

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Necessity is the plea for every infringement of human freedom."

—WILLIAM PITT

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Threepence

In Your Name!

THE reprisals taken by General Templer against the township of Tanjong Malim, in Malaya (reported in last week's FREEDOM) which included reducing the rice ration, closing all schools and imposing a 22-hour daily curfew, has been taken a step further. It may be recalled that General Templer accused the inhabitants of this town with being "too cowardly" to act as informers. Last week, he gave these people another chance to rehabilitate themselves in his eyes. He had distributed to every family a questionnaire signed in facsimile, which opens with these words: "This is a letter from me to every householder in Tanjong Malim. If you are a Communist I don't expect you to reply. If you are not I want you to give on this sheet of paper as much information as you can to help my forces catch the Communist terrorists in your area. Don't sign your name unless you wish to." In other words, if you do not reply you are guilty of being a Communist. If you do not sign your name you may be guilty since the authorities can assume you were among those who did not reply. Such methods can surely inspire nothing but a deep resentment among the people of Tanjong Malim, and a feeling of shame in us in whose names this fascist policy is being carried out.

Speaking at the Royal Empire Society in London, Mr. Oliver Lyttelton, Secretary for the Colonies, expressed his optimism about the "restoration of law and order" in Malaya and in referring to General Templer's action "emphasised that the rice ration was not intended as a punitive measure but to reduce the possibility of surplus rice being supplied to the bandits." The *Observer's* correspondent on the spot, Michael Davidson, reports on the other hand, that: "No-body but those who have actually lost their livelihoods are hungry yet; but reduced rice rations are being felt and the prices of other foods have rocketed to double or more. The worst sufferers are day labourers, contract tappers who live in the town and are paid daily on the nearby rubber estates, and one-man businesses, hawkers and the like who no longer earn any money. Organisations like the Malayan Chinese Association are starting relief for the needy."

And how strictly the curfew has been maintained is shown by the fact that even children are cooped up for 22 hours a

day, denied their playing and their schools. When Michael Davidson questioned the necessity for this he was told that a child might throw food over the barbed wire fence for his Communist friends outside to pick up! Another class of sufferers are families which share outside latrines. Already people have been fined for leaving their homes to use one.

Mr. Lyttelton on the occasion referred to earlier, said he was not prepared to accept the implied criticism from some M.P.s that these methods were "totalitarian". There was nothing uncivilised in trying to prevent murder. (How often have we heard this argument from politicians to justify murder!) He went on to give his "entire support" to General Templer's action, and this glowing testimonial: "He has shown a grasp and knowledge and political sense which were really astonishing in the short time he had been at work."

This is not the view of Mr. N. Read-Collins, late Chief British War Crimes Section Far East Land Forces Singapore, who writes the following letter on the subject of *Group Punishment* (*Manchester Guardian*):

"Sir,—If the group punishment of the Malayan village Tanjong Malim is to be allowed, and in fact to set a precedent, then the British Government must in fairness seek the immediate release of Japanese serving sentence for similar acts during their occupation of Malaya. The Japanese frequently punished, by death and torture, whole villages where Chinese were suspected of aiding British-led guerrillas. The Nazis also used the expedient of group punish-

ment. Angry reprisal of this nature is not new in the history of British military government. It is not a sign of bold leadership but the symptom of incapacity and a brutal military outlook. British law demands that the perpetrator of a crime shall be pursued and punished—not his sister, child, wife, and mother.—Yours &c."

Put in another form, if the trials of the Japanese set a precedent, then General Templer and Mr. Lyttelton are obviously candidates for trial as War Criminals. But that is unthinkable. As Lord Reading, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, pointed out at a press Conference in Delhi last week, with special reference to Malaya, the suggestion that Britain "exploited" the colonies was "hopelessly out of date". Britain administered her colonies with a full sense of responsibility so that the colonies would increase their trade and prosperity and enjoy an ever-increasing measure of self-government. Britain was fighting the Malayan Communists in the interests of "all countries in this part of the world," that is, of all countries bordering on Communist China.

That is the phrase: "fighting the Communists in the interests of all countries, etc. . . ." which justifies all the criminal brutality of military rule in Malaya or anywhere else.

But whatever may be the response to General Templer's questionnaire one thing is certain—and obvious to all observers with any common sense—that group punishment, and the encouragement of informers can only strengthen the resistance to the military occupation of Malaya. LIBERTARIAN.

Moscow Economic Conference

THE International economic conference sitting at Moscow heard last week the Soviet delegate, Mr. Nesterov, state that Russian trade with Britain could be extended to £227,250,000 a year. "Russia," he said, "was interested in buying British textiles, spices and herrings, among other things, and was prepared to buy goods from Western Europe, the United States, South-East Asia, the Middle East and Africa up to a value of £1,365 millions. He argued the need to end economic restrictions, particularly the blockade of China."

Now all this is in strange contrast with the refusals hitherto of the Russia delegates to inter-governmental trade talks to go beyond a very restricted range of capital goods and raw materials. On the British side there has been a severe limitation of the export of engineering products suitable for defence purposes, and other war materials such as rubber. These restrictions and the limitations on Russian buying are official, at governmental level.

The remarks at the Moscow International Economic Conference which have so gratified Lord Boyd-Orr and the other softies mixed up with the fellow travellers in the British delegation, are not official.

In fact, one may take them as no more than propaganda. Such conferences commit the Soviet Government to nothing at all. But they give the impression that Russia is willing, eager, to make trade concessions—were it not for the hostile capitalist ring. Lord Boyd-Orr and the rest of the men of good will, but soft heads, add a suitable garnishing to this Russian dish.

One can only admire the actual technique—the singling out of the textile industry, for example. The Russians imply that but for your government's obduracy, our offer could save you from unemployment and slump. Wishful folk only too readily forget that no offer is so

cheaply put forward as one which has no chance of ratification at all.

Having lent themselves to such side-shows, the Boyd-Orrs have only their woolliness to thank if some of the real dirtiness of government methods (Soviet or otherwise) sticks to them.

Clean Up the Docks?

IN a recent article in the *News Chronicle*, entitled "Let's Clean up the Docks," Gilbert McAllister, one-time Labour M.P. for Rutherglen, Lanarks, wrote: "It is more than a year since we had a serious dock strike, but the tensions in the industry are such that no-one can possibly foretell when the next strike will paralyse our ports . . ."

We shall deal later with Mr. McAllister's cleaning-up proposals, especially the more significant—the establishment of permanent men ("perms" as they are called) which means full-time employees tied to one employer, on a higher basic wage than the men in the labour pool.

One way trouble can be avoided in the docks is for the bosses to behave themselves. Last week, an incident occurred which could have led to a large-scale stoppage—and was entirely due to high-handed action by employers.

At Brown & Eagle's (London) wool department, two men were sacked. One was a "limited" man—i.e., could only work for the one firm, the other was a "pool" man working on a weekly basis. The reason given for their dismissal was that they had been taking too much time off.

Their 130 fellow workers—all "perms"—staged a 4-hour token strike in protest.

Italians in the Pits

MORE than once already we have referred critically to the attitude of the British miners—and more especially the Yorkshire miners—to the employment of Italian workers in the pits.

We do not play the game, so beloved of the capitalist press, of pretending that the workers are always wrong. For that very reason, because our sympathies are so consistently with the workers—and especially the miners, hardest worked of all—we think we have all the more right to criticise strongly when the occasion arises.

