

# Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Politics discovers wisdom  
 by taking a general poll of  
 ignorance."

—DYER D. LUM

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Threepence

## Phoney War in Egypt

THE man who wants to make the job spin out is not a completely unknown figure, and it is quite amusing to watch him working away not too hard to get it done, but just well enough to keep it going. Perhaps one of the most distinguished of this happy band of pilgrims is His Majesty King Farouk, whose advisers have been playing this little game with the British for many years now.

There is no doubt that the Egyptian Government does not really want the British Army to go, but the move to get them out is so ingrained in national politics that no party can acquire in their staying. Although, therefore, Nahas Pasha swept the board at the last election on overwhelming popular support, which even Farouk could not withstand, and Nahas Pasha is in practice an old-standing appeaser of the occupation, both the Prime Minister and the King stand together on the sudden claim that Farouk is king of the Sudan.

Nothing would have pleased Farouk better than for Nahas Pasha to oppose the sudden attempt at thwarting the British, but he is too wily a politician to be caught that way and has simply gone along with the current. For none of the politicians believe the British Army will suddenly pack up and quit not merely Egypt and the Canal Zone, but the Sudan as well. They are obliged to take strong measures to oppose the British Army, because they are sitting on top of a volcano that may explode at any moment, and they would prefer running a little ahead of the lava, claiming to show it which direction to take.

It would not be the first time, indeed, that the authorities in Cairo suddenly gave political and nationalistic reasons for a riot, when they were already aware that the riot was about to break out and there was nothing they could do to stop it. The geography of an Egyptian riot is very interesting. Sometimes it is said to be "anti-Jewish", sometimes "anti-British", sometimes it might be against America or France, but invariably it is directed against the European quarter, the "West End" of Cairo or Alexandria where the wealthy foreigners and Egyptians live. (I recall a Cairo riot, ostensibly "anti-Zionist", where it was perfectly quiet and orderly in the native Jewish quarter while the mob attacked well-to-do British rentiers and ex-majors in the European quarter, who were all so very pro-Abdullah, while the political agents shouted at them "Down with the Jews!")

### Drawing the Wool

What is rather absurd to see, however, is the build-up given by the Press to such incidents, which has been more accentuated this time than previously because of the Election in Great Britain. King Farouk's decision to style himself King of the Sudan does not imply that he really is King of the Sudan, and he might, with rather more justification, style himself King of the Riviera. We are straightaway told, however, that "Britain is being pushed around," etc.,

### OBJECTORS

The twelfth annual report of the Central Board for Conscientious Objectors (6d.), from 6 Endsleigh St., W.C.1) states of men called up for "National Service", that during 1950, five hundred and sixty-four applications were made to the seven local tribunals, an increase of 48 over 1949. Of these applicants, 20 (3.5 per cent) were registered unconditionally as C.O.s, 212 (37.6 per cent.) were registered conditionally upon their doing civil work, 118 (20.9 per cent.) were registered for non-combatant duties only, and 214 (38.0 per cent.) were dismissed.

The October issue of the Board's bulletin *The Objector* gives figures for objectors to the Class Z call-up. As at the 12th September, the local tribunals had heard 510 applications and granted 209 (in 14 cases the decisions are not known), while 37 of the 176 appeals had been allowed.

etc., and there is no doubt that there are some old diehard Tories who would like to see a gunboat go and shell Alex just to show 'em. Those days, of course, are over, and the official Tories and the Labour Government display the new imperialism which takes it with the traditional stiff upper lip, but hangs tight.

Many of the excessive concessions obtained in the old send-a-gunboat era are impossible to maintain nowadays when international politics is so much more carefully poised, and also, when the masses in the colonial countries are so much more easily aroused against gross injustice. There must obviously be withdrawals in some cases, but the fangs of imperialism are not drawn simply because Persia may gain and Egypt may seek a temporary advantage, even up to a "blockade" which will never be pushed too far.

### Divide and Rule in Sudan

Britain is still hanging on to her condominium in the Sudan. Since 1899 that unfortunate country has been ruled by both Britain and Egypt jointly. The Egyptians have always asserted that they have a better claim to the Sudan—it does adjoin Egypt rather than Kent, and the Nile is the lifeblood of Egypt—but the corruption and backwardness of the Egyptian administration has not led the Sudanese to believe that they would be better off under one of the two bosses alone. Britain playing the game of "divide and conquer" has made the most of Sudanese opposition to the Egyptian Government and—need it be said?—stays there, and stays put, for "the benefit of the Sudanese". The Sudanese have, however, noticeably demonstrated their opposition to both parties to the

condominium, and why they resent the idea of becoming subjects of Farouk alone is because that has an element of permanency while the condominium is not supposed to be permanent and indeed, has been the subject of perpetual discussion.

The Oumma Party of the Sudan, although quite firm in its belief in liberal independence, is not opposed to Egyptians and would unite with them, but against the Egyptian Government. This is so far from being a utopian possibility that King Farouk's proclamation of himself as the ruler of the Sudan is a result of his fearing this very possibility, fearing lest opposition to Britain is centred exclusively in his own opponents. The Oumma Party is nationalistic in the same way as many other African movements are; but it is not yet corrupted by politics (it has never been able to participate in them) and contains many revolutionary elements. At the present date its outlook is somewhat similar to the Congress Party in India in the days of the British Raj. When its influence begins to be felt in the Sudan—as will happen very soon—we shall, if the fashion has not changed, hear the cry "Communist" from the Press. It is absurd, because Stalinism has not only not infiltrated, but is entirely unknown in Sudan and a large part of Negro Africa.

But the name will be given to it by the Egyptian Government in order to enlist the support of the British Army in the Sudan, to keep the condominium between the two shareholders and not let it pass to the "rabble". In the same way the British Army may come in handy, not only to Nahas Pasha but also to Farouk, in seeing that the "rabble" do not take over in Egypt also. So you see, Farouk has to make the job spin out. He cannot keep in work without involving anti-British sentiment. It would never do if the "hated vestiges of Imperialism" really went. But if only he could find some other way of keeping the fellaheen down!

INTERNATIONALIST.

## THE FACTS BEHIND THE Edinburgh Strike

THE recent strike of Lighting and Cleansing Workers in Edinburgh was (1) an attempt to gain higher wages to offset the steeply rising cost of living, (2) an attempt by the workers to alter the "take it or leave it" attitude adopted by the union officials dealing with the men. The original increase demanded was one of £1. The union officials however, did not think they could "justify" such an increase and after various "pep" talks the men compromised on the sum of 11/-. It was made quite clear to Penman (National Union of Public Employees) and Campbell (Scottish Horse and Motormen's Association) that if, at the Joint Industrial Council Meeting they accepted less than 11/-, strike action would be resorted to.

On August 14th, the trade union side of the J.I.C. were told that the employers' side would give their answer to 11/- demand on September 15th, a month later. This move, and a "bribe" of three hours overtime per night during the period of the "Edinburgh Festival", perhaps the most opportune time for a strike of cleansing workers, caused the men to agree to wait on the result of the talks (Sept. 15th), by which time the Festival was over! The decision reached on that date and agreed to by employers and union officials was for an increase of 7/6 as from the 10th October. No back pay, no 11/—and the 7/6 to be paid as from three weeks after the decision. Acting on instructions from the men, a wage committee composed of workers from each depot called a strike which was 100 per cent supported (if you exclude formen!) The first move made by the officials of both unions (Scottish Horse and N.U.P.E.) was to call a joint meeting to advise a return to work; they were in turn advised to come to the Mound, where the men of both unions held "joint meetings" every day during the strike, their meeting was picketed and as they refused to meet the strike committee, boycotted.

The second attempt to break the strike took place a few days later. On this occasion, Penman and Campbell were reinforced by Brannigan and Scottish Horse: each in turn trotted out the old strike-breaking formulas but were howled down, contenting themselves at

the finish with telling the strikers it would be a different tale next week when they had no wages!

