

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"No government, however powerful, clever, or ruthless could wage a modern war without the co-operation of its people."
—"PEACEMAKERS"

CORN IN EGYPT

The Great Military Mirage

Lieut.-General Sir George Erskine, British Commander in Egypt, said today that Ismailia was no longer on his list of safe areas and 550 more families there would be evacuated to England.

"This would bring the total due to be evacuated to more than one-third of the original 3,000 British service families living in the Canal Zone."

"I had hoped that we could consider Ismailia as a residential district," he added.

The Star, 12/11/51.

THE evacuation of British service families from the Canal Zone of Egypt has been carried out efficiently. Nobody can dispute that. One recalls once more the admiring and quite unconsciously ironic words of an onlooker during the evacuation from Palestine: "This is the sort of thing the British Army does superlatively well." Ships arriving at Port Said have turned round home again, and shiploads of families, having sold up here, returned back home again. Steadily and without fuss or panic, the families quartered in Suez and Ismailia have one by one been enabled to pack up and go, and back they come by shiploads, some with harrowing tales to tell ("The people at home don't know one-half"), some with indignation, some with relief. The Army has by all accounts taken everything into consideration, and disembarking families with no homes to return to are proceeding to Blackpool, which even in winter-time is a pleasant place to stay at; there is no fuss, no bother, and the biggest post war scandal is discreetly not mentioned. This, too, is the sort of thing the British Army does superlatively well.

Let us examine the facts about the scandal. And it is a shocking scandal of mismanagement, incredible folly and stupidity which is none the better because the element of corruption does not enter into it.

The British Government agreed to evacuate the Delta Zone in 1946. First of all, Alexandria was completely cleared of British troops, and then in 1947/8 the Government fulfilled its promise to withdraw troops from Cairo. The old-established garrisons withdrew. In Kasr-el-Nil, for so long the symbol of foreign military might in Cairo, the last British troops withdrew one night, with the washing still hanging from the window-sills so that the passers-by would imagine they were still in residence, and thus avoid the "incidents" which had become so noticeable a feature of Cairo life from 1946 to 1948. In the Canal Zone it was considered they would be "out of sight, out of mind". The garrisons went to towns built by the Suez Canal Company—Port Said, the little French-built town of Ismailia where the Canal enters Lake Timsah, Suez; they built their own little towns along the Suez Canal roadways; Moascar, farther out Qassassin, Tel-el-Kebir, etc.; and out of nothing arose the garrison town to replace Kasr-el-Fayid Nil.

If withdrawal from the Delta was to mean anything, it was taken to imply at least some progressive withdrawal. But the Army dug itself in with a vengeance in the Canal Zone. The amount of building is incredible. A tiny garden city like Ismailia did not have all the amount of flats and buildings available for the newcomers. Up went the new buildings nearby at Moascar; nothing was lacking to build the "new towns". Money was no object in pro-

viding not merely a garrison for the troops, but everything which had been lost in the Delta Zone, and in principal, accommodation for Service families.

Why were so many families keen to go to Egypt? Surely the answer should have been obvious to anybody with a grain of sense. They lacked houses in England. (If you wanted to know why we lacked houses in England, the answer was always that Service needs came first: the requirements of "rearmament"—under which generic title one may include all the demands of the Armed Forces—always have priority). The Army lacked nothing to build its own towns in Egypt. Heigho for the flat with two servants at dirt-cheap wages and no rationing! Off they rushed, the "refugees from England", the Colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady; no sullen looks out there as you got in Germany!

Was it essential? It is all very well to say that regular soldiers wanted their families with them. But they would not have done so if their families could have lived reasonably well in England. If the building had taken place here instead of there they would not have wanted them out there so urgently. But—and this is the operative point—why so many signed on again as regulars was simply because they could get family accommodation out there which they could not get at home. The officers' wives came out for the pudding-and-pies; the soldiers' wives were doing a lot better than skilly, and it was all great fun while it lasted.

Of course, you only had to go and speak to one man in the street (but who would ask a "Wog", anyway?) to know it was a matter of sitting on top of a volcano. The servants were dirt-cheap and asked only a few piastras a day and a sleep in the afternoon; the poverty around was such that there was never any lack of "loyal Egyptians". But how can one live securely in a quarter of a town (not walled off or fortified in any way) around which are the unknown masses, hostile and bitter and resentful, with nothing to lose because they never had anything. Around the smart French streets in the middle of Ismailia, Port Said and Suez are clustered the mean houses and dingy alleys and farther out the lanes of mud-covered hovels where the European never felt safe in venturing.

Now, all of a sudden, riots have broken out and the European quarters broken into; some houses have been looted, there has been violence and hooliganism and the families are skeddaddling. Whatever may happen, it can only be much less than anyone might have imagined, in honesty, would happen. There might have been expected a sudden swift massacre. Fortunately, fanaticism was curbed because the masses were not vengeful, and the hooliganism and attacks were in spite of everything very far short of what could have been visualised.

The Army evacuates the Service families, as it did in Palestine in 1948, and prepares for action. It may be that military action will take place, and then, as in Palestine, the Army itself will evacuate after all. It is more likely that a deal will be reached. But neither the political question, the incidents reported from the Canal Zone, nor the re-shipment arrangements made so efficiently, should prevent consideration at home of the major post-war scandal. That is the fact that housing was and is desperately needed above all considerations. "Defence" was given higher priority. As

a result of Service decisions housing took place in a part of the world where it was completely untenable and where it proves in the end completely useless. Not only barracks, but roads, flats, houses, schools, churches have gone up in the Canal Zone. What has been rented from the Suez Canal Company has all had to be paid for, too. And in a few short years the semi-colonisation undertaken by the Service chiefs is seen to be all in vain. I read of a wife who

said her husband was going to smash all the furniture when he left so that the "Wogs" couldn't get it. The flats will also be uninhabitable; in any case, there is no waiting list out there; nobody who hasn't one already can afford one. That's how Operation Mirage ends. But we are told at home not to be unreasonable if there is no housing available. After all, Service needs come first. . . .

INTERNATIONALIST.

Is There a Syndicalist Revival?

IT gives some satisfaction to note that people who are supposed to know something about industry, are referring to a revival of syndicalist ideas among workers.

We have often pointed out that unofficial strikes and their organisation and methods, have much in common with syndicalism, but we have not yet seen any conscious recognition that it is only through syndicalism and not through trade unionism that any real progress on the part of industrial workers will be achieved.

This is probably because—and we admit it with regret—the industrial workers as a whole are not concerned with achieving any real progress. They are concerned so far only with the day-to-day struggle for existence, and it is only when their official unions let them down in that struggle that, being thrown on their own resources, they resort to direct action.

Now, we are not given to exaggeration of the size or numbers of the anarchist or syndicalist movements in this country. Such boasting—or boasting—cannot do any good, for those who fall for it and join us only on the basis of any pretended strength, do so in order to use that strength themselves instead of wishing to add their strength to the building

up of a movement from small beginnings.

We do not pretend our strength lies in numbers; we do claim that it lies in the validity of our ideas, and that syndicalist methods—and aims—represent something based on realities, not on theories.

Workers turn to syndicalist tactics whenever they face up to a problem directly, seeking within themselves and in their own strength the solution to that problem. Whenever they do that, they return, as to an old friend, to the half-forgotten lessons which their fathers learned when there was a lively syndicalist movement in this country. And those lessons stand them in good stead.

And what we also point out is that the situation for the workers to-day is one which is crying out more and more for the syndicalist solution. The abject failure of the Labour Party and of the trade unions to offer even an alternative to capitalism; the default or mediocrity of the so-called revolutionary Marxist parties, unable either to gather or keep support among the working-class, points in only one direction: syndicalism. There is no other way yet devised that has not been tried and failed in one country or another. The Parliamentary path, the way of government, clearly leads us up the garden path—with a blank wall at the end.

