

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"The deepest elementary bases of human nature have been shaken: man has to be rebuilt from the ground up. Nor is it enough to preach to everybody and nobody from the top of the tottering edifice: we must get down and repair the threatened foundations stone by stone."
—GUSTAVE THIBON

The T.U.C. and the Labour Party WILL THEY SPLIT?

AS a result of last year's Labour Party and T.U.C. Conferences, at Morecambe and Margate respectively, where the rank and file of each section of the "Labour Movement", as it is called, showed strong signs of going "Bevanite", there is reported to be tension between the Trade Unions and the Labour Party.

Some sections of the Press, particularly those of the Tory and so-called Liberal persuasion, have openly discussed the possibility of a split between the two wings of the Labour Movement. The interests of these sections would, of course, be served well if the Trade Unions could be prised away from the Labour Party. The unions are a source of influence and wealth for their political wing, and even if they did not swing over to the Tory or Liberal Parties—and for them openly to do this is still, at this stage in their development anyway, unlikely—it would be of great advantage for these Parties if Labour lost its T.U. support.

What really is the position? Well undoubtedly the emergence of nationalisation in industry has changed the position of the trade unions in their relationship to the employers and the State. Before the advent of State control of industry they were collaborationist enough, in all conscience, but since its development, T.U. leaders have joined with private employers in sharing the lucrative jobs on State Boards, and have in fact merged in becoming the new managerial class.

Although the trade unionist leaders who have done this have officially left the unions, clearly they were given their jobs precisely in order to bring the T.U. leadership well in with the management, and the colleagues they left behind can be relied upon not to embarrass their ex-brothers on the Board.

In this sort of set-up, the Trade Union Movement has reached its goal. It has stood for, and aimed at, more Trade Union representation—more consultation—in management. It has never aimed at Workers' Control, although many in the rank and file thought that it would go in that direction.

So we find the T.U. leadership in a position where it is interested in *stabilisation*. The long period of struggle is over, the interests of the Union leadership has now merged with that of the owning class, and, like every agitational body, when it has achieved its goal, it ceases to agitate. We have pointed out before, in discussing the Labour Party's attitude to the class struggle, that when a body which has used the class struggle—either in argument or in fact—actually becomes the ruling class, it comes out very

strongly *against* the conception of the struggle. This is now the case with the Trade Unions, and in a recent speech at Scunthorpe, Lincoln Evans, general secretary of the Iron & Steel Trades Federation, put the point of view of the present-day Union leader as plainly as can be.

Because of its importance as a statement of this attitude, we are reprinting in full the report which appeared in the *Observer* of Jan. 25. Mr. Evans said:

"Let there be no doubt about this. The T.U.C. has always insisted upon consultation with any Government where the interests of its members require it. To cease to do this because a Government is one we would not have chosen would be a complete abdication of our right to speak on behalf of our 8,000,000 members and would be accepting a position that has had disastrous consequences in other countries where trade unionism is the handmaiden of political parties.

"If the T.U.C. ever allowed itself to be driven into that position it would cease to command the respect and authority it now does, not only in this country but in the world.

"All our intelligent and responsible colleagues on the political side accept this. It is with our political 'Smart Alecs' that the difficulty lies. They want to carry the political battle on to the floor of industry. But they forget that political beliefs are not a condition of trade union membership.

"Every responsible trade union leader knows that a sensible and co-operative spirit is essential in industry to-day. Without it there is not the slightest hope of getting out of our economic difficulties. But it seems that we are expected to co-operate with the employers one day and to deride them the next as being incapable of running industry and completely devoid of public spirit.

"We cannot engage in that kind of dangerous nonsense if we are to retain any shred of honesty and self-respect. If an employer is a bad one we fight him; if he is a good one we give him the credit he deserves—and in this country there are more decent employers than bad ones.

"The theorists would have us lump them all together as 'private enterprisers', always ready to take advantage of the workers. There is nothing in the philosophy of the Labour movement that requires us to behave in such a stupid way as this.

"But that, of course, does not suit our class warriors and political 'astigmatics'. They still want to fight the private enterprise of the nineteenth century in the twentieth.

"The Labour Party, and indeed the whole movement, is passing through a period of having to adapt its ideas and policies to meet the circumstances and

conditions of a changing world. The trade unions are doing this, but if the political side neglects to it will fail in its appeal to those sections of the community whose support is essential if we hope to see a Labour Government returned.

"It was not the membership of the unions or of the constituent parties alone that gave us victory in 1945. It was also the million or so fair-minded people without party ties who thought the time for change was ripe but had no faith in the Tories.

"To-day we are losing their support for they are doubtful whether our solid common sense can sufficiently assert itself properly to prevent the tail wagging the dog. Here trade union thinking must exert its influence and bring its experience to bear.

"We have to stop and listen to what the facts of our economic life are telling us. They are saying, as plainly as possible, that our economic foundations as a nation are creaking under the load they are carrying.

"Our first job is to correct that, not by reducing the load and lowering our standards, but by strengthening the foundations, because if these crack our policy of full employment, and indeed our Welfare State, will come toppling about our ears.

"A rigid adherence to theories regardless of the circumstances in which they can be applied can do little good and may do irreparable harm."

What Keir Hardie said in his day could not be criteria in the different world of to-day. He would have been the first to dismiss such an idea with contempt. He had little patience with

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MR. CHAPLIN AND THE BAN ON "LIMELIGHT"

Mr. Charles Chaplin, who arrived at London Airport last week from Geneva on a short visit to London said, of the banning by the American Legion of his film "Limelight", scheduled to be shown at Hollywood and Los Angeles Theatres: "Hollywood has succumbed to thought control and the illegal methods of high-pressure groups which means the end of the American motion picture industry and its world influence. I am afraid Hollywood is going to need me long before I need Hollywood."

In this country excerpts were given this week on Television, and next week the film will be released throughout Britain.

Armed Rebellion of Kenya Whites

The Bishop's Incitement

AT the time of writing, white settlers in Kenya have raised the cry of Home Rule—needless to say, for themselves. How do they propose to attain this Home Rule? At the very moment that Jomo Kenyatta and others are on trial for alleged subversive activities, and the Kenya legislature is putting forward plans for the execution of Africans taking part in "murder oaths", Bishop Walter Carey of Nairobi comes out precipitately with the ideas in the minds of Kenya Whites.

In the *London Evening Standard* (14/1/53), Bishop Carey's series of articles on Mau Mau contain an implicit call for armed rebellion against the Crown. No proceedings have been taken against Bishop Carey as yet. We shall be a little surprised if they are: Rebellion becomes respectable when it is the upper class calling for suppression of the lower elements. We have the example at home already in the Carson rebellion and proposed insurrection in Ulster if the British Government had dared to give a united Ireland Home Rule. The parliamentary plans were upset. Parliament can be tolerated so long as it makes laws for the well-to-do, but otherwise it is a case of General Franco.

In his *Evening Standard* article, Bishop Carey says openly:

"If politicians were to try to force Kikuyu occupation on settlers, the settlers would fight it out. They would declare some sort of independence, or join South Africa, however unwillingly."

