

# Freedom

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Threepence

## KOREA--DEADLOCK ; PERSIA--DEADLOCK ; EGYPT--DEADLOCK

# DIPLOMACY? HUMBUG!

THE Korean truce talks could be turned into a perfect Gilbert and Sullivan comic opera, were it not for the fact that as each week passes hundreds more men, women and children are being killed and maimed or driven to join the hundreds of thousands of already homeless and starving Koreans.

First it was General Ridgeway who stopped the talks because a hundred armed Chinese troops had been spotted in the neutral zone. Now it is the turn of the Communists to suspend the talks because of the alleged bombing of the neutral zone, the intention apparently being to kill off the N. Korean-Chinese delegation! The truth of all these allegations can only be known by the leaders on both sides, and until we have their memoirs, in about ten years time, we shall have to read all the sensational and biased tripe that the gutter press pours out day by day in order to fill its columns. For the pro-United Nations Press the latest incident is a "put-up job" by the Communists who want to break off the talks. For the Communist *Daily Worker* it is "a premeditated attempt to wreck the cease-fire talks" by the United Nations, of course!

Through all the roar of this melodrama, perhaps the tiny voice of the public might be heard asking, "What has all this to do with 'peace talks'!" If indeed the respective leaders really meant business, all the incidents which we are made to believe are "wrecking" the talks could easily have been avoided. Isn't the public—that is the victims on

both sides—getting a little tired of diplomacy, national pride, symbolic gestures, etc. . . . you know the kind of thing I mean. The armistice in the First war was signed in a railway coach. So the Germans, when they signed the armistice with France in the Second War, dragged the coach out of a museum and rigged it up at the same spot before they signed. The talks over Korea presented a greater problem in the choice of location than the talks themselves. So that both sides should feel no humiliation or loss of prestige, etc. . . . the place chosen Kaesong, is a shambles somewhere in no-man's land, always at the mercy of some straying bombers, or troops who have lost their bearings. (It might be argued that if the delegations tasted some of the medicine they were handing out to the Korean people, it might encourage them to arrive at some satisfactory terms for bringing the war to an end.) Would it not have been more simple to have held the talks outside Korea altogether. Then there would have been no excuse to overshadow the main purpose of the talks—an armistice—with sensational incidents in which the delegates from each side accuses those of the other side of wanting to murder them?

The "peace talks" are nothing more than a tragic farce, yet no voices are raised, even in the responsible press to expose them and to call a halt. Indeed, that such a farce, and it is only one of many, can be carried on, and seriously

reported in the headlines of the press, is an indication of the contempt in which the people in all countries are held by their governments. In our day of day transactions, such behaviour would be repaid by "firing" those concerned. Instead it is used on both sides to build up hatred and fear, and to justify the mad rearmament race and the division of the world into two mighty power blocs.

### PERSIA

THE oil talks in Tehran between Persia and Britain have ended in a deadlock. If ever there was a farce this is it; and unlike the Korean tragedy, we can watch this performance with amusement and interest, for human lives are not directly involved (part of the joke is that the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, for obvious reasons, is paying wages to all its staff including its 26,000 Persian employees, though wells and refinery are at a standstill) but instead, only political and economic interests (with the stress on economic so far as the British are concerned).

We need not go into all the preliminary details. The Persian Government taking a leaf out of the book of the Mexican and Argentine Governments who (some few years ago) just seized the British-owned oil wells and railways respectively, without a by-your-leave, decided to do likewise with their oil wells. To add a piquant note to their action they nationalised the oil industry assuming(!) that since this was what the British Labour Government had advocated for all the major industries in their own country and had actually put it into effect when they came to power, despite the objections of the directors and shareholders of the industries concerned, surely they could not but approve of such a socialistic measure by the Persians. (After all, didn't the Labour Party always conclude their rallies with that lusty tune which goes "the international unites the human race"?) The British Government were, however, very shocked and hurt by such disloyalty. The yellow press on both sides of the Atlantic dragged out the Communist bogeyman to chill our spines, and the Churchills, still living in those romantic days of Palmerston and Don Pacifico's

TO PAGE THREE

## Food & Population in India

### WILL ANYTHING BE DONE?

IN our issue of July 14th, we commented upon the speech by Mr. Nehru, Prime Minister of India, in which he declared that the State must encourage birth control—the first time that any government has openly advocated it.

Under the title *Talking Is Not Enough*, the Delhi magazine *Virgil* discusses Nehru's "two excellent ideas of increasing food production and diminishing baby production", in the following terms:

"One wonders what prevents his Government from giving a practical shape to these propositions? So far as the first suggestion, namely, increased production is concerned, the Government has been fiddling with it for a long time. The expert as well as the general opinion about the "Grow More Food" drive is that it has been a costly failure. If the Government's own figures, which unfortunately keep on changing, are any indication, the costly grow-more-food campaign has resulted in all these years in a one per cent increase, while the deficit is estimated at 10 per cent. Food production has remained almost stationary, not because there was no plan, not because money was not spent, not because expert advice and service were not available, but because the administrative machinery was neither efficient nor conscientious nor honest. A former Food Minister at the Centre admitted in Parliament that the improved seed given to the zamindar and the cultivator often found its way into the black market. The same was the case with manure. The money given for well-digging was often not used for the purpose. Both the former and the present Food Minister have complained that the best thought-out plans of the Centre were defeated by the apathy, opposition and perversity of the State Governments. The latter, on the other hand, complain of the Centre's lack of knowledge of local conditions and its undue interference.

"The second thing necessary to solve the food problem, according to him, is the limiting of population. We don't think the Prime Minister when he talks of limiting population, is thinking in terms of Mahatma measures of moral self-control by individuals. Evidently, he is thinking in terms of scientific devices of birth control. If that is so, we hope he has communicated his ideas to the Health Minister. If he has done so, one would like to know the number of birth-control clinics established during the last four years in India. Or is it that the menace of increasing population

has only just occurred to the Prime Minister after the threatened famine in Bihar and the South? Whatever may be the case, the Food Ministers have always talked of the pressure of population as the chief cause of food deficit.

"It is not due to want of constructive suggestions and practical propositions that the country is suffering to-day. (It is suffering because what plans there are, are constantly changing and when not changing are not faithfully carried out."

WHEN a mine disaster occurs, the dramatic story of suffering and heroism brings back our minds with a jerk to the ever-present dangers that beset the men in the pits. But, because it is not so sudden, so dramatic or so publicised, we tend to overlook the creeping death that eats away their ranks.

A disaster is always followed by an enquiry. We want to know why it happened; who was responsible; was every safety device properly used; will it be prevented from ever happening again?

But the subtle dust works away unnoticed. Miners are not wiped out in a body, but drop out one by one, the spectacular figures noted only by the statisticians and the experts in industrial health.

We have often discussed in these columns the problems arising for workers from mechanisation, and how it so often entails a loss of livelihood. In few industries, however, does it entail a direct loss of life as it is now being shown to do in coal-mining.

At the recent British Association meeting at Edinburgh, several speakers in the Physiology Section warned about the effects of increased mechanisation in the mines. Dr. Meiklejohn, lecturer on Industrial Health at Glasgow University, said:

"The clamant demand is for more coal, and to this end there is more mechanisation. But pause to examine the situation. Are we quite certain that, in some mines, more coal cutters and conveyor belts are not diminishing output by the deleterious effect on the miners."