It is then, as we said at the beginning, a source of satisfaction to us when, from anti-syndicalist directions, come references to a revival of syndicalism.

In the *Manchester Evening News* recently, for example, an editorial article on the coal situation had a paragraph headed "Is It Syndicalism?" in which we read: "There is probably also a tendency towards Syndicalism among the miners since nationalisation, reflected in the attitude that the coal industry is now theirs to run as they think best."

We hardly think the miners can still have many illusions about that! But the miners' experiences under nationalisation can only strengthen the chances for syndicalism. They've had boss control, and didn't like it; they've had State control and they don't like that—only workers' control is left to be tried.

But the point we are making here is that a journalist in a *Manchester* paper, putting an editorial viewpoint could maintain that there may be a tendency towards syndicalism.

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Reign of Terror in China

ROBERT GUILLAIN, the special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Monde*, has made some detailed reports on the situation in China. The following is a condensed summary of his findings.

News from China is often months behind the times, and the wishful interpretations of some Western commentators are encouraged by such. "Thus, the idea still survives in Europe that the Chinese Communists are not 'true' Communists, and that the 'agrarian reformers' may well return to Chinese tradition." According to Guillain, these ideas will not bear serious examination, nor the idea that "recourse to the strong arm is a proof of weakness."

The recourse to the terrorism of mass trials, already reported in *FREEDOM*, was systematically prepared in the months preceding July, 1950, "through the setting up of organisations of supervision and repression." A whole police system on the by now familiar totalitarian model has been developed. "It works everywhere, very systematically, watching public places of assembly, hotels, and so on. It makes countless domiciliary visits, at which police enquiry is accompanied by political preaching. At the base of the system the 'housewards' let nothing escape their attention. They report everything—activities, removals, opinions; and the police espionage is universal."

New Legislation

The new laws of February 21st, 1951, are of extraordinary severity. "Its 21 Articles were drawn up in vague terms that permit the most elastic interpretations. It enumerates the crimes against the régime, all punishable by death. We find in it, for example, rebellion against the State, and then contacts with foreign imperialism, the propagation of rumours with counter-revolutionary intent, the giving of asylum to an enemy of the people, and so on. The law was retrospective: the extraordinary tribunals have made full use of that provision."

Official Communist newspapers in Shanghai report 1,742 executions in five months of this year. "Between March and June there were six 'mass-executions' with 91 victims on March 26th, 293 on April 30th, 27 on May 9th, 32 on May 16th, 205 on May 31, and 284 on

June 15th. In Canton, 198 were shot on April 25th, and 136 a little later."

The Deputy Governor of Canton officially stated that in his province in 9 months (Oct '50 to June '51) there were 28,322 executions, or more than 3,000 a month, and 89,701 arrests.

Thousands of counter-revolutionaries are rounded up in mass arrests, characteristically carried out at night. Estimates vary from three to ten thousand at a time. In the days following, lorry loads of these unfortunates, bound and under armed guard, are paraded through the streets.

At the mass-accusation meetings, held in Shanghai in the Carridrome, the former dog-racing track, the victims do not come from the most recent round-up. Some of these, however, are present as spectators; "bound by ropes or chains, they were having a foretaste of the fate that awaited them."

Some of the accused confess into the microphones and among such "care had been taken to place some authentic bandits, specially chosen for the blackness of their pasts. The crowd shouts for their death."

This follows at mass executions at which vast crowds attend. Kneeling they are shot in the back of the neck. The official Communist press reports are astonishing:

"The very children standing at the foot of the wall started singing songs for the suppression of the counter-revolutionaries. . . . When the comrades of the Public Security Office left the spot a crowd of two or three thousand people rushed up to get a close view of what the (dead) criminals looked like. A workman of the nineteenth century factory said to me: 'Quite right to get that squint at 'em. It cheers you up'."

It is regarded as a duty to be present at mass accusations and executions. "Far away, in the city, all those who have remained at home must witness them in some fashion. The radio sees to that. Loudspeakers are permanently installed in the streets and squares and places of resort. The result is obsessing."

The population not only has to submit; it is required to say "That's what I want, what I have been wanting: it has been my demand that those heads shall fall, to save the people!"

MR. CROSSMAN SEES THE LIGHT

"I am not prepared to advocate further nationalisation until I can see an answer to the problem of workers' control and workers' participation in the nationalised industries we have already."—R. H. S. Crossman, M.P., in a speech to Oxford University Labour Club, 27/10/51.

Well, Mr. C., we have the very thing to open your eyes. Next time you have a dull evening at Westminster, take a look at our new pamphlet, "The Workers' Next Step" and when you've read it, pass it round among your mates. After all, you said the movement needed "a little clear thinking". But don't expect them to be too eager. For if the workers take a step towards Workers' Control, what will become of the politicians?

CALL A SPADE A SPADE

But Don't Call a Murderer a Murderer

MRS. Esther Seares, of Blackheath, was sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment on Saturday, Nov. 3, after shouting a protest during the showing of the film "Rommel, Desert Fox" at the Odeon Cinema, Leicester Square.

Mrs. Seares was brought before the court on Saturday under a 600-year-old Act of Edward III to be bound over "to be of good behaviour and to keep the peace".

The police said she stood in a gangway in the cinema and shouted: "Do not see this dreadful film. He killed our lads and now they want to make him a hero."

Mr. Stanley Moore, representing Mrs. Seares, asked Chief Insp. W. Branden: "Do you suggest that persons standing up in Britain and saying that people like Hitler and Rommel were murderers is likely to cause a breach of the peace?"

"In a cinema, yes," replied the inspector. The magistrate told Mrs. Seares:

"There is no charge made against you, but your behaviour shows that you are likely to be a person who might cause a breach of the peace if you are not restrained."

He bound her over for 12 months in the sum of £20.

Mrs. Seares' solicitor said "she refuses to enter in any recognisances in these circumstances."

The magistrate: You are bound over with the alternative of 14 days' imprisonment.

Mrs. Seares: I will take the 14 days and work for peace.

On the following Monday, notice of appeal was given on her behalf and she was released from Holloway prison on bail.

Let us now take the case of an imaginary Mrs. Bloggs. Mrs. B. went to see the film and came out saying, "Do go and see this film. Rommel was a hero." Undoubtedly, Mrs. B. would be given a couple of free tickets for the next show.

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP
and
SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT
BRITAIN

A DEBATE "ANARCHISM OR SOCIALISM"

For Anarchism—EDDIE SHAW
For Socialism—TONY TURNER
Chairman: GEORGE STONE (I.L.P.)

at
DENISON HOUSE
Vauxhall Bridge Road, Victoria
NOVEMBER 25th, at 7.30 p.m.

FOOD PRODUCTION AND POPULATION

IT is now the fashion to write books and articles prophesying doom for the human race because our planet lacks the possible agricultural resources to feed the increasing population. I am no prophet and cannot foretell whether this hungry doom will befall my species, but if it does it will not be for the reasons propounded by the enthusiastic Jeremiahs. If such civilisation as we have crashes in ruins, it will not be for lack of agricultural resources or the will to utilise them, but for reasons which are more complex in character.

Let me hasten to disassociate myself from the anti-Malthusians. I have no quarrel at all with Malthus' unanswerable mathematics. A conservative estimate allowing four offspring to every mated pair leads us to calculate that a single pair of humans will produce a population of 2 million million ancestors in forty generations if the human reproductive process suffers no check from disease, war, etc. Now, if mankind order their social relations properly, which is all that we anarchists advocate, they will certainly have the power to reduce these disastrous checks to a minimum. What

then—do we complacently approach to a time when the Earth is chock-a-block with human beings and we have to colonise the other planets? The limitation of breeding by contraceptive methods is the obvious solution, and if we do reach a condition of social harmony which makes the conquest of death by disease and violence a practical possibility, we will also have the opportunity to render rational contraception a world-wide practice.