The next move was for Roberts (General-Secretary, N.U.P.E.) to fly from London and call a meeting of N.U.P.E. members only. This was followed the same day by a meeting called for Scottish Horse members only. The highlight of N.U.P.E.'s meeting was when Roberts, after calling for a vote on some resolution intended to bluff the men to return to work, made a further three impassioned appeals to them and only then when he thought he had a majority did he risk a count. He "won", according to the platform by about twenty votes. The Scottish Horse men, forewarned, did not fall for that one and the following day the strike continued.

It will be seen from this that the first week was spent not in getting the men to organise collections, etc., but in preventing the unions from disorganising and demoralising them. The paid officials having failed, the "good union men" took over! They started to repeat the official "line" and spread the "back-to-work" poison among the men more effectively than the paid strike breakers, Roberts, Brannigan and Co. Compared with the "good union man", when it comes to an "unofficial" strike, a black-leg has some principle!

When this "fifth column" judged the time ripe, they came right into the open offering to "lead" the men back to work, and even went as far as calling a meeting at which the Boss was the speaker! The split had occurred, but an agreement was reached that no "return to work" would take place until a mass meeting of the strikers had been called and various views aired. This is where the strike was lost. The strike "leader" (J. Ashton, a Communist), had up until that moment refrained from using "tactics", i.e., the Commie variety, but, seeing the situation, instead of combating the strike-breaking element, decided that if there was any "return to work" it would be 100% and he would lead it!

The tactics were simple, but effective. A vote was taken by the committee one hour before the mass meeting on a resolution recommending a return to work. This was "padded" by some double talk about "moral victories", "Sake of public health", etc., and worst crime of all, a recommendation for all workers to join the trade unions! In the Communists' eyes, of course, there is nothing wrong with the unions except that they don't control them. The vote resulted, in spite of opposition to the sell-out among a few members, as follows: For—9; Against—1; Abstentions—2.

At the mass meeting, after attacking the men who caused the split, but at the same time implying that the strike had "had it", the resolution was put to the meeting by Ashton and acclaimed as a "victory". Ashton's "reasoning" when analysed is something like this. "If we are split there's no use fighting on, let's surrender in a body and call it 'victory'. At least all stay in the union, come to the meetings and 'vote for me'. In short, the strike ended as a recruiting drive for the union on Ashton's behalf.

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## Impressions of Jugoslavia

BEFORE one relates certain impressions from a stay of four weeks in Jugoslavia it might be well to mention the extremes of two contrasting fallacies. In Trieste, en route for Zagreb, some American acquaintances assumed that the nature of my destination established me as a Communist. Refusing to believe in such distinctions as curious travellers and fellow-travellers, Stalinists and Titoists, they were content to see the quarrel between these two parties as a sham, a cunning piece of Cominform strategy which would parallel the Trojan Horse. Quite as fantastic as these remarks were some made by Communist Party members on my return to Venice. They wanted a first-hand account of how the civil war was progressing. How it was affecting the economic and social life of the country and whether, for instance, the railways were still functioning. Had I noticed whether the civilian population was on the point of revolting in favour of the guerillas and I must have been constantly reminded of the sadness of the people over the break with Russia. My ignorance of all their assertions only established me as a Titoist.

As with Spain, Jugoslavia has recently been given much prominence in the daily press. While some governments and individuals see these countries only as useful military or cold war allies, others have stepped forward and endeavoured to do a little white-washing, particularly in the case of Jugoslavia, where certain minor changes of policy have been interpreted as the beginning of a more liberal phase of its political and social development. How true are these reports?

The changes began, naturally, after the break with Stalin. After hesitating for four or five days the government gradually broke the news to the people though, in the first place, blaming only the Bolshevik Central Committee and not Stalin himself. The feeling at this time can be compared to that morning when Chamberlain declared war on Germany. Suspense and fear were apparent everywhere. Private jubilation was

mixed with anxiety over war or civil war. When these fears did not materialise, and it seemed that Stalin was doing no more than vilify the Tito régime, the relief became more apparent. Tito, however much one disagreed with his régime, was at least credited with the virtue of patriotism. A mood of accepting the lesser evil prevailed and, for this reason alone, some of the counter-revolutionary bitterness was forgotten.

Threatened by the collapse of its economic plan, reacting to the hostile attitude of the Cominform countries, the régime could only be preserved by turning to the West. All this is well-known. Problems had to be hastily solved, plans redrawn, the direct intimidation of the masses replaced by less obvious methods of persuasion. National unity acquired a new importance. A few concessions which contradicted their previous policy was, for a political group, a small price to pay for survival.

The Tito apologists have seized upon such fragments of evidence as an occasional slightly critical article in a journal, a certain re-planning of the economy to allow in some districts more local control, the permitting of certain foreign tourists, and one or two reassuring interviews with Tito himself. Most of this evidence in Tito's favour comes from his own spokesmen. The reality of the situation is not what has been done towards a more liberal authority, but what has not been done, for the same men and the same officials who were so eager to cast their plans to the shape of the Soviet model, are still in power. If their oppressive rule is not so apparent to-day as it was, the reason lies in the fact that the great majority of the people agree with the reorientation to the West. If there was ever to be a reversal of that policy it is not difficult to believe that it would be enforced with the same ruthlessness as in the pro-Stalin days.

Much foreign support is given to Tito with the idea that sympathy will encourage more liberalisation. Though this may be quite true, it also contains its own condemnation implying an

existing tyranny. One of the reasons for supporting Franco was that it would encourage him to introduce some form of democracy. Those who opposed such support for Franco now propose it for Tito. Our politicians have learnt little in the last twenty years.

The first thing that the visitor notices in Jugoslavia is the lack of fervour and revolutionary enthusiasm which one has been led to associate with all working-class movements. There is no observable evidence to make one believe that people feel themselves to be taking part in the creation of a new society. Comradeship, even of the more vocal kind, seems not to exist. Party members, particularly executives, move in a world of their own, refusing to believe the

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## NO RUSSIAN SOLDIER AT WAR?

IN their arguments to show how peace-loving is the Russian Government and how peaceful its intentions, contrasting so favourably with the aggressive imperialism of America, the Communists make use of two arguments which seem effective at first hearing, but which in fact cancel each other out.

Their first line of argument is to quote—correctly in our opinion—the statements of various American spokesmen—General Eisenhower and Senator Taft in particular—to the effect that America's rôle in the coming war will be to provide the arms, and that of her allies to provide the men. This shows clearly enough that American leaders wish to see America pocketing the vast profits that come from armaments, while their satellite countries—and Britain is among them—provide the human sacrifice.

The Communists then go on to show that, as proof of the non-aggressive nature of the Soviets, there is "no Russian soldier fighting anywhere in the world". Whether this is strictly true now, when the newest M.I.G. jet planes have appeared over Korea, piloted, it is said, by Russian and German airmen, is slightly beside the point.

The real point is that in fact Russia has been supplying the arms to North Koreans, Chinese, Indo-Chinese and Malaysians in her own interest, and so has, in fact, been doing the very same thing with her satellites that Russia accuses the U.S.A. of wanting to do with hers.

There is simply no need for Russian troops to fight anywhere in the world as long as they can get the troops of other nations to fight for them.

The Communist Party is quite correct when it maintains that American policy-makers will regard West European troops as "expendable" in the coming war. But what the C.P. itself wants us to forget is that in the last war from 1941 onwards, its slogan was "Second Front Now", whether Britain was prepared for such an immense operation or not, simply in order to draw German pressure away from Russia.

In other words they were then prepared to regard us as expendable for the sake of the Soviet Union.

How similar the policies and actions of the two power blocs and their supporters really are!

## THE PROUDHON REVIVAL IN FRANCE

THE influence of Proudhon in France seems to have proceeded in waves of alternating attention and neglect. During the latter part of 1848 he was the most influential independent writer, but afterwards his reputation suffered a relative decline until the rise of the French working-class movement in the last two years of his life. Then, and for some years after his death, the doctrines he put forward in such works as *De La Capacité Politiques des Classes Ouvrières* became the ideological basis of the Latin sections of the First International and played a great part in the Commune.