And we come back to the question of the Italians in the pits once again because we think that on that issue the occasion has most certainly arisen.

Let us make our position clear. We do not demand more workers in the pits because we think that Britain needs coal. Obviously we do need a certain amount of coal, but the relentless pressure which is being kept up on the miners (usually by those who have never dug an ounce of coal in their lives) is not maintained in order to ensure the satisfaction of our needs, but to ensure sufficient coal to meet the crazy demands of our economic system and the armament drive.

With that we are not concerned. We want to see a full and comfortable life available to all, but the wastage of life and labour in the building of battleships and the other lunatic weapons on which coal is thrown away is, to our way of thinking, something we could eliminate to the advantage of all.

So it is not economic, material or military expediency which governs our attitude to the employment of Italians in British pits. It is something more fundamental than that: it is a recognition that human solidarity is besmirched and affronted when we say: "These are our coal mines. Get back to your own country," which is in effect, what the Yorkshire miners are saying to 31 Italians at the Bullcroft colliery, near Doncaster.

The same feeling of solidarity, the same recognition that our humanity does not end at the white cliffs of Dover, that moves us to protest when Franco shoots Spanish workers, moves us to protest against intolerance and prejudice among

our own working-class. For it is difficult to see what else but intolerance and prejudice governs the Yorkshire miners.

A fortnight ago, at Bullcroft, the young (under 23) haulage hands went on strike because Italians working with them at the same job were getting more money, and since then a colliery meeting has voted against having Italians there. But the miners themselves demanded, when it was first suggested that foreign labour should come into the pits at all, that any who came should be paid exactly the same rate for the job as British workers. "No cheap labour to undercut our rates," they said, and quite right, too.

But, in mining, as in so many other jobs, wages are graded not only according to work but also according to age. And the age at which a miner becomes due for the full rate for the job is 23. Now, it is perfectly obvious that an energetic and strong man of 22 (English or Italian) will do more work than a slow, weak man of 24 (English or Italian), but he will be paid less for it—providing he is on day work and not piece work.

The haulage workers at Bullcroft are on day work and those under 23 do not get the full rate for the job. They will get it as soon as they are 23 and not before—whether they are working with "foreigners" or with true blue Britishers. But the Italian haulage workers at Bullcroft are over 23, so they are getting the full rate—£7 0s 6d. per week, while their young British fellow-workers are getting six or seven shillings a week less. Isn't that terrible?

The Italians are probably nearly all family men. They have left their families behind and have come to a foreign country to live in hostels, to work at the hardest work there is, in order to earn some money to lift their families out of the grinding poverty which unemployment in Italy means. The young Yorkshiremen, probably most of whom are living with their parents and paying less for their keep than the Italians in hostels, are likely to be in fact better off than the Italians in terms of pocket money for their leisure hours as well as actual living comforts.*

One would think that Yorkshire workers would not begrudge workers from somewhere else the right to keep their wives and kids by their own hard work. But no. The poverty-stricken Italian worker bending his back in coalmines far from home has to be blamed for the misdeeds of Mussolini. If he opens a penknife to cut a piece of string he becomes a dago threatening blameless Britishers with a stiletto. If he smiles at a shop-girl, he is seducing their womenfolk—and so on and so forth. Prejudice and imaginary grievances are inflamed into resentment and hostility.

All the arguments are against the Yorkshiremen. But to no avail. The same irrationality upon which Hitler seized with his nonsense about the Jews; which Mussolini himself used against the Abyssinians (and what did the Yorkshiremen do about the export of coal to Italy at that time?) now makes the Yorkshiremen behave stupidly and heartlessly.

It gives us no pleasure to say this. We would far rather be able to print reports of noble workers behaving with sweet reason and warm generosity. But since in this case, the Yorkshire miners are performing a great dis-service to their class, we should do the same if we ignored it or approved of it.

There is one group of so-called internationalists who approve of it. The Communist Party have been opposing Italian workers in the pits, and in Italy the C.P. papers have done their best to keep Italians away by telling them that when they get here they will be starved and exploited as cheap labour and that all British mines are death-traps. The Communists, as anxious as any capitalist to see the workers of the world divided, will chuckle over the blindness of the young men of Yorkshire.

But those who want to see the eyes of workers everywhere open to their true interests; who want to see economic and national divisions give way to freedom and international solidarity, are very sorry about it indeed.

P.S.

*[In fact, of course, these niggling differences are a necessary part of the wage system. It is in the bosses' interests to divide the workers and wages are the most effective means of doing it. Differences of pay are always sore points among workers, and are not going to be solved by anything less than the abolition of the wages system altogether, and the recognition that all have equal right to the satisfaction of their needs, but that this has no relation to a money economy whatsoever.—P.S.]

Spanish Meeting Issue of "FREEDOM"

IN last week's issue of FREEDOM dealing with the Protest Meeting against Political Trials in Spain, we omitted to mention that the collection, taken to defray the expenses of organising the meeting and to continue the work on behalf of the Spanish resistance, amounted to the substantial sum of £102. The sum of £1 has also been received from a reader in Oldham towards this fund. The expenses incurred for the Memorial Hall meeting should not exceed £60 which therefore will leave a balance of £43 to be used for future activity.

Though these lines are written on the Monday following the issue of the Protest Meeting issue of FREEDOM, we have already received a large number of orders for extra copies of that issue, as well as contributions sufficient to send out at least 1,000 copies to selected addresses. FREEDOM readers are showing in no uncertain manner their disapproval of the Press boycott of this important meeting and their concern that the indignation expressed at this memorable gathering should not be ignored. Though we had printed 800 extra copies of last week's issue of FREEDOM we are glad to be obliged to reprint a further 1,000 copies to meet the demand.

NEITHER EAST NOR WEST

by Marie Louise Berneri

192 pages Large Cr. 8vo paper 7s. 6d., cloth 10s. 6d* (U.S.A.: paper \$1.50, cloth \$2.00)

*This important volume—reviewed in our columns this week—is offered to readers of FREEDOM at the special reduced price of 5/- paper edition, 7/6 cloth (postage 6d. extra). The special price for U.S.A. readers is \$1.00 paper, \$1.50 cloth, including postage.

NOTE.—The special rates are only available to readers who order direct from FREEDOM PRESS.

NEITHER EAST NOR WEST

Selected Writings by Marie Louise Berneri.
(Freedom Press, London, 1952)



Unity and Diversity

INDIVIDUALS grow and develop, spiritually and morally, by contact. The same holds true of nations and civilizations. In the primitive stage peoples live as strictly separate entities. They jealously guard their "own" civilization, their "original" traditions, protecting them from "alien" influences. But with the progress of history, barriers give way to a growing cross-fertilization of civilizations; meeting the challenge of other cultures they diversify their own and liberate it from limiting shackles by assimilating and adapting outside influences, often in a complex give-and-take process. The more in the open society grows, the further it advances towards unity of mankind.