Make no mistake about it. By "the politicians" is meant the legally elected sovereign government at Westminster, and while we have no more regard for its sovereignty than Carey has, it is evident that in the present state of trouble in Kenya, and African saying the same thing would be undoubtedly arrested on the spot. It is not too much to say that the closing remarks of Carey's are on a par with any so-called "murder oath" of Mau Mau. He

writes: "Houses: wages: land: those are the three problems of Kenya. The settlers are trying to tackle them honestly. Are they to be abused by politicians at home who do not understand the problems?"

"If we out here are bullied too much, we will not stand it. Even at my age, I would stand by my hut and die with a gun in hand rather than be dragooned by meddling and interfering men who hate the Empire and hate their countrymen—men to whom the glory of our inheritance is a mere song."

The touch of sentiment about it—"I, the old parson, will take up arms" sort of thing—is clearly a call to violence against those sent by Westminster (by which can only be meant the Army—the Kikuyu are not carrying out Parliament's order). Might not the native say with equal force that if he were bullied too much or dragooned by interfering whites, he too would die with a gun in his hand? What is the "murder oath" but that? However, the law against taking the Mau Mau "murder oath" will not be stretched so far as to include the witch-doctors of the Lamb God who are inciting their flocks.

A touch of unconscious light comedy is provided in Carey's article when he attempts to be reasonable:

"I think that Kikuyu who see some land in the White Highlands still unused have a grievance; and I could not defend any Government that allowed it to continue. It should be used for closer white settlement."

However, the fact that the man is an old buffoon does not alter the facts, and one may look forward with interest to seeing whether proceedings will be taken against Carey in the same manner as they would have been taken against Kenyatta. But you may get irritable against being "bullied" with a few articles or speeches when you have taken the precaution of having a white skin. If you are black you should put up with whips and compounds . . . you know, Christian religion—humility, resignation and all that.

INTERNATIONALIST.

What Happens to the Food Subsidies

THE *Manchester Guardian* editorial on the Government's decision to end subsidies on flour and other cereals as well as controls on animal feeding stuffs, points out that as a result "people will be expected more nearly to keep themselves by paying more nearly what the food they eat actually costs. It is a bold stroke of policy, and it will undoubtedly be unpopular. But it is part of the process of waking up from the economic dream-state in which the nation has been allowed to live since the war. Waking up and getting out of bed on cold mornings is never pleasant—and it is a cold world to which we have to awake out of subsidised slumber. But it is a world which must be faced, for we have to live in it, and earn our livings in it."

One has come to expect this sort of glib editorial from the *Guardian*, since it abandoned its Manchester liberalism to join the National Press. But what happens to the £121½

millions the Government will be "saving" by the cuts? By turning to the news pages of the same paper one learns that the £121½ millions plus a further £170 million odd will be absorbed by the supplementary estimates of the various Ministries engaged in the armaments programme!

So the taxpayer has to pay more for his food (though he has the consolation that a further £35 million will be absorbed by the Army, £3 million by the Navy, and £125 million by the Ministries of Supply and Materials), and the poor whose income is not sufficient to be taxable will eat less than before the cut. What benefits is the hungry war machine.

We fail to see where the "bold stroke of policy" to which the *Manchester Guardian* refers, comes into this. The next step will be new wage demands by workers who more than ever will be unable to make ends meet.

AS we went to press, the Home Secretary had just announced that he saw no reason to reprieve the boy, Derek Bentley. The hanging of this boy on Wednesday morning is surely quite indefensible, and brings into relief all the dreadfulness of capital punishment.

Bentley was not the one who fired the shot, and at the time when Craig fired he was held by another policeman. In law, he was an accessory, but whatever the legal definition, common sense and human understanding discerns a difference between grown and experienced men intent on a felony using firearms, and boys of Craig's and Bentley's ages, nourished on the quick-shooting heroes of the daily papers' illustrated strips. Is it not the Home Secretary's function to step in and mitigate the rigours of the law where humanity seems to demand it?

Craig, who actually killed the policeman, is saved from the gallows by his youth. It seems illogical to hang his less guilty companion. The judge made it clear that he thought Bentley less guilty, and pointed out that he would forward the jury's recommendation to mercy to the proper quarter. Everything

seemed to point to an "automatic" reprieve for the boy.

Actually, it looks as though, cheated of Craig's life, the legal apparatus was therefore determined to have Bentley's. And it is difficult to avoid feeling that he would have been reprieved if the man Craig killed had not been a policeman. The Force must be protected, must be vindicated, for will not other policemen feel that they are less than fully regarded if their colleague were not avenged? Is it outrageous to feel that some such considerations swayed the Home Secretary? May not the effect on the recruiting of policemen have been one of these considerations?

The administration of the law regarding capital punishment has been almost hysterical in recent years. During the attempt to abolish the death penalty a few years ago, every man sentenced to death was reprieved over a period of months by the Home Secretary. Then came the reaction and hangings were resumed. Recently, the vindictiveness of the law its retributive aspects is a nicer way of putting it—has been very prominent indeed and has as a kind of figurehead and symbol, the Lord Chief Justice

himself. And many a man or boy receives a thundering sentence as an example to others—could there be a more glowing denial of the principles of justice? "*Fiat Justitia, Ruat Coelum*"—"Let justice be done, though the heavens fall", used to be a proud motto of the law. This recent decision of the Home Secretary's might almost bear the motto, "Let humanity be withheld lest police recruiting suffer."

Judicial hanging is a ghastly routine, conducted punctually by the clock and with full medical care and spiritual consolation, freezes the imagination. It is dreadful enough when the condemned man has age and experience behind him, but when he is a mere lad, the stature of avenging society dwindles to contemptible proportions.

Prisoners are not the most admirable of men but they are far more superior to the callous State. For on the morning of an execution, the tension among the prisoners can be felt as an almost unbearable atmosphere. And as the hour for execution arrives, the men have only one thought, "They are doing a man to death . . . they are doing a man to death . . . they are doing a man to death . . ." J.H.

COMMENT ON SMOG—Fog, Smoke & Nutty Slack

So important is the health of the baboons at the Zoo and of the lettuce in Kew Gardens that sheets of a special kind of glass shelter both in the hope that they may enjoy whatever quantity of the sun's ultra-violet rays reaches the earth. So indifferent are the people of London to their own health and that of their children, their trees and their old masonry, that they live under a roof of corrosive smoke which shuts out the healthier rays of the sun.

—ROBERT SINCLAIR: *Metropolitan Man.*

IN the House of Commons on January 22, 1953, Mr. Marcus Lipton asked the Minister of Health whether he had notified the Atmospheric Pollution Research Committee that 4,703 persons died in the Greater London area during the week ending December 13, 1952, compared with 1,852 during the corresponding week of 1951, a large part of which increase the Minister had attributed to the fog. Mr. Lipton continued: "As the fog in December, with man-made atmospheric filth, killed thousands of people in the London area will the Minister as a matter of really urgent priority, see that his department is represented on this committee and take the most vigorous steps in association with the departments concerned to reduce this appalling and unnecessary loss of life, which in the light of the figures announced yesterday, showing that there were 6,000 more deaths in five weeks in London, is almost on the scale of mass extermination?"

