

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Laws are like cobwebs, which catch small flies, but let wasps and hornets break through."

—SWIFT

Vol. 13, No. 21

May 24th, 1952

Three pence

WORLD GROWING HUNGRIER

FOR the peasants who form the bulk of the 2,400 millions of the world's population, progress is an empty word, for the most primary factor for their survival, food, is getting scarcer rather than improving. Recent United Nations' economic reports have made this quite clear.

They have been summarised in the following words by the *Observer*: "The outstanding single impression given by them all is that, seven years after the end of the war, the economic and social gulf between the industrialised countries and the under-developed countries is wider and more difficult to bridge than ever.

"The rich nations, apparently, are getting richer, and the poorer ones, in many ways—and in spite of everything that has been done by the United Nations, by Governments and by private enterprise and charity—are getting poorer.

"Food is the best index of this. Each of the three reports, tackling it from a different angle, relentlessly rams the point home: there is less food for every mouth in the world now than there was 15 years ago. But more of it goes to Americans, Australians, and New Zealanders, and less than ever goes to Asians."

FREEDOM has always sought to stress the economic situation of the peasant population of the world. The daily newspapers are filled with news of political happenings, often with the most prominent headlines. Yet, in a few weeks, such happenings have been forgotten and replaced in importance by other equally superficial events. Underneath all this so-called news, the basic struggle of the world's peasants for bread remorselessly goes on comparatively unaffected even by the wars and military convulsions which dominate the lives of citizens of the western, the industrialized, world.

A social viewpoint which has any validity must constantly take into account the fundamental struggle for food and place it in proper proportion in contemporary events.

Peasant Diets

The United Nations' Report on the world social situation shows the effect of pressure of hunger on the kind of crops grown. In South-East Asia, for example, where recent years have shown a reduction in the amount of food per head of population, the farmers have concentrated more and more on starchy foods like sweet potatoes and cassava, which are poor in protein minerals and vitamins, and so do not make a health-giving diet. They are, however, both filling to the stomach and provide energy for continued work. From a dietetic point of view such foods are uneconomic, like the bread and margarine and jam diets of the urban workers during the inter-war period; but they do provide the immediate means to go on working, and they are cheap. They show how poverty and hunger are potent factors in determining agricultural policy and while such potent

MUTUAL AID

A TEAM of 20 gardeners have volunteered to help to cultivate the gardens of disabled tenants living on the Thorntree Estate, Middlesbrough. The Borough Treasurer and Housing Officer, in commending the action of these "Good Samaritans," report that if such a spirit can be shown on this estate it will spread to others. The Housing Committee has agreed to buy a lawn mower, wheelbarrow and other implements for the use of the volunteers. *Popular Gardening*, 17/5/52.

pressure is exerted long-term ideas about what *ought* to be grown, are likely to be pushed aside.

This U.N. report declares that to effect even a moderate improvement in the diets of the Far East, the Near East, Africa and Latin America (that is the great primary producing areas), cereal crops would have to be doubled; pulses (beans, peas, lentils—vegetables with a comparatively high protein content) would have to be trebled; while livestock should be increased by between two and four times depending on the particular animals concerned.

Expansion of Industry

In the face of this appalling picture of the situation of the world's peasants—the dumb, unknown mass on whose shoulders the rest of the world sits—the expansion of industrial output seems like a huge irrelevancy. The expansion is shown, for example, by the case of Japan, whose industrial output at the end of 1951 had almost regained the 1937 peak level. German industry has shown a similar recovery.

Symptomatic of our age is the fact that the expansion has been especially notable in the metallurgical and engineering industry—the industries of war.

Primacy of Trade Factor

The economic situation of the world can only be understood in relation to the pattern imposed by trade, by the exchange of goods

against some standard of value. This standard is always the arbitrary scale of supply and demand—providing one remembers that demand does not mean need, but ability to pay. The fantastic division of the world into primary producing peasant agricultural countries, on the one hand, chronically poor and undernourished yet increasingly overpopulated; and, on the other, the industrial nations, with an ignorant uprooted urban proletariat increasingly given over to war production, and dependent on imported food; this division is purely arbitrary and dependent on a method of economy which a majority of thinking men intellectually reject.

The stranglehold of the economic factor is well shown by a contrast. The Social Report points out that the wiping out of mass diseases such as yaws and malaria by a combination of medical research and public health policy has exerted an astonishing effect on the productivity of certain areas. In one district of East Pakistan, for example, rice harvests rose by 15 per cent. when malaria control was introduced, without any change in the method of cultivation or the variety of rice planted.

Where science can be applied, results follow. But the grip of the market system of economy makes the application of science the exception rather than the rule. Where its effects are most marked—in reducing death rates and increasing infant survival rates—moreover, it exacerbates the general problem by contributing to the enormous increases in population, in the numbers of mouths to fill.

The Wage Freeze Again

WE do not intend to be diverted from the path we know to be right," said Anthony Eden at Aberdeen last Saturday. "We intend to hold the national interest high above mere party advantage."

It is always amusing to note how those who have power, or advantage, refer to it as something that they don't really want. They accept it as a duty towards the nation. They have greatness thrust upon them—much against their will.

But when one remembers the bitter party strife in which the Tories indulged between the elections of 1950 and 1951, although we are quite sure they were convinced that it was for the good of the nation, it would look as though party advantage was a matter of some importance to them then.

For Eden now to talk of "mere" party advantage might be a little galling for all those Tory back-benchers who harried the Labour Government night after night in interminable squabble, and for all those party agents who worked so hard at the election to put the party in.

But, of course, they know the party game. When you have power you must always pretend that it is not what you really wanted. You did not want power over people, you only wanted power to serve them. It was not power or party advantage that the Tories wanted—it was the opportunity to serve the people of Britain.

As an earnest of how service-minded they were, the Cabinet cut its own salary on taking office. Churchill knocked a couple of thousand off his salary of £10,000, and the other minor (a mere £5,000 a year) Ministers decided that they could rub along on only £4,000 a year—plus their income from all the other sources, of course. We pointed out at the time, that because of the super-tax these gentry pay, the actual cuts they volunteered represented only a few pounds a year actual income, and we also headed an article "Watch out for Wage Cuts", in which we maintained that the Cabinet's voluntary "sacrifices" were a prelude to compulsory cuts in the incomes of less favoured sections of the community.

Our attention has recently been drawn

*Organ of the Merseyside Portworkers' Committee. Available from FREEDOM PRESS at 2d. (1½d. postage).

(by the *Portworkers' Clarion**) to a passage from the writings of Lord Keynes: "Whilst workers will usually resist a reduction in money wages, it is not their practice to withdraw their labour whenever there is a rise in wage goods. In fact a movement by employers to review many wage bargains downwards will be much more strongly resisted than a gradual and automatic lowering of real wages as a result of rising prices." And the Tories, wiser in 1952 than in 1926, have been putting that Keynesian trick into operation.

Now, they can no longer do that. The bottom is dropping out of the markets, and there is no longer the ability to raise prices. In fact, prices are coming down in most commodities which do not use the same materials as armaments. While metal and electronic goods still rise in price, textiles (including nylon), furniture, pottery and such home-consumption goods are falling in price. Not, however, because of any goodwill on the part of the manufacturers, but because the public are just not buying.

Our real wages have fallen as a result of rising prices—and the post-Budget rise in food prices is now preventing us from benefiting from the fall in other commodities.

So the Government is now being driven into the position of having to make a direct attack on our wages. They do not dare—yet—to attempt wage cuts, but Mr. Butler has now appealed to the Trade Union leaders to accept once again a wage freeze.

"Once again." The last time was under the Labour Government, in 1948. Then, of course, the working class party explained it all to the working class as being absolutely necessary "in the national interests" and so on. Now that the Tories are doing it, the Labour newspapers are resenting it as an attack on the workers' standards.

But the Labour politicians and T.U. leaders themselves are not making such a fuss. Even they are not quite so brass-necked as to pretend that they are doing more than make a token protest. It is shadow-boxing on the good old Parliamentary pattern, and in point of fact that staunch class-collaborator, Arthur Deakin, has already come out in support of increased profits for the bosses, but wage restraint for the workers, saying, "If industries are making large profits it ought not to be the incentive for us to go out and make extravagant claims."

The workers' favourite (?) T.U. leader is therefore now quite frankly in favour of extravagant profits but austerity wages.

So, once again, all the Anarchist points are rammed home with uncomfortable force for the workers. The same policies exactly being put into operation by different parties; the Trade Union leaders supporting measures obviously against the interests of their members, the workers either being unemployed or overworked and underpaid.

