by political action. For politics is the art of government, and however idealistic and high-principled a political party is when struggling for power, when it gets into power it has to govern the same as any other party. Syndicalists reject political action as being absolutely useless in the achievement of the classless society. Socialist governments may oust the old ruling class, but they only establish themselves as the new one, and this is undoubtedly very nice for the politicians, but the workers find they are in exactly the same position as before—at the bottom, doing all the work and getting very small rewards and even less say in the organisation of their own lives.

PHILIP SANSON.

NEXT WEEK: The Revolutionary Aim—Workers' Control.

over all portworkers. I would like to see the "Blue" union strengthened.

Amenities

The Leggett Committee is forced to conclude that the "Amenities for Dockworkers in London are totally inadequate, and this has contributed to the sourness of industrial relations in the Port". The report briefly reviews first-aid equipment, canteens, and meal facilities, sanitary accommodation, washing facilities, drinking water, and the work of welfare officers. Reading this section of the report it is fairly obvious that responsibility for improved welfare facilities is dependent largely on finance and consequently the various authorities have been "passing the buck". However, a report of the National Dock Labour Board presented to the Minister of Labour in February 1949, which is quoted by the inquiry committee makes it clear that the Government must share in this responsibility. The National Board's report states that "In August 1950, the Port Authorities, the National Joint Council and the Board met to consider this unsatisfactory position", and a tripartite deputation made further representations to the Minister in November 1950, with regard to the canteens and lavatories." In February of this year, the Ministry of Labour "informed the Board that no further action by the Government was contemplated". Need I comment?

Conclusions

The above brief summary of the main conclusions of the inquiry committee will give readers some indication of the biased character of such "impartial" inquiry committees set up by the Government. The basic demands of the Portworkers' Charter have been ignored and the recommendations made are to fob us off with a few minor concessions, in order to put across totalitarian labour control over the port-workers.

Mental Ill-Health Among Students

THE Department of Preventive Medicine at Cardiff has made an investigation into the health of 1,217 students, 76% of those entering the university there. It was found that 13 per cent. of the men and women students were suffering from major psychological disorders and about 20% from minor disorders. The report states that "sex frustration and ignorance of sex hygiene" are contributory factors, and that some 95 per cent. of men and 75 per cent. of women came up to college with no previous formal health education.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

OPEN-AIR MEETINGS at
HYDE PARK
Every Sunday at 3.30 p.m.

INDOOR MEETINGS
Every Sunday at 7.30 p.m.
at the PORCUPINE (corner Charing
Cross Road at Gt. Newport Street,
next Leicester Sq. Underground Stn.)

JUNE 3—Philip Sansom on
ANARCHISM TODAY

NORTH-EAST LONDON

DISCUSSION MEETINGS
IN EAST HAM
Every alternate Tuesday

at 7.30
Enquiries c/o Freedom Press

JUNE 12
ANARCHIST BRAINS TRUST

SOUTH LONDON

Fortnightly meetings, sponsored by
the S. London Anarchist Group,
are held on alternate Tuesdays,
at 7.30 p.m. at the

KENTISH DROVERS Public House,
Peckham
(corner of High Street and Rye Lane)

JUNE 5—QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

GLASGOW

OUTDOOR MEETINGS at
MAXWELL STREET

Every Sunday at 7 p.m.
With John Gaffney, Frank Leech,
Jimmy Raeside, Eddie Shaw

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