The problem, however, is what to do in this interim period. The population of the Earth is about 2,500 million people—and it appears to be rapidly increasing. There are about 33,000 million acres of the Earth's land surface, but according to most authorities only a small part of this is suitable for cultivation. The United States Department of Agriculture gives the figure of 4,000 million acres; other authorities place it as low as 2,500 millions acres of cultivable land. So it appears that we have between 1 and 2 acres of land per head

to support us at present, and if anyone has old-fashioned ideas as to the sufficiency of "an acre and a cow", let us remember that Lord Boyd Orr declares that 2½ acres per head are requisite for a proper diet. So according to the statisticians, the world population has already passed the limit at which human life can be properly supported, and every year brings an increase of population to help us on the way to world-wide famine. Again, other statisticians point out that the cultivable surface of the Earth is actually shrinking at an alarming rate, due to soil erosion, and that all we can hope to do is to fight a stiff losing battle against the impoverishment of our resources.

Such a world picture of the plight of *homo sapiens* contributes somewhat to the hysteria and short-term policies of the ruling States of the world to-day. It does not seem such a lunatic action to burn foodstuffs to stabilise a market, or to massacre by the million to simplify the science of government, if mankind

is probably doomed anyway, and that the best hope lies in devastating half the planet in order that one power block may seize what remains. I am not suggesting that the adoption of a war policy by the great States is entirely due to a conscious fear of world overpopulation in relation to food supplies, but this fear is undoubtedly operative both in ruling circles and among those whom they rule.

Before joining in the general hysterical stampede into totalitarianism and accepting the necessity for global war, let us examine rather closely the fundamental premises of the prophets of doom. Is there, in fact, even at this present time with our present knowledge of agriculture and our present potential resources an absolutely fixed relationship between acreage and population? It occurs to me that many of the popularisers of the famine-scare are forgetful, if not entirely unaware, of certain elementary facts about food—where it comes from, what its nature is, and why we need it—and in their too hasty judgment they make economic and political assumptions which are unwarranted. At the risk of labouring the point, therefore, I propose to go over some elementary scientific facts which are perhaps not as widely appreciated in their proper significance as they might be.

All foodstuffs are primarily dependent on the sunlight which floods so abundantly on our planet. Green plants trap the energy which comes from the sun and by its agency synthesise foodstuffs from certain of the gases of the air, water and chemicals of the soil. The energy supplied by the sun is incorporated into the foodstuffs and the need which we humans and other animals have for food is primarily to get at this store of energy and utilise it for our own life processes. When we have done with the food we return (by excretion or by our death and decay) precisely the gases, water and chemicals which the green plants require to synthesise more foodstuffs. So plant life and animal life play an endless game of exchange with the same elements, the whole motive force for the game coming from the energy received from sunlight. There is no "using-up" of the elements of the planet. The nitrogen atoms which were in a pharaoh's beard may very well be in my body now; carbon atoms that rose up in the smoke of burning Rome may well be in the apple that now lies before me. As far as the quantities of the elements necessary for animal and vegetable life on this planet, a million-fold increases in living matter would reduce the world resources very little. The one limiting factor to an almost

infinite reproduction of life (besides the obvious one of living space) is the amount of energy conveyed by sunlight, which we cannot increase. But such is the enormous difference between the number of calories per year which the Earth receives from the Sun and the number of calories which are actually trapped by plant life and made available in foodstuffs in a year, that the problem will remain academic for a long time to come.

This crude picture of plant and animal life playing their endless game of rotating elements in order to utilise the sun's energy, is not the whole story, but it is basic to the understanding of the origin, purpose and eventual destination of foodstuffs. Plants need more than sunlight, aerial gases, water and chemical salts to maintain healthy growth; they need a complex balance of living organisms in the soil and certain climatic conditions suited to the different plant species. Wheat will not grow in a marsh, nor rice in a sandy plain. But Man for unrecorded centuries has been an interfering creature, altering the ecology of plant life wherever he has scratched a living. Let there be no mistake about this; farming is an essentially *unnatural* occupation. Its object is to interfere with the balance of nature and to make certain plants grow in situations and under climatic conditions quite foreign to them. The townsman looking at well cultivated farmland thinks of it as something "natural", something as inevitable to the landscape as bristles to his own chin. But in reality he is looking at something as artificial and man-determined as a motor car factory. He is seeing cross-species of American potatoes growing where bog plants would naturally grow, root vegetables from Mesopotamia growing where native gorse would flourish, and artificially produced species of cereals growing on the ancient site of woodlands. A farmer has only to neglect his constant task of interference and the natural ecology will soon reassert itself and oust his artificial crops. There is so much mysticism and crass ignorance mixed up in the general concept of farming and food production that it is difficult to get people to approach the problem rationally. Man exists on this planet by his ability to oppose, to alter the forces which are loosely referred to as Nature, but there is a current superstitious dread of admitting that our means of life are "unnatural"; i.e., instead of largely adapting ourselves to the general conditions prevailing on this planet, we depend upon adapting the planet to suit ourselves.

TONY GIBSON.

(To be concluded)

Race Myths Exposed

RACIAL MYTHS, by Juan Comas. (U.N.E.S.C.O., 1/6)

RACE & CULTURE, by Michel Leiris. (U.N.E.S.C.O., 1/6)

THESE two pamphlets are additions to the important Unesco series "The Race Question in Modern Science". (The previous volumes were *Race & Psychology* by Otto Klineburg, and *The Roots of Prejudice* by Arnold Rose, and were discussed in FREEDOM for 25/8/51 and 13/10/51 respectively.)

Professor Comas begins by briefly summarising the historical development of racial prejudice which, with the growth of an allegedly scientific background, "developed into a regular doctrinal system during the 18th and 19th century". In a most interesting passage, he shows the way in which Darwinism was put to an economic use to justify the institution of Negro slavery:

"There was indeed a relatively brief period when it appeared as though the spread of the principles of the French and American revolutions and the success of the anti-slavery campaign in England might lessen or even abolish such prejudice, but both the reaction which followed the Restoration and the industrial revolution in Europe at the beginning of the last century had direct and damaging repercussions on the racial question. The development of power spinning and weaving opened ever wider markets to cotton manufacturers, and "Cotton was King", particularly in the Southern part of the United States. The result was an increasing demand for servile labour; slavery, which was breaking down in America and might have vanished of itself, automatically became a sacrosanct institution on which the prosperity of the Cotton Belt depended. It was to defend this so-called "special institution" that Southern thinkers and sociologists developed a complete pseudo-scientific mythology designed to justify a state of affairs clean contrary to the democratic beliefs to be persuaded that the Black was not merely an inferior being to the White but little different from the brutes.

"The Darwinian theory of the survival of the fittest was warmly welcomed by Whites as an argument supporting and

confirming their policy of expansion and aggression at the expense of the 'inferior' peoples. As Darwin's theory was made public in the years in which the greater power were building their Colonial empires, it helped to justify them in their own eyes and before the rest of mankind: That slavery or death brought to 'inferior' human groups by European rifles and machine-guns was no more than the implementation of the theory of the replacement of an inferior by a superior human society. In international politics racism excuses aggression, for the aggressor no longer feels himself bound by any consideration for foreigners belonging to 'inferior' races and classifiable little, if at all, above the beasts.

"The notion that the stronger is biologically and scientifically justified in destroying the weaker has been applied as much to conflicts within as to those between nations."

