

# Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Love . . . Idiotic word! What does the word stand for . . . to the patriot who's ready to die for his country—to die, and, in the meantime, to kill, steal, lie, swindle, and torture for it?"  
—ALDOUS HUXLEY in "After Many a Summer".

## THE FRENCH STRIKES

### Has Initiative Passed to the Union Leaders?

AT the time of going to press, the general strike in France which has spread considerably during the past week is still continuing. It seems certain that the extension of the strike—from a dispute of the postal workers to involve almost all government employees and bring economic life to a standstill—has remained entirely spontaneous. It is evidence of a deep-seated discontent with conditions of working class life and with the administration, but it does not seem to have any very clearly defined objects, remaining a movement of protest.

The more serious of the popular press describe some of the causes of this discontent. "An official publication" writes Nora Beloff in the *Observer* (16/8/53), "has revealed that they (the French workers) enjoy an even smaller proportion of the national revenue than before the war: the substantial rise in social benefits has been more than offset by the severe drop in real wages. The Civil Service is proportionately worse off than are the employees of private business. It is difficult to persuade these people to abandon direct action and to rely on Parliamentary processes to right their wrongs when these processes are constantly flouted by the upper income groups. It is similarly difficult to justify the imprisoning of recalcitrant strikers while tax defaulters, whose cost to the community is so much higher, are amnestied."

#### War Weariness

It also seems likely that the strikes reflect the discontent of French people with the war in Indo-China. Nora Beloff quotes a government official as saying: "Whatever replaces this government, its first and most popular action will be

#### 21 Killed in Ceylon Demonstrations Against Price Increases

TWENTY-ONE people were killed and 380 arrested during demonstrations last week throughout Ceylon against increases in the price of rice and of railway, electricity and postal charges. Troops and police opened fire three times in Colombo, and the Government declared a state of emergency and imposed a curfew.

Mr. Dudley Senanayake, the Prime Minister, said that saboteurs had removed railway lines and in some cases destroyed trains and buses. He told the Lower House that arson had been reported in the capital. The rioters had held up buses, disrupted telegraph and telephone communications, and stoned public buildings. "Unscrupulous political leaders," he said, had incited the troubles, but the Government was determined to stamp out mob violence and maintain law and order. A Government spokesman said that the state of emergency and curfew would be effective for one month if the situation did not warrant their withdrawal. He made it clear that it was not martial law, but that the inspector-general of police had been given emergency powers. He would now have military assistance and was empowered to act on his own authority.

The food controller's office adjoining the principal railway station was also set on fire. The demonstrators were dispersed by police and the first was put out before it did any damage. The Mayor of Colombo, Mr. Grero, resigned at noon following the hoisting of a black flag on the Town Hall by Left-wing city councillors.

to terminate the Indo-Chinese War and use the additional funds and the psychological boom to launch a new recovery plan involving far more radical reforms than those we have proposed."

It seems likely that French economy is too highly geared to the war in the Far East for it to be terminated quite so easily, however. If the ending of the war became a political objective of the general strike and were successfully achieved by direct action, the situation would have become a revolutionary one, and the consequences of such success would raise economic and social problems requiring further revolutionary action.

#### Political Capital

Meanwhile, if the Communists had no hand in starting the strike (as is certain), the leaders of the trade unions are now trying to make political capital out of it. The lack of clearly defined objectives tends to allow the initiative to pass out of the hands of the workers into that of their "representatives". The Communist controlled C.G.T. has

declared its readiness to negotiate with the government, while the leaders of the Socialist and Catholic Unions have already been in conference with the Prime Minister.

Both the Socialist and Catholic union leaders on the one hand and the Communists on the other are aware of the political capital to be made out of the strike in preparation for the municipal elections. If they succeed in securing the initiative and "controlling" the workers, the strike will end in a few concessions, but its tremendous latent power will have been virtually unused. The situation is similar to that of the General Strike in England in 1926 when the union leaders in their negotiations with Stanley Baldwin brought the strike movement to an end with the workers once more reduced to virtual impotence.

At the moment, however, it is not clear whether the spontaneous movement has spent its force, or whether the efforts at negotiation by the union leaders may not succeed in adding fuel to the discontents and spreading the strike still further.

## Behind the Malenkov Speech

MOST of the political commentators on Malenkov's "hydrogen bomb" speech have confined themselves to the question of the bomb, or to the light the speech sheds on the position of power attained by Malenkov, or to the repercussions of the speech for Soviet foreign policy and international relations generally.

Far more important however than these are the implications of the speech for Russian domestic policy. By far the most significant question here is a different attitude to the peasants and to agriculture. Ever since 1928 when the First Five Year Plan was inaugurated, the Russian State has been trying to turn individual peasants into wage workers through the collectivization of the farms on an industrial basis. This attempt was an expression of the traditional hostility of the Marxists towards peasants, and represents an attempt at proletarianizing the land workers, so as to reduce their political unpredictability and bring them into the fold of the messianic proletariat of Marxist ideology.

Malenkov's speech announces a reversal of this trend. After the famines of 1932 and 1933 caused by the collectivization of agriculture under the First Five Year Plan, the Russian government retraced its steps to some extent and allowed the peasants, even those in the collective farms, to own their own piece of land and to keep a cow and other stock. However, they returned to the Marxist attitude to the peasants later and tried once again to incorporate them in a fully State-operated agriculture. This drive has been especially vigorously pushed since the war. Now Malenkov's speech indicates an abandonment of this attempt. Instead of seeking to abolish peasant holdings and privately owned cows and chickens, the government now encourages the peasant to work hard on his holding and earn as much as he can. He is to be helped by a reduction in

taxation, by the wiping off of arrears in taxes, and by changes in the method of taxation, so that individual initiative on the land is encouraged. There are even tax rebates designed to encourage those whom the previous policy had forced to give up their cows to buy new animals.

