

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"A politician is a man who gives your life for his country."

—THE WESTERN BROTHERS

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Threepence

TAWDRY HYPOCRISY

Rule by the People?

AS the General Election approaches, the all too familiar machinery grinds into motion. The canvassing, the meetings in the constituency, the election manifestos, the press endeavours. And, not least, the use of international events as levers in the limited domestic sphere of elections.

Democracy—government of the people, and all that—may once have sounded a fine idea. When it was a battle-cry against autocratic autocracy, for example. But in practice...? Each succeeding General Election repeats the same pattern. The half-truths, the downright lies, the special pleading: the frank untruths written in headlines and then withdrawn in small paragraphs of small type, which seek to damage the other side while paying perfunctory lip-service to truth: the fixed smiles of the candidates and their buttonholes: the triumphal journeys of the party leaders and their bombinating broadcasts. What has all this to do with an idea that once inspired honest and brave men like Tom Paine?

And the people themselves, do they believe it? When they dutifully attend the meetings, when they sceptically or loyally, according to their political colours, scan the newspapers? When they finally go to the polls? It is not difficult to see that the idea is dead and meaningless.

Instead there are diversions. What will be the effect of the Bevan schism in the Labour Party? Of the "victory" of the Bevanites in the elections to the National Executive? What does Attlee think? What will Morrison do?

Since these people and Bevan and his supporters are most careful in what they say and do: since they calculate the effect of their words

BREAD & WATER PUNISHMENT AGAIN IN BORSTAL

THE Home Secretary has agreed to the reintroduction of Restricted Diet No. 1 (bread-and-water) in Borstal institutions, but "only as a last resort when other forms of punishment have failed, or in exceptional cases of serious misconduct where no other form of punishment is deemed appropriate".

The Home Office last week announced the acceptance, with this proviso, of a recommendation of the report of a Departmental Committee on Punishments in Prisons and Borstals that power to award this punishment should be restored to governors and boards of visitors. A recommendation by the committee that Restricted Diet No. 2 be abolished has also been accepted by the Home Secretary, and the power to impose this punishment continues to be regarded as suspended.

The Home Secretary has also announced that rates of pay for all prisoners, including beginners, will be increased by approximately two-thirds, with a maximum flat-rate of 4s. The average weekly earnings of piece-rate workers and of skilled and unskilled flat-rate workers will be about 2s. 11d., 3s. 4d. and 2s. 1d. respectively.

These increases do no more than make it possible for those prisoners receiving the maximum pay to purchase the same quantity of tobacco that was available to a prisoner before the war who earned the then maximum of one shilling per week.

The report of the Commissioners of Prisons for 1950, just issued, reveals that the present prison and Borstal population is the highest since 1909: 21,800.

on policy and electioneering, and are most careful not to let their real feelings express themselves if they would jam the works; such speculations are quite valueless. The electoral procedure demands above all the ability to subordinate truth and feelings to the needs of the moment, to policy. In a word, it demands hypocrisy and it gets it in full measure.

Forecasting
 For others than bookmakers, there is the serious business of forecasting results. It is natural that in our scientific age, scientific methods should come in to help. Dr. Gallup's poll (quite recovered, quite unconcerned about its débâcle at President Truman's election) provides a "firm" basis for calculation. The *Observer* has explained to its readers how the "cube rule" works. How the number of seats held by each of the two major parties may

be forecast by applying the cube of the ratio of number of votes cast for them. It applies this rule each week to the figures supplied by Dr. Gallup, and so provides the science-hungry public with a figure, a mathematical symbol, somehow so reassuring in our age of uncertainties!

Meanwhile, behind all the electoral stuff, the workers still produce goods, services and profits, while the administrators still take the decisions. The problems of wages and prices, of food and rent, of living and loving and misery and hate and dying—the whole tawdry and insincere and irrelevant structure of our world continues. And when the Conservatives or the Labour Party are returned to power, these problems and the sense of emptiness which go with them will still be the day to day course of our lives.

TORIES WOO THE UNIONS UNITY IN INDUSTRY

WE referred last week to the Conservatives' proposed "Workers' Charter", which, as we quoted, was designed to secure greater unity and co-operation in industry.

Further reports indicate that the trade unions are highly indignant at the Tories' attempt thus to seek their support, but even more amusing are the pleas and arguments of the Conservatives to show the need for unity in industry, and, of course, the identity of interest between the workers and management.

Perhaps the Charter itself is not to be taken too seriously, for the Conservatives, with their well-known regard for the freedom of the individual (employer) do not intend to enforce it by legislation, but rather to introduce it as a "Code of Conduct", approved by Parliament, applied in all Government undertakings and a condition of public contracts, but otherwise left to the conscience of managements to introduce.

One of those nice vague "principles" in fact which sound so impressive when delivered in sonorous tones from election platforms, but which—like, say, the Labour Party's continued approval of equal pay for women *in principle*—can always be conveniently shelved in practice.

Not that the Tories do not seek unity in industry. We are sure they do. In a class-divided society the upper class always appeals for unity and lack of internal strife. After all, the owning class is the only one with anything to lose, so of course they do not want class conflict.

This is one of the reasons why the Tory arguments against the Labour Party—that they are the party appealing to class hatred and stir up conflict, etc.—are so much behind the time. For through its nationalisation of industry, the Labour Party became a Party representing the management of industry, and so automatically, like the Tories, became interested in seeing the end of the class struggle, became desirous of unity in industry.