This geographic and biological unity of a common earth and a common blood finds its spiritual fulfilment, however, in a plurality and diversity of civilizations. Each of them has its specific contribution to make, and complements the others. None of them exhausts the spiritual potentialities of man. In the intercourse and interdependence they find the stimulating challenges preserving them from ossification and arousing them to the

search for new responses to ever-renewed questions and conquests. Western civilization, with its emphasis on individual liberty and free inquiry, would have been much poorer without the recent meeting with the ascetic morality of Gandhi and the humanistic wisdom of Rabindranath Tagore, both the fruit of ancient India's contact with the West. The Mediterranean, once the centre from which Western civilization radiated, has witnessed recently at its Western and Eastern extremities, efforts at re-invigoration of the civilizations of Spain and of Islam, which in the past have played their great rôle. All signs portend that an African civilization arising out of a strong virgin soil under the fertilization of older civilizations will soon take its place among these which in clearly recognized and desired interdependence make their contributions to an open society based upon freedom and diversity. Such a society pre-supposes co-operation in the spirit of tolerance. No civilization must think itself in exclusive possession of the true way and endowed with an infallible insight into the course of human history. —Prof. HANS KOHN.

THE life of Marie-Louise Berneri was short, full and brilliant. She died just three years ago, in the flower of her life, her work for anarchism abruptly curtailed. Her friends, however, have been determined not to let her achievements go by un-forgotten and unrecorded. The Marie-Louise Berneri Memorial Committee first published an appreciation of "M.L.B." in 1949 (*Marie Louise Berneri: 1918-1949. A Tribute*). This was followed by a special memorial edition of her only full-length book, *Journey Through Utopia*, and the re-issue of her pamphlet, which created such a furore in the days when Stalin was being hailed as a saviour of democracy, *Workers in Stalin's Russia*. Such works, valuable as they were, could give but a part of the picture of our comrade's tireless activity. Her writings in the main were buried in the files of *Spain and the World*, *War Commentary*, and *Freedom*. Here, therefore, in commemoration of the third year of her passing, are selected writings from the last two papers.

As a volume in itself, *Neither East Nor West* is a remarkably clear picture of the anarchist attitude towards the imperialist struggle. Necessarily it deals with international affairs, but the author does not lose sight anywhere of the main thesis: the fact that the revolutionary must reject both sides in the imperialist game—whether those sides are camouflaged as fascism versus democracy, capitalism versus communism, or whatever new twist may be brought. The temptation in discussing international affairs is to deal too much with the political

wrangles and leave to a concluding paragraph the main thesis. Writing in such papers, too, one is deprived of all the costly means of information at the service of the capitalist press; one must write always in a perpetual hurry because the copy must reach the press long before it is printed; one does not have the time available to the professional writer, and one has the certainty that everything one reads will be scrutinised backwards and forwards by hostile carpers as well as by the M.I.5 boys. And yet what emerges from this collection of articles written often under duress of all the difficulties of the war-time years? In every paragraph the author's own ability makes her thesis plain, while the mere fact of being a convinced libertarian is sufficient in itself to ensure that her assertions are still valid and in many cases undisputed, while not one politician dare uncover his speeches and writings of that period.

Much that then seemed terribly subversive—to the authorities no less than to the many who read our case for the first time—is now admitted to be true. Figures so diverse as Stalin, Tito, Nehru have considerably altered in public estimation since some of these essays were written. Some of the organisations, such as AMGOT in occupied Italy, have perished partly by virtue of such very criticisms as were then made by those who had not compromised. But taken as a whole (and the editor has selected the essays in such a way that they represent the anarchist case against the whole development of public opinion in regard to the war), we have here, as topical as when it was written, an

analysis of the imperialist war from its period of Nazism versus the "West" to the period when the "West" embraced its former opponents too, and we slid into the cold war of "East" versus "West".

The analysis of the "new democracies" in Europe set up by the Russians is still—despite all that has been written since on the subject—the most penetrating. What if their imperialist opponents now borrow some of the arguments? "We know that their indignation is hypocritical and that they may become friendly to Russia again if it suits their interests. But for all that, are we to stifle our own indignation?" The reiteration of the truth about all governments—whether unpopular with the majority or disliked by a minority—and the reaffirmation of what many would like to be thought an "old-fashioned" stand to war—in short, opposition—is what characterises these writings, and one can point to them as surely as to any anti-militarist classic for a declaration on the Anarchist position to the world-political problems of the day.

In the publication of the written contribution by Marie-Louise Berneri to the anarchist movement, the Memorial Committee are attempting in part to answer the question of later generations of militants, "Who was she and what did she do?" But such volumes are not monuments, and the book which is now published is a fresh vindication of the revolutionary standpoint from which its writer never deviated. The spoken word cannot be so recaptured, but at a later period it might perhaps be possible to begin to assess how much our comrade did contribute with others to the rebirth of the anarchist ideas in the English-speaking world, both in regard to the reconciliation of modern thought in education, sex and psychology with the classical anarchist standpoint, and the introduction of so much thought of Italian, French and Spanish writers on anarchism, whose works have seldom, if ever, been translated. It is not so easy to manage to do that as well as speak from the platform, carry out the daily routine necessary to publishing a journal, sell papers, and fulfil all the in-haustible demands upon one's time and patience that inevitably accompany such activities—still less, to remain eternally fresh and alive in our hearts after all that struggle. How could the Memorial Committee ever do justice to our comrade's memory but by saluting her, and continuing the same campaign?

F. A. RIDLEY.

ALBERT MELTZER.

The Importance of Syndicalism

SYNDICALISM—The Workers' NEXT STEP, by Philip Sansom (Freedom Press, 1/-)

IT now seems fairly clear that the international labour movement has exhausted its original impetus and has indeed, largely lost its sense of direction. Disraeli's famous metaphor (1873) which described the Liberal government of the day as "a row of exhausted volcanoes," is quite applicable to the present situation of the Labour movement, both internationally and here in Britain. Social Democracy, including its British variant, the Labour Party, hardly ever mentions socialism or the class struggle nowadays: indeed, it could be strongly argued that the "new deal" effected by the recent Labour Government represents the correct formula for the current needs of capitalism in the mid-twentieth century. Whilst as for revolutionary—without a capital R!—communists of yesterday,

they have now long degenerated into the "Fifth Column" of a foreign police state.

In the history of the British Labour movement, political stagnancy has usually coincided with a militant upsurge on the economic front: the period of the General Strike—1925-6—is a case in point. To-day, however, all is quiet on the Trade Union Front: indeed, one of the major results of the era of Labour Governments has been to chain the machinery, an increasingly bureaucratic machinery, of organised Trade Unionism to the chariot wheels of the capitalist state. To-day, the Trade Union bureaucracy, like its political counterpart, the Labour leadership, is enrolled as a "junior partner" in the administration of the class-state, and has "a stake in the country". Like so many movements before it, the modern Labour and Trade Union movement, originally founded to emancipate the workers from the thralldom of class-rule and of its political instrument, the class-state, has been captured by the experienced British ruling-class and has been safely canalised into innocuous channels.

Under these contemporary circumstances, militant workers are inevitably looking for the workers' next step. This includes both anarchists and those who (like the present writer) are anxious to see the British Labour movement return to its original purpose as an effective instrument of militant class-struggle from which the spoils of office and of Empire have diverted it, as a means to which end, an increasing number of militant workers are again turning their attention to the fighting philosophy of syndicalism which has in the past played so notable a rôle in the class-struggles of both the old and the new worlds, and which has more than once attracted widespread support in Britain: the period immediately prior to the 1914-18 war; the era which witnessed the publication of the famous syndicalist pamphlet, *The Miners' Next Step* (1912), is a case in point.