"It is unfair to level at Darwin—as many have done—the reproach that he promoted this hateful and inhuman theory: the truth is that with coloured societies becoming potential competitors in the labour market and claiming the social advantages regarded as exclusively the heritage of the Whites, the latter were obviously in need of some disguise for the utter economic materialism which led them to deny the 'inferior' peoples any share in the privileges they themselves enjoyed. For that reason they welcomed with satisfaction Darwin's biological thesis and then by simplification, distortion and adaption of it in conformity with their own particular interests, transformed it into the so-called 'Social Darwinism' on which they based their right to their social and economic privileges; it is a thing which bears no relationship to Darwin's purely biological principles. . . . In this way progress in biology was misused to provide superficially scientific and simple solutions to allay scruples on points of human conduct."

The first of the fallacies which Prof. Comas explodes is "the myth of blood

*Readers of the Freedom Press pamphlet *Mutual Aid and Social Evolution* by John Hewitson (now unfortunately out of print) will recall his similar comments on this misconception of Darwinism.

A Volume of Alex Comfort's Poems

AND ALL BUT HE DEPARTED, by Alex Comfort. (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 7/6d.)

ALEX COMFORT's book contains, amongst much rather prosy meditation and rhetoric on quasi-political themes, about half-a-dozen short poems having formal coherence and beauty. In these his great gifts of exact detailed observation and vivid expression are used to good purpose; the poems are clear and firm, and seem to me to bring experience to a genuinely new resolution. Even the best of them, however, such as "A Virtual Image," are small in scope.

The most ambitious piece, "The Sleeping Princess," is lengthy and lumpish, freak description fading into banal, derivative passages. Parts of it are moving and memorable. It hasn't an intrinsic form: the images and ideas are strung together loosely on the supposition of a railway journey. When no such artificial device is used, his poems tend to fall into shapeless heaps of bright images and lack vitality as wholes; though at first refreshing, the meaningless novelty of individual lines and metaphors becomes wearisome and irritating.

The book has more to offer than the last, but does not fulfil the promise of Comfort's early poetry, five volumes back. I wish he would restrain his propagandist zeal, which often intervenes to spoil a good poem (e.g., as with the nervous snarl which ends his last poem here), and write verse not so tendentious. His missionary fervour seems to reduce his poetic power. L.A.

and of the inferiority of cross-breeds". He shows that we are all such mongrels that there are no "pure human races". Nevertheless, he says, "there is a widespread belief that there was a time in antiquity when racial types were pure, that miscegenation is of relatively recent date, and that it threatens humanity with a general degeneration and retrogression. This belief lacks the slightest support from science."

The second fallacy is that of colour prejudice: The Negro Myth, in which he sums up by saying that "all the evidence of biology, anthropology, evolution and genetics demonstrates that racial discrimination on grounds of colour is a myth without the slightest scientific warrant, and hence that the supposed 'racial inferiority of coloured peoples' is untrue." His examination of the third fallacy, The Jewish Myth, ends with the words, "There is no foundation for the claim that there is a Jewish race; it is a biological myth affording no valid basis for an anti-Semitic attitude."

The myths of "Aryan" or "Nordic" superiority, the "Anglo-Saxon" and the "Celtic" myths are successfully disposed of.

In his conclusion, Prof. Comas declares: "Doctrines of racial superiority have played an unprecedented rôle in the high policy of States. They have

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Reader's Viewpoint

APART from abhorrence of bloodshed, which I personally shrink from in disgust, having seen a bit of it at close quarters, I consider that Passive Resistance is, at once and immediately, the most devastating weapon in the armoury of an enlightened proletariat—far and away more highly effective than that of taking to the streets or the barricades. A week or two of it, perhaps less, would bring the hungry troops and police to the side that could feed them—the workers in this practical way proving themselves the real masters of the situation. At rock-bottom, the contest is decidedly a belly-battle. Government posters and forms are an unsatisfying diet—besides who in such a situation would print them? Recollect how government and press were all but dead stuck in this direction in 1926. Not a tram or a bus would move with a soldier or policeman on board. Factories and bakehouses going full blast, but only to meet the needs of the community, not in the State's service. No parading the streets wondering what was to happen next—no idle vacant speculations. No repetition of the 1926 fiasco, awaiting the pronouncements of crawling, terrified "Leaders". Three years after that heartbreak of a show, the *Daily Mail* of 2nd May, 1929, let this loose, hardly, I fancy, realising the full significance of the comment in which they gave away the whole show—i.e., that power to paralyse does lie in the hands of the workers: "Thus it was on May 2nd, 1926, that the great strike which paralysed England for nine days began . . ."

Benjamin Tucker, American anarchist, writing toward the close of the nineteenth century, maintained that anarchist society was started thousands of years ago when the first glimmer of the idea of liberty dawned upon the human mind. Whether or not there may be anyone likely to contradict this assertion, it is indisputable that active revolts against oppression did occur in ancient times. The biblical Book of Amos tells us that "The yield of the earth is for all; even the king is served from the field," which rings very like the voice of thinker who had observed in his day that "fair shares for all" was then, as now, just an unfulfilled idea. Open rebellion and insurrection, ever met and opposed by the trained, armed

PASSIVE RESISTANCE

and organised forces of the State, have always in the end failed. Redress, to some extent may follow, but the position of ruler and ruled remains unchanged.

In place of insurrection, leading to unnecessary and ineffectual blood-baths, Tucker favours the employment of the tremendous power of passive resistance, and claims that this is the most potent weapon ever wielded by man against oppression. "Power," he says, "feeds on its spoils, and dies when its victims refuse to be despoiled. They can't persuade, vote or shoot it to death, but they can always starve it to death. I need do no more," he continued, "than call attention to the instructive history of the Land League movement in Ireland (in the 1880's), the most potent and instantly effective revolutionary force the world has ever known, so long as it stood by its original policy of 'Pay no rent,' and which lost nearly all its strength the day it abandoned that policy. But it was pursued far enough to show that the British Government was utterly powerless before it, and it is scarcely too much to say, in my opinion, that had it been persisted in, there would not to-day be a landlord in Ireland. The Irish Land League failed because the peasants were acting not intelligently, but blindly in obedience to leaders who betrayed them at the critical moment. Had the people realised the power they were exercising, and understood the economic situation, they would not have resumed the payment of rent at Parnell's bidding, and to-day they might have been free."

From published records we extract the following: "Parnell was an Irish Nationalist, born in Wicklow of an English family long settled as landowners in Ireland. In 1875 he entered Parliament as a member of a small party of Irish Home Rulers. Though a landowner, he exercised a commanding influence which transformed his party, small as it was, into an instrument which came near to paralysing the House of Commons; a disciplined body which devoted itself to such an organised obstruction of public business as hitherto had never been known in England. Parnell's aim was explicitly the establishment of an independent parliament in Dublin. For the agrarian question, the grievances consciously felt by the Irish peasant, he avowedly cared little, but he saw in it the means of combining the

great majority of the Irish people into one compact force. To that end he organised the Land League, poured vitriolic scorn on every English attempt to provide remedial agrarian legislation, and urged the Irish peasantry to adopt every conceivable method short of positive crime to render the law nugatory. The Phoenix Park murders, in 1881, forced him to an open denunciation of such crimes, and a contemptuous repudiation of the charges that he had condoned them. Popular opinion, however, still held him guilty, morally at least, of Irish crimes and outrages, until a special judicial commission was appointed to investigate the whole question of 'Parnellism and Crime'. Parnell's retirement from his party's leadership was demanded by Gladstone, but he fought fiercely for his position, repudiating alliance with the Liberal Party, but before the fight was decided he died in October, 1891."