Much of the Tory attack on Labour on this issue is, of course, just electioneering. By playing upon the fears of the middle class they hope to win back the votes which went to Labour in 1945 and—to a lesser extent—in 1950. It is on a level with Churchill's "Gestapo" propaganda of 1945 and Labour's own "The Tories are all warmongers" of today—for as far as the real Gestapo of this country, M.I.5 and the Special Branch—is concerned, Churchill needs them just as much as Attlee, and as far

Working up Nationalistic Feeling over ABADAN EVACUATION

THE plight of British interests and prestige over the evacuation of the remaining British personnel from the Abadan refinery are being extravagantly and obviously used by Tory politicians and the National Press to discredit the Labour Government in the coming elections.

The "line" put over is purely a nationalistic one. We are presented with word pictures—since the only photographs we have seen of the evacuation show smiling white-shirted official leaving the Abadan jetty, some waving!—stressing the humiliation and insults suffered by the oil men. "The Persians are laughing at us," wrote Mr. Ross, General Manager of the refinery in an article exclusive to the *Sunday Express*. (In spite of all these alleged humiliations, Mr. Ross was presented by officials of the Nationalised Oil Board with a Persian carpet which he accepted.) Obviously the Tories can only exploit the Persian oil dispute on emotional lines, hoping that there are still enough

people left in this country to whom such a flouting of the Union Jack, such humiliation of Britishers by "wogs" will be an issue of sufficient importance to win at least their votes. What a low opinion politicians have of the electorate. And how stupid is an electorate which goes on voting for people who hold them in such contempt!

In this hysterical atmosphere it is all too easily forgotten that the dispute is in fact between the Persian Government and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. That long before the Government was called in, talks had been taking place between the two interested parties over the effects of the Nationalisation order. One can no more question the legality of the Persian Parliament's action in nationalising their oil industry than the British Government's when it nationalised the Railways, Mines and other industries. To make it an issue for the United Nations Organisation, as the British are doing, is to expose UNO to utter ridicule and to confirm the views, often put forward, that it exists for the purpose of reducing small nations to servility to the large Powers in whose sphere of influence they have been allocated by these large Powers.

As we have consistently pointed out, the oil negotiations have all along been marked by bluff and counter-bluff, each side, in the classical big business traditions, trying to obtain the best terms for itself. It is surprising, therefore, that Mr. Churchill, an old hand at the game, can put forward as a criticism of the Government's negotiation tactics, and get away with it, that, for instance, all the threats of resistance were never seriously meant. At Liverpool last week, he said: "He [Dr. Mossadig] has penetrated the minds and measured accurately the will-power of the men he had to deal with in Whitehall. He knew that with all their cruisers, frigates, destroyers, tank-landing craft, troops, and paratroops sent at such great expense, and all their bold confident statements, they were only bluffing."

And the *Manchester Guardian* suggests that the British Government's threat to take "all practicable steps" to prevent the Persians from selling the oil may have been made without any serious thought having been given to the manner in which it could be put into effect, and adds: "Perhaps it is just another of the bluffs which the Persians have been calling so consistently and successfully."

In spite of what the *Manchester Guardian* calls the Government's "long list of blunders" in their handling of the Persian oil dispute the terms offered by Persia as recently as September 20th, which have been published now for the first time, show "two important changes for the better in the Persian attitude."

One, related to the "vital" issue of management of the refinery, the other on the question of compensation. That the British Government rejected outright these new proposals the *Manchester Guardian* suggests can only be explained as ineptitude on the part of the Foreign Office or dishonesty.

What is significant, to our mind, is the fact that if all the bluff is on one side only, and Dr. Mossadig is successfully seeing through it all, how is it that at this stage he is still prepared to make important concessions. Is it perhaps, that in fact, the British Government have still a few tricks up their sleeve, and that Dr. Mossadig knows it?

LIBERTARIAN.

A FAREWELL MESSAGE TO THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES

What rot and waste of time, money and energy all these state visits are!

—The Memoirs of H.R.H. the Duke of Windsor.

"GUILT BY ASSOCIATION"

(From a Correspondent)
 NEW YORK, October.

HERE is an example of the American State's dogma of "guilt by association":

Marguerite Perey, who discovered element 87, once invited to her laboratory's dedication Irene Joliot-Curie. And Irene Joliot-Curie is married to Frederic Joliot-Curie, the atomic physicist and French Communist Party member. So the U.S. State Department denied Mlle. Perey a visa. This prevented her from attending the American Chemical Society Congress here recently.

Commenting on the guilt by association doctrine, the *Washington Post* said editorially:

"Mrs. Sun Yat-sen has just got the Stalin peace prize, the most desirable award in the Stalinist world. Soong Ching-ling her name is, and her sister's Soong Mei-ling—in other words, Mrs. Chiang Kai-shek. Which is the guiltier of association, and of what, must be left to the senatorial pundits on loyalty."

Senate loyalty investigations are as much a part of the growing witch hunt atmosphere as State Department denial of visas to foreign scientists. Besides Mlle. Perey, other scientists were prevented from attending the American Chemical Society meeting because there was not enough time to investigate them. Although the number of other scientists denied visas was not announced, it includes five who were to deliver important papers.