During recent years, when an official strike was as rare as a blue moon in the evening sky, we have repeatedly seen the workers take "direct action" in the teeth both of their reformist trade-union leaders and of Labour governments, to whom any effective manifestation of the class-struggle is a mystery sealed with seven seals! With the recent decision of the Trade Union Congress to collaborate even with the current Tory government, we may expect a wave of "unofficial" strikes. In a declining capitalist structure, with a growing menace of mass unemployment just ahead, the spontaneous action of the workers "at the point of production"

may well prove the starting-point of a self-conscious syndicalist movement.

Under circumstances such as the above, Freedom Press are to be congratulated upon their recent publication of *Syndicalism, The Workers' Next Step*, by Philip Sansom, an important pamphlet, and particularly timely at the present moment. The author needs no introduction to readers of FREEDOM or indeed to workers and other militants in current class-struggles.

In his new pamphlet he deals as fully as his terms of reference will permit, with most aspects of syndicalist philosophy and its practical relevance to the circumstances of the present day. Our only criticism is that he has a tendency to treat syndicalism and anarchism as virtually different aspects of the same things; actually, however, many anarchists, e.g., both those of the individualistic school of Stirner and the pacifist

school of Tolstoy—would not accept the syndicalist emphasis on communal organisation or its attitude to violence. Whilst conversely, many syndicalists, e.g., the famous French syndicalist paper, *La Revolution Proletarienne* (to which the present writer has the honour to contribute occasionally)—would not unreservedly subscribe themselves as anarchists.

However, this is merely a question of emphasis. Comrade Sansom is to be congratulated on producing at so opportune a moment, not only a notable pamphlet but, equally, a valuable instrument in the concrete class-struggles of our time. Perhaps future historians of the class-struggle will rank his work along with its famous predecessor *The Miners' Next Step*. In an era which everything indicates will be one of mounting class-struggle, the question of syndicalism again promises to become of major importance. We urge the readers of FREEDOM to "go to it".

F. A. RIDLEY.

ALBERT MELTZER.

FILMS

"VIVA ZAPATA!" Twentieth Century Fox. Directed by Elia Kazan. Script by John Steinbeck.

WHATEVER vilification the real Emiliano Zapata had to undergo from the capitalist press of Mexico and the United States, Hollywood, in the shape of John Steinbeck and Elia Kazan, has done its best to atone for in this film. In one of its rare moments of charity towards revolutionaries (of the past, of course) it has produced an excellent, even if idealized, vindication of the rôle played by Zapata in the Mexican Revolution of the first two decades of this century.

What the fictionalised Zapata of John Steinbeck has in common with his historical namesake, the writer of this review has not, as yet, been able to ascertain, but all who are in sympathy with the struggle to emancipate men from domination and exploitation by their fellows will find this film a refreshing change from the sickly fetishism of the *status quo* that characterises the vast majority of Hollywood productions.

The story begins with the visit of a delegation of Indians from the state of Morelos to Porfiro Diaz, dictator of Mexico for 34 years. Their purpose is to protest against the enclosure of their land by a big landowner. Diaz assures them of his "sympathy" with the usual, hypocritical, hand-on-heart attitude of the would-be benevolent ruler. As the delegation are turning to go out of his office, a young Indian, who has not spoken before, demands something more

Viva Zapata!

concrete than the ambiguous promises made by the president. "Taking time is alright for landowners," he says, "but not for farmers." Diaz, seeing a potential troublemaker in the polite but haughty delegate, asks his name. Zapata, he is told. He rings the name on the delegates list before him.

Zapata returns with his comrades to the village. Already a marked man, he kills a policeman in an endeavour to rescue a friend from arrest. The police return in force to arrest him, but they are prevented from doing so by his fellow villagers. Zapata's rescue is the signal for the beginning of the rebellion. After much fighting, Zapata is given the presidency, though he refuses the title. One day, a delegation of Indians from the state of Morelos come to complain of the expropriation of their land by his brother. One among them is not satisfied by the vague assurances of Zapata that he will investigate the matter. Zapata demands to know the Indian's name. When he is told it, he rings it on the delegates list on his desk . . . suddenly he realizes that he is doing just what Diaz did before him, that he is becoming the same as those he fought, that the power he so unwillingly accepted is corrupting him, too . . . He returns to his village to take up again the fight for land and liberty that he had forsaken by becoming president. His successor to the presidency, aided by his renegade secretary (a somewhat superfluous and ambiguous figure in the film), plots his

downfall, and by means of a trick, succeeds in having him killed.

Such is the bare outline of the story which is enacted against the sultry heat of the Mexican countryside. Marlon Brando stands out as Zapata and he is well supported by a talented and realistic cast.

The comments of the critics on this film of revolution were, to say the least, mixed. The *Daily Telegraph* found it too bloodthirsty; the *Daily Express* thought it the idealisation of a scoundrel; Richard Winnington, in the *News Chronicle*, wrote that it drove home some "hard political truths" about the corrupting qualities of power; whilst the *Daily Worker* denounced Steinbeck's script as "romantic anarchism". Romantic or not this film certainly emphasises the truth of the anarchist attitude to government. In a conversation with some of his followers, after he has renounced the presidency, Zapata tells them: "A strong people are the only true strength." "There has never been a strong man without faults," "There are no leaders—you are the leaders." In answer to his wife's question as to what his followers would do were he killed, "would they not need a leader?" he says, "Yes—but they would lead each other." And he again reiterates: "A strong man means a weak people. Strong people do not need a strong man."

What more need be said?

S. E. PARKER.

FREEDOM BOOKSHOP

Journey through Utopia

Marie Louise Berneri 16/-
"What gives it even more merit is the fact that it is such a book as only a brave intelligence and an ardent spirit can produce: one who was an enemy to the forces that would degrade man into a servile automaton, and a friend to all that fosters freedom and creative expression."
—LEWIS MUMFORD.

Workers in Stalin's Russia

Marie Louise Berneri 1/-
The fundamental test of a political regime is "How do the workers fare under it?" The author discusses the Russian regime from this standpoint, and in the opinion of one reviewer, "It is a thoroughly conscientious piece of work which deserves equally conscientious readers; for the questions which it poses to the reflecting mind are of first-rate importance."

Marie Louise Berneri. 1918-1949—A Tribute

5/-
This volume contains appreciations by friends and comrades with whom M.L.B. worked in this country and in France, and includes fourteen illustrations.

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WAR THE PHYSICIAN

FOR the second time in a generation, the Lancashire textile industry is facing a major slump. The war, by successfully eliminating Japanese competition, eased the market situation for Lancashire cotton goods . . . but only temporarily. For, as a recent article in FREEDOM showed, the Japanese textile industry is once again a factor in world markets. At the same time, it seems that undercutting by particular rivals is only a part of the picture, since the textile slump does not affect Lancashire only, but is, in fact, world-wide.

This aspect of general capitalist economics illustrates the hand-to-mouth nature even of such a drastic method as war. There can be little doubt that a primary object of all the wars of modern history has been to eliminate or curtail the activity of rivals in the world markets. But both the two world wars have also shown that such an expedient, though enormously costly in life and materials, is of short-lived effect economically speaking, both Germany and Japan being already back in the running. Space forbids further elaboration of this theme here, but it may be remarked that wars have acquired another use (amounting to necessity) as an alternative method of organising economy in an age of market decline.