The December "smog" (an apt American word for natural water fog, impregnated by smoke) caused the usual newspaper sensation, but it is hard to see why anyone should have been surprised by it. Mr. Arnold Marsh, secretary of the National Smoke Abatement Society, says that two-thirds of the pollution of London air comes from domestic fires. Now the traditional domestic open fire which we all get sentimental about, as we huddle round it with our fronts roasted and our backs freezing, is about the most wasteful and inefficient heating device invented. Mr. William Johnson declares "out of every £1 worth of coal the householder puts in his grate, 18s. worth goes up the chimney over the roof tops and down on the neighbour's washing." It may be that people exaggerate their preference for an open coal-burning fire. Mr. Norman Wignall says, "this prejudice is much over-rated. The truth appears to be that practically every average dwelling-house is erected complete with grates and chimneys for open fires, and the occupier has no alternative but to use them, unless he makes alterations at considerable expense, which he probably cannot afford. For instance, if any average wage earner has a prejudice against open fires, what chance has he of finding a house with an alternative form of heating? There are electric and gas fires, of course; these are smokeless, but it is doubtful if the

average house occupier can afford to use these 'expensive to run' fires."²

Before the war, efforts were made by the Building Research Station to improve the efficiency of the domestic fireplace, not from the point of view of fuel economy but for avoiding smoky flues. They investigated the rules of construction set out by an eighteenth-century eccentric, Count Rumford, which had been forgotten since that day, and they recommended their adoption. But in their publication, *Principles of Modern Building* (H.M.S.O.), they were forced to point out that no fire-back conforming with these principles was on the market, and if you wanted one you would have to crush and recast firebricks.

During and immediately after the war, the shortage of fuel led to intensive research on the design of domestic fireplaces and as a result a variety of "improved solid fuel appliances" and "continuous-burning grates" are on the market, relatively cheap. They are highly successful and it was reported last year that they were being bought at the rate of ten thousand a week.³

Now these improved devices have many advantages—they are more efficient in warming rooms, and in heating water in back boilers, they need less fuel, they can be damped down for burning all night and are lit with no bother. They are designed for burning "solid smokeless fuel", but will burn any fuel.

At a conference of the National Smoke Abatement Society eighteen months ago, Dame V. L. Matthews pointed out that the modern types of grates and stoves now being fitted to houses gave savings with any type of fuel but were more efficient with coke than with bituminous coal. About thirty million tons of coal was available for household use each year but of the ten million tons of coke produced by the gas industry only about a quarter or a fifth was available for domestic purposes, the remainder being sold to industry or for the heating of commercial or public buildings. With many of these larger installations it was more possible to burn coal smokelessly than in domestic installations, but the domestic market at present had the last call on supply. Looking to the future it would appear that the domestic market should have the first call in order that the recommendations of the Simon report in regard to space heating by smokeless solid fuel may be implemented.

Supplies of open-fire coke are now described as adequate, although other smokeless fuels are too scarce for general domestic use. But raw coal is cheaper and most people still use it, consequently, as an account of the Manchester Corporation's attempt to establish a smokeless zone says, "any attempt to prevent the emission of smoke from domestic fires is likely to be unpopular."

² Year Book of the Heating & Ventilating Industry.

³ A list of approved appliances is issued by the Coal Utilisation Joint Council, 3 Upper Belgrave Street, W.1.

⁴ "Of a total annual domestic consumption of some 35 million tons of solid fuel, at present only 6 million tons are solid smokeless fuel."—*R.I.B.A. Journal.*

This brings us to the point about London's "smog". In the autumn of 1952, the National Coal Board initiated a widespread advertising campaign for "Nutty Slack"—a mixture of coal and slack which is cheaper than coal and can be burned in the improved grates. "The free availability of nutty slack—the smokiest of all domestic fuels," said the *Manchester Guardian*, "is a serious setback to the smoke abatement campaign." And so it proved to be. For it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that—over and above that degree of pollution we have come to accept as normal—the reason for the extreme severity of the December smog was the extensive use of nutty slack in the continuous burning grates.

The National Coal Board, through the voice of its Director of Research tells us that we blow sixteen or seventeen hundredweights of energy in every ton of coal up the flue, and scatter enough sulphur in the wind every year to make seven million tons of sulphuric acid,⁵ and through the voice of its sales department, it urges us to burn the pernicious nutty slack. Its research department urges us to use the new efficient grates, and its sales department takes advantage of this to sell us fuel so poor that only a high-efficiency grate will burn it.

The same sort of "one step forward, two steps back" policy is affecting industrial users of solid fuel. Factory owners have naturally been more energetic than domestic users in economising fuel by more efficient methods and appliances, but deteriorating fuel has resulted in increased atmospheric pollution.

"It seems that the character of pollution is changing. For many years smoke inspection was concerned almost entirely with the emission of black smoke. Grit nuisances were much less evident. Now less black smoke is seen but emissions of dense grey grit "clouds" are all too frequent. This is consistent with improved fuel efficiency and deteriorating coal supplies."⁶

A lot of people, of course, blame in a vague way, nationalisation or the miners for the poorer quality of post-war coal, but the plain fact is that although this island, as the geography books say, is built on coal, the most accessible of the best seams are exhausted. "Who," asked *The Times* a few years ago, "would not be more tolerant about dirty coal to-day if he knew that the rich wide seams had steadily become fewer in the years following the First World War, and that now the miners were working much narrower, dirt-banded seams?"

So the position we have reached to-day is that what has been achieved by the propaganda of the National Smoke Abatement Society and by more efficient burning has been jeopardised by the poorer coal which is in use to-day.

(To be continued)

C.W.

⁵ Dr. J. Bronowski, director of the Central Research Establishment of the National Coal Board, speaking at the conference of the N.S.A.S., 26/9/51.

⁶ G. A. Hellier in an article on "More Smoke and Grit from Deteriorating Coal Supplies" (*Municipal Journal*, 10/10/52).

Divided Planet

WE ask about hope for this hour.

This implies that we, who ask, feel this hour to be not only one of the heaviest affliction but also one that appears to give no essentially different outlook for the future, no prospect of a time of radiant and full living. Yet it is such an outlook for a better hour that we mean when we speak of hope.

Only if the great need of men in this hour is really felt in common can our common question have a great common significance, and only then may we expect an answer which will show us a way. A hundred or a thousand men might come together and each bring with him the daily need of his own life, his wholly personal anxieties about the world and present-day life. Yet, even though each laid his need alongside the needs of the others, this would not produce a common need from which a genuine common question could arise. Only if to those who ask their personal need reveals the great need of man in this hour, can the rivulets of need, united into a stream, drive the stormy question upward.