At first advocating non-payment, Parnell, realising that the peasants were in earnest and, probably to his mind, succeeding too well in their contest, revoked, and at his bidding resumed payment of rent. In this respect, then, in what way did his approach to the deplorable situation of the peasants improve upon or differ from that of those on the English side of the Channel? Admittedly, to him the peasantry were not of primary importance, if indeed of any importance at all, except where they figured on the rent roll. He thus merely made use of them in an effort to further his parliamentary and governmental aspirations. Parnell was a landowner and a politician; and those who follow either or both of these pursuits have never, so far, been noteworthy as battling champions of the landless, houseless or workless multitude. We turn with loathing and repugnance from all murder and violence by whomsoever committed. These may remove individuals but never right social wrongs, which lie very much deeper in importance. The gun, the dagger and the boasted almighty bomb are useless and obsolete instruments in the solving of personal or international disputes; and armies in the garb and equipment of murder are simply the hold-up-gunman and razor-slasher magnified, only the State glorifies and be-medals the one, and condemns and imprisons the other. Argyll. H.T.D.

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Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

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TERROR & APATHY

THE appalling terror now being enacted in China and the systematic oppression of the peasants in Eastern Europe are reported elsewhere in this issue. They present a challenge to which no-one of feeling can be indifferent, anarchists least of all.

Why then, do we not wish to be foremost in the anti-Soviet clamour, demanding like so many that the democratic way of life should recognise in time the threat to its existence? Why are we not among those for whom war with Russia would bring satisfaction?

Let us say at once that whatever our reasons for refusing to join those who look to war as a solution they do not arise from indifference to what is going on in the totalitarian countries. We certainly do not wish to blind ourselves by pretences that the Communist régimes are somehow better than they seem. They are incomparably terrible, and it is this that should make everyone consider the challenge they present with full seriousness.

First of all, it cannot escape notice, that the government of this country are not at all sensitive to the terrible happenings in China. These receive little publicity, and in the main are analysed in newspapers with small circulations like the *Times* and *Manchester Guardian*, or in the political reviews. The national press makes little attempt to present a true picture of the world to-day to its readers. The government, moreover, long ago recorded recognition to the Chinese Communist régime.

One cannot but be reminded of the attitude of the government of this country to the Nazis between 1933 and 1939. Everyone knew of the horrors, the concentration camps and the anti-semitism. Yet our government remained unfriendly to anti-Nazis, and only when the war came was all this used as propaganda. Mr. Eden made his famous remark that we had no quarrel with the Nazis while they confined themselves to their own country: it was only when they carried their ideas abroad that we became interested. It epitomised the indifference of the government. Few, indeed of the anti-Fascists who gladly supported the war in 1939 came through to 1945 without disillusion.

The same situation exists to-day. For the government of Russia exists as a political enemy. The nature of the Communist régimes interests them solely from a propaganda, not a moral, point of view.

Their propaganda consists mainly of fear—fear of Communism. In America this has been the main official line regarding Korea. But a recent Gallup Poll on Senator Taft's opinion that the Korean war is "utterly useless war" showed 56% who agreed, 35% who disagreed, and 11% who had no opinion. This suggests that the American people do not feel Communism as a threat to themselves. We are far from according sanctity to mass opinion, but this result is interesting because it points to an important truth.

Communism has gained its successes in countries where the previous régimes have also been an appalling burden for the mass of the people. Their régime, though ghastly has not been in such sharp contrast in that respect to what went before. Chiang Kai-Shek was an outstanding butcher, and his régime was utterly indifferent to the poverty of the Chinese masses, especially the peasants.

The same is true of the autocracies of central Europe. The

Communists followed régimes of such corruption and cruelty that no hand was raised in their defence. By comparison the dispoiling of the wealthy produced gains—no doubt transient, for the peasants. Communism succeeds where the preceding hopelessness has made no change a thing to be feared.

It is to be observed that the Fascist régimes also succeeded in countries where hopelessness prevailed: the post-1918 Italy, Weimar Germany during the world slump. The Communist Party in Poland was probably weaker than that of France, but it had no real opposition. To-day, the strong Communist Parties of France and Italy are powerless to seize control because the populations are not immobilised by hopelessness, and the same is more true in America and this country.

But when we turn our eyes inward we find that the ruthlessness which characterises the Communist governments is not far below the surface with any government. Faced with resistance, the British are ruthless in Malaya, where even to carry arms is a capital offence for which many, including women, have been executed. The General Strike of 1926 was a peaceful affair, yet Winston Churchill was ready to bring tanks and machine guns into action.

The truth is that all governments are ready to defend their domination by force if they think it necessary. To say this does not excuse the Communist governments: it indicts all governments.

But it also shows that the defeat of Communism lies not in strengthening "democratic" governments—this may well provide the hopelessness which is the seed-bed of Communism. It lies in providing a positive alternative, a way of life which satisfies the creative expansiveness of everyone. Such an alternative will not come from governments but from individual men and women uncontaminated by the desire to lead and wield power. The strengthening of government—and the consequent depriving of the people of responsibility—paves the way for Communism. The way forward, the way of hope and belief in the future, lies in resistance to government.

Race Myths Exposed

Continued from p. 2
been the excuse for cruelty and inhumanity, they have served as a pretext for the colonial expansion of Europe and for modern imperialism, sharpened race hatred, carried patriotism to absurd lengths and promoted war. Nothing will be achieved by promulgating new laws or enforcing compliance with the present laws, since the effectiveness of those laws is in direct proportion to the conviction of the majority of citizens of the need for them and their intrinsic rightness. More can be done against racial prejudices and myths by endeavouring to amend the conditions which give rise to them.

M. Leiris, in his pamphlet is concerned with the cultural differences between peoples, and shows that we cannot describe any people as inferior because their culture is at a different level, that there is no "hierarchy of cultures". The anthropologist, Franz Boas, wrote: "The history of mankind proves that advances of culture depend upon the opportunities presented to a social group to learn from the experience of their neighbours. . . . The tribes of simplest culture are on the whole those that have been isolated for very long periods and hence could not profit from the cultural achievements of their neighbours"; and in this connection, M. Leiris, after describing the advances of the Africans in the Middle Ages, says: "Not merely for Africa's sake, but for that of the rest of the world, it is regrettable that the rapid expansion of the European nations, at a period when the material equipment available to them was out of all proportion to those in the hands of other peoples, should have nipped in the bud a score of cultures whose full potentialities we shall never know."

Since in our daily lives and conversation we continually meet racial myths at work, we would be well armed by the pamphlets of Prof. Comas and M. Leiris to understand and expose these myths and to combat their causes. C.W.

FOREIGN COMMENTARY: EGYPT & PERSIA Pouring Water on Troubled Oil

IN presenting the facts of the Egyptian and Persian crises it is interesting to note how the politicians and press have succeeded in keeping out any mention of the financial interests involved. We are led to believe that the present struggles are of interest to our rulers simply on the grounds of military security. That we would leave Egypt to-morrow but for the fact that the Western Powers need a foothold in the Middle East in order to resist any aggressive acts by Russia, etc. . . . And so long as they can be sure that the public is convinced of and fears Russian aggressiveness then they can hope to get away with anything on the grounds of defending democracy.

The kind of thinking that is apparently going on at high levels is described by the *Manchester Guardian's* diplomatic correspondent in these terms:

"Broadly speaking, there are two lines of thought. One is to support the official policy; it is argued that after so much recent loss of prestige a display of force is the only wise course; Egyptian nationalism is wind and fury (so the argument runs) and if enough troops are sent the Egyptians will negotiate.

"The other line of argument poses the question of whether Suez is any longer of sufficient value as a base to justify the risks of the present policy. At the end of the war the talk was of moving the Middle East bases to Kenya. What has happened to these projects? If a base further north is indispensable, Israel has been making what looks like gestures to the Western Powers signifying that she might take the place which Egypt has declined.