Through Bakunin, his influence was reflected on the early anarchist movement of the 1870's, and when Kropotkin was accused at Lyons of being the founder of anarchism, he said (quote from memory): "That honour belongs not to me, but to the immortal Proudhon."

The next period when Proudhon came to the fore was that of the early days of syndicalism, when his theories greatly influenced both the genuine working-class militants and the intellectual theoreticians on the edge of the movement, like Sorel. There was a further wave of interest after the first world war and then, with Marxism in the ascendant, Proudhon's ideas sank into the background. Now, after the second world war, Proudhon is once again very much in the minds of French social thinkers, and these years have brought a great and extremely interesting series of additions to the already considerable Proudhon literature. By no means all the people who have written on Proudhon are anarchists, but there is no doubt that his revival is connected intimately with a distrust of centralisation and state control, whether of the Western or the Marxist kind, and with a great interest in federalist ideas of social organisation.

In this article I shall give a brief survey of the more important books on or by Proudhon which have appeared since the war, and shall mention one or two which, though they were published before that time, have not received sufficient attention and are still in print.

Among biographies the most important life to date is *Proudhon* by Edouard Dolléans (Gallimard). It is a large and comprehensive work which contains much hitherto unpublished material on and by Proudhon. Its main fault is its lack of structural balance and a tendency by the author to present his material in large undigested lumps of quotation. On the whole, it is a good source book rather than the kind of

biography which leave on the mind a really balanced picture of its subject.

Then there is the first volume of *La Vie de Proudhon* by Daniel Halévy (Stock). Halévy shows even less of the biography which leaves on the mind a compiled, rather than written, his book by making the core of it Saint Beuve's uncomplete Life, prefacing it by a long preface on Proudhon's youth, gathered partly from unpublished notebooks, and giving large appendices to fill in the gaps in Saint Beuve's work. This method of presentation is extremely patchy, yet the information is all interesting in showing the sources of Proudhon's later development, and it is pleasant to have available once again the great nineteenth-century critic's excellent little pioneer work. Saint Beuve's comments remind one of Proudhon's important position as a French prose writer—to which Baudelaire and Flaubert also paid tribute.

A number of more specialised studies of aspects of Proudhon's life and work have also appeared. There is Pierre Hautmann's *Marx et Proudhon* (Economie et Humanisme), a very useful essay on the personal relationships of the two men which reveals the roots of their conflicts and which disposes, with great judiciousness, of the main Marxist accusations that Proudhon was merely a bad pupil of Marx. *Proudhon et la Révolution de 1848*, by E. Dolléans and J.-L. Puech (Presses Universitaires), is one of a series of centenary volumes published three years ago, which traces the rôle played by Proudhon during the Year of Revolution, when he first became recognised by the French workers as one of their most disinterested champions. Proudhon's attempts to give the Revolution a social rather than a political trend are discussed and he is revealed as an incisive and extremely perceptive critic of the errors by which that great movement of the people was brought to nothing by the ineptitude of the leaders.

*Proudhon et L'Europe*, by Madeleine Amoudruz (Domat Montchrestien) concentrates on Proudhon as a federalist, and, with considerable skill, disentangles the involved strands of his writings on the Europe of his age. Proudhon made himself highly unpopular among the leftists of his day by opposing the unification of Italy and the erection of a new Polish State; he was led by his isolation to argue his case with characteristic immoderation, but it cannot be denied that the record of Italian and Polish nationalism after the aims of their patriots had been achieved were of just such a reactionary nature as Proudhon had prophesied. All this Mlle. Amoudruz discussed very fairly and convincingly, and her book serves as a useful introduction to Proudhon's federalist theories in relation both to his general anarchist philosophy and also to the international situation of his day.

An aspect of Proudhon which has been little discussed in England is his position as a theorist on art and literature. His main works on these subjects, *Du Principe de l'Art* and *Majorats Littéraires*, have received scanty attention outside France, yet he was one of the first critics to discuss extensively the social function of art, his influence on Courbet was considerable, and his theories seem to have found at least an echo in those of Tolstoy on this subject. An interesting study, which appeared during 1937 but is still available, is *Le Rôle Social de l'Art selon Proudhon* by J.-G. Lossier (Vrin). It not only discusses Proudhon's own ideas, but also compares them with the ideas of many other theorists on art of his own and later periods.

A general introduction to Proudhon's ideas in relationship to his career is *Pour Connaitre la Pensée de Proudhon* by Georges Guy-Grand (Bordas), particularly useful to English readers since it deals fully with the great mass of Proudhon's work (unfortunately including his most interesting and important books) which have not been translated into English. Finally, among these studies of partial aspects of Proudhon, there is Henri de Lubac's *Proudhon et le Christianisme* (du Seuil), a rather biased Catholic work, which under the title of *The Unmarxian Socialist*, appeared in England some years ago.

Proudhon's own works have been reprinted, for the main part, only in selections, though a few volumes of the

excellent collected edition published by Marcel Rivière before the war are still available. A selection from his writings on Christianity, entitled *Portrait de Jésus* and edited by Robert Aron ("Flora"), has just appeared, and during 1945 two more general collections were published, *La Pensée Vivante de Proudhon* by Lucien Maury (Stock), a sound and interesting selection, and *Proudhon* by Alexandre Marc (Engoff), which is rather biased because of a desire to stress the parallelism between Proudhon and Péguy.

Saint-Beuve contended that the best of Proudhon's writings were to be found in his correspondence, and there is no doubt that it is here that the man stands out in all his complex integrity and that the key to many of his apparent contradictions can be detected. The great fourteen-volume edition of his letters, published during the 1870's, proved a commercial failure—largely owing to the public attitude after the downfall of the Commune—and specimens are now extremely difficult to find. The best substitute that is at present available to the general reader is a volume of selections, *Lettres de Proudhon*, chosen and edited by Daniel Halévy and Louis Guilloux, which appeared in 1929 and has since been reprinted. It is impossible to give a really adequate idea of the range and value of Proudhon's correspondence in one small volume, but the editors have done their best and presented a collection which certainly whets the appetite for more.

Much Proudhon material is still unpublished, but the gaps are gradually being filled, and two volumes of the greatest biographical importance have appeared during the last five years. The first, in 1946, was *Lettres au Citoyen Rolland* (Grasset), a collection of correspondence with a very close friend during the years of Proudhon's exile in Belgium from 1858 to 1862 (when he fled under the threat of imprisonment for his greatest work, *De La Justice dans la Révolution et dans l'Eglise*). It was the period when he wrote *Le Guerre et la Paix*, when he thought out his federalist ideas, when he began to advocate abstention from parliamentary activity of any kind, and when he became an important influence on the new movement of socially conscious workers which eventually resulted in the First International, and these letters are of the utmost value in elucidating his thought at this time. The second volume, *Lettres de Proudhon à sa Femme* (Grasset), which appeared only a few months ago, throws a great deal of new light on his intimate personal life, and also emphasises once again an aspect of his thought which fits in rather oddly with his general libertarianism, and his somewhat patriarchal attitude towards women. The loyalist of Proudhon's defenders to-day is unlikely to agree with him on this point, though it can be said, in explanation rather than justification, that Proudhon was very near in this respect to the militant workers of his time, as a scrutiny of the curious passages about women in the early records of the

## ANARCHISM

ANARCHISM is the philosophy and ideal of individual liberty in human society. But true individual liberty is not possible without economic independence, and, therefore, the theory and philosophy of anarchism embrace the ideal of the economic independence of every individual. The conception of individual liberty excludes all social domination and all state coercion; the conception of economic independence precludes every form of exploitation and all special privileges. Anarchism differs from the accepted basic principles of socialism in that socialism makes society the provider for individuals; society through its managers (more correctly bureaucrats!) will provide the individuals with all the necessities of life. Anarchism, on the other hand, strives towards that social life in which each individual alone or in co-operation with others, shall be enabled to provide for himself whatever he deems necessary.