What is of essential importance, however, is that we recognise not only the external manifestations of that common need which becomes perceptible to us, but also its origin and its depth. Important as it is that we suffer in common the human suffering of to-day, it is still more important to trace in common where it comes from. Only from there, from the source, can the true hope of healing be given us.

The human world is to-day, as never before, split into two camps, each of which sees the other as the embodiment of falsehood and itself as the embodiment of truth. Often in history, of course, national groups and religious associations have stood in so radical an opposition to each other that the one side denied and condemned the other in its innermost existence. Now, however, it is the human inhabitants of our planet generally who are divided, and with rare exceptions this division is everywhere seen as the necessity of existence in this world hour. He who makes himself an exception is suspected or ridiculed by both sides. Each side has taken possession of the sunlight and has plunged the opposite side into darkness, and each side demands that you decide between day and night.

—MARTIN BUBER
in *World Review.*

"ECONOMIC UNPROGRESS"

The Widening Gap and the Resentful Millions

IN an interesting article on "Economic Unprogress," Colin Clark, the economist, discusses the view that far from economic development raising the standard of living in "non-Western" countries, their situation has, on the whole, deteriorated. "As for the Middle East," he says, "the evidence appears to indicate that the economic condition of the majority of the people there now is inferior to what it was a thousand years ago, under the Abbassid Caliphs; or, in the case of Egypt and Iraq, probably worse than it was four thousand years ago. There is no inevitable economic progress in this world. Even in the New World, many parts of Central and South America show disquieting signs of being no more productive now than they were in the seventeenth century."

PROGRESS AND STAGNATION

Most of the Western world, Mr. Clark declares, has progressed at rates as fast as, or in many cases faster, than would have been thought possible in the 1930s. "The Soviet world, with a great deal of fuss and bother, appears to be continuing its own much slower and less humane type of development—a fact of importance in world diplomacy, but of no direct concern to the Western economy, with which the Soviet economy now has virtually no commercial contact. In some Asian countries, and in isolated areas in Africa and Latin America, prospects of economic development are hopeful.

"But most of the rest of the non-Western world is faced with economic stagnation or actual retrogression. And even in those non-Western countries (again using our previous definition) which are making economic progress, the rate of progress is far lower than in the Western countries. The economic gap between the Western countries and the rest of the world is becoming rapidly—and irretrievably?—wider."

NEO-MALTHUSIANISM

To many people, he continues in his article in the *Manchester Guardian*, there is one simple explanation of all these facts—unbearable pressure of population. "This explanation is particularly popular in America, where neo-Malthusianism has become almost a disease. For both American and British intellectuals, this explanation frees the mind and conscience from any necessity to prepare difficult and unpopular measures whereby we could assist the struggling economies of Asia. Those who advocate this idea with the greatest dogmatism nearly always turn out to be most profoundly ignorant of the facts."

He goes on to argue that the countries which have (or have had in the recent past) rapid population increases, are all, except for India and the Middle East, countries with large areas of unused land, fertile and with good rainfall and suitable for agriculture. "China does not have an increasing population; on the contrary, the best evidence is that it has been stationary for a century. Ceylon, Burma, Siam, Malaya, and Indonesia all have huge areas of uncultivated land—likewise the Latin-American republics. Such countries can easily feed themselves if they manage their affairs properly. The really densely populated countries—India, Pakistan, and the Middle East—can provide for their populations by industrial development, and in India and Egypt a promising beginning has already been made. (Similar considerations apply in some of the countries of Eastern Europe.)"

Mr. Clark sees all these countries in a position similar to that of Britain in 1790, or Japan in 1890. "Let us," he says, "remembering the difficulties which our own ancestors had to overcome, give all the sympathy and help we can to oriental and Middle Eastern countries which are struggling to industrialise in the face of an unsympathetic world."

"We may not know it, but we in the

Western world are about at our last chance. With all our wealth, we are a small—and increasingly suspect—minority of the world's population, and the predominance in weapons which we enjoyed in the nineteenth century is vanishing. And with the widening economic gap, the rest of the world is increasingly losing hope of ever earning a Western standard of living, just at the time when, largely through our own silly propaganda and advertising, they have increased opportunities of learning exactly what amenities that standard would give them...."

"And with this will come an overwhelming demand—backed by force if it is not soon conceded—that the good things of this world should be available to all its inhabitants, and not increasingly concentrated, as they are being at present, for the benefit of a small Western minority."

RE-THINKING OUR FUTURE

Mr. Clark's misgivings, like those of other economic thinkers—for example, the authors of the widely circulated *Observer* pamphlet—seem to us, of course, a belated recognition of the attitude to economic development which found its clearest and wisest expression in Kropotkin's *Fields, Factories and Workshops*. But Mr. Clark's remedy—"let us have the channels of world trade cleared and kept open so that their exports may flow unhindered, and that they may suffer no *arrière pensée* in staking their slender economic resources upon industrial development for export"—seems, to say the least, inadequate. What in practice does it mean? The only concrete instances we can think of are that the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company should drop its attempt to prevent the Persian Government from selling oil from the expropriated oil fields, or that the British authorities should attempt to

stop the undercutting of British textile manufacturers.

But Mr. Clark does not even say this in as many words, and we have yet to find an economist who will face the implications of inevitable changes in the world's economic balance, or a government willing to accept these implications. And all the while the "have-nots" are feeling that their claim for the good things of this world is being denied "for the benefit of a small Western minority," as Mr. Clark says. Who can doubt that he is right in thinking that this will result in "an overwhelming demand—backed by force if it is not soon conceded?"

The Biter Bit!

IT is not without a certain amount of satisfaction that I read the following in the *Daily Telegraph* (January 24th): "Protests are to be made to the Home Office by the Police Federation of England and Wales about the new regulation which provides for compulsory fingerprinting of all police officers. Nearly all police officers take the view that the requirement is an infringement of personal liberty and there is insufficient justification for singling out the police service for a method normally reserved for persons with criminal records. A senior officer said the regulation serves no good purpose in the prevention and detection of crime. Experienced C.I.D. officers have told members of the Police Federation that when they are investigating a crime they have no time to search the records of police fingerprints." (My italics.)

While agreeing wholeheartedly that it is an infringement of personal liberty to have one's fingerprints taken, nevertheless, we should all do well to remember the tricks used by the police to ensure that they get the prints of other people who fall into their hands (even for the first time, and not just "persons with criminal records"). When anyone is arrested and charged, they have the legal right to refuse having their prints taken, but if they stand on this right, the police inform them that they will have to tell the magistrate of that fact and that they will ask for a remand in custody so that they will be legally entitled to take the fingerprints, by force if necessary. So

that the result is the same in the end! Again, the police are quick enough to call on the population of a town or other area (usually the males) to voluntarily give their fingerprints, when they are baffled in a murder hunt or other serious crime. Refusal by any individual on principle would very easily look suspicious, even in the case of a perfectly innocent person.