#### The N.E.P. Once Again

We have already some weeks ago drawn attention to similar trends in agricultural policy in Eastern Germany and other Russian satellite countries. It has been described as a revolutionary change and as a liquidation of Stalin's policy but such judgments ignore past history. Lenin also sought to industrialize agriculture, and this policy contributed to produce the famines of 1918 to 1921. To restore economic stability Lenin also returned to private ownership and the encouragement of private trading in the programme known as the New Economic Policy (N.E.P.) launched in 1923. The various retreats from full collectivization under Stalin's

## Policemen Censors

THE BOOKSELLER this week carries the startling headline "Policemen read books". From the mental outlook of P.C.s this was sufficiently startling enough to merit mention. However, the literacy of policemen was not the item's main revelation.

It developed that a lending library, long guaranteed innocuous to maiden aunts of both sexes had unwittingly issued a subscription to a policeman who borrowed two books in the first week which so shocked his virgin susceptibilities that a summons was issued for unlawfully keeping obscene books for the purpose of lending them on hire.

It is obvious that the policeman was an agent provocateur and the laws governing obscenity (whatever that is) are so framed that any book can be deemed obscene on the judgment of a magistrate. One recalls the case where the Chief Constable of Bury borrowed James Hanley's *Boy* from the library and his sensibilities were so shocked that a case for obscenity was brought and won against librarian, bookseller, publisher, printer and author. The book *Boy* had been published five years when the prosecution was brought and in that time it had apparently never come to the view of one so pure as the Chief Constable of Bury.

The present case was adjourned to give the High Bailiff time to read the books in their entirety. This incident took place in the Isle of Man where the cats

are without tails, it seems that the citizens are in for a more serious loss.

The second item is that policemen queuing up for pay were invited to take home one or more of about 400 magazines confiscated in raids on retailers. A sergeant said: "Take them away and read them over the week-end. If you find anything you think is offensive to public decency, mark it clearly and return the magazine. This is not an order. Keep them from children."

So the vestal virgins of the blue lamp retired home for the week-end equipped with magazines and blue pencils. We imagine that suppressed gasps and guffaws were followed with drastic onslaughts with the blue pencils.

One never ceases to find incidents of this type where a concept of public decency is set up, which is entirely infantile and sterile and all books, plays, films, radio and television must conform to it and all departures are censored as "obscene". The latest rush of virtue is at seaside picture postcards many of which have slid "under the counter" to re-emerge at fancy prices.

In America, the Land of the Free, an American publishing firm has used one set of laws to defeat another by suing the police-chief of Youngstown, Ohio for unlawful suppression of distribution and sales of their books in Youngstown and winning the case. They claimed \$3,500 libel damages and \$50,000 for loss of business. The books were suppressed under a local ordinance and included books by Alberto Moravia, Christopher Isherwood, Georges Simenon, Erskine Caldwell and James T. Farrell.

The Judge held that the police chief had a right to act upon the local ordinance (which was based upon an outmoded definition of "obscenity") but he had no right to threaten local vendors of books (although he could prosecute for obscenity) since the publishers of the books were domiciled in New York and were not amenable to Youngstown law. Thus we see how the law of property must be defended even at a cost to the morals of Youngstown.

J.R.

## Dockers Get Less Pay

THE annual report of the National Dock Labour Board has shown that in spite of increased rates of pay, actual income earned by dockers throughout the country has fallen by about seven shillings a week.

In 1951 the average earnings in the docks industry was £9 16s. 6d. a week. During 1952 (the year to which the report applies) the average had fallen to £9 9s. 6d.

The actual degree of unemployment in the docks is always masked by the decasualisation scheme, and the falling off of work has been further hidden in 1952 by the additional week's holiday, for that year was the first for the dockers to enjoy a fortnights' paid holiday.

The temporary release scheme, to enable registered dockers to leave the industry but to keep the door open for their return when needed, has not been a success. In the whole country a maximum of only 1,196 was reached.

The dockers' average earnings are still above the average for the country as a whole, but it must be remembered that those figures represent long hours and overtime some weeks, and no work at all others. It is still an erratic industry, but that any class of worker, in these days of rising prices, should be earning less, is a matter for concern.

## Mutual Aid in an Essex Village

A SHRIMP and kipper shop is the latest welfare effort in Britain's "Utopia village where anyone in trouble is given a hand."

There have been strange goings-on at Parkeston, Essex (population 2,000), these last few days. Ted Silver, 32-year-old shunter, who gets home from work at 10 p.m., has been up and about again at 3 a.m. to put to sea. He brings back the shrimps for the shop.

A few hours later 42-year-old George Coxshall, landlord of the Garland Hotel, is cycling round the village delivering to those who are too infirm to go to the shop.

The villagers decided to open the shop after two children had been injured on the road. This, they decided, was the best way to raise money for a children's

playground.

Now the housewives take turns behind the counter and trade is on the up and up.

Mrs. Katharine Baker, mother of five, said: "We sold 36 gallons of shrimps and over 300 kippers last week. We used to have to take a 6d. bus ride to buy shrimps at 1d. a pint dearer."

Said George Coxshall: "Our fund provides fruit and sweets for a kiddie in hospital, extra money for a man out of a job, and so on. We raise money with concerts and socials. This village is one big family."

Commented Mrs. Baker, a Scot, whose husband Frank is a ship's greaser: "I would not live anywhere else for the world."  
—*News Chronicle*.