Whoever undertakes to provide for another must assume the right to order him what he must do and how it must be done. A society which carries on its production through managers must necessarily wield its authority to dictate to everyone as to where, how and under what conditions he must do his work for the benefit of society. In practical life such an arrangement of affairs borders very closely on slavery, and there is no scarcity, indeed, of facts and instances, whether in ancient or in the most recent types of State Communism, to prove that such is the outcome. Anarchism renounces such a social arrangement in the name of personal liberty. Anarchism does not conceive liberty as does the Marxist Kautsky, when he claims that "all that socialism has to offer to the human being is freedom from starvation". Anarchism demands freedom not only from starvation but also from domination and force, from subjection to the will of another, even if that other be the majority or the entire social group.

—J. A. MARYSON.

First International will reveal. To-day, the workers have moved forward, and I think Proudhon's own attitude can best be seen as an illustration of the fluid and unevenly balanced development of libertarian ideas in those early years.

The wealth of Proudhon material in France contrasts favourably with the poverty in England. Only a few of Proudhon's earlier books have been translated, and none of those which seem to me the most interesting and important are among them. *De La Justice, Le Guerre et la Paix, Les Confessions d'un Révolutionnaire, Du Principe Fédératif, De la Capacité Politique des*

*Classes Ouvrières*, these, to my mind, contain his finest writing and his most stimulating messages for modern times, and all of them remain untranslated and unpublished. Even a comprehensive volume of selections is unavailable, and so the English student has still to go to French sources.

In this quest I hope my little list of recent French publications may be of some value. I have not indicated the prices, since during the past five years the prices of French books have risen considerably and those marked on my own copies are obsolete in most cases.

GEORGE WOODCOCK.

## Thou Shalt Not . . .

ONE of the most solemn moments in the evolution of authority was that of the promulgation of the Ten Commandments before the people, prostrate at the foot of Mount Sinai. All legislations have adopted this style; all, when addressing man, employ the formula of sovereignty—Thou shalt respect thy representatives and thy officials, whom the fortune of the ballot or the good pleasure of the State has given thee. Thou shalt obey the laws their wisdom has decreed, thou shalt pay faithfully the taxes they have imposed. And thou shalt love the government, thy Lord and God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, because the government knows better than thyself what thou art, what thou art good for, and what is good for thee and has the power to chastise those who disobey its commandments, and to reward, even to the fourth generation, those who are agreeable to it.

O, personality of man! Can it be that for sixty centuries you have grovelled in this abjection? You call yourself holy and sacred, but you are only the prostitute, the unwearied and unpaid prostitute, of your servants, of your priests and of your soldiers. You know

it and you permit it. To be governed is to be kept in sight, inspected, spied upon, directed, law-driven, numbered, enrolled, indoctrinated, preached at, controlled, estimated, valued, censured, commanded, by creatures who have neither the right, nor the wisdom, nor the virtue to do so . . . To be governed is to be at every operation, measured, numbered, assessed, licensed, authorised, admonished, forbidden, reformed, corrected, punished. It is, under the pretext of public utility, and in the name of the general interest, to be placed under taxation, trained, ransomed, exploited, monopolised, extorted, squeezed, mystified, robbed; then at the slightest resistance, the first word of complaint, to be repressed, fined, despised, harassed, tracked, abused, clubbed, disarmed, choked, imprisoned, judged, condemned, shot, deported, sacrificed, sold, betrayed; and to crown all, mocked, ridiculed, outraged, dishonoured. That is government; that is its justice; that is its morality. And to think that there are democrats among us who pretend that there is any good government; socialists who support this ignominy, in the name of liberty, equality and fraternity!

—P. J. PROUDHON (1851).

## Books &amp; Periodicals

## What Has Gone Wrong?

HUMAN NEEDS, by Michael Graham. (Cresset Press, 15/-)

THROUGH the eyes of a returned soldier who has fought to save the world and then finds it not fit to live in, Mr. Graham (the author of *Soil and Sense*) sets out to find what are human needs, and in this rather oddly written and discursive book he finds that they are "dignity, adventure, gaiety, exercise, family, code, tenets, defence, and goodwill". He looks at the animal world to see what are the characteristics of the animals' social life, he looks at human history to see how societies have destroyed men. He looks at the rearing of children and sees how it influences the culture-pattern of societies.

The principal authorities upon which Mr. Graham draws are Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid and Fields, Factories and Workshops*, Wilfred Trotter's *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War*, Lewis Mumford's *Condition of Man*, and the anthropological studies of Margaret Mead. The best thing about his book is the humane approach which he shares with these authors, the worst thing is undoubtedly the queer sketch of an utopia called "Mandatia" which occurs in Chapter XI.

The sociologist, Charles Madge, has referred to Mr. Graham's attitude as "a gentle and reflective anarchism". We would not go so far as this; he appears, if we must label him, to be a democratic idealist, and his thoughts have their blind spots and loopholes. His book can, however, be recommended to those who think that all's right with the world, as a starting point to the discovery of what's wrong.

## NEW PERIODICALS

THE American anarchist review *Retort* (Vol. 5, No. 1, Autumn 1951, 2/-) makes a welcome re-appearance. This issue is largely made up of short stories, but the most important article is *Aristophanic Pacifism* by Wilbur Burton, which discusses the plays of Aristophanes.

"The Greeks didn't have a word for pacifism, but they produced in Aristophanes—best, bawdiest, and boldest of the dramatists—the profoundest pacifist, and the only politically sound one, of all time. He was no peacetime pacifist; instead all three of his great anti-war plays—*The Archarnians, Peace and Lysistrata*—were written and publicly produced during the prolonged Peloponnesian War; and the first and greatest of these, *The Archarnians*, was presented in the early part of the war, when "patriotism" was still at fever pitch. *The Archarnians* is an outstanding landmark of history; for it was the first time in the annals of mankind that a pacifistic protest against a war was made publicly during the war."

Amongst the contents of the latest number of the Italian monthly anarchist review *Volontà* (Vol. 5, No. 12, 30th September, 1951, 1/-) are articles by H. Koechlin on *The Criticism of Science*, by Ugo Fedeli on *The Promised Land* (a study of William Morris), an *Economic Review* by P. Tagliacuzzi, an appraisal of the French anarchist movement by Giovanna Berneri, and a symposium on anarchism consisting of two letters of Camillo Berneri and a letter to the novelist Vittorini by Carlo Doglio.

The new number of the *Journal of Sex Education* (Vol. 4, No. 2, Oct.-Nov. 1951, 2/6) includes articles on "Moorish Sexual Life" and "Mohammedanism and Sex", book reviews and the usual "Questions and Answers".

## WORLD APART

WE commented not long ago on the accidental irony of the appearance this autumn from different publishers of two books with the same title, one on German concentration camps and one on those of Russia. These books, *A World Apart*, by David Rousset (Secker & Warburg, 9/6) and *A World Apart*, by Gustav Herling (Heinemann, 16/-), were discussed in a recent issue of *Tribune*, by Alex Comfort, who writes:

"I know of no country where, without ceaseless public vigilance (and even with it) prison as an institution does not settle toward the same level—with different miseries and humiliations according to the country and culture concerned, but never without miseries and humiliations. The only people who know what goes on in prison are prisoners. Only they know what enlightened Penal Codes, Russian or English, are really worth. The world is full of humane prison commissioners who sleep soundly on the strength of such codes, untroubled by the real, everyday, status of the men they are "resettling," "rehabilitating," "segregating." All walls have mouths, just as all prison enquiries exonerate all concerned.

"If these books make anyone, in any country, think twice before he advocates the imprisonment of anyone under any penal code, they will have done something to help the task of psychological medicine to-day. Perhaps the only good effect of the war on legal institutions may prove to have been the return home of thousands of men who had themselves been behind barbed wire. For the same reason, concentration-camp books should not be shirked. They are a comment not on any one culture but on the danger threatening every culture which accepts the validity of coercion."

## THE CINEMA

YOUR article (FREEDOM, 13/10/51) on the staleness that is besetting the makers of documentary films is a reminder of the freshness and vitality which is very often to be found in the work of amateur film-makers. It is a great pity that the public so seldom gets an opportunity to see these films. The ten best of the 16mm. films in the competition organised by the *Amateur Ciné World* this year were shown at the theatre of the British Film Institute, and one of them at least, a realistic study of juvenile delinquency, made by Enrico Cocozza, a Glaswegian Italian who lectures at the University here, was most certainly worthy of a very wide audience.