The money and wage systems so clearly work against the producers all the time—whether there is inflation or deflation—that the whole struggle for wages is a tragic farce.

It must, of course, be fought—under present circumstances. But to imagine—as Trade Unionists clearly do—that it is a permanent and inevitable feature of human life, is to condemn the majority of mankind to never-ending and wearisome struggle and wage slavery.

Now that the Trade Unions are admittedly not going to fight, is it not time that the workers began to turn to other directions? Is it not time that they began to rely on their own strength again, to fight for better conditions now—and then to abolish the lunatic capitalist system altogether? P.S.

the alternative) nevertheless, fear men and women who aspire to real freedom.

Indeed, freedom on the lips of politicians, has become the most abused and distorted word in our language. Freedom and government are anti-theses, and only when this is widely understood throughout the world, will the free society begin to grow to its full stature.

What an extraordinary world we live in, where science can split the atom, and observe stars millions of light years away besides giving us a picture of life on this planet millions of years ago, and yet we are so short-sighted that the simplest concepts, on which human happiness depends, elude us! The human species, it would seem, has developed an enormous head to contain its knowledge at the expense of its heart.

LIBERTARIAN.

FOREIGN COMMENTARY

ITALIAN ELECTIONS & FREEDOM OF OPINION

THIS week, following a long campaign of posters and vituperation on all sides, administrative elections are being held in central and southern Italy and the islands of Sardinia and Sicily. On the whole, the election campaign has passed quietly, with only a few arrests and broken heads. The chief of the police at Reggio, Calabria, has been sacked for "failure to guarantee freedom of speech at political meetings" and the Italian Ministry of the Interior has taken "drastic steps" to protect this freedom by ordering all authorities in the 33 provinces and more than 2,400 municipalities where elections are taking place to "intervene with maximum force" to protect democratic liberties and warning them that any laxity in enforcement should be severely punished. Furthermore, that they should suspend public political meetings "partly or entirely in communities where groups attempt to stifle 'liberty of speech' and those responsible cannot be determined."

At the same time as the Catholic Ministry of the Interior was ordering local authorities to defend freedom of speech with "maximum force" (what a curious way of defending freedom!) the Catholic hierarchy was doing its best to stifle that very freedom of opinion (for what other reason does one advocate freedom of speech if not to freely form one's own opinion?) by threatening all Catholics with the fires of hell if they did not vote for the right candidate! In Sardinia, the island's bishops and archbishops in a collective episcopal letter warned Catholics that anyone who fails to vote "commits mortal sin and is a deserter" for "the vote is the most direct and effective means of defending rights not only of the human being, the family and fatherland, but especially of religion and the Church, most gravely menaced by the foes of Christianity." Having told them they must vote . . . or else, the hierarchy then tells them *for whom* they must vote, for the Catholic is "held under pain of grave guilt to give his vote exclusively to names and lists that give assurance not only of com-

petence, but also of respect and defense of Catholic morals and the sacred rights of the Church and of souls.

"The vote cannot be given to candidates or lists based on the atheistic-materialistic Communist programme."

Not only in Sardinia are the people threatened with the fires of hell. In S. Italy the bishops warned Catholics that it is a mortal sin to vote for Communists or their allies in the elections.

EVERY country on both sides of the curtain threatens or cajols the people to accept restrictions on freedom of speech and movement in the interest of "greater freedom or greater prosperity" in some unspecified future. In Italy, the Communists promise prosperity if they are given power, whilst the Catholics who are in power do not promise prosperity if they are returned but warn that there will be no freedom if the Communists and the Left in general win power. In creating fear of Communism all kinds of abuses of freedom are justified, just as in Communist-dominated countries capitalist hell fires are the alternative to what is euphemistically called the "people's democracies." On both sides of the curtain, the net result of such policies of fear is the eventual elimination of all civil liberties everywhere. Already it is clear that the only criticism permitted East of the curtain is of small officials, of managers of factories and collectives, of local leaders, and so on, but never of the hierarchy of the Party or of their policies. What the leaders do is always right because they know best and they are incorruptible. Any apparently harsh measures are ultimately for the good of the people. A similar mentality is sweeping across the so-called free world. The Seretse Khama case has recently had its equivalent in Algeria, where M. Messali Hadj, leader of the Algerian Nationalist Party, was arrested at Orleansville in Algeria last week and brought to France. "He will be allotted a residence in Western France without the right to visit other departments."

In America, the right of movement—the right of the American citizen to leave the country at will—has been denied to a number of persons by the refusal of a passport. The latest victim is Dr. Linus Pauling "one of America's leading chemists" (according to the *A.P.* report) who has been refused a passport to visit Britain on the grounds that "it would not be in the best interests of the United States".

Dr. Pauling is head of the department of chemistry and chemical engineering at the California Institute of Technology, is a former president of the American Chemical Society.

He said he planned to visit England to participate in a conference of the Royal Institute of Great Britain.

In Japan, the Government has drafted a Subversive Activities Prevention Bill—which it pushed through the House of Representatives—in spite of nation-wide protest strikes. The *Manchester Guardian* correspondent in Tokyo, refers to this Bill as giving the Japanese Government increased powers over not only the Communists but all anti-Government parties in the country.

This is, in fact, the danger in the West to-day. You cannot strike at a particular political faction without involving everybody else. And one cannot too often repeat that the only answer to those who threaten freedom is more freedom. People who believe in freedom, who are educated to the love of freedom above all things, are immune to the onslaughts of totalitarian thought. Is it not significant that the countries where Stalinism has gained most ground are those countries where the people are both materially impoverished and without rights or the elementary freedoms? Of course, Governments though they recognise this fact (for instance, one recalls that penetrating remark by the Labour Home Secretary, Mr. Chuter Ede, when he said that the answer to evil ideas was not suppression but offering good ideas as

Reminiscences of Mexico

I. Background to the Revolution

IMPORTANT public events in Mexico, ever since 1830 have been inseparable from the political and economic imperialism of the U.S.A. Between the years 1830 and 1853, the United States annexed all the Northern part of Mexico which is to-day part of the U.S.A. and about a fourth of its territory. After this there was a short quiet period until the beginning of economic exploitation. This exploitation had two aims:—

(1) To buy cheaply the rich resources of Mexican oil, the products of the mines, gold, silver, copper, etc., and agricultural produce. For these products the American capitalists paid only half the U.S. price—this was made possible by the low wages of the Mexican workers and peons. The mines and railways were, without exception, owned by U.S. capital, as were the oil wells; the big land estates were owned by Mexicans and the Roman Catholic Church (which owned about a third of all the land in Mexico). But all these exploiters were united against the Mexican worker and peon, to pay him low wages, which were in the average about a fifth, or at the best, a third, of the wages paid in the U.S.A.

(2) Mexico is a very rich country in natural resources and in the raw materials to build up modern industry, and from this point of view it could just as well have developed a modern industry as the U.S.A., and yet it has no industry to speak of. And that was the second aim of the U.S. capitalists—to hinder the development of Mexican industry so that they could have Mexican raw materials cheap for use in the U.S.A. and sell their industrial products for a high price in Mexico. The price of these products was about double in Mexico. For instance, a five dollar pair of shoes cost ten dollars in Mexico. But in Mexican currency that was twenty pesos, and a peon earned only half a peso for a day's work from dawn to dusk. It is obvious that he could not afford to buy shoes, and I have never seen a peon with shoes on his feet, shoes were only for the rich and well-to-do.

The prices for the other industrial goods were accordingly, and with their low wages the workers and peons were unable to buy them. Under these conditions it is not surprising that the U.S. capitalists, the Roman Catholic Church and the Mexican owners of the big land-estates needed a "strong man" in Mexico to keep "law and order," and they found this man in the dictator, Porfirio Diaz. He gave grants to these exploiters, and for this privilege they paid him millions of dollars, but they expected him to keep law and order. And Diaz did that with his police force, the *Rurales*. They were mounted on horses and rode in troops around the country. When they met somebody on the road who was not "O.K." in their opinion, or when an employer or land-owner pointed out to them a worker or peon who had shown himself refractory, the *Rurales* went into "action". They carried documents with them signed by a judge, which were blank sentences of death, so the *Rurales* had only to fill in the culprit's name after they had shot him, and everything was O.K. according to "law and order".