# The Nature & Validity of Mystical Experience

**M**YSTICISM in all its aspects and implications, and in the manifold varieties of its expression, is far too wide a subject for a short essay. Furthermore, the term "mystic" has been used in so many different senses that one has to define very clearly what one means by it in order to avoid ambiguity. St. Paul, Platinus, St. Francis, St. Augustine, St. Teresa, Madame Guyon, Martin Luther, William Blake, Edward Carpenter, Rabindranath Tagore, and Walt Whitman, have, among hundreds of others, been defined as mystics. What St. Paul had in common with Tagore, or Platinus with Edward Carpenter, to quote two instances, would be very difficult to define. To add to the confusion, certain modern totalitarian philosophies are now being described as mystical by psychological authors like Erich Fromm and Wilhelm Reich. For purely practical reasons, therefore, I shall confine my remarks mainly to mystical experience of the "grand" or more spectacular type, omitting the "thinking in depth" or rational mysticism of people like Tagore or Whitman, who never repudiated the sensual

or natural world; and who were entirely opposed to the struggles trials and tortures by which so many of the mystics of supernaturalism claim, and indeed seem, to have achieved their objects.

Within the scope of this essay, we shall be mainly concerned with the mysticism which claims to be directly concerned with seeking a relationship with something outside the self, and having as its final objective complete identification with that other person or thing, which it states to be the only reality. For most of the mystics connected with the traditional religions that reality will be described as God who is often conceived as supernatural, and always transcendent; though he may to a certain degree be regarded as immanent at the same time. For the modern avowedly "human" mystics, the object of their strivings to transcend self, will be a society, the State, or humanity, which in some mysterious way, is regarded as an entity which is greater than the sum of its in-

dividual members, and for which, the individual must be prepared to sacrifice himself. The idea underlying this philosophy is that man was made to serve ends other than his own—for instance, that man was made for society and not society for man, this is the basis of all authoritarian religion whether of a supernatural or humanistic nature. Now it may be objected that the very basis of mysticism is of the opposite nature—it frees man from the limitations of traditional authority, it frees him from the desires and whims of the body, and enables him to shake off the burden of his own self and become one with the Reality that transcends space and time, or, if he is a humanist, become one with the great spirit of humanity.

Such an objection as this raises many very interesting questions. First of all, can the claim be upheld that mystical experience frees man from the chains of traditional authority? This is not a simple, but a very complex question. When the would-be mystic lays aside the sensual world, when he shuts his eyes and ears to sight and sound, represses his appetites, so that he can no longer enjoy their satisfaction in the natural way; and when he repudiates traditional authority. When he has succeeded in doing all this, he thinks he has lopped off and thrown away all these undesirable instincts; but all he has really done is to drive them into the realm of the unconscious, out of which they arise again in many disguised forms. Often what arises is less acceptable to the individual than the natural instinct which has been repressed—this he regards as a temptation of the devil. Sometimes what arises is infinitely more acceptable, it is beautiful, pure, and holy, freed from all earthly

and material associations and gives vitality and meaning to these traditional concepts of goodness, purity, and chastity, which have been inculcated by tradition from infancy. It is external authority, internalised, transformed, and disguised as a revelation coming from a supernatural God through the medium of the inner self. Temperament certainly plays a part, but education and environment also play a very important rôle in the making of a mystic. When we consider the great classical mystics like Catherine of Genoa, St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa, or Mme Guyon, we find that in every case they fell very early under the influence of the two great ideals of Monastic Christianity—self-surrender to God's will and chastity. Not only were these presented as good in themselves, but they were also the means by which the highest good could be secured—divine love. Evelyn Underhill and others, have tried to show that the self-denial and asceticism of the mystics was merely a negative thing—the removal of certain distracting influences from their lives so that they could devote the whole of their energies and time to seeking God. But human experience as well as the evidence of modern psychology, goes to show that instincts cannot be psychically lopped off and thrown away in this manner, without having very great repercussions on other spheres of human activity. This is particularly true of sex, but it is also true of other instincts. Chastity is never merely an abstinence—a negative virtue; it has far reaching repercussions and colours one's whole emotional life. Personally, I think it is at the basis of the whole idea of self-renunciation, self-denial, and self-hatred. To hate oneself, to feel sin-

ful, to escape from ones self, these are the requisites for the intense desire to be absorbed into the "wholly other" than self. There is no better way to inculcate that feeling than to teach a child that natural sexuality is sinful. I wonder how many people in the modern world know what it is "to blush at the thought of having a body" as Platinus did. Yet it is quite possible to get to that stage without any of the compensations of mysticism in its more spectacular forms.

While many will question the sexual origin of the idea of self-denial, and self-abnegation, they must be few in religious, and even ethical circles, who think that these ideas are not in themselves good—all mystics emphatically declare that the ideal is, self-sacrifice, the effacement of self, and the complete subjection of the individual to a will or purpose outside himself. Most, in fact, declare that the ideal of mysticism is the complete identification of the self with God, and many claim to have achieved that aim. To the mystic, love of others is a virtue, love of self is a sin. I have often wondered why self-love should be regarded as a sin. The commandment about loving our neighbours uses self-love as the yardstick without passing any strictures upon it. In other words, the manner in which we love ourselves is the criterion by which to judge our conduct towards our neighbours; and through our neighbours—"our brothers whom we have seen—we may come to love God whom we have not seen." I think many people including the mystics make the mistake of regarding self-love and selfishness as synonymous, and that self-love and love of others are mutually exclusive. But self-love and selfishness

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## Examples of Anarchistic Societies

**O**CCASIONALLY FREEDOM has published excerpts from various works on the social structure of certain pre-literate peoples, notably the Eskimos—all of which indicate that people can and do live in harmony without government.