"More troops are going to Egypt. Part of the strategic reserve is going from this country, and may be locked up in the Middle East, perhaps indefinitely. What does General Eisenhower say? And what does the Kremlin think? If these two questions could be answered it would be easier to judge the present policy."

I am rather inclined to support the viewpoint expressed by my colleague *Internationalist* in an article which was

headed "Phoney War in Egypt" (*FREEDOM*, 27/10/51) that in fact "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 acquiesce in their staying." And one can add, surely, that the same argument applies to Persia and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company's technical staff.

IT is perhaps true that the Canal Zone is of military importance in the event of war with Russia but that does not explain the reason for the presence of British troops in Egypt—for they have been in Egypt since 1882, when, as far as we are aware, there was no Communist menace and Stalin was just a toddler with other thoughts than world domination! Britain has even undertaken to defend Egypt in the event of attack, and at one time even administered the country. Let us therefore face the facts that Britain has been very interested in Egypt because the Suez Canal crosses Suez territory and has been a strategic "life-line" to India and the Commonwealth and a source of revenue in itself; and the Sudan is an important cotton producing area. The Egyptians for their part are interested in the Canal from a financial point of view, and they hope that by making a nuisance of themselves they can lay their hands on more of the profits and more of the good jobs. According to figures published by *World-over Press*, the Canal earned some £16 millions last year, of which Egypt received only a little more than £1,000,000, and until 1949 they had only two out of the thirty-two members on the Board of Directors.

AND it was just the same in Persia. The 1950 Balance Sheet of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company has not yet been published. A correspondent in the *New Statesman and Nation* maintains that the Company's profits for 1950 had had been unofficially estimated at about £250 millions. This figure was strongly attacked by another correspondent who quoted the figures for the years 1948, 1949, which were £24.5 millions and £18.4 millions respectively after allowing for royalty payments to Iran, which were £9.2 millions and £13.5 millions respectively, and for British Income Tax. This correspondent did not disclose how much the British Government took in tax, but if one bears in mind that the British Government besides being the Tax Collector is also a 51% holder of shares in Anglo Iranian, one can readily appreciate its "concern" in the Persian crisis, though in general they have sought to create the impression that their principle fears were that Russia might

lay hands on the oil fields. But the new Chancellor of the Exchequer allowed a significant remark on the economic question to escape in the course of his gloomy survey of Britain's fortunes: Examining the causes underlying the "deterioration", he said: "Over the last twelve months external factors have imposed new and heavy loads on our balance of payments. There has been, for example, the worsening of the terms of trade during the last eighteen months or so. There has been the loss of *Abadan*. The development of our defence programme involves substantial external expenditure. . . ." (Our italics.)

Clearly, to include the loss of *Abadan* among the "causes" is an admission that financially it is an important item in the Budget. How much more important then, are the royalties from oil to Persia with a Budget of a mere £100 millions a year to balance?

AND so we come back to the M.G.'s diplomatic correspondent. Maybe General Eisenhower is scratching his head over the military implications of Egypt and Persia, and his counterparts in Moscow are doing likewise. But we are confident that the Anglo Iranian Oil Company are much more interested in coming to terms with Dr. Moussadig, and vice versa, as are also the shareholders in this country and the corrupt parasites in Persia who pocket the royalties. And in Egypt one can well visualise that human mountain, Farouk, dozing after his lunch and dreaming of another visit to the gaming tables of Monte Carlo with the extra share he will get from the Canal profits in return for a few months peace and quiet there.

For the hungry mobs who did the shouting and the flag and banner waving, and the dying, it will be a return to conditions of misery and squalor as before. And just as Russia is the scapegoat for more taxes, higher costs and lower standards in W. Europe and America, so in Egypt and Persia British Imperialism is blamed while their own ruling classes and their hangers-on live on the fat of the land. Even though this may only be partly true, the fact remains that so long as the Egyptian ruling class can point to the British to explain the poverty and ignorance (99% of the people are illiterate) of the masses; and so long as Moussadig and Co. can put the blame on British exploitation for the widespread poverty in Iran, so long will those conditions last, for the people will fail to carry the struggle against the exploiters in their midst. On those grounds alone it is needful to eliminate the remaining vestiges of British interests and rule from these countries.

LIBERTARIAN.

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WAR AGAINST THE PEASANTS Continues in Eastern Europe and Jugoslavia

BY now it has become almost a matter of course for the Communist press of Eastern Europe to report "sabotage" of the harvest by kulaks or richer peasants. They are represented as lagging behind in the delivery of the compulsory quotas of agricultural produce to the State; "trying to cut off supplies in order to blackmail the government into changing its economic policy"; or seeking to discredit the Communist Government.

Of course, the official governmental propaganda, which controls all the newspapers and radio, represents the economic policy of the government as serving the interest of the working-class: anyone who opposes it or defaults is a "class-enemy".

But the language and terminology used has become completely stereotyped, designed to further complete subservience to the régime and to render independent thought as critical and therefore dangerous because open to be branded as treachery. It is the same language as was used twenty-odd years ago during the struggle for the collectivisation of the peasants in the Soviet Union. The term kulak received then the sinister overtones it now possesses. Not merely does it connote a richer peasant, but also a criminal and, in the eyes of the population, quite simply one who is to be liquidated either by death or by disappearance into the labour camps.

FREEDOM has already on a number of occasions analysed the suppression of peasant opposition in the Communist countries. The pattern of procedure is being followed once again this year. In Poland, for example, Hilary Minc, the Deputy Prime Minister (who is the real instrument of Soviet domination in Poland), made a speech in Warsaw in October denouncing the kulaks. This is both a term of abuse and a means of "carrying the class war into the villages"—the Leninist slogan which covers the attempt to divide the peasants against one another.

That the campaign is really aimed at the recalcitrant peasants in general is shown by the next step. The official party press in Poland a week after

Minc's speech attacked not only the kulaks but also even party members who are accused of failure in grain deliveries, lack of enthusiasm in carrying out the policy of the party, and so on. The nature of the charges is clearly aimed to impress the peasants in general. It is needless to point out that if party members are partly to blame then the kulaks cannot be the sole cause of the trouble. Minor contradictions do not matter since the aim is to terrorise the whole peasantry.

Thus Poland. The *Szabad Nep*, the paper of the Hungarian workers' party, declared on 19/10/51 that "kulaks and village reactionaries are everywhere inciting the peasants openly and covertly against the timely completion of autumn work in the fields: in many villages they sabotage the work of sowing and ploughing."

In Czechoslovakia, the Farmers' Union paper, *Zemelske Noviny*, declared on the same day that although the potato harvest had been good, the peasants' deliveries of potatoes to the State were behind the quotas. It is once more clear that the Communist government's war against the peasants involves the whole peasant population of Eastern Europe.

Jugoslavia Also

Not only the Communist countries but also the ex-Cominform régime of Jugoslavia. Despite the white-washings of Bevan, of I.L.P. members and others, the Tito régime continues to resemble its Communist origin in every particular concerning its relationship to the people it governs. Its relationship to Moscow and to the West is all that has changed.

The official press in Jugoslavia reports opposition to sowing the winter wheat as widespread as the resistance to the delivery of the summer wheat yield. Need it be said that oppositionists are officially described as "enemies of the people", "reactionaries" and so on? The Leninist "carrying of the class war into the villages" has the same function in Jugoslavia of bringing the peasants into subservience as we have seen in other peasant countries.