The U.S. capitalists, the Church and the landowners were hardly ever seen

on their properties; they had their administrators to do their dirty work. The Catholic Church probably sent its profits to the Vatican, whose representative was the Archbishop of Puebla. The American capitalists cashed their profits in the U.S.A. and the Mexican landowners squandered theirs in fashionable places all over the world, Paris, Monaco, Nice, etc. But they did nothing for the development of their estates, so far as work was concerned. The peons who worked on the estates were forced to labour in the same primitive way as for centuries past, i.e., to do everything with their own bodily strength. There was hardly ever an agricultural machine on these estates, and very often not even a wagon or a cart, so that the peons were forced to carry all the heavy burdens from the farms to the fields and back again, on their backs. These estates were big, sometimes very big with dozens or up to a hundred farms on them, of which every one was a big estate by European standards. For instance, the Terrazas family owned about 100,000 square miles in the North of Mexico, with about 3 million head of cattle.

On these estates the peons lived in their one-room earth huts without windows, except for an air-hole, without furniture except for a few pots and pans. Cooking is done on an open fire in a corner of the hut. The family sleeps on the ground, only a straw mat between their bodies and the earth. And the family of the peon is very glad if it has sufficient Indian corn (maize) to make *tortillas* from, and a little Spanish pepper to still their hunger. If the peon is in good grace with the administrator of the estate he may have some tobacco, and if he is in very good grace, even a little coffee. So the peon can smoke a cigarette after work is finished but of course he cannot afford to buy cigarette paper, so he uses the leaves of the maize stalks for this purpose. And on special feast days or when a stranger comes to his *adobe* hut, the peon can drink a cup of coffee. Of course, this luxury of smoking a cigarette every day, and drinking a cup of coffee once in a while, weighs heavily on the conscience of the peon, for he knows very well that by this means he is sinking deeper and deeper into debt with the administrator. And these debts have to be paid to the last centavo. As long as the debt is not paid, he is virtually a slave of the administrators of the estate. He would flee, but there is his family and the *Rurales*. And he has no property either to pay his debts with, all he owns is a pair of raw-hide leather soles for his feet, a straw hat, a pair of

trousers, a shirt, and a blanket, which he uses during the night for cover and in bad weather during the day-time as an overcoat. These are all his possessions and all his daily needs. And he sees no silver lining to the dark clouds of his life.

But, in spite of his hard life as a slave, the peon is not only human, but in his behaviour towards other people is obliging and friendly especially towards a stranger. I have many times knocked on the door of peon's hut and always had a friendly welcome. Their first words were always: "Mi casa, su casa"—my house is your home—and this was not an empty phrase with them.

And then came the revolution. Like a burning match in a tank of petrol, Mexico was on fire from one end to the other in no time. The dictator, Diaz fled to Paris and took ten million dollars with him. The bishops and priests fled to the Pope in Rome, and the Mexican landowners fled to the U.S.A. The *Rurales* and the whole arbitrary government apparatus of the dictatorship disappeared, and the Mexican people could breathe freely again.

The former exploiters then began a campaign of lying propaganda against the Mexican people, calling them barbarians, robbers, bandillers, etc. The Pope called for prayers for the persecuted bishops and priests of Mexico. The U.S.A. and several European powers sent gunboats to protect their interests. Mexico had become overnight the abhorrence of its former exploiters. The newspapers in the U.S. started a worse campaign of vituperation against the Mexican people than ever before. Behind this campaign were three powerful Trusts in the U.S.A.: the Standard Oil Company which received no more oil from its wells, the Copper Trust which received no more copper or other metals from its mines, and the Southern-Pacific Railway which received no more profits from its railways in Mexico. They were all disappointed, for their profits, had been first-rate in the thirty years of the Diaz dictatorship.

Soon after the revolution had started, the government of the U.S.A. placed troops all along the Mexican border under the pretence of protecting the U.S.A. from an invasion by the Mexican revolutionaries. But the people of Mexico did not believe this bluff and asserted instead that these troops were placed on the border to invade Mexico. Which, in fact, they did during the revolution.

WILLY FULANO.

(To be continued)

America, Russia & Totalitarianism-3

Next refinement is the well-known Stakhanovite system, which was at first a quite genuine attempt to spur the workers on to emulate the more productive man, who perhaps set about his tasks more efficiently; but it soon degenerated in the hands of over-zealous and under-scrupulous party officials, and was seen by the workers to be "rigged"; for example, by the practice, not unknown in American firms anxious to fix a low rate for piece-work production, of giving the prospective Stakhanovite a new machine, space in which to work and a corps of helpers to feed him with raw material, to remove the finished product and to supply cups of tea. Less direct is the patriotic appeal, which is reported to have been effective during the war. Russia's rulers discovered the useful fact that divisions in a nation, like cracks in a ball of clay, can be removed by external pressure. But this method leads down the slope of war-scare, xenophobia and rearmament to war, which they do not want. Parallel with the patriotic line on a different level is the Stalin-needs-more-production line. Stalin, unlike "little-man" Truman, is so far above the workers' heads that there is little prospect of their saying to themselves that if Joe wants tractors he can come and help make them.

It is in fact this last approach, the appeal to the name of Stalin, which seems to promise most success, as it meets the demand for personal, emotional leadership which is unsatisfied elsewhere; equally, it has advantages for the rulers, who have been in an awkward position. On the one hand, they had to pretend that the people were ruling the country, that theirs was a democratic society; on the other hand, as a result of Marx's authoritarian ideas about the process of revolution, they thought of themselves as the "proletariat", engaged in dictation, and this attitude set up a quite conscious feeling of superiority, of overlordship. This uneasy distinction forbade them to feel like the Apostles, salt of the earth, yeast in the bread, losing their own identity in changing the mass for the better; equally they lacked the tranquil consciousness of a righteous and effortless superiority present in the rulers of a totalitarian State. Russian Communism has been called "a religion without a god" by one visitor who had observed the faithful at a holy place, Lenin's tomb. Stalin, under the pressure of events, is being elevated into a god, and providing the system with an object of adoration, of worship.

The will of Stalin, interpreted to the faithful by a hierarchy of priests! It is a dream to give us pause, and the

scientific resources at the disposal of Russia's rulers may be able to translate it into the light of day. But there is one drawback to this desirable consumption, or rather two. Stalin is a man; the "almighty" Father is not everlasting, and the prospective priests know it; this knowledge would be the worm in the fair bud of the new religion. The best prospect of providing the hierarchy with a religion in which they could believe would be to make Stalin into a Pope; the Vicar of Marx, perhaps. If this should come about, the Holy Russian Empire would be an incalculably strong power; already we hear complaints that the Western democracies have no dynamic, no positive policy against Communism; if Russia became a theocracy we might expect her to re-enact the story of Israel, seizing "the land which the Lord thy God hath given thee".

Neurosis

In comparing these two societies we will have in mind some ideal social organisation. A society may be judged by the extent to which the basic human needs of its members are satisfied: indeed this would form a criterion of the viability of any society. Materially these needs are food, fuel, clothing and shelter; spiritually they are less easy to define—community and solitude, comradeship and independence; perhaps freedom from artificial constraints on the individual, together with a way of life which will encourage responsible behaviour, are the essential needs. (This may be thought to imply a perfectionist view of human nature: it does, to the extent that "human nature", as shown by human behaviour, can be vastly improved by favourable circumstances.)

It cannot be said that a totalitarian society satisfies these basic needs; materially the sheep will be cared for to the extent necessary to enable them to play the parts allotted to them by the shepherds; but for a human being to accept being shepherded a distortion of his mind is necessary, that is, he must be neurotic, in a disordered nervous state; and the foundations of this neurosis are laid in childhood. Thus neurotic behaviour in the citizens of a state may be an indication that it has totalitarian aspects. An example of neurotic behaviour in American society, apart from the high divorce and suicide rates, is the success of catch-phrases in humorous radio programmes. Their use is partly due to the desire to provoke extra laughter, for the physical effects of laughter produced by a catch-phrase are as beneficial as those of normal laughter; partly it is a comic parody of the artistic

Continued on p. 3

Anarchism Among the Eskimos

OPONENTS of anarchism have often contended that the necessity for government is innate in man and that, therefore, men cannot live without it. The existence of primitive societies living without government has been cited by anarchists as disproof of this contention. Certainly, the existence of such unconsciously anarchistic societies proves that men can live in fraternity with their fellows without the dubious aid of external authority and therefore have no innate need for government. It must be stated, however, that most anarchists would find rather distasteful certain customs of some of these societies and we consider that these customs would not exist in the consciously free society that is our ideal. Nevertheless, in spite of this qualification, descriptions of such primitive anarchist societies are part of the evidence anarchists can produce in substantiation of our position.