### EFFECT OF SPEED-UP ON THE MINERS

## THE DUST THAT KILLS

The fact is simply that the new machines of which the National Coal Board are so proud, are creating problems on a scale obviously unforeseen by the experts. Dust—coal dust and stone dust—has always been a major problem in coal-mining, but the high-speed machines which serve the frantic demand for more and still more coal, create such quantities of dust that the dread disease pneumoconiosis—caused by inhaling coal-dust—is increasing at an alarming rate.

Another speaker, Sir Andrew Bryan, a member of the National Coal Board, also said that in spite of great improvements in mining operations dust was still increasing. "This nuisance ought to be removed and every possible step must be taken towards that end," he said. "We are losing more manpower through pneumoconiosis than from any other cause. If we go on doing that, it will bring the industry to a standstill."

We hope that Sir Andrew is more concerned for the welfare of the men than for that of the industry, but from the above report his remark seems ambiguous, to say the least!

One sinister fact that emerged from the British Association's discussion of this matter was that, although the incidence of pneumoconiosis seemed to be higher in South Wales than elsewhere in the country, it was so only because there was more thorough examination there.

## Political Stalking-Horses

From our Australian Correspondent

AN election is to take place in New Zealand shortly. If the results are similar to those in Australia, the Conservatives will be returned once more. Our elections resulted much as had been expected, the Communist issue being the determining factor. But since then the inflation issue has come to the fore. The real trouble is, of course, the shortage of civilian goods accentuated by the last war, and aggravated by preparations for the next one. Armaments and civilian goods cannot both be produced in sufficient quantities and the former are receiving preference. We are soon to have an "austerity" budget, and are solemnly warned that it will make us "shiver".

The increased yield of taxation will, of course, be spent on war preparation, not on civilian needs. If it be asked, "Will the Australian people put up with this?" my reply is, "Yes, I think so." The barrage of press propaganda is very formidable, preparing the public mind for "sacrifices", and, as I have had occasion to remark before, the Australian people do not think deeply, nor reflect on big political issues. It may feel dimly that something is wrong; but to ask it to think out what the real trouble consists in, is to ask it to do something to which it is totally unaccustomed.

### DIRECTION BY DEFAULT

The Strategy of Indirect Approach

IN the August issue of the official *Bulletin for Industry*, the Treasury's manpower report says that the defence drive, as it gathers momentum, will require the transfer of half a million workers from other industries.

The City Editor of the *News Chronicle* discussing the question of how this transfer is to be brought about, says: "I imagine that the Government's answer will be that it will be done (in default of the revival of direction of labour) by various forms of pressure, diversion of materials from the non-essential industries, refusal to allow these industries to fill vacancies and so on."

In fact, direction of labour by closing the opportunity of getting non-armaments jobs, and by deliberately creating unemployment in 'non-essential', that is non-armaments, industries.

"Those who get power hate to lose it and use every means to condition the people to obedience. The two most powerful buttresses of power are state religion and education."

—LORD BOYD ORR.

The referendum against the Communists which is to take place on 22nd September, will strengthen the present trend towards a war-economy, for every opportunity will be taken to emphasise the danger that the Communists present to Australia. Of course, their own behaviour will lend support to this view, the promotion of strikes for purely political purposes having been their chief activity. The events in Korea and Malaya have been a god-send to those who desire to use the Communists as a convenient stalking-horse for bringing in repressive legislation.

Wherefore I anticipate that the Referendum will be carried and the Communists suppressed. This need not in itself cause any supporter of the working class the slightest grief, as the Communists have been a pest and a parasite on the movement ever since they started here thirty years ago—but what does cause anxiety is the fact that the legislation forecast could be used to hamstring the whole Labour movement, both industrial and political. The word "communism" is not defined. It could mean anyone of the Leftist or even Labour views. For this reason the Labour Party is opposing the Referendum.

Mr. Chifley's sudden death has made Dr. Evatt leader of the Labour Party, and he is at the head of the campaign. Evatt, in my opinion, is a political careerist and adventurer. He has no working-class background, and I think his defence of Communist Trade Unionists in court cases (which earned him much criticism even in Labour circles) is due to a desire to stand well with the industrial wing. He has not gained the respect that Mr. Chifley had from all sections of the Labour movement; for no one believed that Chifley was self-seeking, or ambitious for a great career, consequently he was respected even by Leftists. Evatt is not trusted either by the Right or the Left. The former believed him to be a Socialist (everyone in Australia who believes in increased Governmental power is called a "Socialist", and the epithet has even been applied to Mr. Menzies!); but the Leftists consider that Evatt so far from being a Socialist is not even a Labourist, but only an Evattist.

K. J. KENAFICK.

## PECKHAM OUTLOOK BRIGHTER

THE London County Council have announced new proposals for the future of the Pioneer Health Centre (see the article "The Experiment Ends," in *Freedom* for 11/8/51). The *Architect's Journal* reports that:

"Following the Health Committee's report to the L.C.C. in December, 1950, regarding the acquisition, conversion and partial equipment for health service purposes of the Pioneer Health Centre, Camberwell. The Committee has now revised its proposals in order to secure maximum use of the premises at the earliest possible date.

"The Education Committee concur in the proposal that the first and second storeys of the building should be used for a wide range of educational evening institute activities, together with a family club under the direction of the Council. Discussions have been held with representatives of the Peckham Health Centre Members' Association with a view to incorporating their activities in the educational and health activities proposed. The L.C.C. hope that the Association will participate by the majority of their members enrolling as members of the evening institute.

"Informal discussions are in progress with members of the former Scientific Advisory Committee set up by the Sir Halley Stewart Trust to determine what form of research could best be carried out in future under the schemes outlined by the Health Committee in their present report.

"The scheme of works now proposed for the premises, together with those previously authorised, will enable the whole of the main building to be used for day nursery, ante-natal, educational and recreational purposes."

P.S.

# LIBERTY AND FATALISM by ERRICO MALATESTA (1853-1932)

WE say that a revolution is necessary, that we want one, and that we are devoting our energies to awakening and uniting the human wills which are intent upon this end.

But a fundamental objection is opposed to us. "Revolution," we are told, "is not made by the caprice of man; it comes (if it does come) only when the time is ripe for it. History does not move by chance but develops in accordance with natural laws which are immutable, irresistible, and against which the will of man can do nothing."

In practice, at least in the majority of cases, this objection involves nothing but a polemic, or a political expedient. Just because a thing is not desired, it is affirmed that it is impossible; the power of will is denied when one is called upon to make an effort in a direction which is not convenient; and (since now nearly all who know the alphabet set themselves up as scientists and philosophers) desire itself is rationalised and science and philosophy are called upon to act as go-betweens for the little schemes of individuals and parties. On the other hand, when a thing is interesting and pleasing, all theories are forgotten, one makes the necessary effort and, if concurrence of others is needed, one appeals to their willingness and exalts the power of will instead of denying it.

In spite of this, however, it is certain that every man who thinks, feels the need to put his conduct into harmony with his intellectual convictions, and when he acts, he likes to take account of the efficacy and the quality of his actions. Every man who thinks and observes and who is learning the innumerable facts of nature and of history, feels the need of organising his acquired impressions into a system, and of finding some general principle which will unify and explain them.