You have pointed out in the past that people who are not satisfied with the films the big distributing monopolies choose to exhibit, ought to join or start local film societies to get the films they want to see. They ought also to get outside the run of 'classical' films and get the amateur film-makers to come and show their work, or better still—start making their own films.

W.H.

## FREEDOM BOOKSHOP

- The New Society E. H. Carr 7/6  
New Hopes for a Changing World  
Bertrand Russell cloth 9/6, paper 5/-  
These two books give in volume form the talks by Bertrand Russell and E. H. Carr which were broadcast earlier this year.
- Two Cheers for Democracy E. M. Forster 21/-  
Seventy essays, articles, lectures, etc., written since the publication of E. M. Forster's *Abinger Harvest* in 1936.
- Salt and His Circle Steven Winstein 16/-  
A centenary biography of Henry S. Salt, the friend of Meredith Cunningsham Graham, Kropotkin, William Morris and Bernard Shaw.
- Retort, an anarchist review, Autumn 1951 2/-  
Volontà, anarchist review from Naples, Sept. 1951 1/-  
Journal of Sex Education October-November 1951 2/6

... Obtainable from  
27 red lion st, london,  
W.C.1

## SHY COMRADE PRIESTLEY

There was a woman outside a fish shop, Pudsey way, who spoke for some of us. She was one of those tiny indomitable women, all bones and fiery resolution, that you often see in the West Riding. She was wearing one of her husband's older caps, and could have bounced straight into a pantomime. "An' Ah say," I heard her cry, "ther's too much so-and-so government. An' it'll be just t'same whichever lot gets in. Ah told ahr Joe that. A deal too much so-and-so government."

And only shyness prevented me from standing her a pound of bae—a favourite fish round there—for those fine anarchical sentiments.

—J. B. Priestley, in  
*News Chronicle*, 16/10/51,

## POLITICAL ASSASSINATION

THERE can be little doubt that for a very large number of people political assassination is still connected, as it were by an unconscious association, with anarchism. Such people are apt to assume that anyone who professes the ideas and ideals of anarchism also necessarily approves of assassination as a method of political action.

Yet there is little truth in this association of ideas, and an actual case of political assassination by an anarchist has scarcely occurred during the lifetime of most of us. The confusion is not helped by statements like that of Mr. Attlee that conservatives are anarchists in pin-striped trousers. No doubt it is good election business to try to abuse conservatives with the term "anarchist". No doubt anarchists will feel themselves even more insulted. But the important matter is the disregard, and a conscious disregard at that, of truth. It is quite surprising how many people call up false associations with a misuse of the words 'anarchism' and 'anarchy' with no sense of shame at all, though many of them no doubt pride themselves on their truthfulness.

The recent assassination of Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, gives an occasion for making the anarchist position somewhat clearer. Let us state right away that anarchists do not "believe in" political assassination, in the sense that they think that it is a legitimate and effective political measure. No-one but a fanatic or a half-wit could hold such a belief in any general sense. According to newspaper reports, the assassin of Liaquat Ali Khan was hired, and if true, this means that he did not carry it out from personal conviction. It also means that whoever hired him, and the suggestion is that it was a neighbouring government, whatever their professions do regard political murder as admissible.

Now, anarchists do not approve that kind of action though governments have seldom refused to use the assassin's knife when it suited them. In the minority of cases in which anarchists have carried out a political assassination, there has almost always been a clear moral question. Three anarchists, Lucetti, Sbardelotto and Schirru, made attempts on Mussolini's life, and many anti-fascists regretted that they failed. Similarly, non-anarchists have sometimes made attempts of which anarchists have approved: those who killed Himmler's Gestapo Second-in-Command, Heydrich, for example—an obviously moral deed although the reprisals which followed were so ghastly.

The point is that where the politician assassinated has himself, either directly or symbolically, been carrying out acts of violence against the governed, his death has a retributive quality about it and justice can be said to have been redressed. There may indeed be argument about whether such deeds are right or justified or expedient: but they are clearly on a moral plane, and very different from the calculated use of murder in the struggle of political factions.

Those who unthinkingly accept the politician's use of the word "anarchist" as a term of abuse, might well reflect on the morality of those who seek to make capital out of a politician's murder, and never concern themselves with the moral questions involved.

## An All German Election

(from our German correspondent)

WUPPERTAL, Oct. 11.

TWO questions sway public opinion in Western Germany to-day, one is rearmament, the other the problematical joint election which will take place in all Western Germany and in the Russian Zone. This election would be the first election throughout Germany since Hitler. It is part of Moscow's new policy of appeasement towards the Western Powers which was started a few months ago. And it is also directly connected with the rearmament of Germany, for Moscow seeks by this election to prevent this rearming of Germany.

Propaganda for this joint election has been made in recent years several times from the government in Bonn as well as from the government of the Russian Zone. But the proposals for the conditions under which this election should take place, were always found unacceptable by the other side. But it seems, in all fairness, to say that mostly the fault was on the Russian side.

Of course, there are obstacles on the part of the government in Bonn, too,

and it is doubtful whether this election is welcome at this time, because it may bring into the government the opposition which is headed by the Social-Democrat, Dr. Schumacher. The present government of the Christian-Democratic Union, headed by Dr. Adenauer lost many votes in the last elections for the provincial Diets in Western Germany.

The last election of this kind, where the government party lost again heavily, took place on the 7th of this month, in Bremen.

This is due to two facts: when this party was established it was a union between the Roman-Catholic Church and the different Protestant Churches. The Churches combined to rule Germany after Hitler. But the Roman-Catholic Church with its well-known thirst for power pushed the Protestant Churches aside to rule Germany alone, and in the last years we have had this rule. And that made the Christian-Democratic Union lose many Protestant votes.

The second reason is the fact that the former Nazis deserted the Christian-Democratic Union. When this party was established after the time of Hitler,

the Nazis were in much trouble. Amongst other things they had the sword of Damocles hanging over their heads in the shape of "denazification". They were looking for protection and they found it in the Christian-Democratic-Union party. The party took them all in with open arms and saw to it that the Nazis were not hurt too much—on the contrary, some of them received employment in the government.

But that is all changed. The Nazis no longer need protection and they now have their own party, the S.R.P. Of course, this party also took part in the election at Bremen, and their election meetings were made up accordingly to "Goebbels' style", in spite of the police having forbidden leaders of this party to speak at these meetings. The party received 7 per cent. of the votes cast, that is 4 per cent. less than they received in the election in Lower Saxony in the last month of May.

The tone and trend of the election speeches was exactly like those during the election in Lower Saxony; only the Western Powers were attacked, nothing was said against Russia. This is according to the agreement which the S.R.P. made with the Communist Party of Germany before the election in Lower Saxony.

But whether this joint all-German election takes place or not, and whether Dr. Adenauer or Dr. Schumacher is head of the government, it will give us no more security and no better conditions in Germany. And if the war comes then it makes no difference whether Germany is rearmed or not, and whether the battles are fought on the banks of the Vistula or the Loire, it will be Germany's fate to become a second Korea.

At present, economical condition grow worse, prices rise and so do the number of unemployed. The scarcity of coal for this coming winter is a big question for the population. Germany is forced politically to export coal to other countries, and is forced economically to buy coal in the U.S.A. to keep its own factories running and the people from freezing. A crazy system!

WILLY FRITZENKOTTER.

## POLITICAL CENSORSHIP IN AMERICA

HOW far have publishers, authors, reviewers, booksellers or librarians in this country, or in any other which has contact with the American public, awakened to the implications of the U.S. "Smith Act"? This huge piece of legislation which, in 1948, revised part of the United States Code, sternly restates the law about "treason, sedition, and subversive activities". One of the offences is to publish subversive literature, which explains why Justice Hugo Black, who dissented last year when the U.S. Supreme Court held the Smith Act to be constitutional, called it "a virulent form of prior censorship". The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* has organised a petition to have the constitutional issue re-tried.