The name of one chemist refused a visa, Dr. Steig Viebel, a Dane, was revealed. He is "said to be a Communist," according to the capitalist press. But this alleged "Communist" is quoted as saying that "if America kept insisting on enforcing such strict exclusion laws, no more international meetings could be held in this country, and the United States would, in this respect, place itself in the same class with Russia."

Scientists like Dr. Viebel, who does not sound like a Stalinist, should learn that the American State is, in more than one respect, in the same class as the Russian State. JOHN LOEB.

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IT is a general opinion that we, because we call ourselves revolutionists, expect anarchism to come with one stroke—as the immediate result of an insurrection which violently attacks all existing institutions and which replaces them with institutions that are really new. And to tell the truth, this idea is not unknown among some comrades who also conceive the revolution in such a manner.

This prejudice explains why so many honest opponents believe anarchism an impossible thing, and it also explains why some comrades, disgusted with the present moral condition of the people and seeing that anarchism cannot come about soon, waver between an extreme dogmatism which blinds them to the realities of life and an opportunism which practically makes them forget that they are anarchists and that it is for anarchism that they should struggle.

Of course, the triumph of anarchism cannot be the consequence of a miracle; it cannot come about in contradiction to the laws of development; it is an axiom of evolution that nothing occurs without sufficient cause, and nothing can be accomplished without the adequate means.

If we should want to substitute one government for another, that is, to im-

TOWARD ANARCHISM

pose our desires upon others, it would only be necessary to combine the material forces needed to resist the present oppressors and put ourselves in their place.

But we do not want this; we want anarchism, which is a society based on free and voluntary accord—a society in which no one can force his wishes on another and in which everyone can do as he pleases and in which all will voluntarily contribute to the well-being of the community. But because of this, anarchism will not have definitely and universally triumphed until all men will not only refuse to be commanded, but will also refuse to command; nor will anarchism have succeeded unless they have understood the advantages of solidarity and unless they know how to organise a plan of social life in which there will no longer be any traces of violence and imposition.

And just as the conscience, the determination and capacity of men continuously develop and find means of expression in the gradual modification of

the new environment and in the realisation of their desires in proportion to their being formed and becoming imperious, so it is with anarchism; anarchism cannot come but little by little—slowly, but surely, growing in intensity and extension.

Therefore, the question is not whether we accomplish anarchism to-day, tomorrow or within ten centuries, but that we walk toward anarchism to-day, tomorrow and always.

Anarchism is the abolition of the exploitation and oppression of man by man, that is the abolition of private property and government. Anarchism is the destruction of superstitions and of hatred. Therefore, every blow given to the institutions of private property and to the government, every exaltation of the conscience of man, every disruption of the present conditions, every lie unmasked, every part of human activity taken away from the control of authority, every augmentation of the spirit of solidarity and initiative is a step towards anarchism.

The problem lies in knowing how to choose the road that really approaches the realisation of the ideal and in not confusing real progress with hypocritical reforms. For with the pretext of obtaining immediate ameliorations these false reforms tend to distract the masses from the struggle against authority and capitalism; they serve to paralyse their actions and make them hope that something can be attained through the kindness of the exploiters and of governments. The problems lie in knowing how to use that little power we have so as to go on achieving, in the most economical way, more support for our goal.

There is in every country a government which, with brutal force, imposes its laws on all; it compels all to be subjected to exploitation and, whether they like it or not, to maintain the existing institutions. It prevents minority groups from realising their ideas, and prevents social organisations in general from modifying themselves in accordance with the modifications of public opinion. The normal peaceful course of evolution is arrested by violence, and it is thus, with

By ERRICO MALATESTA*

violence, necessary to reopen that course. It is for this reason that we want a violent revolution to-day; and we shall always want it as long as man is subject to the imposition of things contrary to his natural desires. Take away the governmental violence, and ours would have no reason to exist.

We cannot as yet overthrow the prevailing government; perhaps to-morrow from the ruins of the present government we cannot prevent the arising of another similar one. But this does not hinder us, nor will it to-morrow, from resisting whatever form of authority—refusing always to submit to its laws whenever possible and constantly using force to oppose force.

Every weakening of whatever kind of authority, each accession of liberty will be a step toward anarchism; always it should be conquered—never asked for; always it should make us remember well strength in the struggle; always it should make us consider the state as an enemy with whom we should never make peace; always it should make us remember well that the decrease of the ills produced by the government consists in the decrease of its attributions and powers. By government we mean any person or group of persons in the state, country, community, or association who has the right to make laws and inflict them upon those who do not want them.

We cannot as yet abolish private property; we cannot yet regulate the means of production; perhaps we shall not be able to do so in the next insurrectionary movement. But this does not prevent us now, nor will it in the future, from continually opposing capitalism or any other form of despotism. And each victory, however small, gained by the workers against their exploiters, each decrease of profit, every bit of wealth taken from the individual owners and put at the disposal of all, will be a step forwards towards anarchism.

Always it should serve to enlarge the claims of the workers and to intensify the struggle; always it should be accepted as a victory over an enemy and not as a concession for which we should be thankful; always we should remain firm

in our resolution to take with force, as soon as it is possible, those means of production which private owners, protected by the government, have stolen from the workers.

The rights of privilege, maintained by force, having disappeared, the means of production being placed under the management of whoever wants to produce, the resulting economic forms will be the fruit of a peaceful evolution.