From this need of comprehension and of mental adjustment, have originated both the theological and the naturalistic systems of philosophy. From this need are born the inquiries and the discussions concerning the problem of Will, that is, of the power of man (or of any conscious being) to sway the course of events. This is the fundamental problem of any philosophy—it has fatigued,

and continues to fatigue, the thinkers of all schools.

This fact would not have been otherwise than advantageous to the intellectual development of man and for the better utilisation of human forces, had it not been that, very often, by a common mental illusion, that which is a simple product of the imagination was mistaken for the real objective, and more or less comfortable hypotheses were mistaken for certified facts with which it was attempted to unify and explain known facts. Worse still, when simple words without any precise and definite significance were taken for real things.

Thus were invented God and the Immortal Soul; thus were invented Matter, Force, Energy (all with capital letters) and all the other mental concepts designed to explain by words, the universe which is not understood.

But above all these entities, which it is well to treat with prudent and smiling scepticism, there is a superior principle which seems truly unassailable—or at least such that the human mind cannot conceive its negation; this is the principle of Causality which, all by itself constitutes the philosophy called Determinism. Nothing creates itself and nothing destroys itself; no effect without sufficient cause; no cause without its proportionate effect.

Very well. If, to the human mind, this seems to be necessary and absolute truth then logical reasoning is also a necessity of the mind, and it is also true that every premise leads to its obvious conclusion. Now the logical conclusion of the principle of causality, understood as the universal and unavoidable principle, is that, starting out of eternity, everything is a necessary concatenation of events which could not be other than as determined, and that, therefore, man is nothing but a conscious automaton, will is an illusion, and liberty is non-existent and impossible.

It is a fact that, reasoning in the

abstract, many willingly arrive as far as the ultimate consequences and they say, with Laplace, that, if a man could know all the existing forces in the universe at a given moment, with all their points of application, their intensities and directions, he could calculate all that has happened, and everything that will happen, at any moment whatever in eternity and at any point whatever in infinite space—everything from a star in its orbit to the verse of a poet, from an earthquake shock to a newspaper article.

This is, in its most consequent expression, the philosophical system which is commonly called Determinism, and which, starting from the concepts of Nature and Necessity, and following rational and scientific method, arrives at the same conclusions as those reached by the ancients with their Fate and the theologians with their Predestination.

There are, also, some who seek to restrict and attenuate the meaning of the system and to elude its consequences, trying to conciliate the idea of necessity with that of liberty. But these are, as we see it, vain and illogical attempts for, a "necessity" which is not always necessary, which admits restrictions and exceptions, can no longer be called by that name.

Determinism responds admirably to certain needs of the intellect and it is a sure guide in the study of the physico-chemical world. But it indubitably paralyses and denies the will and makes useless and laughable any effort directed toward any end.

Nevertheless, while every man more or less thinks and acts by deterministic logic, there aren't any who actually translate their philosophy into life—at any rate, we do not know of any. This is not strange because if there were any such they must find it useless to make known and to propagate their ideas, convinced, as they must be, that that which must occur (even the cerebral antics of each one) will occur fatalistic-

ally at the determined time, and that nothing can possibly prevent it, nor retard it, nor hasten it.

Obviously the determinists—who are, in general, studious, active and desirous of progress, and who have become determinists not only through reasoning but also through reaction against the prejudices, the impositions, and the obscurantism of religions are floundering about in a continuous contradiction. They deny free will, and, therefore, responsibility, and then they become indignant against the judge who punishes the irresponsible. As if the judge were not himself determined and therefore also irresponsible! They say that all things that take place (natural phenomena, human history, actions, passions, and individual thoughts) do so in an uninterrupted and necessary sequence of cause and effect, reducible to physico-chemical facts which are subject to mechanical laws. Then they assign great importance to education and to propaganda! They are the apostles of charity, tolerance and liberty. As if evil, intolerance, and tyranny were not, since they exist, necessary things which the laws of mechanics should explain! Often they are revolutionists, struggling and sacrificing themselves for something which, according to their system, will happen and must necessarily happen of its own accord, when the time comes.

It is true that it could be answered that the determinist who thus contradicts himself is also determined and cannot help contradicting himself, just as we cannot do otherwise than point out the contradiction. But then, one may as well say that doing is equal to not doing and that all this reasoning and striving is but a comic opera, tiresome, or diverting, but—also necessary. How are we to escape from these difficulties?

The absolute Free Will of the spiritualists is contradicted by facts and is repugnant to the intellect. The negation of Will and Liberty by the mechanists is repugnant to our feelings. Intellect and sentiment are constituent parts of our egos and we know not how to subjugate one to the other.

We may not know how to deny the principle of causality but neither can we look upon ourselves as automata. Nor if we seek and desire the explanation of all things, do we deny their existence simply because we do not succeed in

explaining them. For there are many more things in the universe than in all the system of philosophy! Science and philosophy are but attempts, still infinitely imperfect, to explain the universe. And while science searches and philosophy syllogizes, we ought to live—to live like men who will obtain from life the maximum possible satisfaction.

What is Will in its essence? We do not know. But we do, perhaps, know what, in their essence, are Matter and Energy. Efficacious will must be the power to introduce into the chain of events, new factors which are not necessary and not pre-existent—it must be, in fact the power to produce an effect without a cause. This immediately repels the intellect educated to the scientific method. But isn't it true that upon retracing the path of the chain of events and regardless of the philosophical system one takes as a guide, one always arrives at an unknown and perhaps inconceivable First Cause—that is to say, at an effect without a cause? "We do not know." To us, this seems to be the last word that can be said, at least for the present, by wise philosophy.

But we want to live a conscious and creative life, and such a life demands, in the absence of positive concepts, certain necessary presuppositions which may be unconscious but which are always, nevertheless, in the soul of everyone. The most important of these presuppositions is the efficacy of the will. All that can usefully be sought are the conditions which limit or augment the power of the will.

[This translation by E. J. Boche originally appeared under the title Liberty & Fatalism, Determinism & Will, in the American anarchist journal Man! for February, 1934.]

## EDUCATION DEPT.

Those who blandly assert that every young man requires the stiffening up that a military training gives have a limited conception of human personality. War is a brutalizing thing, and the training for war must also be, to some extent, brutalizing if it is to be thorough. The Nazi youth organisation or the Spartan *phiditia* turned out good soldiers in the mass; they were healthy, resourceful, fanatical, highly disciplined and blinkered. That is not a bad recipe for troops, but it is a low ideal for human excellence.

—Times Educational Supplement, 17/8/51.

## A Sex-Affirmative Society

IN the last two articles, an attempt was made to indicate the ramifications of the sexually negative attitude of our society. We started from the most sensational of its results, the sex murder of children; but we should not fail to retain a proper sense of proportion. Far more important is the overwhelmingly widespread sexual misery which afflicts all civilised peoples and which stem directly from the sexually negative attitude of our type of society. It is this misery which underlies the apathy, the desire for leaders and the desire for power, which strangles the creative abilities and the capacity for joy of which human beings are potentially capable.

It is also this apathy that makes men and women easily lose themselves in despair and pessimism when they seek remedies for the evils of society. But it

is as well to remember that the desire for sexual happiness is probably the most powerful driving force in human life and that however much individuals may despair, the search for a solution will never die but will be born anew with every generation.

Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that the sexually negative attitude of society is derived from a sexually negative attitude in the individuals who comprise that society. The defeat of sexual desires has to be accomplished anew in every child that is born. It is accompanied by denial of the breast, often by denial of affection; by discipline with regard to toilet and the establishment of an identification of the excrements with ideas of filth and dirtiness; by punishment and fear of touching the genitals and deriving pleasure therefrom; by frustrating curiosity about the bodies of the parents and their sexual activity; and by inhibiting the free release of energy both in bodily activity and in emotional releases whether in affection or in anger—the whole mystique of self-control and "not showing one's feelings". And over and above all this preliminary defeat of infantile sexuality, there comes the rigid prohibition of masturbation, of sexual games, and finally of the sexual act itself. And when the child is able to understand the attitudes of its elders it begins intellectually to absorb the sexually negative orientation of society at its conscious level, and in its turn to pass it on to the next generation also.

We have mentioned these matters thus cursorily in order to show that an understanding of the mechanism of sexual defeat in children provides many points for attack. From a feeling of helplessness in the face of an overwhelming problem we can begin to discern practical ways of tackling it individually and socially.

But we also know that many readers will have ready an armour of scepticism ever ready to deprive understanding of the complimentary will to action. Let us therefore try to undermine this scepticism by turning away from our own society to consider one in which the affirmation of sex is the naturally accepted attitude of everyone. Our own society is too close to us and perhaps by examining the problem at a distance and in a simplified form we may overcome our own pessimism and derive hope for the ultimate success of an endeavour.

### The Trobriand Islanders

Our example will be familiar by repute to many readers. It is based on Malinowski's account of the sexual lives of the Trobriand Islanders. Familiar, perhaps, but how often fully understood or pondered over?

"Children in the Trobriand Islands enjoy considerable freedom and independence. They soon become emancipated

from a parental tutelage which has never been very strict. . . . Some of them obey their parents willingly, but this is entirely a matter of the personal character of both parties: there is no idea of a regular discipline, no system of domestic coercion. Often as I sat among them, observing some family incident or listening to a quarrel between parent and child, I would hear a youngster told to do this or that, and generally the thing, whatever it was, would be asked as a favour, though sometimes the request would be backed up by a threat of violence. The parents would either coax or scold or ask as from one equal to another. A simple command, implying the expectation of natural obedience, is never heard from parent to child in the Trobriands. . . . The idea of retribution, or of coercive punishment, is not only foreign, but distinctly repugnant to the natives. Several times, when I suggested, after some flagrant infantile misdeed, that it would mend matters for the future if the child were beaten or otherwise punished in cold blood, the idea appeared unnatural and immoral to my friends, and was rejected with some resentment."

These remarks of Malinowski (*The Sexual Life of Savages*, 1929, pp. 44-45) serve to show how different is the naturally accepted relationship between children and adults from that which seems natural in our society and prompted his suggestion regarding punishment. He goes on to point out that "such freedom gives scope for the formation of the children's own little community, an independent group, into which they drop naturally from the age of four or five and continue till puberty. . . . If the children make up their minds to do a certain thing, to go for a day's expedition, for instance, the grown-ups, and even the chief himself, as I observed, will not be able to stop them."

(Continued on page 3)

AT this particular moment it may be valuable to look once more at the contents of a letter written by an Eskimo who could not understand why men hunt one another like seals and steal from people they have never seen or known. He apostrophizes his own country: "How well it is that you are covered with ice and snow! How well it is that, if in your rocks there is gold and silver, for which others are so greedy, it is covered with so much snow that they cannot get at it. Your unfruitfulness makes us happy and saves us from molestation." He expresses surprise that Europeans have not learned better manners from the Eskimo, and—the crowning touch—proposes to send medicine men as missionaries to teach them the advantages of peace.

—Otto Klineberg: *Race and Psychology*.

## COMMENT

### Taking the Initiative

WHEN, ten years ago, I wrote in *Tribune* that future planners of London County Council estates could have no excuse for neglecting to provide communal facilities, I thought I was stating a platitude.

But a report on the new L.C.C. housing estate at Oxhey, near Watford, recently submitted to the Hertfordshire County Council says that many factors militate against cohesion at Oxhey. The tenants have been uprooted from their own background and moved to an estate in which they are strangers. There are no churches, no public halls, and no public houses. There is one small café. A shopping centre is planned but at present there are only half a dozen shops. Amenities, then, and even daily needs have largely to be sought elsewhere. For children, amenities should include open spaces. At Oxhey there are none save the school playing-fields.

It is the same story with the L.C.C.'s post-war estate at St. Paul's Cray in Kent, as was shown in a recent letter in *Town & Country Planning* whose correspondent concludes:

"The L.C.C. are rightly striving to provide playing fields in their reconstruction areas within the County of London and are proud of their redevelopment scheme at Poplar and Stepney—a show layout for the Festival of Britain—and it is a thousand pities that at St. Paul's Cray (outside the County) they appear to have learnt little from current ideas of community planning and to be working to a layout whose primary aim is the rehousing of the maximum number of population units rather than making a happy community."

The Hertfordshire report indicates that Oxhey, too, is just another underplanned dormitory suburb as if all the planning research, the reports, surveys and recommendations had never existed. The same social problems which arose on the pre-war housing estates spreading out into the ever-receding "green belt" around London, are springing up again.

The tenants, says the report, "are drawn from the whole of the London area. They have not specifically asked to live at Oxhey and they have little or no choice of a house."

"Many of the estate's tenants are faced with serious economic problems by going to live there. To the inevitable expenses of a new home is added the high cost of travelling to work. To supplement the family income many mothers on the estate have to go out to work;

and as there is little work available for them in the neighbourhood they also must travel long distances.

"At one school alone 50 or 60 children have to be kept until 7 o'clock at night because their parents have not returned home to look after them."

Now we know that any healthy community life springs up from below and not from the "improving" activities of do-gooders and authorities, but under the conditions described, at Oxhey there is much less opportunity for the sense of community and for community activities to arise than, for instance, in Herbert Read's village whose adventure in building the village hall, he described in *Freedom* a fortnight ago.

I was discussing this last week with a friend who said, "Well, if you lived at Oxhey, what would you do? The first thing I would do has no doubt been done by the tenants there, I would get together with people of common interests in that multiplication of clubs, associations, circles and groups through which people follow their hobbies and social needs, or protect their interests as tenants, parents and so on. We would probably feel the need for a Community Association and in order to get the benefit of other people's experience would get in touch with the National Federation of Community Associations, of 26, Bedford Square, W.C.1, which seeks "to turn an aggregation of neighbours into a living community bound together by social understanding, and inspired by a spirit of mutual service, a community of which the members find significance in the exercise of initiative and the sharing of responsibility." Couldn't we try to turn to advantage the fact that the children have to stay at school till seven until the parents get home from work, by arranging a parent-teacher-children club at the school, and persuade the Council to allow the use of the kitchen and dining room as a café where the parents and children could have an evening meal before going home? Couldn't we arrange with other people of the same trade to start co-operative businesses in Oxhey itself, and not have to travel miles in order to earn our living?

Couldn't we, in a word take the initiative, or lack of initiative out of the hands of the "responsible authorities" and the irresponsible ones and start running our own lives?

This is a question to be asked far far beyond Oxhey.

C.W.