Seen in this light, the refusal of the Government to exempt Lancashire goods from Purchase Tax as a means of helping the cotton industry over a difficult period, shows another aspect. The newspaper headlines point this aspect succinctly: "Tax Repeal Unlikely for Cotton Trade. Defence Jobs for Unemployed."

According to the Economic Correspondent of the *Observer*, the Government's refusal of the Lancashire request "does not mean that Mr. Butler is not concerned at the rising unemployment in the textile industry. Some planned re-direction of defence contracts to give unemployed textile workers new jobs close to their homes is, in fact, under serious study." (Our italics.)

One can picture armaments manufacturers, bald-headed like vultures, planning their new factories in the vicinity of the sickly industries. Where once factories were placed near the sources of raw materials, they may now be placed near the source of labour—the excess ("redundant") labour of the age of capitalist decline.

The link-up between economic depression and rearmament can be seen in this instance. When market economy fails, war economy steps in. But one also sees that apparent major differences between the Tories and Labour are only different ways of applying the same remedy. The Labour Party would prefer to direct labour into "defence" industries and avoid the accusing finger of the unemployment queue. The Tories flaunting slogans of freedom and free enterprise use unemployment for the same purpose. In either case, the sickness in peace-time economy is repaired by turning over to a war economy.

As this pattern becomes clearer, the demand for a rational economy and a just social order will perhaps grow more forceful.

"There is more to life than increasing its speed."

—GHANDI

OTTO STRASSER--The Trotsky who Survived

POLITICAL intriguers are attracted like bears to honey by the battleground of interests and ideologies which is Germany to-day, and it would be surprising if so experienced an adept as Dr. Otto Strasser, one-time lieutenant and later mortal enemy of Hitler, did not appear to claim his place at the feast.

Strasser is still a political refugee living in Canada. He reached that destination, and the relative obscurity it has conferred on him during the past few years, by a devious and often perilous route. A young officer in the first World War, he earned the title of the "Red Lieutenant" and became a militant Social-Democrat. A little further along the road he added nationalism to his socialism, and when his brother Gregor became associated with Hitler in the infant National Socialist German Workers' Party, Otto gradually veered towards the Nazi line, and eventually joined the party in 1925.

Through the '20s the Strasser brothers formed the nucleus of an opposition to Hitler within the Nazi party. They represented the more radical wing, which placed its emphasis on the socialism rather than the nationalism in the party programme, but, though their intrigues were excused by idealistic motives, their main aim was the personal gaining of power through the displacement of Hitler as party leader. For a time the Strasser grouping, which at first included Himmler and Goebbels, actually controlled the North German sections of the organisation.

But Hitler the demagogue, supported by the capitalists and the conservative elements, outsmarted the Strasser conspirators: Himmler, Goebbels and many others transferred their allegiance, and Otto realised that the attempt to gain the party from within was doomed to fail. In 1930 he left it and formed the Black Front, based on the tenets formerly held by the more radical Nazis, and comprising members of such reactionary groups as the *Stahlhelm*. It was an organisation whose opposition to the National Socialist Party was founded almost wholly on personal interests: ideologically it ran on a parallel line laid slightly to the left. Gregor Strasser remained within the Nazi Party, to co-operate with his brother by maintaining the radical intrigue from within.

Hitler's Trotsky

The accession of the Nazis to power in 1933 brought the twilight of the Strassers' hopes. Otto fled to Austria, and his supporters, in so far as they were detected, became fugitives or denizens of the concentration camp. Gregor stayed on, to die in 1934 in that bloody night when Roehm and 260 other high Nazi dignitaries were slaughtered to assure Hitler's power.

Otto Strasser became Hitler's Trotsky, perpetually intriguing from exile against the leader's power, perpetually hounded by the agents of the Gestapo with that bitter remorselessness which fanatics reserve for their closest ideological kin. He organised and led an anti-Nazi movement among the right-wing exiles, and also within Germany, where the Black Front went underground; the growth of Nazi influence drove him from Austria to Czechoslovakia, from Czechoslovakia to France, and finally to Canada. With power out of reach, he shelved his patriotism for the moment, and gladly shared his knowledge of the Nazi party and of conditions in Germany with the European politicians, hoping that in this way he would eventually facilitate his return.

At the end of the war, Strasser was eager to re-enter Germany, but his requests for permission to do so were rejected by the Allied High Commission, well aware that his fundamental principles were still those of the National Socialism he never fully abandoned. But he did not wait to return before preparing the ground for regaining his influence in Germany. Instead, he established contact with former members of the Black Front who had survived the Gestapo persecutions, and in particular with Bruno Fricke in Hanover and Waldemar Wadsack of Munich.

Fricke and Wadsack began to organise within Germany an élite body known as the League for Germany's Revival (*Bund für Deutschlands Erneuerung*); its ideological aims were those of an independent Germany standing apart from East and West which Strasser had expressed in his most recent book, *Deutschlands Erneuerung* (Germany's Revival), published in Buenos Aires in 1948 and reprinted later in Switzerland. At first the League included only 300 members, tried veterans of the Black Front, chosen for their financial independence, which it was calculated would render them impervious to the temptations of bribery,

WILL HE NEVER CRACK-UP?

"What the world needs, said Mahomet Andiev to himself, is a nut cracker that really cracks nuts.

So, after brooding over the matter on the Voroshilov Collective Farm in the Belokansky district of Russia, said a Tass report broadcast to-day, he invented a Stachanovite nut cracker. It cracks 1,320 pounds of nuts an hour, and in a factory the machine replaces 120 men who had been opening nuts in a primitive manner.

It is all the more remarkable, said Tass, because Mr. Andiev is 101 years old." *A.P.*, 18/2/52.

It was to be a secret organisation, formed on the basis of regional cells, whose aim would not be to create a numerically large party, but to infiltrate and act as a leaven among the nationalist parties and associations of ex-soldiers and of German refugees from the Slav countries. Strasser's connection with the League was for the present to be kept a close secret.

Strasser and De Gaulle

One of the most interesting points about the formation of this League was fact that it was done with the assistance of De Gaullist representatives. The delegates for the early meetings of militant members would gather in the small German frontier village of Monschau, and thence they would be led across into Belgium by De Gaulle's liaison men, so that their meetings might be held outside the scope of Allied security organisations.

This substantial help in the accouchement of a German nationalist organisation has become more comprehensible as De Gaulle's plans have unfolded during the last few years. De Gaulle and Strasser are both nationalists, both believe in leadership and in the mystique of the State, and even before the war Strasser had established contact with French conservative elements who now form part of the upper stratum of the RPF. As early as 1949 De Gaulle made it clear that he no longer regarded a renewed Germany, however militaristic or nationalistic it might be, as a danger to France; on the contrary, the real danger lay further east, and a strong Germany would this time act as a bulwark for the defence of France. This line was further developed by De Gaulle at the RPF Party congress last November, when he declared himself opposed to a European army, but instead suggested starting negotiations with the German Federal Government for the formation of a European confederation in which France and Germany could agree on the setting up of fighting forces entitled to the same privileges and rights, "side by side and not forced together". The rôle which Strasser might play within Germany for the furthering of such aims is clear.

At the same time, while Strasser accepted all the help he could get from De Gaulle, he was too old a campaigner to rely on one ally who might well betray him with a change in the political situation. He realised that his aim of a Germany independent of East and West would have its appeal to the Communists, whose fear of a re-armed Germany within the Western camp made them anxious to work with any movement which might be turned towards neutralism.

Teachers for Peace?