At this moment, seventeen persons, including Mr. Alexander Trachtenberg of International Publishers, New York, stand indicted for "conspiring to publish and circulate . . . books, articles, magazines, and newspapers advocating the principles of Marxism-Leninism". Each of them faces maximum penalties of a 10,000 dollar fine plus ten years' imprisonment. Let us notice that Mr. Trachtenberg's politics are irrelevant to the issue. Naturally the first prosecution is taken against a politically vulnerable publisher. His firm publishes the Communist works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin, as well as those of Diderot and other non-Communist authors. Hundreds of ultra-respectable journalists review books that may be more or less accurately described as Marxist-Leninist; sometimes the reviewers even express approval. Would the courts consider such reviews as "advocacy"? And why should prosecutions stop at Marx-Leninism? The *New Testament* and Paine's *Rights of Man* have both been held to be subversive before now. Is the United States public really prepared to accept a situation in which whole categories of books are to be banned, in which every publisher—including many non-Communist ones—who has published books that may be brought into this category must search his stock and destroy them as criminal literature?

New Statesman, 13/10/51.

## As Tyrants Succeed Tyrants Moscow Condemns Bulgarian Ingratitude

INTOLERABLE situation in Bulgaria," announced the *Bulletin of the Cominform*, published in Bucharest, at the end of July.

Intolerable for whom? For the Russian "protecting power" which could no longer bear in silence "the openly hostile attitude manifested by numerous members of the Bulgarian Communist Party even in the midst of the Central Committee". "A fundamental confusion," writes the *Bulletin*, "reigns amongst the Bulgarian Communists and paralyses the work of Prime Minister Chervenkov." "A muffled opposition is still manifest, in spite of the conviction of the deviationists" (ministers Kunin and Sakeravov, Politburo members Masalarov and Smerdiev, recently "liquidated", etc.) This sabotage by traitors in the midst of the Party," is attributed to the friends of Kostov, "still very active, who seek to arouse the people against their great protector, the Soviet Union." It is to be seen even in the national economic plan, whose directors, "incapable of presenting a statistical survey, falsify the accounts misuse or ignore the material furnished by the U.S.S.R."

The Soviet journal, *Pravda*, in its turn speaks of "a nest of vipers hiding by astute acting in the leading posts". These vipers, the paper adds, "benefit from the tolerance and sympathy of the Central Committee which obstinately refuses to welcome into its councils new and young elements. The deviationist movement has cunningly sought to profit from the disastrous economic situation since the setbacks to the five-year reconstruction plan."

To what was this set-back due? "To the instructions for forced collectivisation imposed by the U.S.S.R.," answers the emigré Bulgarian peasant organ, *Semlensco*. Is this an "infamous anti-communist lie"? At all events the collectivisation in the districts of Teteven and Koula had such catastrophic results that the collective farms had to be dissolved immediately.

"They have been run in such a stupid and haphazard way," says the *Bulletin of the Cominform* (quoted above), "that instead of isolating the kulaks from the peasants, it has resulted in uniting them in a general opposition movement."

The deportations, the massacres of political opponents, the purges in the party itself, the liquidation of the kulaks, are laid to the account of the "Titoist saboteurs", who were in their turn "liquidated". It is consequently practically impossible to tell whether the Kremlin terrorises in order to impose collectivisation or whether it collectivises in order to terrorise.

The latest chapter in this story is that the installing in positions of power of the direct agents of Moscow—an operation which forms part of a plan for the complete exploitation and mobilisation of Bulgaria's resources by

Anarchists to-day would never justify assassination except of those men whose active membership of a tyrannical government like that of Nazi Germany puts them beyond the pale. But even in such extreme cases the problem is not only a moral one: there is still the question of the practical effects. Thus the truth is that anarchists have no monopoly of political assassination, and that every instance has to be judged in the light of its own peculiar circumstances.

the Soviet bureaucracy has led to the resistance even of those who were until now the docile instruments of Soviet imperialism.

Thus the arrest has been announced of General Slavcho Trinsky, a Communist hero of the resistance against Germany, a pupil of the Frounzé Military Academy in Moscow and a high dignitary of the new régime. These manifestations of Bulgarian "ingratitude" were neither the first nor the last and it is already being asked when the turn will come of the executioners of the Chervenkov clique and then the executioners of the executioners, and so on. Meanwhile, the people suffer and struggle, without hope against all these tyrants.

Paris.

A.P.

## Impressions of Jugoslavia

Continued from p. 1

reality of their friendliness. The country, to which so many British Labour politicians have been hurrying for their vacations, to be treated as Gide was in Russia, though without that gentleman's disapproval of the fuss, is a place where open criticism of Tito or the Party still means prison. Where the man at the next café table is a plain-clothes informer and where each train has its policeman to check on the travellers. Where, in the main square of Zagreb, there were never fewer than two hundred uniformed figures during the week I observed it. Where the railways and the hotels still preserve the bourgeois class distinctions.

The crucifix has come down and Tito's portrait has gone up. In every shop window one sees the baby-cheeked blue-eyed face. The prize exhibit in every art gallery, the leading article of every journal, stresses the same subject. The film shown at night on one of the walls of the main square was one of the Partisan war. The atrocities of the Nazis, vividly displayed, were set against the humane example of Tito and his men. The film ended with a fifteen seconds shot of the benevolent leader, arm conspicuously tied in a white sling, staring down from the screen.

One need not stress the fact that every aspect of life is controlled by the Party. If it fails to do this in some cases the reflection is on the efficiency rather than on the intention. One realises this as one writes these notes, and wonders why one should mention in detail such

### ANTI-REVOLUTIONARY PLOUGHING

Sofia broadcast the statements of the Council of the Bulgarian Academy of Rural Economy, which denounced the system of shallow ploughing as "reactionary, harmful and anti-revolutionary". This system, hitherto in general use, favoured capitalist exploitation and signified the return to manual labour, putting an end to the mechanisations of Bulgarian agriculture. Even responsible specialists did not understand the anti-State character of shallow ploughing, and the Ministry of Agriculture, headed by the Minister himself, had issued a directive to the Machine Tractor Stations to do shallow instead of deep ploughing. This "hostile and anti-revolutionary activity" was practised by persons opposed to the fight for collectivisation and mechanisation of agriculture. "Support for deep or shallow ploughing means support for or opposition to Socialism." Peasant International Agency, 19/9/51.

generally accepted facts. It arises, of course, from seeing these things for the first time. Reality comes to life with meeting the people involved; their resignation to fate, their preference for the shadows. Two examples of the arbitrary rule come to mind. I spent a few days on the Dalmatian coast during which time I wished to hire a row-boat, numbers of which were tied to the quay, for a few hours. This I was not permitted to do because, some days before, a number of youths had used this method to escape to Italy. The frustration of the authorities therefore reacted against the workers having their well-earned holidays.

The second example was that of a friend in Sarajevo. He had learnt that a certain flat was to let and had hopefully visited the place. He was greeted not by the owner but by two policemen who called him inside. There he was made to wait all day, being joined at intervals by other callers. At the end of the day they were all marched away. At the 'trial' they learnt that the owner had been imprisoned for counter-revolutionary activities and that anyone calling at the flat was somehow guilty by association. My friend was given six months.

Neither of these examples are worth mentioning except to show the constant pin-pricking at people's nerves. This constant fear, together with a standard of living far below anything further West, tends to make people think only of the present. To exist. A worker normally receives a wage of 3,000 to 5,000 dinars. With this is an issue of coupons having a purchasing value of another thousand dinars. What, then, does this money buy? A shirt of poor quality costs 3,000 dinars, shoes 4,000, a comb or a toothbrush 200, cigarettes 70 for twenty, a bicycle 30,000.