In view of the recent crop of cases, featuring policemen who, singly or collectively, have appeared in the dock on charges of breaking and entering premises, stealing or receiving goods, all of which they are supposed to be guarding, it must cause some surprise to readers to see that "experienced officers of the C.I.D. have told members of the Police Federation that when they are investigating a crime they have no time to search the records of police fingerprints". The detectives have plenty of time for poking their noses into the minutest private details of the ordinary citizen's life when they are investigating! What is sauce for the goose...!

The very uniqueness of an individual's fingerprints is a well-known fact and there is the danger that the fingerprinting system will be extended, very much as in America, where records of about a third of the population are available for "crime investigators" should they so desire to use them. It is the duty of the individual to oppose, by word and deed, this pernicious practice. It should certainly not be left to the Police Federation to make the protest! T.W.B.

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SPRING CLEANING ANARCHISM

IS anarchism, the denial of the State, of the right to rule, a merely negative doctrine? Should it not put forward also a positive contribution to political, social and economic theory? Such questions have periodically been asked since the time when the parliamentary Marxists of the eighties and nineties first accused anarchism of being a negative conception.

In a recent issue of FREEDOM (Jan. 17th, 1953, "For a Reevaluation of Ideas," by R. A. M. Gregson), a correspondent raises these issues again, and makes a plea for "re-capitulation, for a re-evaluation of basic ideas, and evolving new ones". Destructive criticism, he wrote, is easier than the expression of positive beliefs and proposals. "The literature of the movement . . . contents itself with protestations on the one hand and yearnings after past revolutionaries on the other."

How does such criticism apply to FREEDOM? To keep ideas up to date is an important function of a paper such as this, and it is always important to be on guard against the hardening of ideas into dogma, or of their losing their significance through mere repetition. To do so is all the more necessary since fundamental anarchist ideas have not changed much over the years. Much that Godwin wrote over a century and a half ago could not usefully be added to to-day. Readers of Max Stirner are astonished by his flashes of psychological insight that seem far ahead of his time. Our correspondent wrote of Bakunin and Kropotkin as though they were a little out of date, yet again and again Bakunin astonishes one with his prophetic vision of the age of world wars his grasp of the fundamental determinants of history, while Kropotkin was never so widely read, or so carefully thought over than in sociological circles to-day.

Yet Bakunin's and Kropotkin's ideas will only be really fruitful if they are creatively and imaginatively applied to the problems of our own age. It will then be found that traditional anarchist conceptions do not require much, if any, revision. FREEDOM has always found itself on orthodox and traditional ground—see, for example, V.R.'s critique of the Spanish Revolution, recently concluded; or the anti-war stand of *War Commentary*. When we think our way through a particular situation, we usually find that we arrive at a traditional anarchist conclusion. But it is important that we should continue to think through these problems and not just apply the anarchist yardstick like any churchman or party-liner.

It is important, too, to remember that criticism, even of the most destructive kind, shows the standpoint of the critic and therefore has its positive side. Anarchism cannot attack existing institutions without revealing its own approach to the problems enshrined—and, too often, fossilized—within such institutions.

But there seems to be a danger also in our correspondent's own outlook. Calling for the attempt "to produce the economics of Anarchy," he declares that "there seems to be no Keynes of syndicalism". And, later, he points to rapid advances in technology in the light of which "the theories of Kropotkin on productive capacity need considerable modification".

The danger here lies in anarchists taking too much for granted current

technological situations. Syndicalism is surely a mode of struggle suited to an industrial age, a means to achieve the revolution. But once achieved, revolutionary economics will not be the economics of syndicalism, but those of anarchism. Modern technological "advances" have been made to meet the new needs of capitalist production, and have taken very little account of the needs of the workers, the producers. Marxism, it could be said, is interested in production. Anarchism in producers. Kropotkin's ideas, as expressed, for example, in *Fields, Factories and Workshops*, are rooted in the needs of man as worker, and as consumer; as artist and craftsman, and as husband and father as well. Anarchists ought to be most careful not to mistake modern technological advances for human progress.

It is necessary and right for an anarchist paper to consider "working hypotheses reviewed constantly in the light of social change": but specifically anarchist ideas start from a radically different conception of social life of economic organisation and of human incentives. Much that seems progressive and practical to-day will require radical remodelling when the social revolution has swept away many of the institutions which confer the appearance of practicality upon them.

It is when we come to consider these basic anarchist foundations that we find so much solid guidance in Kropotkin and Bakunin. But we should be but poor followers if we did not work our way through to their conclusions without adulation, and be prepared to add our own constructions as well.

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THE COMMUNIST MENTALITY

(Continued from last week.)

The Militant: The First Phase

(1) The origin of the international Communist movement lies in the Russian Social Democratic Party, whose founders were on the one hand Russians of bourgeois and aristocratic origin and on the other Jewish intellectuals. Marxist Socialism in Russia did not arise from the rebellion of the working class against the material conditions in which it lived, but from a revolt of aristocratic and bourgeois intellectuals against their social milieu. It was not their material circumstances which drove them to revolution. Besides Lenin did not attribute too much attention either to hard material conditions as a generating force of revolutionary spirit nor did he consider the revolutionary sentiment inherent in the working class. In his book, *What To Do*, he declared frankly that the working class left to itself could not rise above the trade union spirit. Nor did Lenin wait for the industrial development of Russia to make a revolution. In Russia, Socialist doctrine preceded industrial development instead of being its consequence, and then the revolution with Socialist tendencies, was carried out without waiting for the formation of the material basis foreseen by Marxist teaching.

(2) Having become rebels—which was not the case with their Socialist colleagues in the West—these Russian intellectuals pushed their revolt to its extreme point—Bolshevism. It is fairly easy to draw the psychological profile of Bolshevik leaders—and of Communists in general—until the end of the "heroic" period, that is to say, up to the nineteen-twenties. They were men with a fighting instinct. They embraced the Marxist cause less for its doctrine, less to raise the workers' standard of living than because they found there above all a field of action where they could use their revolutionary energies. Marxism was to give satisfaction to the supreme desire of their life: to fight. And often when that desire was not quenched they did not hesitate to go to the other extreme—Fascism. This was the case of the former Left-wing Italian Socialist, Mussolini, of the French Communist leader, Doriot, and of thousands of German workers, Socialists and Communists, in the years 1930-1933.

(3) Moreover, these revolutionaries were animated by an irresistible faith. At the beginning of this century political fanaticism no longer existed. Politics had become a combination of petty manoeuvres and business or something similar. Marxism, not in its theoretical form but in its everyday activities, became for the first time a real creed which expressed itself in revolutionary action.

The Second Phase

When the hour to build Communism in Russia came, these rebels and fanatics had to face a new situation. The fighting instinct was no longer the basic quality demanded when one had to proceed to building up a system which like any other provided ammunition for many critics. It is easier to maintain faith while awaiting an ideal solution than in an actual régime whose shortcomings are obvious. A first decisive line of division took place among the Communist leaders: between rebels who, unable to agree with the new reality and defer to it, become victims; and the opportunists who succeed. Until then opportunism was considered as a specific trait of the Right, now for the first time it became a characteristic of the revolutionary extreme Left. And the non-conformists of the bourgeois society became the conformists of the Soviet one. The examples Silone gives in his memoirs are revealing on this point.