BERMONDSEY STORY

AN adventure, small in physical scope but unbounded in possibilities, is going on in Bermondsey at this moment. In two Victorian tenement buildings—condemned, gas-lit, five families in each passage sharing one cold water tap—four ground-floor flats, two in each block, have been rented for the children of the tenants. The scheme seems unspectacular, involving no grandiose new buildings, equipment, and team of technicians, yet behind it lies an idea bigger than many with more startling manifestations. Their work was described to a small conference held last Saturday in London. Here is not the escape from home life, which is all that a club can probably offer, but an extension and enrichment of it. Discussion was almost solely concerned

with one of the tenement buildings. Until recently, the other building has so suffered from shortage of money and staff that it has not yet succeeded in becoming part of the community. To be part of a child's life the flats must be always open in his after-school leisure time. He must be able to pursue there the hobbies and relaxations which, in less cramped and difficult circumstances, he would find at home. He must choose what he would like to do, and if he wants to do nothing, that also must be permitted. He must be allowed to come and go at will, taking, if he wishes, anything he has been making to show his mother. Existing loyalties must in no way be infringed upon. In the flats they try to exert influence but not authority. —Times Educational Supplement, 9/11/51.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Problems of the Revolution

I ATTENDED the meeting on Sunday, 4th Nov., at the Porcupine, and would like as a result to make a few comments.

First: the speaker, as was generally agreed, was not an anarchist. Second: the comrades present seemed to be unable to answer him. I suspect that this was not because they did not know the answers but that they were too readily drawn into discussion of side issues and irrelevancies.

Only twice during the discussion was the speaker's subject approached. One comrade said: "We cannot make blue-prints for the future society, because the future society will make its own prints and they won't necessarily be blue." Unfortunately, the comrade did not press his point, which contains the essence of the answer.

The speaker was attempting to guard the future society against certain undesirable acts which, though possible, are not probable. The speaker was unable to remove himself completely from present society before thinking of an Anarchic society. I think that this is the first thing an Anarchist must do—completely rid his mind of present-day standards and arrangements, and then envisage an entirely different structure of society. The Anarchic society is not coming to-morrow; if it did then I will admit that the situations the speaker

imagined would arise. The Anarchic society will only come when we are prepared for it, i.e., it will come from the mass of the people accepting its principles and acting accordingly, and not be imposed on them by a small pressure group. In that case Anarchists must recognise that the fears of the speaker are imaginary. While it is possible that each and every one of the crimes he postulated could occur, it is improbable that they would.

It would indeed be a wanton act of

ANARCHISM AND PACIFISM

HAVING read M. P. H. Acharya's contribution in FREEDOM (3/11/51) on the subject of violence v. pacifism, I seem to detect an inability to call a spade a spade or rather the ability to condemn violence and later to point out that counter-violence might be necessary. However, in times of comparative calm we always find that certain types of mentalities tend to isolate themselves in ivory towers and there produce fantastic theories such as whether pacifism or violence are absolute values, whereas in reality each plays its part when circumstances demand.

Let us take the contemporary world set-up. Most of us are governed by a

CRISIS IN THE VATICAN!

I WAS very interested in Libertarian's article "Crisis in the Vatican?" and in your editorial "Kremlin-Vatican Axis", (FREEDOM, 11/11/51). Personally, I was pleased to see the question mark in the heading of Libertarian's article, because anyone who understands anything at all about the Catholic Church's attitude to sex knows that there is no crisis but merely a reiteration of the fundamental views she has always held.

Surely sex is after all simply the biological method whereby the human race is perpetuated, and indeed all other life, for that matter. To call the Pope's attack on birth control "life-denying" seems fallacious to say the least of it. As the name of Wilhelm Reich has been brought into the controversy I should like to remind you that he also would support the view that one form of birth control, namely coitus interruptus is responsible to a large extent for the anxiety neurosis so prevalent in modern society. As I see it, the Pope is trying to point out that what the Catholic Church considers to be Holy Matrimony should not be turned into legalised prostitution.

In other words, he is attempting to clarify something about which the modern world has very hazy ideas, namely, ends and means. How on earth Libertarian arrives at his final conclusion that the Catholic Church is a "pernicious life-denying dictatorship" is beyond my comprehension. Surely it is the countries with a declining birth-rate who are from a biological point of view, decadent and "life-denying", probably because birth control as a means has become an end in itself. H. WARDLE.

[Libertarian writes: Either H.W. is pulling my leg, as I was his when I gave my Commentary the title "Crisis in the Vatican?" or else he is deadly serious—in which case he appears to me rather lacking a sense of humour and an understanding of the meaning of words: e.g., his objection to the use of "life-denying" in describing the R.C. Church's attitude to "pleasure" in sexual intercourse, as if "life-denying" can only be used to describe murderers and suicides! The reference to coitus interruptus and its consequences only strengthens the argument for proper birth control methods.

There is no evidence that people who use contraceptives have no children. If, however, as H.W. implies, sexual relations are for the sole purpose of reproduction then it would only be necessary for a woman to mate once a year or thereabouts to produce a child a year! I am afraid that most people, including Catholics, would not find this a satisfactory arrangement! So why not face the facts that sexual intercourse among the higher animals is a conscious and pleasurable act in itself and that the thought of reproduction of the species resulting from it is generally the cause for all kinds of fears! In a country like France where, for political reasons,

WORLD IN REVOLT

"What is occurring in the world to-day is a series of revolutions against oppression and poverty. These revolutions would take place if there were no Kremlin—To put down revolutions in Asia by military means is not sound thinking—You cannot shoot an idea." —Justice William O. Douglas, of Supreme Court.

HEAR! HEAR!

"Most of the ills we suffer are caused by people going into public life." —Mr. Evelyn Waugh, in a speech last week.

self-destruction for the Anarchic society to create machinery to deal with improbable possibilities. The very act of thinking them possible would indicate that Anarchy had not been attained.

Anarchy can be reached only in so far as its principles are brought to the notice of the people. And it will come when they have been accepted by the people. That being so, there is no need to fear the dark . . . the future will make its own prints.

London, Nov. 5. R. R. ARMSTRONG.

minority who hold their privileged position by the acquiescence of the masses and the threat of violence should this acquiescence be withdrawn. Of course, when the producers start to assert their demands regarding full value of their labours, it can be considered a certainty that the rulers will bring into force their powers of violent coercion, and if the producers are to be successful in their attempts to take over the means of production, then regardless of any moralistic acrobats victory will go to the strongest regardless which side thinks that God is on their side.

I think these theories in support of pacifism or its counter, violence, are merely the rationalisations of intellectuals isolated from the dynamic reality of human affairs and are dangerous to those who would try to help build a better future, because they tend to inhibit action, and reduce us to the position of endless discussions during which we would probably find how many angels really can stand on the point of a needle.

Let us accept with courage that we must and can only eliminate our masters by violence, that there will be no choice in the matter, and rid ourselves of the neurotic more-righteous-than-thou attitude of the pacifists. W. KNAPP. London.

THE AMERICAN INDIAN

CONFIRMATION of the point of view expressed by Jack Gallego in his article on the American Indians in our last issue, is given by a report in the New York Times for Nov. 1st, which states that:

"The American Indians, wards of the Government for 127 years, are not likely to be emancipated fully until the year 2000. That is the prospect held out by the Interior Department to-day, unless Congress alters the situation.

"Lip service has been given to the ultimate goal of emancipation for approximately 4,000,000 Indians for many years by successive national administrations and by members of Congress. Yet to-day the goal seems as far away as ever.

"A survey of the situation as it is seen in policy-making Washington shows plainly that there exists no firm, definitive programme, no timetable for achieving the goal. Even more, there appears to be no real trend of policy, or even a vigorous drive among officials really to head for the goal.

"Meanwhile, the many little questions that make up The Indian Problem go on simmering more or less intensely in the Bureau of Indian Affairs of the Interior Department, much as they have for more than a century."

contraception is illegal, it is estimated that no less than a million illegal abortions are performed every year.