It is quite true that most Eskimo groups are anarchistic, as are numerous American Indian societies—the indigenous people of the Mackenzie Basin (Chippewyans, Kasha and Diné groups) and some of those of the so-called Plateau area (the Paiutes). All of these people lived in chiefless societies. They knew neither class nor caste. However, it must be remembered that all of these cultures were pre-agricultural. The Mackenzie and Plateau area cultures are considered by many anthropologists to be about the most culturally barren of all indigenous societies in North America. And the Eskimo represent one of the most unique adjustments to a most unique environment and climate. Both the Eskimo and their Mackenzie area Indian neighbours possess little of what might be legitimately termed a community life. Groups rarely exceed fifty and during long periods of the year the largest group is an isolated nuclear family. In all probability no more than 25-30 thousand people roam over more than a million square miles.

Thus, it would seem to me that these examples of anarchistic societies are not as appropriate as some others might be. Tiny bands of wandering hunters are considerably remote from complex societies embracing a million or more people and founded upon agriculture and industry. The fact that anarchism (of some sort) exists among the Eskimos does not deal with the problem of the possibility of a governmentless society in a sedentary, urbanized area.

When we look outside the confines of the pre-agricultural cultures, anarchistic societies are rather scarce. Indeed, the purists are certain to balk at those which might be offered since these cases presented will not be so obvious as the Eskimo. They will be "ultra-democratic"

and have only tendencies towards a kind of anarchism. As an illustration, let me briefly describe the political system of the Kabyle—the native Berber population of Algeria—as it existed before being emasculated by the French government. The Kabyle are an agricultural, village-dwelling people. Their domain is one of the most densely settled regions in North Africa. Prior to the 1870's each Kabyle village was an independent sovereign unit governed by the village council which included every male member of the village old enough to observe the Fast of Ramadan (about 16-18 years old). All matters were brought before the council where they were freely discussed and voted upon. Unless the vote was unanimous the matter at hand was set aside until a later date. It is true that in practice the elders and members of the Marabout class (descendants of the Prophet and of various saints) had considerable influence either by virtue of their position and wealth (which they not infrequently used to buy votes) or through their ability to persuade through oratory. Nevertheless, this does not reflect upon the integrity of the basic structure. Ideally, all the male members of the community were equal and nothing could be done within it unless all were agreed.

Any man could, if he wished, move to another village and join it. Frequently, several villages formed a federation to pursue some specific aims—usually related to feuding—but the sovereignty of each village council always remained intact.

The Kabyle, as Moslems, accepted the spirit, at least, of Koranic law. Their society was one where the absolute ruler was Allah, but the specific political functions were to say the least, of an elemental democratic nature—similar to a Quaker business meeting. In common with most Berbers, the Kabyle are known for their spirit of independence and autonomy. To be sure, every Kabyle village had its gadi or judge, as in all Moslem countries, who exacted fines and punishments on the basis of Kabyle customs and Koranic prescriptions and who derived his position from the village council. But, then, it must be recalled that all people enforce custom by some kind of punishment.

On summary, the Kabyle political system has many parallels to the federalism of Bakunin—a number of free village-communes sometimes federated for specific purposes. It is likewise representative of an essential equalitarian spirit pervading Islam—the equality and brotherhood of all believers before an omnipotent deity. The Kabyle system is the most anti-authoritarian variation on a culture complex common to the Berbers, i.e. the village council-free commune.\*

Kabyle society is by no means a model of an anarchist society but it does contain within it a certain anarchist-like direction or Ethos which is worthy of attention and, what is more, its type of structure (the agricultural community) is far more relevant to our own Western type culture than are those of isolated hunting and gathering peoples.

HAROLD B. BARCLAY.

\*One might well wonder what influence this Berber institutional complex had in the development of the free cities in Spain and a general tradition of federalist anarchism there (since, of course, most of the Moslem invaders in Spain were Berbers).

Sources:  
COON, CARLETON: *Caravan: The Story of the Middle East.*  
WYSNER, GLORIA: *The Kabyle People.*

## Economics and Coercion

**W**HEN in 1908 Barone wrote his famous article on "The Ministry of Production in a Collective State" the general opinion of economists was that the economic laws they had studied in more or less liberal capitalist states were the only possible and natural laws, and that if they were not allowed to obtain, chaos and disaster would inevitably result. Chaos and disaster did result in Soviet Russia, but some equilibrium was subsequently established at least as stable as that of any capitalist country. Those elements, in fact, which first appear as chaos and disaster are called order and prosperity as soon as they become institutionalised. The industrial revolution brought as much disaster and chaos to the countries in which it was effected as did the communist revolution in Russia. When and if Stalin's book on economics will be published we may be treated to some interesting translations of political coercion into "scientific" economic terms. Thirty years before Barone's essay Brentano had written: "If, as in a prison, it is precisely laid down what everyone is to consume, then only a counting of heads is necessary in order to regulate production according to needs."

Law determines economics just as much as economics determines Law. If Böhm-Bavérk thought that there was no real conflict between the two since economic power works through and not against institutions, we may with equal evidence state that institutions may wreck, create economic power, or cause it to change hands. The conclusion to reach, or, rather, the assumption from which we started, is that economic and other forms of power, since they are not working separately, should be studied together. There is no point in abstracting economic laws from their social context to have to modify or abandon them later each time their working in this same context is to be explained. Government and parties, though wielding some economic power, are mainly power of another sort, and it is by exerting this other sort of power that they can hinder and complicate the free play of economic laws. To take an example outside Russia, parties in Italy said to represent the workers' interests have caused legislation to be passed forcing employers not to dismiss their workers in spite of shortage of raw materials or contractions in markets. But for State subsidies to the firms concerned the price of the commodities they produced would have risen out of all proportions with either the demand or their real cost of production.

This example shows also that one advantage of living under a capitalist system is that workers can force the government to reduce within increasingly narrower limits the freedom of exploitation on which the very existence of a capitalist class depends. The ultimate result of a legislation protecting an ever

increasing number of workers' rights will be to render capitalist exploitation unprofitable and finally impossible, and to usher in nationalization. It is worth knowing in this connection that not the least reason why railways and mines were nationalized in Great Britain was that their owners could not at one and the same time run them at a profit and pay the workers the wages which they were strong enough to demand.