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## POLITICS AND RESPONSIBILITY

AMONG the criticisms levelled at the anarchist are the charges that he is impractical, unrealistic, irresponsible and unconstructive. He is unconstructive, it is said, because he ridicules the political parties and their aims but has no plan of his own to put in their place; he is irresponsible because for all his sniping at those who accept the responsibilities of office, he says that he would not accept authority even if he had the chance; he is unrealistic because he will not recognise that mankind is not perfectible and that authority is necessary for the protection of society; he is impractical because he will not recognise the value of the work done by reformist bodies in "improving social conditions"; and so on.

But the anarchist will show that these very words are descriptive of the political attitudes of the critics of anarchism. It is they who are impractical for they do not see that their reformist remedies for social problems, their practical legislative measures, merely set up new problems in solving the old, nor that the "enlightened" policies of governmental systems are more than cancelled out by the governments' predatory activities. It is they who are unrealistic about the nature of man, because they will not recognise the truth of William Morris's saying, "No man is good enough to be another man's master," because they will not accept the evidence of history that the best-intentioned system of authority contains elements of tyranny.

It is they who are irresponsible, because they foster the notion that the citizen can meet his responsibilities to himself and others by making on a ballot paper his delegation of those responsibilities to others. It is they who are unconstructive, because by urging people to give their support to political movements and "properly constituted authorities", they are destroying people's capacity to support themselves and to solve their own problems.

When people with political concepts of life accuse anarchism of being an irresponsible attitude, the question to be asked is, irresponsible to whom? The responsibility of the politician is not, as he claims, to the electors, but to the political system within whose framework he acts. He is convinced that he is acting responsibly in all the expediences, deceptions, changing alliances and policies, in which he indulges. And so he is, within the limits of the political game, the "give and take of the political arena" as it is called. But it is not a game for the people whose abnegated power provides the motive force of the politicians, and whose delegated responsibility becomes their authority.

It was held at the Nuremberg trials that the German people were responsible for the crimes of their rulers, that the German soldiers could not disclaim responsibility for atrocities committed under military orders. So it can also be held that the British and American peoples are responsible for the atomic bomb though they were ignorant of its existence until it was used, and that the British people were responsible for the late Mr. Bevan's policy in Palestine, or present British policy in Malaya, or in our participation in the Korean war. And so long as

FROM PAGE ONE  
ear advocated sending the fleet to Persian waters to let the "natives" look down the barrels of our heavy guns. But the Government's advisers obviously knew which way the wind was blowing.

Compromise and bluff must be their tactic, they were advised, and a business man, Mr. Stokes, was chosen for the job. The compromise was not accepted and his bluff was called. We have not yet seen, however, the end of the oil incident. Mr. Stokes may yet call the Persian Government's bluff. One thing is certain: the Persians have the upper hand since in the long run they have little to lose and much to gain, whereas the British have nothing to gain and much to lose. Already under the British proposals the revenue derived by Persia from oil would be three times the amount received under the original contract (which the Persians could well point to as a very good justification for all the fuss and bother caused by their nationalisation programme. Without such direct action—if one may be permitted to apply such a term to governments—the British Labour Government would certainly not have been so generous!) And there is no guessing what the British will next offer if the National Iranian Oil Company's spokesman, Mr. Mazda, proves that he was not bluffing when he said that four foreign-trained engineers were ready to take over in the large oilfield at Masjid-i-Sulaiman, from which 130 British are now being evacuated. He added:

"It is not a matter that can be settled in a few hours, but we are getting more Persian engineers from Tehran. Everything should be in order in a few days in the oilfields. There are enough Persian engineers for us to run the oilfields."

The British have, of course, a few more tricks up their sleeves. They uncovered one last week when they pointed out that by 1953 Europe would have sufficient refineries to deal with nine-tenths of her total requirements. That will give those Persians something to think about before they reject our generous offer to take all her oil production!

But when you have much to lose and

## FOREIGN COMMENTARY PERSIAN OIL "DIPLOMACY"

nothing to gain, you never close the door with a bang. In fact you don't close it but leave your visiting card with a fragrant bouquet.

"The Lord Privy Seal paid a farewell round of visits to the Shah, the Premier, Dr. Musaddiq, the Foreign Minister, Mr. Kazemi, and the staff of the British Embassy. He thanked the Government and the people of Persia for the 'generous hospitality' shown during his visit and added: 'To my mind, the welcome that we have received augurs well for the future friendship and co-operation between our nations.'" (Reuter)

Significant, in connection with the oil dispute, has been the three weeks visit to this country, at the invitation of the British Government, of the Emir Feisal, Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia, complete with colourful robes. At a Press conference, he stated that the purpose of his visit was "to strengthen the already existing friendship between the two countries and to discuss some points of mutual interest." Have we heard something like that before?

What has been discussed is given in a Foreign Office statement which says that discussion during the talks had turned mainly "on the delimitation of frontier areas between Saudi Arabia and some of the British-protected shajikdoms on the Trucial Coast and on the determination of sovereignty over certain islands, shoals, and sea bed areas in the Persian Gulf."

And the concluding remarks are that "considerable progress was made" and the "talks were most frank and friendly and have contributed to strengthening still further the close relations already existing between the two countries."

In case the reader confuses what he understands by "close relations" with what Government Ministries mean, let me hasten to explain why the British are so interested by quoting further from Prince Feisal's Press Conference.

## A READER'S IMPRESSION OF GERMANY TODAY

I HAVE just returned from a holiday in Germany. This, I agree, is a poor qualification for writing about German life and thought; after, say, a year of working in Germany my impressions would undoubtedly have been more accurate, and probably very different. However, I think I can claim to have learned more in my few weeks of travelling than anyone who travelled for a similar time by rail or by air, or even in a comfortable Chevrolet. Hitch-hiking is slow, uncomfortable and hard on the nerves, but the hitch-hiker is constantly meeting new people of all kinds, who are willing to describe what they really think, because they know a wanderer will never be able to tell their friends or mention them in an official report.

The Germans, I found, were almost all against the idea of a new war, yet they had gathered from somewhere (perhaps the occupying powers) that the British want a war. "You English and Americans," said one, "do not understand the meaning of war. We Germans have learned it twice already this century." They have, too. They are no longer dying from explosions, or even from starvation, but they still live in the macabre remains of bombed cities.

Many people, discovering I was English, showed a complete lack of good manners in their haste to point out every heap of rubble that our gallant allied Air Forces had made of a bit of building. One rather unpleasant fellow (he was not in the habit of giving lifts, he said, though his car was always empty) kept repeating in English, "Here the bombs fell, and they burned in the cellars."

I don't think I felt shame or guilt (after all, I never approved of the carpet raids, and before the end I was actually agitating against them), but for some reason I always tried to point out that earlier in the war, quite a few ruins had

we do not repudiate the politicians who initiate and support these policies, it is our responsibility. But withdrawing our responsibility from those to whom it has been delegated is only the first step towards a personally responsible attitude. Are we to search out for new allegiances, for "incorruptible and honest" politicians upon whose willing shoulders we can unload our power, or are we to resolve to keep our power to ourselves, to govern ourselves and to resist the attempt of others to take responsibility for us and from us?

Which is the responsible attitude?