A CONFERENCE organized by a provisional "Teachers for Peace" Committee, was held on 8th December, 1951, in London and attended by 250 school teachers. The great majority of the teachers attending this conference were genuinely concerned by the drive towards war-mindedness which is being put over children to-day, and also by the cuts in the educational service necessitated by the rearmament drive. These cuts adversely affect schoolteachers in State service in two ways: first, they make the conditions of work, the large classes, inadequate equipment, unsuitable premises, a permanent feature of school-teaching and, secondly, they are a threat to the standard of living of teachers.

It was noticeable at the conference that a certain section of the attendance was anxious to use it for aims rather different from those of the conveners. In fact they were anxious to harness it to the campaign for what has come to be known as "Peace" (i.e., the foreign policy of the Russian Empire). The Commies had smelt blood!

Following this conference, local groups of teachers were formed. I went to one convened in a private flat in Hampstead. It was as I had feared: the table was spread with those pamphlets which are thought to appeal to the more timid fellow travellers. We were invited to go and see an exhibition of "Soviet Children's Toys, Books and Paintings," to hear Deana Levin on "Out of School Activities in the U.S.S.R." The brave Monica Felton's revelations were displayed there before us. We were all set for a cosy meeting of an Innocents' Club.

The young man with whom I discussed the cuts in education was rather shocked when I suggested that our real and primary interest was to sabotage the rearmament programme. He was opposed to the rearmament drive, yes (was he not "for Peace"?), he would do all he could to stop it and expand the educational service instead, but sabotage, that was an ugly word to use! We must all work together, Churches, Trades Councils, Professional Associations, Political Parties, T.U. Branches—all "for Peace".

Where had I heard that siren-singing before? They sang the same song in

1941 when Stalin and Hitler were allies and the Communist Party was trying to sabotage the war against Germany. We Anarchists were a little too old in the tooth to fall for it then: we were against the war, but from motives of human solidarity and not to serve the ends of Hitler and Stalin. We saw many sincere Pacifists and Socialists fall for the Communist line of co-operation on a broad front which they called the "People's Convention". We saw the Commies lead many prominent people by the nose in a futile agitation for a negotiated peace, deep bomb-proof shelters, etc., etc., and the followers of this affair believed that they were genuinely doing something for Peace, instead of acting as pawns in Stalin's game. But when war broke out between Germany and Russia, this People's Convention folded up like a pack of cards, and all the non-Communist supporters were denounced by their colleagues as traitors, saboteurs, cowards, Fascist Beasts for daring to talk of Peace while England was at war in alliance with the great and glorious Red Army. I remember those Communist monkeys insulting the sellers of *Peace News* in Kingston market place. "Pacifists are Fascists," they yelled, "it's all the same thing!" That is what the Pacifists got for their adventure into fellow-travelling.

As I listened to the parrot-slogans being rattled off "for Peace" the other night, I visualized just what would happen if the armaments drive, which is eating up the country's resources, were to be continued with Britain in alliance with Russia. These Commie school-teachers would be grudging every penny spent on schools, and they would be in the forefront of those who try to debauch the minds of the young with militarism and hatred of the "enemy" (in this case it would be the Americans). They did this in the latter years of the last war when they were screaming for a second front against Germany, and they would do so again. Their policy then was that everything, living standards workers' rights in industry, education, freedom of speech and opinion—all should be sacrificed to bigger and better armaments to support the Red Army. They were more warlike than the Generals, more intolerant of pacifism

than Colonel Blimp.

At the exhibition of "Soviet Children's Toys, Books and Paintings" which we were invited to see in the interests of "Peace", I'll bet there are none of those Russian books I have seen which glorify the militarism of the Red Army and the imperialist generals of Russia's history.

The Communist Party is actually doing a grave disservice to the anti-war movement of this country, for whenever they infiltrate into a body which has genuine pacific and anti-militarist aims, such a body immediately becomes suspect, and sincere people refuse to associate with it. Past experience has shown that it is impossible to co-operate with the Communist Party on any issue whatsoever. Those who do so court betrayal. The Communists are bound to serve no other end than the temporary expediency of Russia's foreign policy, and they do their utmost to gain control of every organisation they infiltrate to pervert its aims to this end. The only realistic policy is to refuse all offers of help, all co-operation from the Communists, for their past record shows that they contaminate everything they touch.

It is noteworthy that their present activities within the "Teachers for Peace" movement includes a demand for a censorship on undesirable literature coming from America. The trashy "Yankee Comics" are bad enough—but what about the dishonest trash which comes from Russia via the Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R.? How the Commies and their fellow travellers would scream if this stuff were subjected to censorship!

In 1939, the pacifist and anti-war movements were subjected to overtures from the Nazi cultural agencies. All that was needed was a little more "international understanding" they pleaded. Those movements who turned down such Nazi overtures, flat lost nothing by so doing; in fact they preserved their integrity in what they were struggling for. The parallel to-day is exact. If the "Teachers for Peace" movement wants to pursue its aims uncontaminated by the ulterior motives of Russia's foreign policy it will steer clear of Communist influence in every way.

Communist Support

Accordingly, he got into touch with the East German President, Pieck, and in due course he received a communication from a certain Colonel Nicolayev of the Soviet Military Administration in Karlshorst, who let him know that his co-operation in working against the remilitarisation of Western Germany under Western auspices would be acceptable. It was further offered that important posts would be found under the East German government for former Strasser followers, whose status as "victims of fascism" would render them politically acceptable. Very shortly afterwards a certain Dr. Lothar Bolz, who had been one of Strasser's old disciples and had fled to Russia in 1933, emerged as a figurehead of the National Democratic Party, which provided a rallying point for nationalist elements in Eastern Germany. The Russians, needless to say, were giving nothing away by this appointment, since Bolz had become a Communist Party member and a Russian citizen, and was thus completely under the thumb of the MVD, but he represented a link with Strasser's East German followers. Other former members of the Black Front obtained leading positions in the Cultural League for the Democratic Renewal of Germany, an organisation directed by Russian officers, which assures certain advantages in professional life for nationalist elements who are willing to tag along with the Communist neutralist line.

As a final token of good will, the Communist authorities arrested a former follower and later enemy of Strasser, an ex-Nazi named Franke-Grieksch, who had worked within the expatriate organisation of the Black Front in Prague and Vienna and had betrayed a number of its members to the Gestapo. In 1934, Franke-Grieksch returned to Germany and became an S.S. officer, and after the war he founded an organisation in Western Germany which combined neo-Nazism with a pro-Russian slant. In October, 1951, Franke-Grieksch visited Eastern Berlin, and there he was "arrested" as an accessory to murder, owing to his betrayal of the Black

Continued on p. 4

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Conscious Egoism--2

AN understanding of the past illuminates the present, and clarifies the future, so it is well to know what thought and actions determined our forefathers' conduct in order that we may learn from their mistakes and benefit from their discoveries and labours. Religion has played an important part in man's actions, and in the realms of philosophy. The religion of the West is known as Christianity and our calendar was made by the Christians so that we count the years from their advent. They who were before Christ are known as the ancients, and what the ancients set the highest values upon the moderns spurn as valueless. These two, the ancients and the moderns have a different conception of the truth, to one the natural, to the other the intellectual, the earthly and the heavenly. To the ancients the natural ties of blood were the truth which they worshipped, but the Christian must regard himself as a "stranger on Earth". The ancients, by searching the world for truth, help to make it a lie. What is known as the Periclean century was the peak period of the ancients; then the various schools of thought, namely the Sophists, Socrates and the Skeptics, worked toward the destruction of existing beliefs. The Sophists expounded the idea: "Don't be bluffed, use your head, your wit, your mind, against everything. By a well-drilled understanding you get through the world best, and provide the pleasantest life." They recognise in mind, man's true weapon against the world. They lay stress on dialectical skill; the act of disputation. Command of language to them is a means and is not yet the "Holy Spirit". This, however was found wanting as there was nothing that the wicked heart would do that the understanding could not justify, the free understanding serving the desires of the vicious heart. So one must cultivate the heart as well as the understanding. The philosopher, Socrates, contends

that it is not enough to use the understanding in all things, for it is a question of what cause we exert it for—to serve a good cause is essential.