In spite of all the objections usually raised against Fabians in England and socialist reformists on the continent, it is a fact of considerable magnitude and importance that as long as the State is one thing and employers another, the power of the Law can be used to ratify and secure the workers' conquests in their struggle for emancipation. The State, in other words, can be made to behave in the most unmarxist way as the guardian of the workers' interests. But when as in Russia to-day or in Great Britain to-morrow if nationalization becomes an accomplished fact, the State is the sole employer and wielder of all legislative and coercive power, any attack on the workers' part against conditions of exploitation will be considered as an attack against the Law and dealt with as crime.

A dangerous assumption and widespread belief concerning State ownership and nationalization is that under their dispensation there could be no room for exploitation. It is an assumption and belief bred by the evolutionary optimism that dominated so much socialist and radical thought in the last century. An easily selectable and, telling evidence is there, however, to substantiate the contrary pessimistic claim that historical progress is to be read mainly in terms of increasing rationality and efficiency in the forms of coercion and exploitation. The progress of these forms would then logically demand the fusion in the State of all economic and coercive power. Capitalist dynamism has created such complicated conditions, and its purely economic assumptions have proved so disruptive socially that increasing penalties and limitations will finally deal the fatal blow to its profit-making motive, but then State compulsion, presented as social duty, will take its place.

I confess my present inability to trace and describe all the factors and their interrelations which would give cogent support to my conviction that exploitation will not come to an end by replacing capitalism with a State-controlled economy. It is obvious that State-owned concerns running at a loss will be kept running by subsidies obtained through taxation, and that it is by being taxed instead of being underpaid that the worker will be exploited. But why should State concerns run at a loss, and why should taxation be constantly on the in-

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crease? Inefficiency and bureaucratization are only a minor explanation. A major one is the existence of large unproductive bodies in the social structure such as the army and other services and organizations of defence, to which perhaps we may add the burden of unintelligently developed social services. But exploitation there is and there is bound to be if one looks at the composition of the population in a country like Great Britain where unproductively employed people greatly outnumber the productively employed. It may all depend on the one fact that the State which inherits the capitalist legacy, and wants to preserve and increase the social and material advantages of capitalist economy will not be able to dispense with that exploitation through which these advantages were created and secured. The State at any rate will use its coercive power, against which there will be no appeal, to maintain its position of universal employer, and the science of economics will then be merely a study of pretexts for and results of coercion.

The professional economist may prove my conviction ill-founded, but there is motivating it an element of truth which the anarchist will readily appreciate. The State is economically a parasite, and most of the available evidence goes to prove that it tends to multiply rather than cut down parasitical bodies and institutions. Even with things as they are it should be possible for Society so to adapt its economic life to the will and initiative of its members as not to leave room for exploitation. But the State is not Society, and if we have forced the argument to prove the close interdependence of Economics and Law, it is because exploitation, though ubiquitous both in State and capitalist economy, cannot be explained in purely economic terms. Exploitation occurs because of compulsion, and the forms of compulsion are established by Law. Exploitation must be understood not so much from the point of view of the exploiter as was the surplus-value of marxist theory, but from the point of view of the exploited as mainly a sacrifice of freedom, strictly conditioned if not made necessary by Law. In a community of free societies inheriting the industrial structure of capitalism people would still have to work to earn their living but they will have at least considerable freedom to decide what to do with their earnings and what their living is to be like. In an economic State, and the more so the more it will pose as a Welfare State, this freedom will be practically destroyed, for through its control of culture and its congeries of social services and disservices the State will reclaim most of the workers' earnings, and decide how their money and their life is to be spent.

GIOVANNI BALDELLI.

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## THE GROWTH OF IDEAS

IN the midst of the record of disasters, of trains plunging over viaducts, of airplanes crashing into the sea, and now the beautiful Greek isles suddenly transformed into a vast cemetery by the forces of Nature, the progress report from Blengdale Forest, on the western fringe of the Lake District National Park, comes as a breath of fresh air and for anarchists, perhaps even as a symbol.

In 1928 the Forest Commission made the first of a number of purchases—totalling 829 acres—of moorland which were planted with young trees, so that to-day the moorland is a handsome forest with trees of up to 24 years old, and from which now much useful timber is being cut down. At the same time self sown seedlings have sprung up in places to regenerate it naturally. We quote from the *Manchester Guardian* report:

"Two successive thinnings have abolished the regimentation of the trunks; they are no longer in rows. Nor is it all black within. Patches of sunlight dapple the ground; the foresters think that grass, moss, and ferns will grow over it. The trees will be thinned again—every three years—until by 1980 only the largest and best of the original planting will be left. They will probably be 100ft. high and 18in. through the trunk at the bottom. Then they, too, will be felled for the sawmills, but other trees of various ages and species will be rising below them."

And to this once bleak moorland have come roe and fallow deer, and there are otters in the river Bleng. Forest flora and fauna are establishing themselves and soon the original conifers will be underplanted with hardwoods and "as they mature, what have been blocks of trees all of the same species, age and size will become mixed woodland".

To complete the picture, those 829 acres of moorland, have now added to the natural beauty of the surroundings, and, to quote again, "there is even now an atmosphere of the German folk songs about it".

★

By 1980 those seedlings will have reached full maturity. In all probability the men who planted them more than fifty years before will not be alive to see the fruits of their labour. But such considerations have, fortunately, never prevented Man from undertaking tasks the results of which only future generations will enjoy. Just as we enjoy to-day what has been produced by the past, so the future will enjoy many things started in the present which we of this generation will not live to see realised.