Statistics and propaganda, however, can be manipulated to prove anything. The free-market rate for a pound is 1,500 dinars. The official rate of exchange, fixed by the Yugoslav government, is 140 dinars to the pound, a simple method of extracting the maximum foreign currency from more wealthy countries. At 140 to the pound it can be shown that a Yugoslav worker earns more than an English or a French worker, despite the fact that he must work one month for the price of a pair of shoes. In the propaganda pamphlets it is stated that expectant mothers or retired workers receive the equivalent of so many pounds or dollars. In fact the purchasing power is equal to shillings. Many similar examples could be quoted.

Nevertheless, the standard of living has risen during the last year and there is hope that a good harvest and in-

creasing aid from America will cause a further appreciation. It must be remembered, in being critical of material conditions in Jugoslavia, that it suffered, with Russia and Germany, more than any other European country during the last war. That the country has never been able to return to a comparatively peacetime basis. That before the war it was a backward and extremely poor country, a state of affairs aggravated by differences between several distinct nationalities and a particularly corrupt administration.

To its credit it must be mentioned that the government has made substantial progress, as one should expect, towards a comprehensive health service, against the tuberculosis problem, in improving housing, in reorganising its economy after the double catastrophe of the war and the false start of the pro-Stalin period. It is pleasant, too, to visit a country still free of the American plague, to be able to live without the blaring of commercial advertising, to feel that clothes, fashion, and needless luxury have little importance. To find people having a truer appreciation of personal friendship, since there are so few artificial distractions, waiters that do not expect tips, the absence from every street corner of newspaper boys increasing one's anxiety. Most of these virtues, however, are human ones.

It is, perhaps a platitude to add that the future of the country seems poised between chaos and the possibility of Tito stabilising his régime. Similarly, it is difficult to decide how much of the dynamism of its ideology, and therefore of its ability to stay in power, the Communist Party will have to sacrifice in return for much-needed material help. It is well to remember that political organisations are always prepared to compromise endlessly if that is the only way to maintain their positions.

C.H.

### ULTIMATE DESTINATION

What he wants is the mass production of atomic bombs "with virtually no limit". He contended that if this were done the United States could guarantee the security of the Western world at a saving of something between thirty and forty thousand million dollars a year. 97 per cent. of the defence programme was given over to conventional weapons. This plan was tactically wasteful and economically ruinous. "At the rate we are moving," he said, "I can see ahead only two ultimate destinations: military safety at the price of economic disaster or economic safety at the price of military disaster."

—Manchester Guardian, 20/9/51, reporting a speech in U.S. Senate by Senator McMahon.

# LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

## ANARCHISM AND PACIFISM

THE recent correspondence on "Pacifism and Anarchism" was closed by the Editors after a few weeks, but we have since realised that we did not allow enough time for our comrades and readers abroad to reply.

We have since received three letters on the subject, two from America, one from India, which we think should be published. Also, we have to accept

George Woodcock's point, published two weeks ago, that it is a mistake to think in terms of Anarchism versus Pacifism, since within the general framework of Anarchism there is plenty of room for both pacifist thought and action.

One of the letters we publish below is from M.A. of Minneapolis, whose letter in our issue of August 25th started the correspondence.

I SHOULD appreciate your giving me the opportunity to reply to M.A.'s letter published in FREEDOM of Aug. 25, under the caption of "Violence".

It seems to me M.A.'s objections to Sansom's "Defence of the Revolution" would be better grounded had their author taken more pains to examine the principles on which anarchistic philosophy is based.

If we are perpetually to abstain from a direct challenge to oppression in its many forms in order to avoid "alienating potentially sympathetic pacifists, intellectuals and portions of the middle-class", then we had better resign ourselves to the unimpeachable right of the oppressive forces, and like good, God-fearing, law-abiding ninnies shut up for evermore.

As to "the end justifying the means", a closer scrutiny of the position Sansom takes in this connection will disclose a "means" utterly different from that taken by the State or the R.C. Church. Nor does Sansom's advocacy necessarily imply violence.

I wonder whether our friend in Minneapolis is aware that the system under which he lives is the living embodiment of violence? Has he ever taken stock of its laws, the way its police operate? Its arbitrary methods in dealing with strikes or people holding "subversive" opinions? Has he heard of the "White Circle League" and Jim Crow? Does it ever occur to him that what under the system passes for education is insidious conditioning of the young, and what passes for "news" in the newspapers is largely propaganda of the rankiest kind? All this receives the blessings and the active support of the Church behind his Catholic Worker.

The central idea around which anarchism turns is a free and unhampered association of individuals—freedom on the highest possible plane; and that will be attained only when we show balanced judgment and moral stamina enough. As I once wrote (via *l'Adunata* of N.Y., in reply to a specious plea for the "only true religion", R. Catholicism, made by a R.C. professor in Italy), "... the outlook of the average anarchist is neither narrow nor doctrinaire. He glimpses the possibilities of more human harmony and less strife. He conceives of human existence as less 'cabin'd, crib'd and confin'd, less corrupt and specialised,

more rounded, wholesome and expressive. He wants to witness man's creative ability to the full... to share the enthusiasm of his fellow-man's achievements, and to sing—yes, to sing, not to groan, at his own labours, with fear and envy largely eliminated with the evils that begot them."

Surely M.A. wouldn't say "no" to that? Yet the objections he raises amount to a denial.

FREEDOM occasionally launches a vigorous attack—with perfect justice, in my estimation—on the crafty jerry-mongering that's politely called religion. To these attacks M.A. takes exception, criticises them as unfair. The question at once pops up: Why shouldn't FREEDOM exercise its right to criticise without laying itself open to the charge of unfairness? Furthermore, is it possible that any sort of criticism can be unfair when it is levelled at the foulest kind of unfairness ever foisted on credulous men?

It would seem that when criticism comes from sources like the big Yellow Press or the holy synods, it's to be taken as an "expression of carefully weighed opinions". All such criticism is—criticism. When a paper like FREEDOM criticises, it is "dogmatic". What could be more dogmatic than the doctrines of those behind the Catholic Worker movement?

And what's the purpose of this movement? I don't think I'd be far amiss in saying its purpose is to oppose and wreck real, live, labour and liberalising movements wherever they occur. The majority of its members are doubtless quite unaware of this design. And it is to this design that M.A. should direct his fire. If his heart is really with the workers and not with holy Rome, he will do his bit to see that the members of the movement are made acquainted with its ultimate purpose for which, like a snare, it was set up.

New York, Oct. 2. F.N.

### NO-WORK ISLAND

Labour was wanted for a sugar beet factory at Cupar (Fife). None was available locally. A representative went to the island of Lewis and picked 100 men. He could have had 900—all unemployed.

News Chronicle, 13/10/51.

## NAZIS OR ANARCHISTS IN GERMANY

IN your number of the 15th September appeared a travel report on "Nazis and Anarchists in Germany". I must lodge a protest at the superficial and slanderous manner in which the writer of this article has reported on the group that publishes *Die Freie Gesellschaft* (Free Society).

The organisation which publishes the "F.G." has been called from the beginning the "Federation of Libertarian Socialists (F.F.S.), and has never "dropped the name Anarchist". It stands for a modern libertarian socialism. Anarchism has often been written about

in the "F.G." The publishers are the survivors of the earlier syndicalist F.A.U.D. They stand fast to many basic ideas of the F.A.U.D., but are not dogmatic syndicalists.

The "F.G." has never expressed the view that "the next stage in the revolution must be a victory of the Western over the Eastern governments". This claim of the writer of the article is a stupid slander.

That the comrades of the F.F.S. feel themselves in solidarity with genuinely democratic forces in the West, is another matter. About that one can be of a different opinion, and nobody can have anything to say against open discussion and criticism. But criticism among libertarian socialists must be factual, reasonable and responsible. Your article is the opposite of that.

Your colleague admits that he has not examined F.F.S. "very closely". In spite of that he dares to dismiss the F.F.S. and "F.G." with a few stupid remarks.

The most stupid of his remarks is that the *Freie Gesellschaft* is "a beautifully produced little magazine," "appears to be thriving." The other anarchist tendency with which the writer is more acquainted, "does not seem so healthy".