One of these descriptions appeared in the Canadian magazine, *Maclean's*, for March 1st, 1952, with the somewhat strange title, "They Sometimes Murder But Never Steal." The author, Farley Mowat, lived with an inland tribe of forty Eskimos, the Ihalmiut, during 1948 and 1949. The Ihalmiut are an isolated people who have very little contact with the outside world. They live on the plains of the Keewatin District under a form of primitive anarchist communism.

After explaining an incident in which an Ihalmiut friend of his had broken the custom of non-interference with other people, Farley Mowat writes:

"This is the first great law of the land: that a man's business is sacred unto himself, and that it is no part of his neighbour's duty to interfere in any way unless the community is endangered. However, this does not mean that assistance is withheld in case of need. In fact, the second and perhaps the most important law of the land [the author persistently refers to 'laws' what we would call 'customs'.—S.E.P.] is that while there is food, equipment, or bodily strength in any one of the tents, no man in another tent shall want for any of these.

"This belief has led to a communization of all material things in the most real and best sense of the word. Nevertheless, individual ownership still exists in the camps, and this paradox may seem hard to grasp. Put it this way: every item of equipment is the personal property of one person, or of a family group. But, if a stranger in need of a spear should come to the place, any spear is his for the taking. He does not necessarily need to ask permission of the owner, though he usually does, and no direct recompense is expected or offered. He may or may not return the spear when he has finished, for

the spear is now his property and not just something he borrowed.

"Obviously the system is not abused. Used with discretion and only under the pressure of real need it has greatly assisted in making men's existence possible in the Barrens. The man who requires a spear will always, if he has time and materials, make one for himself. However, the man who needs a spear urgently takes one from a neighbour, and it is given to him with good will."

Mowat then describes what he calls the Ihalmiut "Law of Life" and remarks on the rarity of murder among them:

"The two unwritten laws I have mentioned are loosely combined with all other laws [More accurately described as customs, since there is no coercive means of enforcing them.—S.E.P.] into a code of behaviour known as the Law of Life. All of the delicately balanced minor and major restrictions which go to make up the law are flexible, and yet they impose barriers beyond which an Ihalmiut tribesman does not dream of stepping. Very probably it is the flexible nature of the laws, their openness to individual interpretation, and their capacity to adjust to the individual, that accounts for the remarkable absence of what we know of crime in the camps of the Ihalmiut.

"Hundreds of stories have been written about the Innuits—a name all Eskimos go by and which means, literally, The Men. But all other Eskimo tribes refer to the Ihalmiut by a name which means 'the strange ones', although the word Ihalmiut itself means 'people of the rolling plains', or 'of the little hills'.

"Of all these stories written about the Innuits as a whole the majority have dwelt with a morbid and smug satisfaction on the Eskimo deviations from the moral codes we white men have developed. Tales of cannibalism, wife-sharing, murder, infanticide, cruelty and theft, appear with monotonous frequency in Arctic stories, where they not only serve to supply a sensational element but also to provide the popular justification for the intrusion of the self-righteous white men who would destroy the laws and beliefs of the people to replace them with others which have no place in the land.

"Take murder as an example. If you examine the R.C.M.P. [Royal Canadian Mounted Police.—S.E.P.] reports for the last twenty years and compare the number of murders committed by Eskimos with the number of murders recorded in a corresponding numerical segment of any province of Canada or any state of the U.S.A., you will discover that murder is a rarity in the Innuits camps, a phenomenon. Furthermore, many of the so-called Eskimo murders were not murders at all, but mercy killings dictated by dire necessity. Of the homicides which remain, most are concerned with the killing of white men when the murderers were under implied or direct threats from the visitors—threats which brought

an unreasoning fear to the Innuits, for they were threats which could not be understood by the Eskimo's mind. I do not know of an authentic case of an Eskimo killing a white man for motives of revenge or of gain, but only from motives of self-defence, mistaken or real. The basic motivation of such killings has always been fear."

The author goes on to relate some of the causes for these rare murders, among which are blood revenge (of which he states there are only a very few authentic cases) and a malady known as Arctic fever, which often results from religious mania. One case he mentions arose from the visit of a Christian missionary. Mowat concludes by stating: "The point I wish to make is that murder for motives of gain, or for other cold-blooded reasons of self, is foreign to the mind of the Ihalmiut."

The question of infanticide is dealt with in a satisfactory manner. The author points out the very often terrible conditions under which these primitive people have to live. Such conditions necessitate a priority system of valuing life. The hunter is the most valuable member of the family, then his wife (or, if their is more than one wife, the youngest one), his children and lastly the old people. The author comments:

"Put coldly like this, the value placed on the

lives of men, women and children, seems like a harsh, unnatural thing, but there is nothing else to be done. Who can care for helpless old people when their sons and daughters are gone? Who but the wolves? Who can care for children who have not yet been weaned when the mother is gone? Only the wind and the snow. What can the wife feed her family when there is no man to bring in the meat of the deer? Only tears and the hard taste of dying.

"The logic of the order of death in the Barrens is more inexorable than death itself, and as inescapable. Yet there are few of the Ihalmiut who, when the time of decision is on them, do not try desperately to escape the horror of seeing a loved one go into the night of the winter. Love overcomes logic. Many families have perished because love was too strong to let logic save the lives of all but a few."

The author concludes his description of these customs forced upon the Ihalmiut by the necessity of nature in the following terms:

"Let the moralists peddle their wares to those who would think of the Innuits as barbaric and bestial people who destroy their own children. Let them preach the white man's love which must be brought into the dark, savage hearts of the Innuits. But let them keep their sanctimonious mouthings from the ear of Ootek and those of his race, who alone know what it is to assist death in its work."

Mowat then deals with the "crime" of

Continued on p. 3

THE MYTH OF PROMETHEUS

SOMETIMES I doubt whether it will be possible to save the man of to-day. But it is still possible to save the children of this man, both in body and soul. It is possible to offer them both a chance of happiness and a chance of beauty. If we have to resign ourselves to living without beauty and the freedom it implies, the myth of Prometheus is there to remind us that no mutilation can be more than temporary, and that we cannot serve man at all unless we serve him as a whole. If he is hungry for both bread and heather, and if it is true that bread is the more necessary, let us learn to keep alive the memory of the heather. In the darkest moment of history, the Prometheus will not

abandon the difficulties of their task, nor will they forget the friendly earth and the unwearying grass. Amidst all the thunder and lightning from on high, the fettered hero maintains his tranquil faith in man. In this he is harder than his rock, more patient than his vulture. It is this long perseverance which has more meaning for us than even his revolt against the Gods. It is this astonishing will to separate nothing and to exclude nothing which has always reconciled, and will yet reconcile, the sufferings of the human heart with the springtime of the world.

—ALBERT CAMUS: "Prometheus in Torment" (*World Review*, May, 1952).

FREEDOM BOOKSHOP

- Germinal* Emile Zola 5/-
Introduced and translated by
Havelock Ellis.
- The Sense of Glory* Herbert Read 7/6
A volume of literary essays.
- Experiments in Living* A. Macbeath 30/-
An attempt to work out the implications for the nature of morality of the mass of new information about the moral ideas of primitive peoples brought to light by the recent researches of social anthropologists.
- Equality* R. H. Tawney 15/-
"In so far as the opportunity to lead a life worthy of human beings is needlessly confined to a minority, not a few of the conditions applauded as freedom would more properly be denounced as privilege. Action which causes such opportunities to be more widely shared is, therefore, twice blessed. It not only subtracts from inequality, but adds to freedom."
- Some of our second-hand books . . .*
D. W. Brogan: Proudhon 5/-; Alec Craig: Above all Liberties 5/-; Arthur Koestler: Arrival and Departure 2/6; Darkness at Noon 4/-; Lewis Mumford: The Culture of Cities 14/-; City Development 4/-; A. S. Neill: A Dominion Abroad 3/6; A. Domine in Doubt 3/6; A. Domine's Log 3/6; Max Nomad: Apostles of Revolution 15/-; George Orwell: The Road to Wigan Pier 6/-; Polemic No. 2 (includes Orwell's Prevention of Literature) 5/-; Marie Peneth: Branch Street 2/6; Elie Reclus: Primitive Folk 5/-; Boris Souvarine: Stalin 17/6.

(Please add for postage)

Obtainable from

27, RED LION STREET,
LONDON, W.C.1

THE ADMINISTRATIVE FROST

BERTRAND RUSSELL ended an article published on his eightieth birthday, with these words:

"Man has survived hitherto because his ignorance and incompetence have made his folly ineffective. Now that science has shown us how to make folly effective we must abandon our folly or perish. Perhaps my grandson will see the issue."