Now in the present society there is some kind of system for distributing food. It works badly, chaotically, with great waste of energy and material and for the benefit of capitalistic interests; but after all, one way or another, we must eat. It would be absurd to want to disorganise the system of producing and distributing food unless we could substitute for it something more efficient and more equitable.

There is a postal service. We have thousands of criticisms to make, but in the meantime we use it to send our letters, and shall continue to use it, suffering all its faults, until we are able to correct or replace it.

There are schools, and how badly they function. But because of this we do not allow our children to remain in ignorance, refusing their learning to read and write. Meanwhile, we struggle for the time when we shall be able to organise schools the way we want them.

From this we can see that to arrive at anarchism, much more than a revolution of material force is required. It is essential that the workers, grouping themselves in their various branches of production, should themselves prepare to insure the proper functioning of their social life without the aid or the need of capitalists and governments.

And we see also that anarchist ideas, far from being as the 'scientific socialists' claim, in contradiction to the scientifically established laws of evolution, are in fact a conception which accords perfectly with these laws. They are the experimental system brought from the field of research to that of social realisation.

*[This article by the great Italian anarchist, Errico Malatesta, is one of those first translated in English in the American journal, Man! during the thirties.]

The Roots of Prejudice

ANOTHER valuable contribution to the series, *The Race Question in Modern Science* has just been issued by U.N.E.S.C.O.*

The first of the series, *Race and Psychology* was dealt with in *FREEDOM* (25/8/51), and clearly showed us that there is no evidence whatsoever for the widely-held belief that some races are "inferior" to others.

In the *Roots of Prejudice*, Arnold Rose, Professor of Sociology at the University of Minnesota, discusses the many causes of prejudice of one group of people against another, and deals firstly with what he considers to be the most obvious, that of personal advantage as a cause of prejudice. He points out how prejudice can be consciously built up against a section of people for political or economic gain, and shows how a "relatively small number of exploiters can maintain their dominant position by dividing their subordinates and encouraging them to be hostile to one another". On referring to certain imperialistic methods of rule which can be used "within an 'independent nation'" Professor Rose says, "prices or rents of houses can be kept at a high level by obliging people to live within certain small, segregated areas. Wages can be kept low for people who are not allowed to work in any but certain exploited jobs." As an example of how conscious prejudice can be, he cites the case of a young man who, when answering a questionnaire on anti-Semitism, said, "I have no strong feelings about Jews either way, but I am studying to be a banker, and if my employers are anti-Semitic, I'm going to be anti-Semitic, too, as I want to get ahead." Professor Rose stresses, however, that it makes little difference whether prejudice is deliberate or unconscious as the effects and underlying causes are the same.

On dealing with the ignorance of other groups of people as a cause of prejudice, it is again made apparent how this ignorance is deliberately used by propagandists for economic exploitation and political domination.

On the problem of racism as a cause of prejudice, it is interesting to note that whilst religious and political inter-group struggles have existed in some cultures since the beginning of history, racism was little known until less than two centuries ago, and is rarely found outside Western culture.

*THE ROOTS OF PREJUDICE, by Arnold Rose. (U.N.E.S.C.O., 1/6d.)

FREEDOM BOOKSHOP

- Arms and Mr. Bevan Emrys Hughes 6d.
A pacifist-socialist's view of "Bevanism".
- Seven Summers Mulk Raj Anand 9/6
Autobiography of an Unknown Indian
- N. C. Chaudhuri 21/-
Mr. Anand writes of his childhood in the N.W. Frontier area and Mr. Chaudhuri of his life in Eastern Bengal.
- Marx Against the Peasant David Mitrany 25/-
Has Communism succeeded or failed in peasant societies.
- Contemporary British Art Herbert Read 3/6
Art and the Evolution of Man
- Herbert Read 4/-
The first of these books is the new *Pelican* discussed in last week's *FREEDOM*. The second is a new *Freedom Press* publication.
- Waiting on God Simone Weil 12/6
The first of this remarkable philosopher's books to be published in England.

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W.C.1

CINEMA

'Sing Me a Song of Social Significance'

IN an article on the work of the late Robert J. Flaherty (*FREEDOM*, 4/8/51) we mentioned the films of "John Grierson, Paul Rotha and Basil Wright who made such good documentary films before the war (and are now presumably hamstrung by finance)." But perhaps it isn't a matter of money only. The *Newsletter* of the British Film Institute reports a discussion which took place at the Edinburgh Documentary Film Festival.

"Since 1945," says the *Newsletter*, "there have been heart-searchings in the British documentary camp. It is widely said that the old fire has gone, that no films are emerging on the larger themes and that documentary has become stale and lifeless. Plenty of people have been blamed for this—in the past John

THE POET'S TASK

THOSE of us who cannot accept either of the two dogmas predominant in our time, Christianity's or Communism's—how are we to help build? By remaining faithful, first, to Wilfred Owen's belief that "All a poet can do to-day is to warn. That is why the true Poets must be truthful"; searching patiently after the meaning of our personal experience, as it stirs, weak and inarticulate, beneath the creative heart. Secondly, we may be able to do something after Philip Sidney's recommendation—the feigning of "notable images of virtue". I think we need a rest from the minority minor prophets of our age, who carry the world's guilt about with them like credentials. The human virtues are always accessible to the poet, even—perhaps most—when faiths appear to have melted away, or dogmas have become too, too solid. There is really no argument about courage, magnanimity, compassion, honesty, patience. We may all rejoice in them, admire and praise them, without putting Man into the throne of God, and falling down and worshipping him. Poets have done this in our time—both Christian poets and agnostics. Compassion and tenderness breathe from the lines of Thomas Hardy. In the last scene of *The Cocktail Party*, the dead Celia so dominates the stage, and the audience, that we feel courage and innocence like living presences—we know that good lives are not wasted. Louis MacNeice, in *The Kingdom*, has given us portraits of ordinary men and women which hearten us because they image qualities so often concealed beneath the workaday surface; virtues which leaven the mass. This surely is not least of the poet's tasks, and one that to-day may be the most needed—to incline our hearts towards what is lovable and admirable in humankind.