Herein he lays the foundation of Ethics and Morality. You must be pure-hearted if your shrewdness is to be valued, says Socrates, as against the Sophists who could find a reason for the most vicious impulses. The first phase of the Greek liberation of the mind was the supremacy of the understanding, the second was the purity of the heart. The Skeptics did for the heart what the Sophists had done for the understanding, as the Sophist outlook was that the understanding no longer stands still before anything, with the Skeptics the heart was no longer removed by anything. In short, what antiquity was seeking was the true enjoyment of life, as is borne out by the view of its learned men. Simonides, the Greek poet, says: "Health is the noblest good for mortal man, next to this is beauty, the third is riches acquired without guile, the fourth is the enjoyment of social pleasures in the company of young friends—these are all the good things of life." Diogenes of Sinope claimed that, "the enjoyment of life is to have the least possible wants," and Aristipus found it in a cheery temper in all circumstances. The Stoics were for the isolated life, and the Epicureans for the moving life. They all desired good living, especially the Jews, who sought a long life blessed with children and goods, and still remain to this day children of antiquity. "The Jews" are set forever apart from "The Christians", because of their unspirituality. The true spiritual man is one who busies himself with thoughts, and aspires toward independence from material things, to "pure spirit" or "pure thought", which is much the same. Thus the Christian is urged not to depend on things, but to live spiritually on spiritual food.

EDDIE SHAW.

OTTO STRASSER Continued from p. 3

Frontists. However, it was evident that the arrest was only tactical, for the purpose of pleasing Strasser, and that the Russians had no immediate intention of discarding such a potentially useful tool as Franke-Griekische. A month afterwards he sent his mother-in-law a large sum of money from the Russian zone, and the latest news of him is that he has been entrusted with tasks in the Far East conveniently far from the scene of his past betrayals.

Through the League for Germany's Revival, Strasser maintained contact with neutralist and pro-Soviet groups in the Western zone. But he soon realised that this might endanger his alternative plan of rising to influence through Allied

channels, and in October there took place a split between his two confidants in the League. This organisation had now come into the open, and in September last, Bruno Fricke, the head of its branch in Hanover and the most influential member in northern Germany, issued a statement (reported to have been made at Strasser's instigation), in which he nominally resigned from the League and dissociated himself from Strasser, on the grounds that former members of the VVN (a pro-Communist organisation of Victims of Nazism) had been put into leading positions in the League, and that Strasser had ignored his protests. Waldemar Wadsack immediately denied these statements, and countered with a published accusation, which had some basis in fact, that it was Fricke who had established contact with the pro-Russian elements and had also associated with Dr. Gerecke's neo-fascist Germany Social Party. Thus there emerged two factions, one officially supported by Strasser himself and led by Wadsack, which leaned towards the West, and the other, nominally denied by Strasser and headed by Fricke, which continued its neutralist associations. There were clearly many advantages in having two associations which could follow opposing policies.

Intrigue and "Radical Nationalism"

Wadsack's statement immediately paid by arousing an interest in Bonn, where certain elements were anxious to find an organisation which could organise the German ex-soldiers into an efficient force to counter the rising neutralist power of the Socialist Party under Karl Schumacher.

On the 18th May, last, Prince zu Schoenaich-Carolath rang up Wadsack from the Federal Chancellery, asking him to receive a visit from a certain Feuchtnet, a journalist who was employed by State Secretary Lenz as a confidential agent. Feuchtnet arrived in Munich on the following day, and two meetings took place between him and Wadsack. Feuchtnet asked about Strasser's intentions, and held out the possibility that, if Strasser were willing to put himself at the disposal of the Government, an entry permit might be arranged, and also perhaps a subsidy for the expansion of the League. Actual figures were discussed and Wadsack said he would need a million marks to start a newspaper and two or three millions for building up a party. When pressed on the question of supporting the government, however, he unguardedly made the statement that Strasser would choose to remain in "Constructive Opposition".

In July, Feuchtnet appeared again and persuaded Wadsack to call a congress of the League. This took place at Stuttgart on the 15th July. Eighteen delegates appeared, and Feuchtnet made a speech to say he was unofficial representative of Bonn. The League assumed a federal organisation and elected Strasser chairman in absentia, with Wadsack as his representative in Germany.

Someone who likes the 'DIRTY WORK'

DEALING once again with the hoary "Dirty Work" objection to anarchism, Comrade A.M. last week pointed out that in a free society the dirty work either will not get done, or will be simplified or mechanised, or someone will do it.

The people who consider the fact that nobody could be forced to do the dirty work represents a weakness in anarchism, always bring up human nature and always betray the fact that they know very little about it.

It is therefore refreshing to hear from somebody who does the dirty work today and would obviously be quite prepared to do it in an anarchist society—because he likes doing it. So we reproduce below a letter broadcast in the B.B.C.'s feature "Dear Sir":

"I'm one of those blokes who has been a failure in life and I'm proud of it. You see, I'm a navy."

"A lot of folk look down on shovellers and pick-needlers, especially when we're digging a hole in the road. And yet you, too, can look a queer bunch of geysers when I'm looking up at you through a drain-pipe."

"Have you ever stopped to think what would happen if chaps in dead-end jobs thought only of 'upward, ever upward'?"

"There would be no roads constructed, no coal dug, no houses built and no bread delivered."

"Success in life is not measured by popularity. I'm happy in a full life of working, playing, loving, and worshipping."

"Numerous books have been written on the secrets of success and there are many postal courses advertising the only way to the top. But no one has written a volume on the advantages of being a failure."

"I've put down drains and sewers and repaired the roads. I've brought light and water to hundreds of folks and it has made me happy."

"And one thing more. "When I leave this world for realms beyond, I can honestly say that the world is a better place because of me."

"Can you?"

Barry, Glam. ELUET EVANS."

DETERMINISM

SOMEHOW I think George Woodcock's criticism of determinists should not go unanswered. He makes the all-too-common confusion between determinism and pre-determinism. The former means only that every event we know has its sequences and conditions—it is not entirely unrelated to every other event. The latter implies that one factor or group of factors control in a tyrannical fashion all the rest. One has only to refer to the list of works published by Freedom Press to see that they act on the principle that they can condition some people's activities—otherwise there would be no sense in such publications. Indeed, why write at all if one cannot have any effect on anybody else?