Ideas and ideals are like the forest of Blengdale, and if only this were more clearly understood perhaps the people as a whole would give more attention to the "anarchist dreamers", than they do at present, and less attention to the "realists" who in our time have succeeded in influencing thought to such an extent that all ideas which cannot be applied to the immediate situation are rejected out of hand as utopian and impractical. Trees do not grow in a day; nor will they grow in a thousand years if men were not prepared to plant them because they could not hope to live long enough to see them grow to their full stature.

Revolutionists who abandon their revolutionary ideas for the satisfaction of "seeing results" in Reformism are like the man who plants a forest of quick growing trees which are cut down in a few years for firewood. All that is left is a desert of tree-stumps. He has not allowed the original trees to grow nor the "self-sown seedlings" to spring up and regenerate the forest. There is no shortage of these impatient men in the world. And it would seem that they have in the inter-war and post-world-war years succeeded in contaminating the patient men and women who were prepared to plant forests with ideas that took an unforseeable time to reach their full fruition, but which once they did left a permanent mark, something of value to mankind. And it is a quality of such forests that when the original ideas are outdated, there has grown up alongside them, the "self-sown seedlings" ready to play their rôle as did their predecessors. This is the natural process in the life of trees and of Man . . . and of ideas.

## 'Apple Polishers' in the Soviet Union

WE are always assured by the apologists of the workers' fatherland that capitalism and all its vices have been abolished in the Soviet Union. Yet in this period of "self-criticism" (excluding criticism of Malenkov and Co. of course, except by Malenkov and Co., and which ends in a Beria) all kinds of abuses are being revealed which must make our native C.P.'s very uncomfortable. In *Pravda* recently (Aug. 5) reference is made to the fact that too many "capitalist-style apple-polishers" are getting ahead in the Communist party system.

The party organ, in a leading editorial broadcast by Moscow radio, rapped the knuckles of local party organizations for letting little groups of "mutual encouragement" creep into factories and state farms.

There are only two proper conditions for promoting workers and party members to local cadres, *Pravda* said. They are first "political reliability" and second, "suitability for any given job."

Complaining that this principle is frequently violated, *Pravda* said: "Some people select the cadres by the principle of personal devotion, comradeship relations, local patriotism or nepotism."

"At the same time," the newspaper added, "workers who are honest and know their job but who do not tolerate shortcomings, and therefore cause unpleasantness to their superiors, are squeezed out of

their jobs and replaced by others who are of doubtful use but who suit the leaders.

"Instead of a group of responsible workers," *Pravda* said, "a little family of close people is set up—a group whose members strive to live in peace with one another and keep their mistakes to themselves.

"Familiarity of this kind creates an intolerable situation of mutual encouragement under which there can be no place for criticism or self-criticism."

*Pravda* warned also that some people who are all right on efficiency

but doubtful as to political confidence have "penetrated into responsible posts." It reminded the faithful that "under conditions of capitalist encirclement, agents are being sent into our midst and will continue to be sent."

This "business-only attitude", it said, "would suit the imperial agents well enough."

It is all very well for the Comrades to say: "Well the beloved leaders are attacking these abuses". What we would like them to explain is how in this non-capitalist paradise such a situation has been allowed to develop.

## Conditions in Italy

HOW far we are from having solved even the problem of every human being having the bare necessities of life is indicated by the findings of an Italian parliamentary Committee which has been investigating poverty in Italy. One of every nine Italian families lives in extreme poverty. One of every thirteen families never eats meat, drinks no wine and has no sugar. In actual figures this means that 1,357,000 families live in conditions of extreme want "at the lowest level of life", whilst an equal number live in conditions of extreme want "at the lowest level of life", and an equal number live in conditions of "less-acute poverty". 7,616,000 families are in "modest" conditions and 1,274,000 are "well-off". More than 80% of the families living in

extreme poverty are found in the South and in the islands, principally in Sicily and Sardinia.

As to housing, the report makes grim reading. The committee said that almost one-fourth of the population has less than adequate housing. Two per cent. live in cellars, garrets of warehouses. Eight-tenths of one per cent. or 92,000 families, live in barracks or caves. More than 8 per cent. are crowded into three persons per room, and another 12 per cent. live in habitation with two persons per room.

In Naples, biggest city in Southern Italy "19,000 people live without roofs over their heads or in barracks or caves".

It is not surprising that the incidence of illiteracy is highest in the South and on the islands. About

30% of the population in these areas can neither read nor write (compared with one-third of one per cent. in the industrial city of Milan). On a national basis the committee estimated illiteracy as ranging between 10 and 20 per cent.

## A Ducking for Authority

EVEN the serious *New York Times* cannot resist reporting an incident which hardly encourages respect for those in high authority. It occurred on board the American battleship *Missouri* and the story was told by officers in this way:

Frank C. Naish, Assistant Secretary of Defence, boarded the *Missouri* when she stopped at Guantanamo on her way back to this port from a midshipman training cruise in South American and Caribbean waters.

Somewhere between Guantanamo and the Hampton Roads, arrangements were made to "transfer Mr. Naish from the *Mighty Mo*" to a destroyer in the training squadron. A line was rigged between the two ships and the Defence official climbed into the breeches buoy.

Out over the Atlantic Mr. Naish skimmed. When he was about midway something happened. Maybe it was accidental that the line became slack, maybe somebody thought it would be fun to dunk one of the top brass.

Anyhow, before one can say "Aye, aye, sir," the Assistant Secretary for Defence was down in "the drink".

Cameras clicked frantically as shutters revealed in a field day. But soon after Mr. Naish reached the destroyer, safe and sound, but dripping wet, the word was passed that all film should be surrendered.

So it seems that posterity will be deprived of pictorial proof of the Pentagon's predicament.