—C. Day Lewis in his inaugural lecture as Professor of Poetry at Oxford, 1/6/51.

Grierson has had a go at the film-makers, and this year, in a slashing article in *Documentary* 1951, he attacks this Government's record as a sponsor. Apart from blaming each other and, incidentally, Grierson himself, the sponsors have quoted the importance of economy and the film-makers' shortage of material as the reasons for this retrogression. The reasons, of course, lie deeper, as was exposed in the discussion.

It was generally accepted that the driving force behind the films of the 'thirties—the crusade for economic and social reform—has lost its power. James Beveridge, London representative of the National Film Board of Canada, emphasised the selfishness of the "couldn't care less" attitude which marks the young people in the audience, and particularly the returned ex-serviceman, in many countries to-day. Ross McLean developed this into the personal field of those politicians, public servants and industrialists responsible for sponsoring documentary films. Grierson agreed that everyone was playing safe; there was a scarcity of individuals who would take personal responsibility—and no good films could be made without this.

Other speakers demanded films on colonial themes and on industrial topics.

The author of the *Newsletter*, comparing the "non-fiction" films of to-day with those of the 'thirties, says, "To-day the films can be said to be professional where they used to be amateur; great expertise has come . . . the films are mature, nearly always good to look at and sometimes moving. Dickson, an individualist, Brian Smith, Margaret Thomson, with their approach to child psychology, Stuart Legge with his talent to turn journalism into a history-drama, and some others, have got something consistent to say of general interest to humanity. Others are jacks-of-all-trades, ready to respond to the sponsor's offer. When the offers are generous and large, as occasionally they are, then we get the empty glossy films which are the cause of these misgivings."

The octopus of the modern world has got us, along with many others, in its grasp; any sort of constructive liberal thinking tends to be overwhelmed by too many problems with too few solutions. When we consider afresh how the documentary film can best serve the community at large, we must, I feel, turn our backs upon the compendious statement of the majority view, as exemplified by many drab, expensive and cliché-ridden sponsorship outpourings that we see to-day. We must in fact take a personal decision and seek, in a Griersonian phrase, the new growing-point which we believe will influence the future."

Another aspect of the social character of films was discussed last month by the film critic of *The Times Educational*

Supplement, who writes: "The cinema does not often drain the cup of social criticism; it keeps a little in the bottom so as to toast society. This is quite natural since films, which are made to entertain large miscellaneous groups rather than exceptionally perceptive individuals, need to be based upon common assumptions, and therefore might be called society's own art form. A poet or a painter may cry in the wilderness, but film-makers have to keep within earshot of popular sympathy."

The self-protective instincts of a community are thus likely to limit cinematic frankness. M. Charles Spaak, president of the Screen Writers' Guild of France, 1950-51, writing in the September number of *Unesco's Courier*, discusses the machinations of society's watch-dogs, the censors. Quoting various instances of obstruction, M. Spaak says that when the producer of *Le Diable au Corps*, M. Autant-Lara, wanted to tell the story of a conscientious objector, he met with such difficulties that he had to abandon his original idea. One is also aware that films in the American 'Negro cycle' were careful, for all their self-reproachful outspokenness, to avoid treading on certain susceptibilities. They proclaimed human brotherhood, but drew the line at miscegenation. Quite apart from any deliberate censorship, there is the constant vigilance of the box-office, which discourages producers from offering the public what it may find distasteful. Each country has, of course its different taboos; it seems probable, for instance, that Anglo-Saxons as a whole would be more outraged by *Le Diable au Corps* than by the sympathetic discussion of pacifism.

"The cinema is unlikely to be found in the forefront of rebellion, but this does not mean that it will not side with progressive points of view. Part of its special value as a social form lies in its ability to speak, in popular terms, for an enlightened section of the public, catching and spreading ideas which have only a limited currency."

MARXISM FOR ANARCHISTS

READERS in London who are more addicted to Groucho Marx than to Karl, should note that the Everyman Cinema, Hampstead, in its 10th Marx Brothers Season, is showing *Horse Feathers* in the week beginning Monday, 15th October, together with short films which include Mitty's *Pacific 231* and Humphrey Jennings' *Family Portrait*; and in the week beginning Monday, 22nd October, *Duck Soup*, the most anarchical of all the Marx Brothers' films, together with Charlie Chaplin's *Easy Street* and *The River*, a film about the Mississippi, made by Pare Lorentz.

For this kind of Marxism you don't have to follow the Party Line—just take the Edgware Line to Hampstead Underground Station.