## TRAGIC ACTORS

INDIA and Pakistan again stand near the edge of the precipice from which Mr. Nehru and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan have already once before pulled them back just in time. The reason is that each, while not desiring war, has spoken the language of war. The responsibility sits on the political leaders: except at moments of tension, no great excitement over Kashmir has possessed the greater part of the voters in India; the impediments to a settlement do not come from them. The quarrel has the true ingredients of tragedy in which passion plucks down disaster on the most honourable men and destroys their life's work. The fact that their intentions are honest is no safeguard against catastrophe. Did not Frederick the Great begin by being a disciple of the pacifist Voltaire and writing the *Anti-Machiavel*? If Mr. Gandhi were alive to-day he would probably be fasting. Now he is dead what is left to appeal to the reason of these tragic actors?

—Manchester Guardian, 15/8/51.

"The importance of boundaries in Eastern Arabia and of the ownership of islands and seabed areas lies in the oil deposits, and Prince Feisal agreed that certain American, British, and Australian oil companies had been seeking new concessions in his country, though 'nothing serious has developed yet.'" (23/8/51).

Is this another trick up the British Government's sleeve?

## EGYPT

"*Il faut qu'une porte soit ouverte ou fermée.*" wrote Musset, but the diplomatic rumpus between Egypt and Britain is over the fact that the Egyptians say that Foreign Secretary Morrison's speech in the House of Commons on July 30th had "slammed the door on further negotiations," whereas Mr. Morrison assures his Egyptian counterpart that there was nothing in his speech which justified a closed door interpretation. So one sees that in diplomatic language as to whether a door is closed or open depends on your point of view.

## THE FRUITS OF MILITARY TRAINING

The prosecutor at a Canadian court-martial alleged to-day that when a number of British and Canadian soldiers were prevented from assaulting two Korean women, one of them lobbed a hand-grenade into a room full of people.

Evening Standard, 25/8/51.

## A SEX-AFFIRMATIVE SOCIETY

(Continued from page 2)  
Sexual Life of Children

This freedom extends also to sexual matters. "To begin with, children hear of and witness much in the sexual life of their elders. Within the house . . . a child has opportunities of acquiring practical information concerning the sexual act. I was told that no special precautions are taken to prevent children from witnessing their parents' sexual enjoyment."

The older children also allow the younger ones to witness their own sexual acts. "There are plenty of opportunities for both boys and girls to receive instruction in erotic matters from their companions. The children initiate each other into the mysteries of sexual life in a directly practical manner at a very early age. A premature amorous existence begins among them long before they are able really to carry out the act of sex. They indulge in plays and pastimes in which they satisfy their curiosity concerning the appearance and function of the organs of generation, and incidentally receive, it would seem, a certain amount of positive pleasure. Genital manipulation and such minor perversions as oral stimulation of the organs are typical forms of this amusement."

In quoting Malinowski, the same western attitude as appeared in his remarks about punishment emerges in the use of words which cast moralistic shadows like "perversion", and the implied surprise at the achievement of positive pleasure. Of course, babies and children do experience orgasm, unless the moralistic taboos succeed in obliterating the capacity for it.

There is, unfortunately, no space to indicate further the charm and liveliness of these children, which Malinowski brings out in abundance. Even so, the contrast between the life described in these bare quotations and the solitary and anxious and furtive and inhibited sexual explorations of civilised children—when they have not been wholly suppressed by their elders—is only too plain. "Small girls," writes Malinowski, "follow their fathers on fishing expeditions, during which the men remove their public leaf. Nakedness under these conditions is regarded as natural, since it is necessary. There is no lubricity or ribaldry associated with it." Again, the contrast with the salacious modesty of our own society is marked.

Malinowski, despite his cautious language makes it quite clear that these sexual activities of the children are not merely tolerated by the adults, they are regarded as natural and proper behaviour. Following his description of their erotic pastimes quoted above, he makes this plain:

"As they are untrammelled by the authority of their elders and unrestrained by any moral code, except that of specific tribal-taboo, there is nothing but their degree of curiosity, of ripeness, and of 'temperament' or sensuality, to determine how much or how little they shall indulge in sexual pastimes." In brief, their sexual development is allowed to follow a perfectly natural course.

"The attitude of the grown-ups and even of the parents towards such infantile indulgence is either that of com-

Egypt demands "the immediate evacuation by land, sea and air, of British Forces from Egypt and the Sudan". Persia demands: "We want Persians at the head of the oil industry. The oil problem is first and foremost political. The workers will not tolerate foreign bosses, whether they are British, American or German. We shall engage experts on an individual contract basis, giving priority to Britishers if they want to work here, just as we engaged American experts to help to carry out Persia's seven-year development plan."

The Koreans, if their voice could be heard, would demand that they should be left in peace to till their land. In Malaya and Indo-China, in Africa and the West Indies the demands would be the same.

The Press, Radio and politicians are working overtime exposing the horrors of Russian expansionism. They are calling on the peoples of the satellite countries to resist, to fight to get rid of the Russian invader who is stripping them of their industries, and looting their production. "We will help you to get them off your backs."

But is it not obvious to any person other than a politician, or business man, that to a Persian, Egyptian, Malayan or African, it matters little whether the man on your back is a "democrat" or a "Stalinist". Yet the "democratic" line is that these people are ungrateful. After all, a democrat on your back is as a feather compared with the leaden weight of a Stalinist. To which the answer is: "which weighs more, a pound of feathers or a pound of lead?"

LIBERTARIAN.

plete indifference or complacency—they find it natural, and do not see why they should scold or interfere. Usually they show a kind of tolerant and amused interest, and discuss the love affairs of their children with easy jocularity. I often heard some such benevolent gossip as this: 'So-and-so (a little girl) has already had intercourse with so-and-so (a little boy).' And if such were the case, it would be added that it was her first experience. An exchange of lovers, or some small love drama in the little world would be half-seriously, half-jokingly discussed. The infantile sexual act, or its substitute, is regarded as an innocent amusement. It is their play to *kayla* (to have intercourse). They give each other a coconut, a small piece of betel-nut, a few beads or some fruits from the bush, and they go and hide and *kayta*."

Even in our society, children sometimes have love affairs whose depth and seriousness is entirely overlooked by adults. Almost always, however, and inevitably, they end in misery and disappointment and so add their quota not to joy but to the mechanisms of repression. Is it necessary to point out, furthermore, that overt sexual activity in civilised children means often enough the juvenile courts and approved schools, or even the misery of Borstal training till the age of 18.

## The Role of the Father

Limitation of space precludes further illustration of the sexual life of the Trobriand children. But it will be in place to draw attention to an accompanying aspect of family life which is also in contrast, though less blaringly, with civilised life. This is the rôle of the father. We will use Malinowski's description. (*Op cit.*, p. 17.)

"The husband fully shares in the care of the children. He will fondle and carry a baby, clean and wash it, and give it the mashed vegetable food which it receives in addition to the mother's milk almost from birth. In fact, nursing the baby in the arms or holding it on the knees . . . is the special rôle and duty of the father . . . Again, if anyone enquires why children should have duties towards their father . . . the answer is invariably: 'because of the nursing', 'because his hands have been soiled with the child's excrement and urine.'

"The father performs his duties with genuine natural fondness; he will carry an infant about for hours, looking at it with eyes full of such love and pride as are seldom seen in those of a European father. Any praise of the baby goes directly to his heart, and he will never tire of talking about and exhibiting the virtues and achievements of his wife's offspring. Indeed, watching a native family at home or meeting them on the road, one receives a strong impression of close union and intimacy between its members. Nor . . . does this mutual affection abate in later years."

Such a situation can only come about where affections in childhood have not been brutally frustrated, so that the father treats the children with the same love which he himself received.