## The Nature and Validity of Mystical Experience

Continued from p. 2

far from being identical, are really opposites. The really selfish person does not love himself too much, he loves himself too little—he really despises and hates himself he feels empty and frustrated and feels he must snatch from some source outside himself, the things which he thinks will make him happy. He can neither love others nor himself. This I describe as the Conservative solution of the problem created by self hatred. It is excused on the philosophy that each individual by his own initiative in acquiring as much of the world's wealth as possible, will, in the long run, benefit all. It is still the basic assumption underlying much of our social order, or disorder.

The other type of self-hate is the selfless person; he too experiences all the frustrations and inhibitions experienced by the former type, but he adopts a different solution, a solution which he calls unselfishness. The selfless person does not "want anything for himself" he "lives only for others" and does not consider himself important. In politics he will adopt the so-called Socialist solution, which demands the sacrifice of the individual for the sake of the corporate State, or the corporate society. In religion he will support the idea of "the mystical body of Christ" he will always seek to identify himself with something external to, and greater than himself, he will tend to regard himself and others in relation to the whole and to one another, as the members of a physical body are related to a central consciousness, and to one another—existing only for the sake of the whole and having no individual rights, no individual freedom, and no individual consciousness. This is of course the ideal of the mystic, complete surrender of individual rights, and complete identification with God—the unity without the multiplicity—the many swallowed up in the all embracing One.

If the foregoing analysis is correct it appears that both selfishness and selflessness spring from a common source—the lack of self-love in the individual, and his consequent inability to achieve satisfaction and happiness through his incapacity to love others. Selfishness is acknowledged by many to be a vice but selflessness is not always a virtue—the soldier is the most selfless person in the world, he throws his life into the furnace of war on behalf of his country or his ideology as one would cast a straw into a flame, having no love of self, he has no scruples about destroying others. The world would be a better place without

its soldiers, without its corporate States, and bureaucracies; all of which thrive upon the idea that coercion and interference in other peoples lives is a duty and a virtue.

The religious mystic however, does not always choose one of the professions I have just mentioned. He would admit that they bear certain resemblances to mysticism proper, but he would probably say that they are of a lower order, that they are a perversion of the true mystical instinct which is always restless until it finds rest in God. He would, also I imagine, deny that his ideal of self-effacement, and his craving for identity with the absolute has its source in asceticism, that his contempt for self draws its strength from both his repression of sexuality with consequent inability to experience human love; and his frustration of many other perfectly natural instincts and legitimate human activities. He will in fact regard all such forms of self denial from a purely negative point of view, he will say he abstains from these activities, because he wants to concentrate upon achieving mystical union with God. In fact he will say that his abstention has no more significance than my refusal to go to the pictures to-night because I wanted to write this essay. However, as I have already tried to point out, if the findings of psychology and of human experience, including the frank admission of some mystics, are not completely misleading such a position cannot be held. I have not had time in the preparation of this essay to examine the lives of individual mystics with a view to proving or disproving this view but Prof. J. H. Leuba in his book *The Psychology of Religious Mysticism* says:—"Not one of the prominent representatives of mysticism lived a normal married life. (George Jose is no exception to this rule). The kind of love bestowed by them upon God and Christ is apparently incompatible with normal conjugal relations. Many of the curious phenomena to which most great mystics owe in part their fame or notoriety are due to perturbations of the sex function consequent upon repression."

Until supporters of mysticism can show that a person can have mystical experiences side by side with the living of a normal and full life, it seems to me that we are quite justified in seeking a rational explanation of mysticism in terms of repression and frustration of natural instincts. The other possible explanation is that all men possess a mystical instinct, which somehow has

become dormant in the majority and highly developed in the great mystics. Here it might be possible to explain their asceticism and self-denial as being helpful in attaining their object through the laws of compensation. It is a well known fact, for instance, that if a man becomes blind he develops a very keen sense of hearing, or if he becomes deaf his powers of observation improve. By the same analogy a mystical sense could develop to a very high point of efficiency when the other senses are put out of action. Such an explanation is not entirely inconsistent with the other explanation but in order to uphold it, one would require some evidence of a mystical instinct operating in parallel with the other instincts, and one would also expect its operation to be complementary, and not antagonistic to that of the other faculties.

I think it is important at this juncture to say something about the subject of irrationalism and super-rationalism. Mystics often claim that the revelations they have received are of a super-rational nature, i.e. they could not be discovered by reason, and it is beyond the capacity of reason to judge them. They would deny, however, that such judgments are actually contrary to human reason. It seems to me that there is a fallacy in this statement—human reason is fallible, it is possible to build up a completely false picture of reality by reason—through lack of all the relevant factors. Now if a mystic claims to have found a method of obtaining new knowledge which is superior to the rational method, is there any reason to suppose that such a revelation must be consistent with human reason? If, for instance, in the days when human reason and knowledge seemed to indicate a flat earth, it had been revealed directly to somebody that the earth was in fact a globe, such a revelation would have appeared irrational and could not be checked by reason on the basis of the data then available. Such a revelation would have been irrational from the point of view of the people then living. Similarly if we today accept the idea of super-rational revelation—there is no reason why such a revelation should not appear to us to be irrational although it may be perfectly rational in the light of new knowledge. If we accept the super-rational it seems to me that we need some safeguard against the nonsensical and the false being imposed upon us as higher knowledge. Our only defence would seem to be a refusal to accept anything that cannot be tested by reason, and it is difficult to see how a believer in the super-

rational could subject himself to such a limitation.