This process, the gradual emergence of a certain ability consciously to affect the destinies of large populations, throws into great importance the question of social philosophy, the attitude of men to their fellows. Already it is possible to discern certain dominant trends in shaping such attitudes, and they are on the whole disturbing rather than reassuring.

On another page appears an article on the conditions of the peasants, the largest economic division of mankind, and the one on whom all the rest depend. Bodies like the United Nations now collect enormous amounts of information which can be tabulated and statistically analysed. In this way, human problems can be reduced—reduced is unquestionably the right word—to figures.

It is said that after the 1917 revolution in Russia, Lenin believed that there was adequate food for only one-quarter of the industrial workers (the actual figures are not important for the purpose of this illustration). He unhesitatingly decreed that rations should be so allocated that the most important industrial workers survived. Who were the most important depends in such decisions on the social theory of those who make the decision, on the nature of economy and on immediate political problems. What is of interest is that there are to-day many men and women who are prepared to take such decisions: not perhaps so nakedly a matter of life and death as in our illustration of Lenin's problem, but nevertheless decisions which affect the life and happiness of millions.

Such a habit of mind is not confined to Russian or totalitarian countries generally. It is the outlook of what are regarded as practical men and women. Such people are impatient of general problems and of such vague considerations as happiness or humanitarianism. To reduce a human problem to figures and percentages is for them a relief. The Fabians, in this country, have always been characterized by this attitude. Bernard Shaw exemplified the clarity which it gained, but also the ruthlessness, and admiration for power which go with it. How important such an attitude is shown by the way in which the Fabian Society pushed aside the humanitarian socialists of the William Morris or Keir Hardie stamp, or the revolutionary theorists. Lenin, among the Russian social democrats, was influenced by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, and after the access of Bolshevism to power in Russia, these inspirers of Fabianism, together with Bernard Shaw, became the admirers of the Russian régime. (Being practical, they easily overlooked the ruthlessness, the disregard for truth, and were concerned only with what, to them, were desirable results.)

The scientific control of folly undoubtedly has so far thrown Fabian types to the administrative top. How deeply ingrained such attitudes are can be tested by any reader who asks himself what is his reaction to the problem which faced Lenin which we have described. Many will detect a certain sense of pleasure in the ruthless answer, the facing of facts. Facing

facts easily becomes acceptance of facts, even revelling in facts. It is more a question of psychological attitudes than of necessity.

Now the fact is that the greatest figures in the history of man's human stature have not possessed this Fabian, Leninist cast of mind. Dante, Shakespeare, Beethoven, the greatest religious philosophers do not approach human problems that way. But one must not think therefore that they represent an impossibly high philosophic attitude. For their sort of approach is also the human approach of mothers towards children, of friendship, of the everyday warmth of human relationships. Human warmth and those who feel it and allow it to guide their decisions are also out of place in the Fabian Society's world, the world of the administrator.

Fabians and Lenins are not a special cold-blooded version of humanity generally: they are just the type of administrator which centralisation and planning inevitably selects. If we abandon centralisation and place the world's problems in the hands of the populations themselves, their solutions will reflect the human warmth that characterise the majority of men and women.

THE PARISH PUMP

"**W**HAT has FREEDOM said nothing about the County Council and Borough Council elections?" asked one of our readers. "You talk a lot about decentralisation, local initiative, and so on. Anyway, what's the difference between a Borough Council and a 'commune' of the sort that the anarchist theorists talk about?" "One has delegates and the other has representatives," replied our local theoreticians smugly.

The politics of local administration in Britain follow those of the central government and, generally speaking, our Borough Councillors and County Councillors are members of the Labour Party or the Conservative Party (though the latter are often described as "Progressives" (!), "Municipal Reform," "Independents" and so on), but there is a larger sprinkling of Liberals, some other non-Tory independents, and others whose parrot cry is "What about the ratepayers?" The Labour landslide in the recent municipal elections is very like the Tory landslide in the elections of 1949, though, as the press in this country is largely controlled by Tory interests, it has dropped out of the news more quickly. The great voting public swung away from the Labour Government in office then, and this time it has swung away from the Conservative administration, probably with more reason, since the most remarkable Labour gains were those in Glasgow where the Tory council was proposing to take advantage of the Government's suggestion, and sell some of its municipal houses, and in a number of rural areas where the

councils had, with true "what-about-the-ratepayers" meanness, followed the Minister of Education's directive about a 5 per cent. cut in expenditure with alacrity, and curtailed school bus services and other items from their education budgets.

One may, however, confidently expect that when the next Labour Government comes to office, it will be reflected in a Tory landslide in local government elections.

Turning to our reader's second point—the difference between a borough council and the sort of "commune" that anarchist writers envisage as the administrative unit in a free society, I believe (and many will probably disagree with me), that it is, in essentials, the difference between the prosaic reality and the idealised future. Most people take for granted the functions of the local council, the provision of schools, street lighting, paving and cleaning, drainage, council houses, parks and public gardens, public libraries, the prevention of epidemics, and so on. It seems fantastic that people don't take much interest in these things, or say that local councils don't really do anything, but the consequence is that questions of local administration become a silly miniature of national politics, and the people who have an old-fashioned conception of public service or a new-fashioned concern for public welfare, find themselves reflecting the sterile political struggle of the rival parties, alongside the usual busybodies, ratepayers' watchdogs, windbags and social climbers. Meanwhile the paid staffs of the councils may be mediocrities basking in public indifference, petty dictators taking advantage of it, or devoted and energetic administrators, frustrated by it.

In the radio programme "The Naturalist," last Sunday, Mr. John Barrett mentioned a woman who for thirteen years had been dissecting dog-fish but couldn't recognise one washed up on the beach (they had usually been sent to her with their tails cut off to save postage). This is a failing which many of our social dissectors seem to share. Preoccupied with international problems, with great affairs, and the psychology of the big-wigs or with the social organisation of the Trobriand islanders and the Eskimos, we neglect the small affairs that affect us and our ideas just as much. Town-planning, said W. R. Lethaby, begins with whitewashing the backyard, and adult education, a sanitary inspector told

us, begins round the kitchen sink. In just the same way, the sort of personal, social and industrial initiatives which as anarchists, that is, as advocates of the absence of authority, we find valuable are local and provincial, rural and suburban, in their origins, and don't belong to the metropolitan, cosmopolitan, rootless and sophisticated world of social theorists and weekly political reviews.

"We begin by demanding revolution, and end satisfied with a sewage scheme," said a Labour councillor in Winifred Holtby's novel, *South Riding*. Is this what I am advocating? Or am I suggesting that anarchists should stand as candidates for the borough council? By no means. From the point of view of tactics, more can be gained by prodding the permanent officials, and from the point of view of strategy, more can be done in developing the untapped springs of initiative and independence for making life more worth living, in unofficial local bodies, community associations, or such admirable organisations as the Stepney Reconstruction Group, or the Sudbury and District Planning Association.

We live in the world of water supply and slum clearance as well as of cold wars and iron curtains, and they are just as much the concern of anarchists. Municipalities have, with the growth of centralised government had more and more of their administrative activities filched from them and the advocates of a free society have often declared that their autonomy must be regained and enlarged. The first step to the regeneration of the life of the town or village is a concern for and understanding of its functions.

"The glory of Notting Hill in having achieved its independence, has been enough for me to dream of for many years, as I sat beside the fire," wrote G. K. Chesterton in his most profound and funniest book, *Notting Hill is a Nation*. Why should it condescend to be a mere Empire? All the same, I would have more faith in the Napoleon of Notting Hill than in a World Citizen who doesn't know what his rates are spent on. C.W.

America, Russia & Totalitarianism—3

Continued from p. 2

imposition of one man's view of the world upon his audience, meeting a desire on the part of the listeners for a fantasy-world which is consistent and reliable, even if as irrational as the "real" everyday world. A catch-phrase is generally introduced together with some visual joke for the studio audience, who laugh, setting some barren radio listeners on to laugh: a snowball process which grows week by week with a popular programme any mention of the phrase which has "caught on" in a public place of amusement will produce laughter which would lead one to suppose that an income-tax collector had been bitten by a dog and had slipped on a banana-skin. In laughing thus at a particular verbal utterance, not humorous in itself, these people are exactly comparable to Pavlov's famous dogs, who were conditioned to salivate at the sound of a particular bell.