In the next article we shall describe the sexual life of adolescents, and the social institutions which underwrite it.

J.H.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Anarchism and Pacifism

Is Capitalism Inhuman?

I WAS faintly surprised that my article on "The Defence of the Revolution" (Freedom, 7/7/51) had not drawn comment from pacifists nearer home, but that it was left to comrade M.A., of Minneapolis, to cross swords with me (if he will forgive that violent metaphor) on the subject of violence. Pacifists are usually second only to Esperantists in getting off their mark when the occasion permits.

To answer his points:

(1) Workers' militias would not stand a chance against the organised might which the State has at its disposal.

History shows this to be simply not true. In the fighting that followed the Russian Revolution it was the peasant armies of the anarchist Mahkno that had the greatest success against both the Whites and the armies of intervention. It was not until Mahkno collaborated with Trotsky's Red Army—the new centralised army of the State—that they began to suffer defeats and were finally stabbed in the back by the Bolsheviks, who had collaborated only in order to destroy the peasant armies—for obvious reasons.

In Spain, unhappily, roughly the same thing happened. Successes while the militias remained autonomous and free, demoralisation and ultimate defeat when they merged with the centralised Government forces.

In the last war, the guerilla armies of the Resistance against the Nazis showed that even—on a limited scale—decentralised mobile forces can play havoc with centralised armies.

Let us not be hypnotised by the strength of the State. It all depends upon the workers. One soldier in the field needs ten workers to keep him supplied. The factories and the lines of communication are vulnerable—even to pacifist attack!

(2) The only results of violence... would be death or imprisonment... increased repressive measures by the State.

Only if the State won! I don't think it should be allowed to win. (Incidentally, one good step to take to prevent the imprisonment of anybody after the revolution would be to destroy the prisons immediately the prisoners have been released—which should be one of the first tasks of the revolutionaries.)

(3) Violence would mean... an alienation from the anarchist cause of many who would be potentially sympathetic (pacifists, intellectuals, portions of the middle-class, etc.) had they not been repelled by the workers' violence.

If these potential sympathisers turn from anarchism, but still retain reformist ideas (they obviously will not have revolutionary ideas, to whom will they give their support? Since Anarchism is the only anti-government philosophy, they must support some ideology which supports the idea of government—and they will have just had an example of the benign nature of the State with its "death, imprisonment and increased repressive measures.")

And, in fact, it is very noticeable how many pacifists, very horrified at the thought of workers' violence, condone its use by the State ("police forces are necessary," etc.)

They can, of course, turn their backs on all further social agitation or activity, and retire to their ivory towers, as do all those offended by the fact that their ideas do not coincide with reality.

The reality in this case is that a social revolution entails struggle. If M.A. and his fellow pacifists will carry on the struggle for an anarchist society by non-violent means, he will have my whole-hearted encouragement, but although it is possible that "any number of abominations could easily flow [from the workers' use of violence]" I think he will have to agree that the State will be only too delighted to practice any number of abominations on those who don't resist, as well as on those who do—and perhaps with greater success as well as greater ease. And we should not forget that pacifists (Nehru, Gandhi himself) have shown themselves just as easily corruptible by power as any who use force but are not anarchists.

For all M.A.'s subsidiary questions ("Where does defence begin and end?" etc.) revolve around the question of the motive for the fighting. It is to seize State power, or maintain it, then violence

must become institutionalised and will never end. If it is to abolish it, then as soon as the institutions of power are destroyed, the violence will end. It is a question of whether the authorities or the libertarians win.

This will probably shock M.A., but it would be just as easy to ask him questions like: "If the assassination of one tyrant would prevent the massacre of five thousand peacefully demonstrating pacifists, would you allow it?", to which he would, presumably, say "No," which would shock me!

Of course, the use of the atom bomb is never to be justified. Nor is it a revolutionary weapon, or even a weapon that is likely to be used against a revolution except perhaps by an interventionist power. One could perhaps conceive that America might use it if a social revolution were successful in Britain.

Pacifism, it seems to me, is a great theory for the maintenance of the moral innocence of the individual. I admit that passive resistance has never yet been tried on a scale likely to show its social value, and if M.A. thinks it can be an effective enough means to overthrow the State, he has every right to propagate that opinion. I, personally, think that the State is far too unscrupulous to be swayed by the moral arguments of sacrifice and that other means must be countenanced.

London.

PHILIP SANSOM.

IT would be nonsense to talk of a capitalist class where there was no capitalism. That does not mean that there always has been capitalism or that there always will be. Capitalism grew up as certain practices grew up—certain ways of accumulating wealth and of carrying on trade independently of the feudal practices that had been the rule before that. It began "within" feudalism, but it was a new mode of economic activity, and it grew into something that displaced feudalism. It would be idle to ask who was responsible for the innovation. It did not come all at once, and nobody planned it. It was a result partly of measures which the feudal lords had undertaken to meet political and economic difficulties in their régimes. It was a result partly of tactics which the monarchy adopted to counter the power of the feudal lords (that was more especially the case on the continent than here). And it was a result of a great number of other circumstances as well. Nobody intended to produce just what has in fact resulted. They were intent upon other things.

If you say that capitalism is "man made", this can mean no more than that it has grown up in human society and is a form of human society; and in this sense it is an outcome of human activities. But this does not mean that anyone has produced it, as I might produce a house, or as a group of people might set up a company or a school. (Even the company and the school will generally

develop into something different from what anyone at first intended.) Certain people are well off in this form of society, and others are not. Those who are well off may want to see this way of carrying on business and production preserved. But this does not mean that they are responsible for it, as though it were something they had designed. It does not mean that capitalism goes on because they want it to go on. And it does not mean that they control the developments that may come about in the course of it.

When people behave as they do, this is not generally because they have decided to behave in that way, or even because they "want to" behave in that way. And this will be true in any society, capitalist or other. Decisions are made, of course, but they are made within a way of living which was not decided on—any more than we have decided to speak the language as we do.

Even in details, most of what we do is not decided on. I do not decide to take a bus to work in the morning. I just hope I won't miss it. I might make a decision about this, of course. But that would happen only rarely. And although you can say of almost any single thing that I do, that I might take a decision whether to do that or not, you cannot say that I might always decide about everything that I do. That would be inconceivable. And I mean absolutely inconceivable. The assumption would be just nonsense. If we can make decisions about particular things—as I may decide on a particular morning whether to go to work or not—that is only possible because for the most part we do things without making any decisions at all.

I do not know whether capitalism is an evil system. And I can make nothing of the statement that it is evil "by definition". There are evils that come up within capitalism, and some of these are not accidental. (The destruction of food is not typical and not important. It is inconsiderable in comparison with what has been accomplished in the production and distribution of food under capitalism. And if that were all you had to put against it, I'd say capitalism had a wonderful record.) Some people may come out in opposition to these and try to do things differently. I agree that they would be foolish to expect support from "benevolent capitalists"; although wealthy people may join them, just as aristocrats have done. Some of the opposition may come from people who advocate "a truly human society". I expect that such a society would be about as inhuman as capitalism is; but I don't know. Anyway, what comes about will be something different from what they advocate. And in any case it will call for opposition.

Yours, etc.,

Swansea, Aug. 25. TOM TEMPLE.