AGAIN THE ATOMIC BOMB

IN the recent past there have been those who have held that the best hope for peace lay in one of the peace-loving countries—that is, America or England—possessing a monopoly of the secret of atomic bombs, and hence an exclusive possession of the bombs themselves. The argument assumed that “we” would not use such powers, and this assumption was blandly maintained even in the face of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Of course it also flew in the face of all history. Such a viewpoint whether sincerely held or put forward as mere propaganda, has always been derided by FREEDOM. Our derision has extended from those who advance the argument to those who accept it.

The leakage of atomic “secrets” produced consternation in the camp of this atomic-monopoly-by-the-good propaganda. Peace, they cried, is now in jeopardy because the wicked also possess the magic secrets. And their despondency became even greater when evidence of an actual atomic explosion within the Soviet Union came to hand.

Now Stalin has openly admitted that Russia has the bomb.

There is no doubt that from a practical point of view which takes into account the world we live in and its perpetually resumed armaments races, this news is depressing. But to pretend that it is unexpected is surely idiotic. The tearing down of illusions is always painful: but when the illusions are about practical world affairs and have the ostrich quality of brains buried in the sand, their destruction has a sardonic touch of the ludicrous.

If the illusion of monopoly-by-the-good is irrevocably destroyed, its place has been taken by another absurdity. The Soviet Government “demand” prohibition of the whole production of atomic bombs, but raise objections to supervision of their own implementation of this prohibition. The United States demand limitation but, in effect, such limitation would be more limiting to others than to themselves.

Such propositions contain little that affords hope of practical realisation of “control” of the atomic bomb. They strain the limits of sincere belief even more thoroughly than their predecessor.

Meanwhile, with characteristic unconcern for the past propaganda of its national Communist Parties, Stalin's interview with *Pravda* has simply dropped the line peddled for so long by Communists both inside and outside of the Soviet Union, that Russian atomic endeavour was strictly peaceful—for moving mountains and changing the course of rivers. Once again the Powers do not conspicuously show sincerity.

On top of Stalin's statements come those of Mr. Gordon Dean, chairman of the United States Atomic Energy Commission. He tells us that we need have no fear for “America” possesses many different kinds of atomic missiles, from pilotless atomic bombers to “small” ones which can be used against armies in the field without involving the destruction of whole countries. Comforting words!

Mr. Dean expanded his news. Such weapons, he said, could obliterate the disadvantages of small armed forces (could he mean the maritime powers, England and America?) faced by overwhelming numerical superiority (?Russia, China?) Then came the inevitable pendant: the value of such weapons lay not in their actual use, but in the fact that knowledge that they exist “will deter the aggressor”.

Fairy tales used to be exclusively used for children: now the fathers of their people use them for the newspaper consuming public.

Standing back from all this insincere humbug, one sees governments seemingly in the grip of forces beyond their control. Blindly, as though history were not there to guide them on what not to do, they press down the well-worn paths that end in war.

Forces beyond their control. But are they beyond ours? With the revolution and the elimination of government on the one hand, and inert apathy on the other, it should not be beyond the creative capacity of the people as a whole to handle the problem of what to do with the knowledge of the nuclear physicists. The revolution could hardly do worse than the present administrators.

ON WAR

THE governing classes do not really want war, but they do want to keep up a continual menace of war. They want the peril to be always averted, but always present. The do not want the cannon to be fired, but they do want it to be always loaded. Those who perpetually spread abroad rumours and alarms of war only half believe them, or more often do not believe them at all, but they see great advantages to themselves in inducing the people to believe them. You know, comrades, what those advantages are. They are political and financial. A people living under the perpetual menace of war and invasion is very easy to govern. It demands no social reforms. It does not haggle over expenditures on armaments and military equipment. It pays without discussion, it ruins itself, and that is an excellent thing for the syndicates of financiers and manufacturers for whom patriotic terrors are an abundant source of gain.

—ANATOLE FRANCE.

FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATION IN THE “UNDEVELOPED COUNTRIES”

SOME time ago, I was looking at a reading book published by the Ministry of Education of the Mexican Government in its campaign to end *analfabetismo*. It was intended for use by adults learning to read and write for the first time, and with its brightly-coloured pictures and simply-worded text it told how to avoid malaria, the best way to grow beans, and discussed the need for filling up holes in roads, how to keep food clean, the advantages of rural co-operatives, and so on. An admirable book, but interspersed with these items were glorifications of the flag of the United States of Mexico, of the Federal Army, and of the great and wise president. The compilers of this book had accepted the responsibility of helping the people of the benighted and poverty-stricken hinterland of Mexico (of which some idea can be gained from Graham Greene's book *The Lawless Roads*, or from the very good film, “The Forgotten Village”), and had responded in a very sensible and human way, but at the same time they thought it necessary to inculcate into simple and superstitious people a reverence for the authorities set over them as though “obey the government” were as unquestionable a precept as “where there's dirt there's danger”.

I was reminded of the Mexican reading primer while looking at a fascinating book from India. It is *Village ABC: 456 Brief Hints on Rural Reconstruction*, by Mr. F. L. Brayne, a retired member of the Indian Civil Service.* The author, whose love and concern for the people he is addressing emerges on every page, says in his introduction: “The object of all Government and of all Planning is the promotion of the welfare and happiness of the people, the men, woman and children in their homes and villages and it is in the villages and homes that all plans must start and where we must all look to find out what is needed to make our country happy and prosperous.”