In America the prevalent atmosphere is, in a business word, credit. It is credit, a disposition to believe that things are possible, which leads Americans to try out new methods of production, to accept blithely such responsibilities as marriage over which Europeans are more apt to ponder, to follow hopefully fantastic Saviours in the bodily form of a five-year-old boy, to fall victim to confidence tricksters and vendors of quack remedies. It was credit, unwisely and greedily extended, which led to the stock market crash of 1929, characteristically American even in its scale. Credit, the optimistic attitude to life, is behind the sense of individual freedom and the resilient energy so widespread amongst Americans. But there is another side to this freedom: it is responsibility. Open an American magazine, not the comparatively sophisticated *New Yorker*, but the popular *Satevepost*, and the most

noticeable feature, apart from the announcements of the cut-throat car trade, is the insurance advertising. Insurance is one of America's big industries, for the American, living in an atomised, competitive society, united by the cash nexus, is well aware that if some accident destroys his earning power he certainly cannot rely on his "friends" to behave as would his neighbours in a simpler society. It is a case of swim, or sink.

In Russia, fear is not merely the obverse of "credit," it is basic. The attitude of the rulers of Russia to their own people and to the outside world has often been classed as paranoid, that is, characterised by an unnatural degree of hostility to others, together with the delusion that they are the subject of plots. The trials of foreign engineers in 1933 marked a stage in this process, though this suspicion was at least understandable in view of the Western powers' behaviour towards Russia in the 1920's. A decisive event was the assassination of Kirov in 1934 by a party member. He was at that time one of Stalin's closest colleagues, and the purges which were touched off by this event lasted for the next three years as the investigations spread from Leningrad over this country. The situation now, in which, it would appear, people are almost arbitrarily accused and arrested, and must concoct fantastic stories of plots to satisfy their examiners, is a logical development. In the springtime of the Revolution it was the aspiration of the workers which impressed every observer, and this is still the keynote among the youth. But as they grow older and as the Revolution grows older, so this generous aspiration is replaced by fear: fear is the underlying atmosphere in Russia. However much it may be covered by other temporary enthusiasms. This "paranoid" if

untreated will grow worse: even those Russians who have been exposed to the harsh winds of reality outside the curtain are carefully nursed back into the right frame of mind in re-indoctrination camps, while the young people have no real chance of learning the truth about the outer world. The only possibility of a change would be the death of Stalin, which would be a deep shock and would at least provide the chance of a subsequent re-organisation more in accordance with reality.

America, we may conclude, however brash some aspects of her society may appear to us, and although there may be more freedom in her propaganda than in her practice, has greater potentialities for developing into a humanly satisfactory society than Russia, where the very idea of the individual as an end in himself has been abandoned and where society, apart from accidents, is almost certain to become more closed-in, more fearful and further from reality. R.H.

ANARCHISM AMONG THE ESKIMOS

sexual promiscuity among these primitive people. He comments:

"... I know from my experience with the Eskimos that promiscuity in the world of the Innuit does not compare with its sordid prevalence in our lands. True, erotic play among children is common, but never hidden or driven out of sight to become something dirty and obscene. . . . Women for hire, clandestine sexual experiences, the thinly cloaked extra-marital relations of those who have joined by the Church, all these belong to our race and not to the Innuit. Wife-trading . . . is a voluntary device which helps alleviate the hardships of the land. To begin with, only song-cousins or other close friends would normally consider the exchange of their wives. Contrary to popular opinion about Eskimos, a stranger is not expected to leap into bed with the wife of his host."

When a Innuit has to make a prolonged hunting trip, or a journey of some distance, "he often leaves his wife at home because of the dangers of travel." When he arrives at his destination, "his song-cousin may, with the wife's full consent, volunteer to share his wife with the visitor during the time of his stay."

There are no problems of paternity among the Innuit. It does not matter from what parents a child comes, it is the child itself that matters. The questioning of the paternity of his child by a husband is considered madness.

"Now this may be uncivilised behaviour. But it is as barbaric as our repudiation of bastard children who must bear the stigma of their parents' 'sin' throughout their lives?"

Perhaps the most interesting section of Farley Mowat's account is that headed "Amity in Anarchy," in spite of his persistent use of the terms "law," "law-

breaking," "crimes," and so on, when they obviously have no relevance to such a society.

"The Innuit . . . are only men after all, and not infallible. Therefore there are deviations from the law and there are crimes in the land, for no race of men can be free of these things. But there are also certain controlled forces which direct the actions of men, and these forces keep the lawbreaking within narrow bounds. To understand these forces is to realize why the Innuit have no need of our laws to maintain the security of their way of life."

"There is absolutely no internal organisation of authority. No one man, or body of men, holds power in any other way than magical. There is no council of elders, no policemen. There are no assemblies of government and, in the strictest sense, the Innuit may be said to live in an anarchistic state, for they do not even have an inflexible code of laws."

"Yet they exist in amity together, and the secret of this is the secret of co-operative endeavour, limited only by the power of human will and endurance. It is not blind obedience or obedience dictated by fear. Rather it is intelligent obedience to a simple code that makes sense to those who must live by its rules." [My italics.—S.E.P.]

The writer goes on to show that even when a man transgresses this unwritten code, there is no social revenge wreaked. Even in the case of an individual refusing to share a deer he has killed with a fellow, no revenge is enacted. The anger which leads to revenge is something which the Innuit regard as savage and inhuman.

If an individual persistently breaks the community's customs, he is subjected to ostracism. This usually succeeds in bringing him to his senses and he ceases his transgression:

Continued from p. 2

"Thus, while there is no overt act of justice or of social revenge, nevertheless the object is achieved and the wrongdoer almost invariably returns into the community once again, with no permanent stigma attached to his name. . . . His defection is tacitly forgotten and to all intents and purposes it never happened at all."

In contrast to this, anyone who is so unfortunate, through reasons of mental or physical incapacity, as to be prevented from doing his full share of work, is treated well. Patience and understanding are shown by his fellows and material provision made for his dependents. There is no ridicule or contempt of his condition.

As was stated at the beginning of this summary, the existence of such a society described above is proof that men have no innate need for government by their fellows, though it by no means follows that the free society for which we strive will reproduce certain of the customs of the primitives. The Innuit have obviously been influenced by "civilised" peoples, as is shown by the writer's references to their magical and religious beliefs. The Canadian authorities keep an eye on them and see that they keep within the framework of the legal system. Thus they cannot be considered as being free from the corrupting and authoritarian influences of the outside world. In spite of these, however, they still manage to maintain their anarchistic mode of life and I think we can be safe in attributing any deviations from this to outside forces, rather than to any inherent cause. Good luck to them!

S.E.P.

(See also George Woodcock's article, "In the Far North," on p. 228 of our reprint volume, *Mankind is One*.—Eds.)

FREEDOM PRESS

- TONY GIBSON:**
Youth for Freedom paper 2s.
- PHILIP SANSOM:**
Syndicalism—The Workers' Next Step 1s.
- ERRICO MALATESTA:**
Anarchy 6d.
Vote—What For? 1d.
- M. BAKUNIN:**
Marxism, Freedom and the State paper 2s. 6d., cloth 5s.
- HERBERT READ:**
Art and the Evolution of Man 4s.
Existentialism, Marxism and Anarchism 3s. 6d.
Poetry and Anarchism cloth 5s., paper 2s. 6d.
The Philosophy of Anarchism boards 2s. 6d., paper 1s.
- ALEX COMFORT:**
The Education of Free Men 1s.
- ALEX COMFORT:**
Delinquency 6d.
Barbarism & Sexual Freedom paper 2s. 6d., stiff boards 3s. 6d.
- RUDOLF ROCKER:**
Nationalism and Culture cloth 21s.
- ALEXANDER BERKMAN:**
ABC of Anarchism 1s.
- PETER KROPOTKIN:**
The State: Its Historic Role 1s.
The Wage System 3d.
Revolutionary Government 3d.
Organised Vengeance Called Justice 2d.
- JOHN HEWETSON:**
Sexual Freedom for the Young 6d.
Ill-Health, Poverty and the State cloth 2s. 6d., paper 1s.
- MARIE-LOUISE BERNERI:**
Neither East nor West cloth 10s. 6d., paper 7s. 6d.
Workers in Stalin's Russia 1s.
- GEORGE WOODCOCK:**
Anarchy or Chaos 2s. 6d.
New Life to the Land 6d.
Railways and Society 3d.
Homes orhovels? 6d.
What is Anarchism? 1d.
The Basis of Communal Living 1s.
- WILLIAM GODWIN:**
Selections from Political Justice 3d.
On Law 1d.
- F. A. RIDLEY:**
The Roman Catholic Church and the Modern Age 2d.
- SELECTIONS FROM FREEDOM**
Vol. 1, 1951, *Mankind is One* paper 7s. 6d.
- ★
Marie Louise Berneri Memorial Committee publications:
Marie Louise Berneri, 1918-1949: A Tribute cloth 5s.
Journey Through Utopia cloth 16s. (U.S.A. \$2-50)
- ★
K. J. KENAFICK:
Michael Bakunin and Karl Marx Paper 6s.