ANARCHY AND PECKHAM

MAY I congratulate you on your "Peckham" number, occasioned by the final winding-up of the Pioneer Health Centre. As usual, one found really important subjects dealt with far more thoroughly in your paper than in any of the dailies or weeklies. Dr. Williamson's reply, completely vindicated your conclusions, though I must say I thought his opening remark, if intended seriously, a little unfair, especially as you were careful to point out that you were presenting only one aspect of his experiment, and urged your readers to go for themselves to the sources of information. But what does he mean when he speaks of "the foolish concept that autonomy results in anarchy"? He cannot be using the word anarchy to mean chaos, because he obviously knows what anarchy really means. But autonomy, when applied to the individual is anarchy. Anarchy means non-rule, and if the individual is not ruled, he is—autonomous. To call this autonomy autarchy—a word which is universally taken to refer to economic isolationism, on the argument that the literal meaning of the word is self-rule, is just a play upon words. However, Dr. Williamson's article is so full of meat that one can readily forgive him his wilful misinterpretation of words—his activities are far more eloquent.

To return to your own brief anthology of Peckham writers and anarchist writers—what a grasp of the nature of a free society Kropotkin, Bakunin and Godwin had! The parallel between their remarks and the observations at Peckham is almost uncanny. One thing which they illustrate is how much more there is to anarchism than to the political dogmas of the usual run of 'isms; they show it to be a coherent (by no means chaotic) philosophy or attitude to life, firmly based—Dr. Williamson notwithstanding—on the natural laws of organic growth and development, with a relevance and application to every aspect of human activity.

London.

C. MACB.

BERLIN AND BRITISH YOUTH

(see eyewitness account in last week's Freedom)

AT the National Union of Students' Congress, the Russian delegates invited the Leeds University Theatre Group to perform at the Berlin Youth Festival. This invitation was accepted and a letter was sent to the Yorkshire Post signed by members of the staff asking for funds to pay the fares. The editor of that newspaper took the opportunity to attack the project, calling the Theatre Group a collection of "unworldly staff and ardent youth". This caused great annoyance amongst the individuals directly concerned, particularly as not one of them was a Communist... The British Council withdrew its sponsoring of the plan after a speech by Morrison attacking the Festival and finally the whole scheme was abandoned through lack of funds, though the plays to be performed were "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and "Oedipus Rex", which would appear to be singularly lacking in capitalist or communist propaganda. This is the history of one attempt by British students to obtain cultural contacts with their opposite numbers abroad.

The Foreign Office has admitted that it used every means in its power to dissuade British youths from going to Berlin without actually forbidding them (the Sheffield Peace Conference tactics, slightly adapted). The American military authorities behaved with a good deal of violence to them, and if any of the young folk attempting to reach Berlin had any faith in the political democracy of capitalist countries the experience of being herded with bayonets can only have served to shatter their illusions. While condemning wholeheartedly the unformed youth parades and the phoney peace demonstrations linked with these functions, one must remember that at the two previous large-scale youth rallies at Budapest and Prague, British students attending through their membership of the communist-dominated International Union of Students, were able to express an independent point of view and could gain some idea for themselves of what life is like behind the Iron Curtain. Now the blimps of the Foreign Office are showing their distrust of unrestricted travel and intercourse between different peoples more obviously than ever before. Mr. Bevin's remark that he wanted to be able to go to Victoria and buy a ticket and go "wherever he damn well liked", has been quietly forgotten. It was probably regarded all along by his associates as a beginner's faux pas.

FRANCIS TONKS.

TO THE ANARCHIST GROUPS IN SAN FRANCISCO AND LOS ANGELES

We have received regular contributions to our funds from these Groups, and again this week they figure prominently in our Special Appeal with contributions of more than 50 dollars from each Group. As the money was not received direct but through our New York contemporary, *l'Adunata*, we wish to thank, through the columns of *Freedom*, all those comrades and friends in Los Angeles and San Francisco who have so generously contributed to these substantial donations.

Their solidarity is a real source of encouragement to us in our task of issuing a journal every week in the face of ever-increasing economic difficulties caused by the rocketing prices of raw materials. Thank you, Los Angeles and San Francisco! May your example be followed by those Groups who receive bundles of *Freedom*, but who not only do not contribute to our funds but do not even pay the cost of postage!

EDITORS.

Special Appeal

August 18th to August 25th:

Glasgow: F.D. & H.D. 10/-; St. Austell: L.A. 4/-; Kingston: Comrade 1/-; Belmont: M.R. (per V.R.) £3/9/0; San Francisco: Group (\$51) £17/17/0; Los Angeles: Group part proceeds picnic Aug. 5 (\$52.75) £18/9/0; W. Somerville: D.C. 7/-; Colchester: W.M. 5/-; Edinburgh: T.O.M. 5/-; London: V.R. £1.

Total ... 42 7 0

Previously acknowledged ... 310 16 6

1951 TOTAL TO DATE ... £353 3 6

(per O.M. (Newark).)

Germany Today

(Continued from page 3)

it there and why. (The explanation appeared a fortnight later: "Your hope, your dream, your film! To Live in Peace!". One ex-Nazi described the attitude of his kind: "All is finished for Germany now. I have my work and no interest in anything else. Let the Americans and Russians fight the next war.")

The only two Germans I met who wanted a war (they were quite enthusiastic, too) were a team of drivers on a long-distance non-stop lorry. They said the Western powers should have allied with Germany against Russia in 1945. "That was what the Germans wanted."

I met one young man, by the way, who returned from a Russian prisoner-of-war camp in May of this year—five and a half years after the end of the war. He had been moved around for about six months, then settled in one camp where he worked six years in the lead mines and eighteen months as an orderly in the prisoners' hospital. He said the Russian and Mongol soldiers were good blokes, but difficult to converse with as they spoke so many different languages and could not even talk to each other. Many of the local children, however, spoke very good German. He had a tobacco ration of five grams a day (i.e., about an ounce a week), and "always enough to eat".

Those are the facts he told me. About his own feelings I gathered only that he found life in a slave camp very unpleasant and intended to enjoy his freedom while it lasted.

The Germans were very interested in nine young men in grey-green uniforms driving new four-seater Volkswagen in single file almost like a drill formation. These were the "Grenzpolizei" (frontier police), "the new German Army", as I was informed by two motorcyclists, two pedestrians, and one lorry driver, independently. As they passed me for the fourth time (they were driving very slowly because their cars were new), I signalled them again and one picked me up. They had been twenty hours driving without sleep and kept having five-minute breaks, during which I got into conversation with quite a few of them.

These nine, six officers and three constables, were the total force of the Grenzpolizei when I met them (31/7/51), but they had, besides the nine new four-seaters, two personnel wagons and two machine-gun cars, ready to accommodate a total of 100 men. And they said they did not want to be an army. In fact, they said it so promptly and unanimously that it sounded, even when accompanied by throat-slitting signs, suspiciously like an official line.

D.R.

(To be continued)

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MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

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

NORTH-EAST LONDON DISCUSSION MEETINGS IN EAST HAM

at 7.30 SEPT. 4.—(at Woodford) SOCIAL EVENING—Eric Lewis: "A TRIBUTE TO SPAIN" SEPT. 19.—Edgar Priddy THE ABC OF ANARCHISM Enquiries c/o Freedom Press

SOUTH LONDON

Meetings suspended for the time being. Readers interested in possible future activities, please contact S. E. Parker, c/o Freedom Press.

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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