Between rebellion and submission there was one stage: opportunism. Especially among those who did not participate in the struggle from its very beginning. During the revolution in 1917 and the Russian Civil War, I. Ehrenburg spent his time writing against the Bolsheviks: to-day he is one of the ornaments of Soviet literature. In 1917 Zaslavski accused Lenin of being an agent paid by Germany and in return the latter called him a "rascal" in his newspaper, *Pravda*. To-day, however, it is Zaslavski who edits Lenin's newspaper. Marcel Cachin was, in 1914, a "social patriot" and in 1917 wrote articles against the Bolsheviks. To-day he is the only founder of the French C.P. who has remained in its ranks. He has survived all the purges.

The Ideal Communist

This curious mixture of self-sacrifice and of acceptance of all the ignominies of Stalinist policy have made the Communist quite a new figure in modern history. The true Communist is above all a man who has broken once and for all with the non-Communist world. Communists are, according to them-

selves, those who march in the direction of history. Instead of the divine absolute they adopt the historical one. Once engaged on this road they see no other solution except to continue till the end. As soon as this logic is adopted, the Communist mode of behaviour and even of thinking seems no longer denuded of sense. Let us take two examples of this Stalinist logic.

First, every opposition ends up in treason. That was the reason given for the condemnation of the Bolshevik Old Guard. It is evident that Trotsky, Bukharin and the others were not agents of Hitler or of the Mikado. But it is clear on the other hand that those who supported the Trotskyist, Bukharinist, etc., point of view and who escaped Stalin's liquidation became his real enemies ready to fight him to death like all his other enemies. Historical irony has shown that those who fighting Stalin in the past placed themselves on the Communist Left, once detached from the monolithic Communist bloc ceased to be "Leftish" but were found in the forefront of the struggle against the U.S.S.R. Thus, according to Communists, it is better that they should immediately undergo the fate of Kostov and Rayk than to be allowed to continue their activities.

The other example concerns the revision of the Marxist-Lenin-Stalinist doctrine. According to the Stalinist logic every revisionism ends up by becoming anti-Marxist and anti-Stalinist. Consequently, the only one who has the right to bring about theoretical modifications is Stalin himself. Against all the others, doctrine, strategy, tactics and practice. It is impossible to be in favour of the U.S.S.R. without approving, for example, Lysenko's biological theories.

The Socialists seem to have concluded an eternal pact of friendship with defeat. At all the decisive moments of modern history they kept quiet or acted in the wrong way, i.e., in 1914, 1918-20, 1929, 1933. The Communists on the other hand, seized their historic opportunity: sometimes they won it as in Russia (1917), sometimes they lost it as in Germany or even lost the first round as in China (1927), but won the second in 1948.

The Communist logic is different from that of the non-Communist world. Their criticisms are not the same. Here, too, those who did not bend under the Stalinist rigidity were eliminated. At the beginning of the international Communist movement, 1917-1927, one saw from time to time a Communist leader react in ways customary in political life. When Paul Levy, leader of the German C.P. judged the insurrectionary action in 1921 inopportune, he said so frankly. Later, these criticisms became more and more rare and when after this war the German Republic on the Volga was

erased from the map by a simple administrative decree, foreign Communists made not a single protest.

Summary

In short, the characteristics of the true Communist are: (1) He must not admit, even to himself, any contradictions. He who begins to show signs of them, becomes suspect and is in danger of being eliminated, either politically if he is lucky enough to live in a non-Communist State, or physically if he is under a Communist régime. What seems a contradiction according to our point of view is not so according to the Communist. Everybody noticed in 1950 a great contradiction in the Communist camp which at the same time launched the notorious "peace campaign" and began the war in Korea. But no Communist left the ranks of the Party because of this contradiction which, according to our logic, seems flagrant.

(2) The Communist must not allow himself to have an uneasy conscience. A non-Communist has rightly an uneasy conscience when it comes to adopting an attitude towards Communism. If he hits out he is inconsistent with the principles which he proclaims: if he proclaims; if he vacillates, he allows the destruction of all he cherishes. But the Communists who knew how to accept the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939 accept in advance any C.P. volte-face.

(3) The Communist knows no sentiments except in the service of his cause. When the Greek Communist Belyannis was shot, the noblest sentiments were evoked. Never will a Communist accept the view that anti-Communists are capable of acting from noble motives.

(4) The Communist is by definition intolerant. Since free discussion leads to doubt, it is better to suppress it. Besides, it is impossible for both the Communists and their opponents because the same words have a different meaning.

For the Communist the individual does not count, for the Cause is everything. The Communists are the instruments of history; he who acts against them commits a crime against history. It is therefore better—according to them—to punish quickly and radically since it is not an affair of sentiment but a surgical operation. A man or a class condemned by history must disappear.

These characteristics are to be found more among the leaders than among the rank-and-file militants. Yet this fact is all the more important since the leaders direct the movement while the militants by climbing up the C.P. hierarchy acquire the mentality of the leaders. Even when one finds among the rank-and-file militants a dose of faith, idealism and heroism, one must point out that these qualities are not values in themselves. It is only their use which decides whether they are positive or negative.

Birth Control Propaganda

"GOD is not an external despot, or a Sultan in disguise," said Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Vice-President of India, scholar, philosopher, and revered spiritual leader, in his opening speech to the Third International Planned Parenthood Conference held in Bombay in November. He dismissed as spurious the argument that birth control interfered with nature or opposed the will of God. "What is civilisation? Is it not progressive control of nature? To combat disease, pestilence . . . prolong the span of life, all these mean a fight against the drift of nature. Abstinence is in essence a defiance of the edict of nature. Children that might have been normally born or unborn because of one's abstinence. Intelligence is a divine gift, and it is up to us to use it in furtherance of social happiness and individual development." His words were underlined by the plain-spoken Dr. Kan Majima, President of the Japan Birth Control League, who said, "in a country like Japan where there are but very limited natural resources and the area is also limited, the people cannot afford to spend life idly fooling with old taboos, muddling with useless customs and traditions and with misplaced sentimentalism." Dr. Yoshio Koya, Director, Institute of Public Health, Tokyo, said that it is a tragic fact that there are more than a million abortions a year registered in Japan.

In this real but truly spiritual atmosphere it is not surprising that the Conference, attended by five hundred delegates from fourteen nations, was an enormous success and ended its deliberation by bringing to birth the first full-scale organisation for spreading the freedom of choice of birth control to the human family everywhere. The provisional International Committee on Planned Parenthood now gives way to

The International Planned Parenthood Federation, which will have as its first joint presidents, Lady Rama Rau, and Mrs. Margaret Sanger, of the U.S.A. It will have three regional offices: one for Asia will be in India, for Europe in London and for North America in New York. It is planned to establish other regional offices at the appropriate moment in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Western Pacific and Latin America. The objectives of the new organisation will cover research and dissemination of information, agitation for inclusion of family planning institutes in the national health programmes of all countries. The Conference aims to see every country imparting birth control information to 80 per cent. of its women in the next ten years.