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

That Urge to Get Ahead

This article is reproduced from *The Industrial Worker*, the organ of the I.W.W. We apologise for having had to cut the original by about a third, for reasons of space, but we have cut, as far as possible, those sections which deal more specifically with the American scene.

IT'S part of the American doctrine that a man is supposed to get ahead—or at least to try to. How is that bit of the American doctrine faring today?

The March issue of the *American Journal of Sociology* is devoted to the sociology of work. Its studies are concerned largely with the attitudes of workers, and what is happening to this dream of getting ahead.

One survey shows that among auto-workers, the dream has taken a beating, but still has a flicker of life left in it. It used to be that "getting ahead" meant that one made a definite shift in social and economic status—quit being a wage slave and became self-employed or rose into the upper hierarchy of management, moved to a different part of town and mixed with different people. To-day, auto-workers still believe in getting ahead—at least as a set of words. Few can steel themselves to concede that there is no chance of them leaving their present servitude, but few have made or entertain any definite plan of how they are to escape and become farmers, businessmen or otherwise make any definite change of status.

Auto Workers' Hopes

The auto-worker, pinned down by interviewers, settles to the idea that getting ahead for him means achieving more security—chiefly by accumulating seniority by not leaving his present master—and acquiring a few more gadgets in his home. For some, the hope is to move to a better residential area, and there is at least lip service to the idea that their children will have the education and opportunity to make that long dreamt-of change of status.

Which End of Horn?

A survey of social mobility in Oakland, California, helps explain why there is so much distorted thinking on this. The survey indicates that for most workers there is little chance of changing their lot; mobility is largely within the same general status. But a majority of those in the middle and upper social and economic groups have at some time done hard manual labour. To these it seems that the normal career is their own, from manual labour to business man or executive. But even if all in the upper strata rose in this way, it would not appreciably alter the mathematical chances for the great bulk of workers. How the chances look depends thus pretty much on which end of the telescope one looks through—but the mathematics is constant.

Dream of the Slums

For a host of slum kids, the boxing ring has long been the spot to fight to success and renown. A study of the "Occupational Culture of the Boxer" points out that over a number of decades the leading fighters have come from the same run-down sections of the same cities. The nationality or race of these areas has changed, and with it has come the same ethnic change in the ring: from Irish to Jews to Italians, then Negroes. It wasn't the race that bred the fighter, but the slum area. Now the dream of most Negro boys is no longer

Joe Louis, but Jackie Robinson and the baseball field.

It's a slim chance to become tops in baseball or the prize ring—but it seems a chance for millions. For the girls and the less pugilistic lads there is Hollywood, where there is a fortune even for gals with homely faces if they can make out at character rôles. Hence the vast circulation of magazines about Hollywood. This is frowned upon by some of the misfit old maids in clerical jobs, and they are likely to parallel the same dreaming with books on success or attending Dale Carnegie classes, or charm schools.

The Professional

The cult of getting ahead takes many forms. Part of it is the general grading of occupations into business, industrial and professional. "Industrial" has become a term of good repute—maybe from its use in the expression "Industrial Workers of the World". The businessmen, who live by imposing strategic blocks to the industrial process, like to refer to themselves as being engaged in industry, and even those tripartite monstrosities that are supposed to settle most things to-day, give these non-industrial leeches the dignified appellation of representing industry. Psychologists who get off the hazardous search for individual fees on to a corporation payroll, call themselves "industrial psychologists". Junk dealers like to refer to their line as "the material salvage industry". The one stage higher is the "profession".

To define the profession, this learned journal concludes, one must recognise that a profession is an occupation in which one believes he knows what his client needs and judges what his client gets, better than his client can, and where consequently the client is not in the position, as in buying shoes, to be assumed a fair judge of what he wants or gets. It seems that flat janitors in Chicago, according to one of these studies, participate in this dream of getting ahead, by assuming a more or less professional status.

Let's Get Ahead

Our point in all this plagiarism from this learned journal is that the drive to "get ahead" is a very persistent drive, and still lives no matter how blocked off. Blocked, it assumes new forms. Don't we want to get ahead? What is the rational way for us to aim at doing so to-day?

The boss hasn't many daughters, and probably none of them will marry you. We don't know who will be the next president of the United States, but there is a strong likelihood it won't be you. "Climbing up the ladder of success, but by stamping on the fingers clenching the rung below you"—that is the accepted formula—but plainly by now for most it won't work.

The world is full of headaches and problems. These are at least largely soluble by going ahead to a new social order. Aren't those who intelligently strive to build the solidarity of labour and organise the capacity to bring this new world into being—aren't they, regardless of their clothes or their houses or their income bracket—definitely, and in a rather satisfying way, "ahead" of those who merely dam up the streams of progress? To get ahead, we must go ahead, and we'll get and go faster if there are more of the rest of you with us. F.T.

ON UNDERSTANDING THE ANARCHISTS

IN last week's FREEDOM there was a cutting from a Press review of a recent book on the Russian Revolution (oddly entitled *The Bolshevik Revolution*, which is historically the same as calling the French Revolution the "Napoleonic Revolution"), of which the first sentence deserves elaboration.

Mr. M. Philips Price said: "It is not generally understood that in the early days of the October Revolution the Russian Communists were engaged as much in a struggle against their Anarchist Extreme Left as they were against the counter-revolution of the Right." Calling the Anarchists the Bolsheviks' Extreme Left is somewhat like calling the Czarists "their Extreme Right", but other than that use of the word "their" the sentence is absolutely true. Why, then, have I italicised the opening words, which—alas—are undeniable?

Only because I recall that in an interview fifteen years ago, with a Spanish Syndicalist paper, on his visit to anti-Fascist Spain, Mr. Attlee told their reporter that it was not generally understood in England what the C.N.T. stood for, or what it was doing. He certainly made no attempt afterwards to make

it so understood. When Mr. Philips Price returned from Russia in the early days of the Bolshevik seizure of power (which is, one supposes, what the author in question intended to convey by the title of his book), he, like many another sincere man, was carried away by enthusiasm for the new society. When Russian Anarchists tried to make the British Labour movement understand what was really happening in Russia, they got much the same response from Labour M.P.s like himself as anarchists did later when they tried to make it understand what was happening in Spain. It is pretty generally understood now, at least, that the Communists were playing a very suspicious rôle in the struggle in Spain; it is no longer quite such heresy to denounce them as grave-diggers of the anti-Fascist struggle. But we may be sure that when another crisis approaches of a similar nature, the Anarchist case will be just as much understood by the Labour hierarchy as it ever was.

As for the "general" public, poor devils, they would stand very little chance of understanding even the difference between Anarchists and Anabaptists

if it were not for the propaganda of the former—and perhaps the latter. It is the most remarkable feature of modern "cold war" propaganda that the Russian Opposition never gets a mention. Yet the slightest oppositional triviality was deemed worthy of record in the war against Hitler Germany. A handful of Kaiser-monarchists in the United States, an insignificant dissident-Nazi group in Canada, any one of half-a-dozen German-Jewish groups in London, anybody, in fact, who was in exile from Hitler for any reason whatsoever, had only to style himself the German Resistance, and if he got in with the B.B.C. his words were beamed across the Continent. I remember one day at Swiss Cottage tube station during the war, telling a friend who took it all seriously not to give me his views on German reconstruction too loudly or we should be quoted in the ten o'clock news to Czechoslovakia. . . . The joke was not quite so far-fetched in 1941.

However, one is safe from that sort of thing in 1952! The propaganda to Russia is based on alternate threats and enticements as to American standards (which with no suggestion as to how to get them will probably succeed in making only a few Cossacks determine to reach New York—not as immigrants). So far from boosting up insignificant groups—except for the flirtation with figures such as Kerensky—it is considered expedient to leave the opposition to stew in its own juice. It would be nice to be able to dig up a few stories about Czarists or Kerenskyites in Russia. But the real Russian Opposition is not the capitalistic one. And it would not quite do for it to be generally understood that the Democratic West had quite as much concern as Holy Joe in keeping down the forces he has suppressed for so long, which bitterly contended against the present dynasty from the beginning and has been a thorn in its flesh ever since. INTERNATIONALIST.

Readers write . . .