Here I might remark: the reason why the "F.G." is so beautifully produced a magazine is solely because of the sacrifices and intelligence of its publishers. The "F.G." is the poorest journal in Germany. It has no capital behind it, it has no paid editors. The editor is a worker, who has to go out to earn his living each day. The "F.G." has a very small circle of faithful readers, but they cannot keep the paper alive. The position of the "F.G." is catastrophic.

We call upon the friends of an undogmatic, libertarian discussion in the whole world, to help the comrades of the "F.G." with solidarity, instead of slandering and besmirching them in an irresponsible fashion.

Libertarian greetings!  
Sweden, Oct. 8, 1951. HELMUT RÜDIGER.

I WISH to thank you for printing my letter in your August issue, and I am pleased to see Mr. Sansom's replies to my arguments. A thorough discussion of the points raised would be desirable, but I will content myself with an outline statement of my views to which the reader is invited to add his own reflections.

Mr. Sansom cites the successful exploits of the anarchist armies in Russia and Spain as refutation of my claim that workers' militias would be easily crushed by the armies of the State. I reply:

(1) Russia and Spain at the time mentioned were both in political and economic chaos—and had been so for many years previous. No wonder the anarchists could enjoy initial successes! Perhaps under similar conditions similar results could be obtained; however, in most of the western "democracies" conditions are too stable, communications too well organised, for any effective anarchist violence. I fear that there the results would be as I outlined them (executions, imprisonments, repression) should the anarchists take violent action.

(2) Mr. Sansom's own words give me a further argument, for he admits that the anarchists who used violence finally "collaborated" and "merged" with the bolshevik communists. Thus, in the long run anarchist violence did not succeed, but ended in miserable failure. This may be explained by an examination of the nature of political (or anti-political) violence. Violence is essentially an opportunist measure. It is likely to appeal to certain sections of the population which are interested solely in destruction, personal revenge ("comes the revolution..."), and irresponsibility. When these are brought into the movement the consequences are obvious. Principles are sacrificed for expediency, compromises are made to ensure success on the battlefield—as if that were the only goal towards which we are striving, the sincere anarchists who are fighting for an ideal are "purged" by the new elements who fight only for plunder and position... need I go on? While it is true the so-called pacifists have been inconsistent it is also true that anarchists using violence have also been led to inconsistencies.

My opponent seems to think that if the anarchist workers destroyed the prisons the "beggars on horseback"

would not be able to build new ones or make over existing structures for such purposes. I don't think history bears out this contention.

As regards violence alienating from anarchism potential sympathisers, Mr. Sansom apparently thinks that even with violence anarchism will be the lesser of two evils (the State being the other), and that any real sympathiser will still choose anarchism. Others will either become tools of the State or retire to their ivory towers. I can only reply—with Malatesta—that if the success of the revolution depends on "raising the scaffolds" then let the revolution fail; or rather, let it wait till it is mature enough to discard such childish methods for eliminating discord. It appears that till then the ivory towers will be filled to overflowing.

I do not support any particular pacifist group. That many of them have been inconsistent, I readily agree. What I am arguing for is the ideal of pacifism (or non-violence) as a moral and social force. (This same argument may be used against me—i.e., anarchists using violence have failed in the past, while non-pacifist anarchism may still be a valid ideal. I can only appeal to the sorry history of violent revolution and point out that non-violent revolution has yet to be given a chance.)

My opponent appears to think that if our motives are right in using violence, then the consequences will satisfy our motives (the abolition of the State). What was it Dr. Johnson said about "the road to hell...?"

As for Mr. Sansom's question about killing one tyrant to save 5,000 pacifists: it is easy to invent hypothetical dilemmas to "refute" non-violence (the maniac and the child, etc.) If I were to say "No" to the killing of the tyrant, my decision would appear both senseless and inhuman. The truth of the matter, however, is that the world does not present us with such neat situations (for one thing, we never know exactly what will result from our actions). Many factors must be taken into consideration when we are confronted with the world as it is, and not as it is presented in hypothetical problems. I could make up a few for the non-pacifist anarchist to answer, but I don't think they would have any more validity. Given Mr. Sansom's premises, I would say kill the tyrant by all means—but since he is an imaginary tyrant I don't feel any conscious pangs for my violent decision.

### SHOES FOR USE OR PROFIT?

MR. Aylmer Vallance in a recent article in the *New Statesman*, discussed the industrialisation of the Nottingham boot and shoe trade. His article led to an interesting letter from Mr. Wilfred Wellock, who writes:—

"The handcraftsmen of the shoe trade still claim that hand-made shoes are more economic, more weather-proof, and more hygienic than machine-made. In discussing this point with a Northampton manufacturer some five years ago, I was told that a pair of hand-made shoes would cost me £6 whereas a top-grade machine-made pair would cost £3. After that I got into touch with a first-class Northampton craftsman, who agreed to make me a pair of shoes, which to-day is the best and most comfortable pair of shoes I have ever had. They cost me £3. I then told him what the manufacturer had said to me. Yes, he said, if you went to your retailer he would charge you £6. He, his wholesaler, and the manufacturer would each add £1 profit. The "economy" of the handcraftsman is local, and thus cuts out three profits.

"The big firms, with costly machinery, and in keen competition, must keep their machinery running full strength or go bankrupt. They inevitably over-produce, to overcome which they resort to fashion and all manner of freakish designs, from low to high heels, then back again. In the world conditions, however, that are now emerging, raw material shortages will soon put an end to these wasteful processes and force down production to the natural demand. They may indeed bring conditions which will make possible the return of the craftsmen in many industries."

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

I would like to reiterate my belief in the power of non-violence. I believe that it is one of anarchism's most effective weapons. It appeals both to the intellect and the emotions, while violence usually appeals to feelings too unstable ever to be used as the basis of a better society. Non-violent methods appear to me to be much more practical (e.g., less danger of early suppression, less chance of compromise—of bringing unsavoury elements into the movement) and more likely to be used (the workers will use the general strike before they will ever take up arms).

In the final analysis, one cannot decide the issue of violence vs. non-violence on a purely intellectual-experimental basis. I admit that whatever I have said here can be answered by a non-pacifist, and I can then answer him, and so on. The honours appear to me to be equally divided, because we are dealing with problems of too complex natures to be simply resolved by generalisations from history and surmises concerning factors that have yet to be understood. The basis for the decision rests in the emotions—or rather, in the complete person (as Mr. Herbert Read would suggest), including emotions, intellect, past conditioning, etc. Whichever path a person takes he must be judged by his sincerity and disinterestedness, and not by one's own insecure prejudices. We can dispute the pragmatic validity of each other's choice, but that, as Mr. Sansom points out, need not interfere with our whole-hearted co-operation and mutual respect.

Minneapolis, Sept. 22. M.A.

## MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

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

NOTE: Sunday meetings at the PORCUPINE, Charing Cross Rd. (next Leicester Sq. Underground Station)

Every Sunday at 7.30 p.m.

OCT. 28—Philip Sansom on OUR LAST ELECTION?

NOV. 4—Bernard Gelstein on PROBLEMS OF THE REVOLUTION

DISCUSSION & SOCIAL MEETINGS  
Every Wednesday at 7.30 at the BIRD IN HAND Long Acre, W.C.  
Everybody welcome

### NORTH-EAST LONDON

DISCUSSION MEETINGS IN EAST HAM at 7.30

OCT. 31—General Discussion on FUTURE GROUP ACTIVITY  
NOV. 14—Round Table Discussion OBJECTIONS TO 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.

### BRADFORD

At the MECHANICS INSTITUTE (Saloon) Monday, Nov. 19th, at 7.30  
Eddie Shaw on THE APATHETIC THROG

### LIVERPOOL

DISCUSSION MEETINGS at 101 Upper Parliament Street, Liverpool, 8  
Every Sunday at 8 p.m.  
OCT. 28—H. Sculthorpe on FREEDOM—IS IT A MYTH?  
NOV. 4—Rufus on THE FRUSTRATION OF ANARCHISM

### GLASGOW

INDOOR MEETINGS at CENTRAL HALL, BATH STREET  
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