Readiness of Rural People for Birth Control

The widely held idea that illiterate villagers are uninterested in birth control, and would not take the trouble to practice it, was one of the myths evaporated at this Conference. The director of the United Nations Office for Population Studies in New Delhi reported that 60 per cent. of the urban population and 40 per cent. of rural dwellers interviewed were interested in birth control in Mysore and in other areas the percentage rose as high as 70. A social worker in a village in Mysore reported that two peasant men walked eighty miles to consult her on how to limit their families. Pathetic stories were told by workers in India's 200 birth control clinics of the desperation of impoverished Indian mothers and fathers to seek information. The Japanese delegates reported the same verified facts about the eagerness of their peasant population for the same help.

—Bulletin of International Planned Parenthood Committee.

THE flood of correspondence upon Herbert Read's extraordinary action has beautifully illustrated a point that A.M. (himself one of the correspondents) recently brought out in an article on "Speaking and Writing"—that we get far more correspondence in criticism than we ever do in approval.

I don't recall any of the correspondents writing in after the highly successful meeting that Freedom Press organised last March in protest against the political trials in Spain, but most of them must have known that Read was of considerable help in getting the outstanding panel of speakers we had there. No congratulations appeared then, however; no public approval was shown. Nor do I recall any reader's comments upon the "Postscript to Posterity" by Herbert Read that FREEDOM published in its issue of March 1, 1952. But the majority of comrades, I'm sure, approved of it.

What is it that makes us take for granted the things a person does of which we approve, but makes us get so heated when he steps out of line? Isn't the real reason for all the criticism of Read, the feeling that he has let us down? He has let us down—isn't it that which upsets us most? He has put us in an embarrassing position. How are we going to face the sneers of the Socialists and other enemies of Anarchism now?

The motive for this attitude is very obviously exactly the same as that which governed Read's own decision—sheer self interest! We think he would have served us better by refusing the knighthood; he thinks he serves himself better by accepting it.

Where I should like to step into the controversy, however, is to say that Read would have served himself better if he had simply said that he was looking after his own idea of his own interest, than to try and justify it by saying that since he has been compromising in so many things for so long, one more doesn't make any difference, and we are all just as bad anyway.

Read knows well enough that Anarchists do not accept the protection of the State's armed forces; he stood in the witness box at the Old Bailey when four of us were on trial (myself among them) on charges of disaffection of the Forces—in other words, of trying to make the Forces stop protecting us against our will!

The distinction, however, between bearing something which is forced upon us against our will, and accepting something which it is in our power to refuse, has already been made. What the comrades have to accept, with as good grace as possible, is that, for Herbert Read, his position as an Anarchist is less important than his position on the Arts Council, the British Council, the Council for Industrial Design, the Institute of Contemporary Arts and the other interests which occupy his time and attention.

For his activity in these bodies—and I have always had respect, and still have, for his revolutionary and eclectic approach to the arts and their relationship to life—his new honour may be of use. In his work for Anarchism, it clearly does more harm than good, for, from the Anarchist point of view, it shows weakness and inconsistency.

Will They Split? Continued from p. 1

those who thought that politics had less to do with practical realities than social theories."

Well, there it is. The sell-out neatly set out and explained away. The decent employers must be given all the credit as well as all the profit, and the millions of industrial workers must be kept down in order to persuade a million middle-class floating voters that the Labour Party itself is respectable and dull enough, reactionary and capitalist enough, to be trusted with power again.

Now this doesn't look like a split. It means that the leadership of the T.U.C. is prepared to sell out its membership for the sake of stabilising its own position within capitalism, strengthening that capitalism, and in the interest of getting the Labour Party back in power next time. The disagreement really lies with what Evans calls "the Smart Ales"—those who "want to carry the political battle on to the floor of industry". These are the people in the Labour Party—and the Bevanites are among them—who realise that the rank and file, in the Party and in the Unions, are getting restive and unless the Party puts up a show of being militant, it is going to lose their support. But Lincoln Evans obviously thinks that he can rely upon loyalty, the big stick and doubletalk to keep the rank and file in order. And, unfortunately, he's probably right.

What Evans' statement, and the present attitude of the T.U.C., do show, however, is that the trade unions to-day are, more strongly than ever, identifying themselves with the State. And they don't really care whether the governing Party is Labour or Conservative. They are the Labour Front, the disciplinary organs for keeping the workers in order. They are the machinery for controlling the workers in the interests of the State.

And as the 20th century State develops, taking to itself more and more functions in the control of industry, so will the position of the T.U. Commissars strengthen, and what split there is will always be away from the Party in Opposition and towards support for the Party in power. So, at the moment, the most that can be said about a split is that there is a divergence of interest between the Unions and the Labour Party. The Party wants to go militant to revive its supporters to help it back to power; the Unions are quite satisfied with things as they are and just want to stay put with no disturbances.

I should have liked to have gone through Evans' speech, commenting upon each point. But it would have taken too long and is in any case unnecessary. Every reader of FREEDOM will be able to do that for himself, for from a militant working-class point of view, the arguments are plain. P.S.

"Titles of Honour"

Here we come on to the original (perhaps in more ways than one!) editorial, where J.H. expressed the hope that perhaps some good will come out of Read's action. I can't see it myself, if good for the Anarchist movement is hoped for. No more force and authority in the expression of Anarchism will be given to Sir Herbert than was accorded to plain Mr. Read—except among those who will be impressed by the knight when they hadn't time for the man. And I don't think we are very interested in filling our ranks with people like that. Nor, incidentally with those who come and go purely on the strength of our attitude to individuals.

The point that such honours are awarded on the recommendation of one's colleagues is certainly true. But surely it is the respect of those colleagues that gives strength to Read's work and not

the actual acceptance of the title. I should have thought, in fact, that Read's colleagues would respect him more, knowing his social views, if he had refused the title instead of accepting it.

Finally, although it can be said that Read's honour has been given him for his cultural activities and not for more direct services to the State, I should like to know by what right the State claims the power to honour individuals for work in Literature? The main function of the State in respect of Literature is in censorship. Every State shows itself contemptuous of literary values when they conflict with its moral or legal codes. The State that dishes out awards "for Literature" is the same reactionary institution that banned *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and burned *Ulysses*. It would have been an act of solidarity to all the fine writers of the past and the present

who have been and are being persecuted and banned by their various States if Herbert Read had spurned the overtures by the British State.

However, he did not do so, and I must express my disappointment. But what it really means is that we can now no longer use Read as we used to do. He has done us a dis-service, but have we any right to demand anything else? We have no Party line; Read was never a member of any Anarchist Group, or had any say in the moulding of Anarchist policy except through his writings, although most of us were pleased that he was associated with us.

The ideas of Anarchism do not suffer because of his action. If anything, it rather proves the Anarchist point about the weakening effect of position and privilege. That is all. P.S.