*VILLAGE ABC, by F. L. Brayne, (Bombay: Oxford University Press, Rs. 3; London: O.U.P., 5/-)

This book tries to help in this work. It is not a book of wisdom. It is a book of tips, in which I have tried to point out some of the simple ways in which we can make our homes and our lives more healthy, more happy, more comfortable and more prosperous. What I have said cannot be applied literally to every home and village in India and Pakistan but the underlying ideas certainly can. . . . The illustrated entries in his book cover almost every aspect of life, there are notes on the laying out of villages, allotments, bee-keeping, road building, canning and preserving food, cattle-breeding, irrigation, concreting, making economical fireplaces and using alternative fuels so as to keep cowdung for manure, cleanliness, conservation of soil, drainage, avoiding disease—the reader is continually struck by the tact and wisdom of the author's advice, much of which is applicable to “undeveloped” countries all over the globe—how admirably, for instance, he argues for improving the status of Indian women in many of the entries. For instance, under BACKWARD, he writes:

“A backward country is where the women are considered inferior to the men and are not treated as their equals and are not given as good an education and training, but are neglected and do not share equally in the great work of promoting the health, happiness and prosperity of the country. It has been calculated in Europe, that in a country of smallholders (such as India and Pakistan are) the housewife is responsible for more than two-thirds of village life. We expect the men to farm or carry out their craft efficiently, to bring home their earnings, to keep the village clean and not waste their time and money in faction and litigation. All the rest is in the hands of the women, everything that makes a home happy and healthy. The standard of a country is the standard of its homes. The standard of home is the standard of the woman as she is in sole charge of it. The standard of the country therefore is the standard of the women. Backward women therefore mean backward countries.”

But in the book there are references to the rôle of the government which, especially when we consider the record of the governments of India and Pakistan, are highly questionable. The entry under GOVERNMENT reads:

“The object of Government is the promotion of human happiness, the raising of the standard of living. Law and order, impartial justice, well-adjusted and promptly paid taxes are essential to this objective but they are only the preliminaries—the rolling of the ground and the marking of the pitch in order that the great game of human happiness may be played.

“Government must not merely create the environment in which happiness is possible, Government itself must provide that happiness.

“Conversely, the disturbance of law and order, the spoiling of justice by bribery and false evidence, the evading of taxation, are the worst things that a citizen can do as they destroy the possibility of happiness and divert the attention of Government from its real objective.”

This is a very curious view of government to inculcate, along with factual information about building latrines, in the subjects of two governments busy building up their armed strength to attack each other, governments of which the leading article in the *Manchester Guardian* recently said, “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 impediment

DUBLIN HOTEL WORKERS STRIKE

BETWEEN 2,500 and 3,000 Dublin hotel workers are on strike for a 10 per cent. service charge on all accounts.

The workers involved are waiters and service staff, who ceased work at midnight on Saturday, compelling the guests in the fifteen hotels affected to move out to guest houses and private houses.

Unfortunately, the hotel workers are not all organised together, so the office staffs are not affected, and were able to send off telegrams cancelling bookings. Thus much of the pandemonium which the strikers should have been able to count upon, to help persuade the managements to accept their demands, was avoided.

Four of the larger hotels in Dublin have agreed to pay the service charges and are not affected by the walk-out.

*To discover how the catering trade can organise a struggle against employers, read *The French Cooks' Syndicate*, by W. McCartney, *Freedom Press*, 3d. (by post 4½d.)

Africans Fear Federation

Victoria Falls Congress Ends in Deadlock

AS was to be expected, the Victoria Falls Conference held last month (see “A Sterile Conference,” FREEDOM 22/9/51) resulted in a deadlock. It met to discuss the proposed federation of Northern and Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland (5,500,000 Africans and 200,000 White settlers) in a new dominion of British Central Africa. The proposals were vehemently resisted by the Africans of the three territories, and the White delegates are pressing for a further conference in London next June.

The Conference was held in secret and requests by Africans that press correspondents should be admitted was rejected. Douzi Yamba, a member of the Northern Rhodesian African delegation stated afterwards that Mr. Gordon-Walker had said that the conference would not agree to the request but that they were free to issue their own statements to the press. But later in the same day a press conference was given by Mr. Griffiths and Mr. Gordon-Walker (the British Colonial Secretary, and Secretary for Commonwealth Relations), and Sir Godfrey Huggins, Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, at which it was stated that delegates had been asked to give no information to the press. The only source of information would be an official communiqué “which might appear daily” and a press conference which would follow “only if a communiqué were issued”. The only information given that day was a list of speakers and a statement that delegates had dealt with “broad principles” and made “certain prepared speeches”.

Commenting on the “great concern” which this secrecy gives rise to, Lord Faringdon in a letter to the press wrote:

“What is to be the position of these African representatives if the proceedings of the conference are to be held in secret, and statements to the press are forbidden? They are deprived even of the opportunity of stating their people's view in public. They cannot support federation either in principle or in detail without going directly contrary to the expressed wishes of their people. The conference is being chaired by the Governor of Southern Rhodesia, and the Southern Rhodesian delegation includes not a single African. How can such a body be regarded as fit to place proposals before the British Government, which must take the final decision? In the first place, African representatives were in doubt whether they should boycott the conference altogether. The

Northern Rhodesian and Nyasaland African Congresses wished to send a delegation to this country to put before the British people their views on federation before the two United Kingdom Ministers went to Africa. They have been persuaded to be as co-operative as possible, but they are not, apparently, receiving much encouragement in this course.”