The science of ecology, dealing with both animals and plants in their varying environments shows clearly that human and other forms of life are unthinkable without a determinist background. I certainly choose during my lifetime, but such choice cannot over-ride conditions as Woodcock seems to imply it can. I personally know of no determinist who says that emergence does not take place. Surely every fresh combination gives rise to qualities that are not present in the individual factors. As regards tyrants and determinism, I would point out that a central doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church is that of free-will which implies non-causation or indeterminism—one cannot have it both ways. Either things are determined or not. In the latter case science and indeed all culture is impossible.

Guernsey.

BERT SMITH.

IN his article (FREEDOM, 29/3/52), George Woodcock stresses Malatesta's "indication of the illogicality of Kropotkin's notion of mechanistic determinism"; then he states that "it is possible to prove it (mechanistic determinism) logically without a hitch." Despite his intentions, he is indeed "wallowing deeper into the metaphysical mire". The result is such meaningless phrases as "human logic cannot grasp," "it is sounder to accept how we act rather than how we think," "the Will... a partially independent and free faculty," "pragmatic logic of actions," "intellectual logic of inevitability," "pressure of events bearing down men's wills."

The answer to bad reasoning is good reasoning, not an attack on logic. Systems of logic may have weaknesses but criticism of them must itself be purely logical: the "light of actual life" does not shine in this direction.

A much stronger case for solipsism can be put forward than Mr. Woodcock dees, but it is not "logically irrefutable"; nor is the case for mechanistic determinism, which is based on a misunderstanding of the nature of scientific investigation, and is not valid even in the field of physical phenomena unaffected by human actions. Certainly, "the chain of cause and effect is endless and inevitable," if this means no more than "men will always interpret events in terms of cause and effect," but that is not mechanistic determinism.

A few days later an indiscretion on the part of one of the delegates allowed the news of the congress to reach the press, and a report was published in a number of daily papers. No denial was immediately issued by Bonn, but on the 7th August a rather ambiguous AP message quoted the usual "Authoritative political circles" as saying there was no reason for explanation.

Meanwhile, owing partly to Wadsack's statement that Strasser would remain in the "Constructive Opposition" and partly, no doubt, to the unwelcome publicity, Feuchtnet's employers did nothing further in the way of communicating with Wadsack. The latter became impatient and began to ask for clarification. Eventually, in September, State Secretary Dr. Lenz wrote to him saying that he had given Feuchtnet no commission to speak on his behalf or to act as his representative at the Stuttgart conference. But when a full report of the affair was published in the *Deutsche Woche* on the 31st October, it was not denied, and it seems evident that certain elements in Bonn were—and possibly still are—eager for an opportunity to use Strasser for their purposes.

It is clearly impossible in the present fluid German situation to make any prophecies even for the immediate future; the factors and personalities involved, the complicated pattern of intrigues, bring in too many unpredictable elements. But the very fact that a man of Strasser's background should again be playing, even from a distance, a significant part in German affairs is sufficient in itself. His appeal in Germany, like the successes of the neo-Nazi SRP, is a sign of the spirit of radical nationalism that is still alive, fed by a bitterness as intense as that which provided the background for Hitler's rise to power.

T.R.M.

Mr. Woodcock's own criticisms are invalid. It is not necessary to examine closely the meaning of the statement that "each combination in the chain of cause and effect has a quality of its own..."; determinists could still argue that the emergence and nature of this quality are still determined by previous "combinations in the chain." Postulating an "emergent quality," Will, "which operates in the process of choice..." is question-begging: to assert "Will" is merely to deny "mechanistic determinism."

The final part of the article is a confusion of false and meaningless statements. Knowledge of the universe is continually growing, and the process of growth can never be completed, but this is not to say that "there are some parts (aspects?) of the universe which will always remain in the shadow"; the difference is that between "there will always be things which men do not understand" and "there are things which men will never understand." Human understanding is not human logic, "grasp mysteries," and every mystery can be solved, for what men can never understand can never mystify them. Where there can be no answer there can be no question; and every significant question can be answered, now or in the future.

One final observation: freedom and responsibility are dependent on, and proportional to, knowledge and understanding. The doctor is responsible for the health of his patients, the teacher for the characters of his pupils, the parent for the actions of his children. As anarchists, we regard the politician as more responsible than the average citizen for the state of society, because he knows political corruption at first hand; yet insofar as the anarchist claims superior understanding of the forces operating within society, his responsibility is even greater than that of the politician, who is often the puppet of forces he does not understand. How many comrades and sympathisers are accepting this heavy burden; how many are shirking their duty and passively awaiting events?

Swansea, Mar. 29. P. L. LEWIS.

MANKIND IS ONE

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LAW—NOT JUSTICE

A newly-arrived traveller at Paddington hailed a taxi. "Please drive me to the courts of justice," he told the driver. "Never heard of them, sir," replied the driver. "What, you've never heard of the courts of justice?" "No, sir, never heard of any courts of justice." "You are a Londoner?" "Yes, sir." "Then, surely you know your way to the Law Courts?" "Oh, it's the Law Courts you want, is it?" I know where they are; why didn't you say so before? The Law Courts are in the Strand, but courts of justice—never heard of them!"

—The Freethinker, 23/3/52.

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GREECE

I NOTICE that in your report concerning Greece, you state emphatically that the Communists, supplied by Russia, attempted to seize power. From personal experience in Athens during 1946, I believe this is a gross exaggeration.

Do you not realise that the present Greek Government would consider the Liberal Party here Communist?

Also it seems to me that once you admit the necessity for the use of violence, where the arms come from is an academic point. By taking up a hovering position on this fundamental principle, FREEDOM is trying to have it both ways.

Harwich.

L. WARREN.

[There seems no reason to think that Russian policy towards resistance movements—dominating them with a view to seizing state power—was any different in Greece than in any other formerly German-occupied territory.

It is clear from figures given in our article that we are well aware of the nature of the present Greek Government. Our correspondent seems to think (a common error) that hostile criticism of Communist Parties and their tactics implies some kind of moral support for the reactionary elements who tend to be American puppets.

The question raised in our correspondent's last paragraph is much too large to be discussed here. We are not pacifists, but to regard the source of arms (and the conditions attached to their supply) as academic, seems to us appallingly dangerous. It disregards the clear teachings of the Spanish Revolution, and of the fate of all the resistance movements during the war.—Ed.]

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

OPEN AIR MEETINGS

Weather Permitting
HYDE PARK
Every Sunday at 3.30 p.m.

TOWER HILL
Every Friday 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.

MEETINGS SUSPENDED TEMPORARILY
(looking for new premises—watch for new announcement)

NORTH-EAST LONDON DISCUSSION MEETINGS IN EAST HAM

Alternate Wednesdays
at 7.30

Enquiries c/o Freedom Press

APRIL 16—Peter Green
SYNDICALISTS IN THE TRADE UNIONS
APRIL 30—Mary Canipa
THE PROBLEM OF FREEDOM

WEST LONDON

A Group has been formed in West London and any comrades interested in working with it are invited to contact—
C. Brasnett, 79 Warwick Ave., W.9

LIVERPOOL

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

GLASGOW

INDOOR MEETINGS at
Central Halls, Bath Street
Every Sunday at 7 p.m.

OUTDOOR MEETINGS

Begin again at
MAXWELL STREET
Sunday, 20th April at 7 p.m.

With John Gaffney, Frank Leech,
Jane Strachan, Eddie Shaw
Frank Carlin

MIDDLESBROUGH

Anyone interested in forming a group in this area is asked to communicate with D. C. WILSON, 3 Norman Terrace, South Bank, Middlesbrough.

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