★

JOHN HEWETSON's remarks on the "Sir Herbert" business surely call for a reply.

He says "(Read's) critics might well read his articles written during the Spanish war in *Spain and the World*. These comprise one book review, two theoretical articles, a poem relating to Spain, and the translation of Berneri's *Credo*. Without belittling these five articles, it seems to me that Ethel Mannin (who appears among the "critics") is a better instance of the value of a writer to the libertarian movement at such a time.

As regards civil liberties, J.H., too, reserves the right at times to criticise others who also protested at the sedition trials. This has always been recognised when public figures supported such specific issues.

It is surely unfair to put such an obviously highly individual point of view as an editorial and then stigmatise the inevitable crop of replies as a "witch-hunt". While, if previous criticism had not been suppressed, the suggestion that at the first sign of disagreement Read was to be "thrown over" could not have been made. A.M.

★

SINCE J.H. has assumed complete responsibility for the editorial "Titles of Honour" (FREEDOM, 17/1/53), I feel justified, as a member of the Editorial Board in making my own position clear in the present controversy. The more so since the correspondence that has since been published in FREEDOM has so much the spirit of the witch-hunt behind it, that I wish to be disassociated from it much more than from the points of disagreement I have with J.H.'s editorial and subsequent comments.

To my mind, the anarchist position to titles was stated quite clearly. Where I cannot agree with J.H. is in his assumption that titles for "non-governmental activity", as he puts it, are not motivated by governmental or national considerations, and that titles might help people such as Herbert Read to further the causes they have championed in the arts and in literature. But I think J.H. is motivated by generous sentiments, which should be held by all anarchists, when he refuses to write-off Herbert Read's valuable contributions to anarchist thought and his support of initiatives connected with civil liberties in the past, and when he expresses the hope that the "paradoxical situation of an anarchist knight may perhaps be happily resolved". Perhaps I am much less optimistic, in the latter respect, than is J.H. because I cannot help feeling that Herbert Read's acceptance of a title is an indication that other considerations and loyalties weighed more heavily in the balance than his concern as to his effectiveness as an exponent of the anarchist philosophy. Surely it is pretentious to suppose that Herbert Read has not been in any way influenced by those people on whom he has been able to exert his influence; it is the "price" of collaboration in all spheres of life, and for revolutionaries, the strongest argument in support of intransigence—which is not synonymous with "living in the desert" or being condemned to inactivity.

Read is right when he says that "living is one activity, thought is another". And there are too many examples, even in the anarchist movement, for anyone to deny this. But I would add that if living approximates to thought then these thoughts will have a greater impact on the minds of those who examine them, at least among one's contemporaries. I think, that from the point of view of an anarchist propaganda movement, ideas

valuable one. He also shows his remoteness from our propaganda with his remarks about insulting the Queen and her Government. We rarely mention her. Apart from the fact that we consider she already receives more publicity than her talents merit, we are aware that, as the head of a decadent monarchy, she has no real power. We do, however, delicately point out that she contributes nothing of value to society. I feel sure that Herbert Read agrees with this. Her Government may be considered a different matter because it has real power. Its very existence is an insult to Anarchists, and I certainly make no apologies for the many occasions on which I have insulted most of the politicians who compose it.

Finally, I would say to the other comrades, that when J.H. reminds us of the work Read has done for the movement in the past he is making a valid point. However inconsistent we may think Read's action to be, his writings on Anarchism remain as valuable as ever. R.M.

★

I MUST be one of the many who feels disappointment at Herbert Read's statement. It surely must be agreed by all that we cannot escape this society, not even to some fairly desert isle. It illustrates once more how by logical argument one can explain away one more compromise—even the editorial is kinder to Read than it has been to others and lends a helping hand. The paradox it seems has also happened outside England. One may ask why accept the title at all if it is so meaningless.

As we are unable to escape this society surely the only thing we can do is refuse to compromise as much as possible. The accusation of accepting the protection of the State's armed forces is open to question—we are forced by law to contribute to the Health Scheme—Food, etc. What is left we have a free choice and we compromise according to conscience.

So by the same logical process as Read's we could witness an Anarchist accepting the premiership of a State in order to further the aims of Anarchism.

It was unfortunate that his statement appeared opposite the tribute to Frank Leech who, as we were informed, will soon be forgotten. The name and writings of Herbert Read will live for many years. He should derive much comfort.

Newport, Jan. 20. MILWARD CASEY.

★

[Letters attacking Herbert Read, and FREEDOM's editorial of January 17th, have also been received from Harry Derritt, T.W.B., Michael Forty, Donovan Pedelty, George Leaf and Sylvia D. Sugden.—EDS.]

Special Appeal

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* Readers who have undertaken to send regular monthly contributions.

and arguments could, in the long run, be put over more effectively by being published anonymously. Too often are the reader's judgment and critical faculties influenced by the name of the writer. Too often is the writer influenced by what his "public" wants. Anonymity would also discourage the building up of personalities, and the polemics over personalities which have resulted and have been one of the unfortunate features of the international revolutionary press, particularly in the past.

Though Herbert Read has always been a "free-lance" anarchist, in that he has never identified himself with any particular anarchist group, and though he does not justify his acceptance of a title on anarchist grounds, the anarchist movement will have to contend with those critics who will use his case as an argument against anarchism. However unfortunate this may be—and anything which detracts attention from the real issues is a waste of time—Herbert Read's action in no way invalidates the ideas of anarchism. At most it is a reflection on traits in Read's character, a matter of little importance in a discussion on anarchism. People who are seriously interested in social problems will not use Read as an argument against anarchism any more than Kropotkin (whose attitude in the first world war has had serious repercussions in the international movement to this day).

I do not in any way wish to minimise the disappointment I, for one, felt at Herbert Read's action, or when reading his aggressive *Statement*. But equally disappointing is the tone of most of his critics' letters, and the facility with which abuse can be hurled both at Read and the Editors on an issue of relative importance compared with subjects of very great importance to anarchists which have been dealt with both by Read and the Editors in our columns and on which most of our present correspondents have been conspicuous by their silence. V.R.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP OPEN AIR MEETINGS

Weather Permitting
HYDE PARK
Every Sunday at 4.30 p.m.

INDOOR MEETINGS

NOTICE

London Comrades are requested to note that the London Anarchist Group's Tuesday evening meetings will be held in future at:

GARIBALDI RESTAURANT,
10 LAYSTALL STREET, E.C.1
(3 mins. Holborn Hall)

The meetings will be held on TUESDAYS at 7.30 p.m.

FEB. 3—Arthur Uloth on
WAR AND THE STATE

FEB. 10—Jim Peeke on
DOWN WITH EDUCATION

NORTH-EAST LONDON

DISCUSSION MEETINGS
IN EAST HAM
Alternate Wednesdays
at 7.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL

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

GLASGOW

INDOOR MEETINGS
at
CENTRAL HALLS, 25 Bath Street
Every Sunday at 7 p.m.
With John Gaffney, Frank Carlin
Jane Strachan, Eddie Shaw,

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