MORE ABOUT ZAPATA

FURTHER to my review of the film "Viva Zapata" and to Comrade W.'s article "Zapata and History." I have since ascertained that Steinbeck based his script on a book by the American writer, Edgcomb Pinchon, who himself took part in the Mexican revolutionary movement. Those of your readers who have read the one available account of Zapata—"The Crimson Jester: Zapata of Mexico," by H. H. Dunn—will be interested to know that Pinchon refers to Dunn's book as false. It is further stated that Dunn merely collected newspaper stories and gossip and was never in touch with the Zapatistas. Considering that Dunn purports to have been an agent of the Diaz government and writes a hypocritical and scurrilous account of the Mexican revolutionaries, one is not at all surprised to hear this.

In a recent issue of the *Tribune*, a very interesting letter by a Mr. Raymond Fletcher of Cardiff appeared under the title of "The Real Zapata." Mr. Fletcher states that Zapata was "a small tenant farmer midway in the social scale between landless peasant and rancher." He writes:

"After the murder of Madero by General Huerta, the struggle for land and liberty . . . was transformed into a direct struggle for power. Together with the better known but far less admirable Pancho Villa, the Zapatista took Mexico City. Finding the strings of power too entangling for himself, however, Zapata surrendered them to lesser men and returned to his fellow peasants.

" . . . Zapata's rôle in the Mexican revolution was perhaps best summed up by Leone B. Moats, an American eyewitness with strong pro-Diaz sympathies. 'Next to Villa,' she wrote in her book *Thunder in their Veins*, 'Mexican revolutionary balladry has most to tell about Zapata, a bandit, but an admirable man . . . Throughout his career Zapata stuck to one cause, one quarrel. "Land for the Indian"—that was all. He would fight for anyone who promised that, then fight against them when, in power, they reneged."

One aspect of the Zapata movement which is of particular interest to anarchists is its connection, emphasised in a recent lecture by Comrade Albert Meltzer, with the Land and Liberty movement of the Magonists, who took their name from the Magon brothers, members of the anarchist Junta of the revolutionary Mexican Liberal Party. Perhaps one day someone will do a great service to the cause of emancipation by writing a comprehensive account of the Mexican Revolution from a revolutionary and libertarian point of view. Any offers? London. S. E. PARKER.

A MEETING PLACE

WITH reference to the letter from P.S., I should like to say that his idea is an excellent one and should you get enough support for the idea of permanent meeting premises, I would give the suggestion my approval and practical support.

For a person like myself who up till a year ago had no idea of anarchist thought but who after reading some of your literature and the paper FREEDOM, realized that this was the way of life and thought I had been seeking ever since I was at school. Seeing that letter from P.S. led me to think what a good suggestion his is, for a place where we could go and meet our fellows in an informal atmosphere. Surrey. J.L.R.

Special Appeal

April 29th to May 10th :

London: J.P.B.* 10/-; Los Gatos: L.M. (proceeds of picnic) £17/3/4; Glasgow: A.M.C.D.* 4/-; Cambridge: C.L.D.* 10/-; London: L.G.W.* 5/-; London: Anon* 2/6; Anon* 2/6; London: F.E.D.* 5/-; Glasgow: R.L. 3/3; Manchester: J.E.B. 2/-; London: W.E.D.* 10/-.

Total . . . 19 17 7
Previously acknowledged . . . £189 6 5

1952 TOTAL TO DATE . . . £209 4 0

GIFTS OF BOOKS: Stroud: M.K.; Bradford: H.C.M.; London: C.W.

* Readers who have undertaken to send regular monthly contributions.

WHY PICK ON MESSENGER BOYS?

I don't know how it is with you, but we have had a steady run of F.B.I. agents paying us visits. Most of the calls have to do with checking references for individuals seeking government jobs or for fellows registered as conscientious objectors. It seems to me that all of this simple routine work could be handled by messenger boys and they could save the F.B.I. agents for bigger and better things. —Catholic Worker (U.S.A.), April 1952.

Carnations Cause Landslides

FROM time to time FREEDOM draws attention to the relationship between certain apparently natural disasters and the methods of husbandry encouraged by a market economy. Much could be written in this vein on the theme of deforestation and its effect on topsoils, on rainfall and on the character of the region concerned. A small example indicates that the way men have to get their living lies behind this kind of destructive agricultural practice also.

On April 24th this year, landslides killed eleven people at Menton in the south of France. *Associated Press* reports that: "The increase in the growing of carnations in Menton was given to-day as a major cause of the landslides. An

official report said that so many landowners had started growing carnations, sometimes uprooting olive trees to make room for the flowers, that the area did not have enough roots to hold the earth together.

"When about ten inches of rain fell in 72 hours before the landslides, the earth was unable to withstand the pressure. According to the report, eleven people were killed, 35 injured, and 510 made homeless. In all fifteen houses were destroyed and forty damaged."

It is needless to say that it is not love of flowers that make landlords uproot olive trees, but that carnations are relatively more profitable than olives.

THE PAPER MYTH

THERE will be few more fascinating studies for the historian of the future delving into material for a work on "Popular Superstitions and Folklore in the Twentieth Century," than a perusal of the letters sent to the editors of the *Daily Mirror*. It may be a little instructive for the rest of us to observe a few of the popular fallacies so plainly exposed in those cheery columns which so wholeheartedly plump for drastic remedies every time and invariably prescribe curing every delinquency.

"By the branding-tool, the bloody whip, And the summons to Christian fellowship."

The constant appeals to return to Christianity and have a good all-round flogging to cure the devil out of everyone ever likely to commit a crime, form a constant theme both in the letters to the editors and those curious emaculated letters to a pair of anonymous old men who appear to have done everything, been everywhere and know everything—but always together, a pair of journalistic Siamese twins.

The year's prize, however, goes to a Rugby reader of the printed matter between strip cartoons that constitutes the *Mirror*. She wrote this gem:

"I have just seen something I have never seen before and I hope I never see again. A man—if you could call him a man—put a match to a pound note just to show off to a bunch of women around him. He was a book-maker." *Daily Mirror*, 17/5/52. How her pen must have quivered with indignation when she wrote that denun-

ciation of some poor little spiv! How the *Mirror*'s readers must have quivered, and looked around for the cat-o'-nine-tails that they mostly seem to have hanging up to punish Delinquent Children—who are in a different category from Ordinary Children . . . people who touch them at all unkindly deserve it (see quotation from Browning).

Now, the gentleman who burned the note was no idle capitalist, you may be quite sure. Business-men do not do those things. In fact, one of the ways in which one does become a business-man is by refraining from burning pound notes—it is usually found more expedient to burn the business and collect the pound notes from the insurance. He was most certainly a bookmaker, indeed, of a type one knows well enough in our democracy. But what had he done to excite so much indignation from a Statist?

Had he burnt anything of real worth? No—but people still believe that pound notes represent real wealth. She possibly meant to imply that the money could have been given to (stock list of deserving causes). Quite so, all them and me, too. But supposing, to show off, the bookmaker had given the pound to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He would have been thought a generous or philanthropic man.

The outraged lady who watched him might have been touched by someone's honesty at sending to Whitehall £1 conscience money which the income tax or customs robbers had overlooked. The gesture in question, however, of which all one can say is that it comes on a par with the particular tie are sure the

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

OPEN AIR MEETINGS

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

MANETTE STREET
(by Foyle's, Charing Cross Road)
Every Saturday at 6.0 p.m.

INDOOR MEETINGS

at the
CLASSIC RESTAURANT,
Baker Street, W.1
(near Classic Cinema)
Every Sunday at 7.30 p.m.

MAY 25—J. H. Moorhouse on
TWENTIETH CENTURY RACKETS

NORTH-EAST LONDON DISCUSSION MEETINGS

IN EAST HAM

Alternate Wednesdays
at 7.30

MAY 28—Rita Milton
SEXUAL FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

JUNE 11—Bill Hanton
THE VALUE OF THE TRADE UNIONS

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

OUTDOOR MEETINGS

at
MAXWELL STREET
Every Sunday at 7 p.m.
With John Gaffney, Frank Leech,
Jane Strackan, 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.

FREEDOM

The Anarchist Weekly

Postal Subscription Rates

12 months 17/- (U.S.A. \$3.00)
6 months 8/6 (U.S.A. \$1.50)
3 months 4/6 (U.S.A. \$0.75)

Special Subscription Rates for 2 copies

12 months 27/- (U.S.A. \$4.50)
6 months 13/6 (U.S.A. \$2.25)

Cheques, P.O.'s and Money Orders should be made out to FREEDOM PRESS, crossed a/c Payne, and addressed to the publishers.

FREEDOM PRESS

27 Red Lion Street

London, W.C.1 England

Tel.: Chancery 8364