Sexual freedom is feared by all ruling classes. It is a freedom which is so difficult to control, and yet such an important freedom in developing individual personality. And until the state of "1984" is achieved where giant telescreens are installed even in one's bedroom, the only way to make such freedom more difficult is to encourage ignorance and fear (guilt) as does the Catholic Church or make proper birth control difficult as in Russia. In this country, noted for the middle course in all things, you just try to keep sex within bounds and advise "highly-sexed" young people to take up a sport or cold baths!

HIS HOLINESS

IN your very sensible and witty comments on the Pope's statements on birth control, and your editorial discussion on the issues involved (FREEDOM, 10/11/51), you rightly concentrated upon the important aspects—his remarks on the prevention of conception. The daily press on the other hand, has almost completely ignored this, and discussed at great length (and frequently misinterpreted the Pope's remarks) on the fortunately rare choice of saving the life of mother or child. They have really let themselves go on this (the Church of England Newspaper called the Pope "inhuman, callous and cruel"), but it is in fact one of those hypothetical discussions like the 18th century philosophers' arguments about rescuing Fénelon or his housemaid—even Godwin had a go at that one. In view of the tacit boycott of discussion in the press of the real significance of the Catholic Church's anti-sex attitude, one is grateful for the existence of a paper like FREEDOM which without sensationalism, will discuss it. T.K. London.

It Can Be Done!

THE increased activity on the part of London comrades as well as of a few in the provinces, during the election week has shown us that, given the determination and willingness to devote a few hours a week to the task, it would be a simple matter for FREEDOM to have the 1,000 new readers we need to ensure the continued publication of our paper as a weekly. We realise that election week was an exceptional period, for many people the only time they will show any interest in politics—until the next election comes long. And therefore street-selling may not now be as brisk as it was during that week. Yet the letter on the subject, which we print below, from our comrade John Bishop, shows that even in normal times, the developing of a regular "pitch" for selling the paper is well rewarded.

These are hard times for minority papers. We see that the latest victim is the Birmingham Labour weekly paper, The Town Crier, which is to "suspend publication after ninety years because of the cost of newsprint". Others have raised their prices and some fear that further increases will be inevitable.

FREEDOM can ride the storm with the co-operation of those of its readers who think sufficiently highly of the value of our paper to view its suspension as a serious blow. To those readers we say: "Support the Special Appeal Fund to the best of your ability and use your initiative in finding new readers."

And if those interested readers include some who have not yet renewed their subscriptions (though we sent out renewal notices several weeks ago) then they will be helping by doing so this week-end!

REPORT FROM LONDON

SOME time ago, I suggested that FREEDOM be sold outside stations throughout London and the provinces, and I appealed for any interested comrades to contact me c/o Freedom Press. At the moment there are only three stations in London being "covered", each for about two hours, except in the case of one station at which there are two sellers.

Speaking of my own experience at Sloane Square, I can definitely say the response was considerably better than I anticipated. On the first occasion I expected to sell, at the most, a couple of copies, and probably none at all, but succeeded in selling four. Since that time there has been a steady, if fluctuating, increase, and now I never sell less than eight, and the number, on occasions has risen as high as twenty-four.

Are there really no more readers of FREEDOM who feel they can devote one or two hours a week to this important activity? Newsagents, even if they do stock FREEDOM, will give it no display, so this naturally puts us back on our initiative, and as anarchists we should rise to the occasion. We should also

remember that in making our point of view more widely known we lessen the possibility of public ignorance condoning any future repressive legislation, aimed at anti-war minorities. In other words, it is a self-protective counterblast, which at the moment is only a draught!

Totalitarianism is gaining ground everywhere! What are the readers of FREEDOM doing about it? London, Nov. 1. JOHN BISHOP.

REPORT FROM SWANSEA

DUE to a misunderstanding, I was unable to sell any FREEDOM's at the two main political meetings, so I decided to give up selling booklets door-to-door, and sell papers instead. Including giving away 12 or so to libraries, old age pensioners, etc., I just managed to get rid of the 160 FREEDOM's as well as more than 300 of the "Vote What For?" penny pamphlets.

The pamphlets went very well, I thought—especially as I hit on the idea of charging "a nominal price of 1d., or free if you prefer." Nine out of ten paid up, and I sold many more than I would have if I'd demanded a penny outright. I tried the latter way as a check, and found it much more difficult.

Wednesday was quite a day—I sold 80 papers from door-to-door, with very little difficulty, particularly in the better working-class areas, sometimes five or six consecutively. The Editors deserve commending on an excellent and well-balanced issue. Swansea, Oct. 28. P.L.

Is There a Syndicalist Revival?

Continued from p. 1 In our Syndicalist Notebook for October 6th, we referred to a lecture given by Sir George Schuster at a function organised by the Ministry of Labour. Sir George is an authoritarian (we pointed out at the time how he claimed to seek spontaneous harmony in industry—through leadership plus discipline!) and, it goes without saying, anti-syndicalist. Nevertheless, in the course of his lecture, he quoted an M.P. from Doncaster, who maintained in the House of Commons that: "There has been an amazing revival of the old syndicalist idea of direct workers' control in certain sections of labour. In my opinion, it is impossible to envisage any great development in the sphere of joint consultation if we imagine that this old, woolly idea of workers' control can operate."

And, from his point of view, the M.P., Mr. Gunter, was quite right. The idea of workers' control is not so woolly—as we suspect he knows—but certainly, if workers begin to get interested in that idea, they will have little time for the joint consultation which is the limit of the bosses' conception of industrial democracy.

After all, class collaboration on the joint consultation committees, can only operate while the workers admit the right of the owners and the management to have the major say in the running of the industry. The managements would far rather not have joint consultation. They would rather be completely free to organise things as they want them and have the workers just doing as they are told. But, because of pressure from below, they have had to yield to the extent of letting the workers have a say in the unimportant issues.

They have had to yield, because they cannot get along without the co-operation of the workers. And as long as the workers can be fobbed off with this phoney democracy—which has its counterpart in the political field: the governed allowing the governors to rule them—so long will the managers have nothing to fear.

But can it continue? Such "democracy" depends upon the ability of the owning class to keep the workers at least quiet, to continue to throw them crumbs of comfort. All the signs, however, are that British capitalism is getting into such a state that it can no longer afford even the crumbs.

When they reach the limit and can go no further, the continued pressure from below can produce two things: totalitarianism or revolution. It could produce first one, then the other.

As we are already moving into that economic position, it may be that the

instinctive feeling of the workers is towards the sort of organisation the situation is going to demand. If that is so, perhaps we are nearer to a conscious revival of syndicalism than we think. P.S.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP OPEN AIR MEETINGS

(Weather Permitting) at HYDE PARK Every Sunday at 3.30 p.m. TOWER HILL Every Thursday at 12.45 p.m. MANETTE STREET (by Foyle's, Charing Cross Road) Every Saturday at 4.30 p.m.

INDOOR MEETINGS

at the PORCUPINE, Charing Cross Rd. (next Leicester Sq. Underground Station) Every Sunday at 7.30 p.m. NOV. 25—NO MEETING AT PORCUPINE—Advert. on page 1 for Debate elsewhere DEC. 2—Mark Holloway on COMMUNITIES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO SOCIETY

DEC. 9—John Hewetson on CHILDREN, THE FAMILY AND THE COMMUNITY

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

NOV. 28—OPEN DISCUSSION DEC. 12—Bob Lindon on DIANETICS Enquiries c/o Freedom Press

LIVERPOOL

DISCUSSION MEETINGS at 101 Upper Parliament Street, Liverpool, 8 Every Sunday at 8 p.m.

NOV. 25—Mat Kavanagh on ANARCHISM

DEC. 2—H. Sculthorpe on WAR RESISTANCE

GLASGOW

INDOOR MEETINGS at Central Halls, Bath Street at 7 p.m. With John Gaffney, Frank Leech, Jimmy Raeside, Eddie Shaw

FREEDOM

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