On the following day, the conference was temporarily adjourned after Sir Godfrey Huggins was said to have complained that too much emphasis was being placed on the views of the African delegates. The Africans left, and one of them told reporters that “some other delegates” had wanted to expel the Africans. The Conference resumed and continued until the end of the week, but as the *Manchester Guardian* reported: “Some delegates considered that the opposing views had proved so irreconcilable that the conference directors would welcome the excuse provided by the coming British general election to end the discussion before the rift became even wider.”

On his return to this country, Mr. Griffiths said that he thought the conference had been very well worth while and that it had never been intended to reach a final agreement.

The *Sunday Times* commenting on the deadlock reached in these fruitless discussions observes that: “One factor influencing all the discussions was Dr. Malan's attitude toward the High Commission territories. If Britain were to support the Central African amalgamation in the face of strong native opposition, the South African Premier could quote this as a precedent to justify South Africa's taking over the administration of Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland against the wishes of the inhabitants.”

Fear of South African expansion, especially into Bechuanaland, the protectorate to which the Government of Southern Rhodesia also lays claim, fear of the application of the Colonial Office's policy of “Black democracy” as applied (under African pressure) in the Gold Coast and Nigeria, to Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia, these fears are among the driving motives of the White politicians in Central Africa. Fear of the application of Southern Rhodesia's kid-glove Malanism to the Northern territories, fear of exchanging the well-intentioned paternalism for the White supremacy policy of the settlers, there are the fears behind the African opposition to the federal proposals.

“You are a tall man,” perhaps you can see over the hedge,” an African told Mr. Griffiths, “but we can see only the thorns.” C.

to a settlement does not come from them.”

The strange thing is that Mr. Brayne, in an article also in the *Manchester Guardian*, last April, on “Planning in the Less-Developed Countries”, puts the emphasis on development from below, and not from government. “Planning must,” he writes, “start in the homes and work upwards, not in the clouds and work downwards (and perhaps never reach the home at all).”

And elsewhere in the book itself he continually advocates co-operation in all its forms and Co-operative Societies for every purpose. In the section on SELF-HELP he says:

“Don't let us wait for Government or the District Board or anyone else. Let us do things ourselves and join with our neighbours to do them. In this way things will be done quicker, better and cheaper and will give us much more satisfaction than if we wait for someone else to do them for us—and in the end they may not do them at all or if they do, will put a heavy tax on them. Whether it is killing locusts or getting quinine or a stud bull or mending the village roads, let us do it ourselves. . . .”

The entry under the word STUPID will give you some idea of the value of Mr. Brayne's book:

“Many people think the villager is stupid. No, he is far from stupid. He has the wisdom of ages behind him, which has enabled him to feed the whole world since the dawn of time. He speaks slowly because he has to draw on that wisdom for his answer.

“He knows more about the weather, when to plough, sow and reap than anyone can tell him. He can keep, train and work all manner of animals. He can work on the land and in the forest. He can obtain and use the water from well, river and tank. Who then dare call him stupid? He has reason for his conservatism. Nature does not change and the villager hesitates to change the old ways which have served him well in the past. His real trouble is that the whole world is changing faster than he can adapt himself to the changes. And the reason he is slow to adapt himself is that, through no fault of his, he has very few means of learning what is going on outside his village. He can rarely read or write, the school teaches him very little and much of that little is of the wrong kind. He has no radio, and no newspaper suited to his needs. He is rarely visited by anyone who can tell him anything useful. Most of his visitors come for their own purposes; not to help the villager.

“We can and must help the villager to solve the problems that modern conditions have brought to him and to help him and not ourselves.”

A desire to help him and not ourselves. It is this that explains the failure of schemes like the Colonial Development Corporation with its groundnuts, and its Gambia eggs, its gold mining in British Guiana and Tanganyika and its hotel in Uganda, to benefit the peoples of the “undeveloped territories”. The operations of these schemes, as an article in the *New Statesman* emphasised, recently “may indirectly improve local conditions by increasing earnings of foreign exchange, but they do not seem to be amongst the most valuable development works which could be promoted”—the extirpation of malaria or of the tsetse fly, for example, or the provision of supplies of fresh water, or the building of roads and railways. For these, says the *Statesman*, “are things on which the economic returns are delayed and often indirect.”

Humility and respect is the approach recommended by the *Village ABC*. These are the very last qualities with which the prosperous and the sophisticated have approached the peoples of “undeveloped territories” in the past. Can they be learned to-day? C.W.

(To be concluded)

FIFTY YEARS AGO

THE *New York Herald Tribune* in its feature “Fifty Years Ago in the European Edition” reminds us that on October 3, 1901, “Miss Emma Goldman, the American anarchist, who was recently arrested in connection with President McKinley's assassination and was released later, starts a lecture tour in Chicago on the subject of ‘The Philosophy of Anarchism.’” and on October 6, 1901, “Rome Police seize anarchist periodical *Agitazione* because of an article by the Italian anarchist leader Malatesta defending the assassination of President McKinley.”

An all-Union athletic competition has been held this week in Odessa for “collective-farm youth” with the approval of the Physical Training and Sports Committee of the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers. The events include the novel one of “grenade throwing”. One wonders whether this is the 1951 equivalent of “putting the shot”.