As I have gone to considerable length in criticising the defects and fallacies of mysticism, it is now fitting that I should consider the elements of truth which it contains, apart from the psychological factors which I think gave rise to it. In the first place I do not for one moment doubt the sincerity, neither do I doubt the subjective validity of the mystic's experience. I think however I have every reason to doubt its objective validity, as I doubted the objective validity of my Evangelical friends' experiences some ten years ago. If I had never been a Rationalist I could never have become a Unitarian, all I have learned about the religion of reason has strengthened rather than weakened my faith in it. When the Protestant mystic sees a vision of Jesus and the Catholic mystic sees a vision of the Blessed Virgin, and when the revelation received by one contradicts that received by the other I feel justified in doubting the objective validity of such experiences. On the other hand some of the basic assumptions of mysticism have a certain element of truth in them. Take the idea of turning away from the world, for instance. We know perfectly well that a society which demands that man must prostitute his creative instincts in order to live, is detrimental to spiritual life and it seems almost instinctive to turn away from it. But the cure for social evils is not to shut oneself up in a monastery and pretend that nature is inherently evil, but to work for social revolution. The idea of union with God is derived from the great truth that we must work with and not against the spiritual and physical laws of the universe, until such actions become instinctive. We can indeed pray with Tagore that our vision of the One may not be lost in the touch of the many, but we should also pray that our vision of the One may not blind our eyes to the many. Tagore expressly said that salvation was not for him in renunciation, he refused to shut his eyes to the sensual delights of the world, he saw God in all things. He was not blind either to the evils and abuses of our society. Similar remarks apply to Whitman and Carpenter. This seems to me to be the true mysticism. Blake expresses the difference between the two kinds of mysticism very well when he says:—

*God Appears and God is Light  
To those poor souls who dwell in Night,  
But does a Human Form Display  
To those who dwell in Realms of Day.*

N. J. TEAPE.

# Reform and Revolution

FOR all those whose aim is a revolutionary change in society the question is continually coming up as to how far, if at all, we should support reforms within existing society.

Those whose attitude is a purely intellectual or theoretical one will find the answer easy. Since they are not interested in making capitalism work or even in making it palatable, they will, quite correctly, maintain that they should not support any reform of any kind, but must go all out for the complete revolution and will be satisfied with nothing less.

This attitude, however, can only be maintained if they are prepared to keep their revolutionary activity on a purely intellectual or theoretical plane. And this is an attitude which very quickly defeats their own ends by divorcing their ideas from existing and present possibilities.

For nowhere in the world to-day is there a class-conscious working class with a revolutionary aim. Nowhere do we see the possibility of a social revolution of a libertarian character in the foreseeable future. In every country there is still a tremendous amount of preparatory work to be done and in most countries Anarchists are in the position of having to build up their organisation, or their groups, and definitely their influence among the people, from practically nothing.

## The Rise of Reformism

The wide-spread Anarchist movements of the last Century and the early years of this one have dwindled away through two influences. One, open repression by

governments; two, the support the working class has given to reformist political parties.

I do not wish here to discuss the first of these causes. In part, of course it stems from the second, and if we want to find out why the working class has drifted from revolutionary movements into reformist parties we must see what the two have to offer.

The Anarchist movement promises the worker nothing. It tells him that whatever he wants he must get for himself, and that if he is really determined he can get complete control of his industry, abolish the boss, the State, the police and all the apparatus of government and live a dignified life in a moneyless society with complete freedom of access to all he wants out of life. In order to achieve this he has to launch himself into a revolutionary struggle which may land him in prison, which may lead to the sack, to being black-listed among employers, and all sorts of other unpleasant experiences. And the achievement of a free society is uncertain, the time for its inception unknown.

All in all a worker sees that he may grow old and die, having lived a life of hardship that he might have avoided, before he sees an Anarchist society and reaps the fruit of his labours.

On the other hand a reformist political party makes plenty of specific promises which are eminently possible and practical. Nothing utopian like the abolition of the wages system, but the promise to improve wages here and now. No talk about free access to all the means of life, but a promise to increase old age pensions. No schemes for a free society but simply a promise to iron out a few of the worst features of this one. Above all no demands for hard work or sacrifice; no risk of victimisation or prison; all you have to do is walk to a polling booth once every five years and in complete secrecy and safety make a cross on a ballot paper and then the man or woman you vote for will do the rest.

There is no doubt which would sound the most attractive to the State-educated,

army-trained, properly-conditioned, average man-in-his-right-mind. Everybody likes something for nothing, and it is so much easier to conform to the society in which we find ourselves and so much more comfortable not to engage in struggle against it but to try and rub along with as little trouble as possible.

## Here and Now

It can be clearly seen then that capitalism has been saved, not by its traditional supporters, like the Tories, but by its critics like the Labour Party, who have drawn off from more revolutionary organisations the numbers which could have made them effective. And that has been done by promising them something here and now.

Isn't that legitimate? Anarchists attack Christianity on the ground (among others of course) that it encourages humility and putting up with things in this world in order to win a reward in the next, to which the Anarchist says, "We have only one life to live—let's get the best out of it here and now."

What we have to consider then, is just how valuable are the reforms which can be won in present-day society, and whether there is any contradiction between the Anarchist insistence upon a thorough-going revolutionary idea and that of getting the best out of life in this society whilst preparing for a revolution.

If we believe that reformism has sapped the revolutionary movements of much of their influence and impetus, then is it not dangerous to play any part in anything that may be termed reformist? Should we take any part in wage struggles when what we want is the abolition of the wages system. Should we demand the abolition of the death penalty when that can only be achieved, short of the disappearance of the State, through Parliamentary action?

And if we embark on this activity, with whom should we be prepared to collaborate, by what methods should we seek to achieve our limited objects and where do we stop? P.S.

(To be continued)

# Nigerian Delegation Here

THE Northern Elements Progressive Party have sent a delegation from Nigeria to discuss electoral reform with the Secretary of State.

The African League held a meeting in the Holborn Hall on Monday, 17th to welcome the delegation, whose visit to Britain has not been publicised by the daily press and who have been bound to secrecy according to the terms of the invitation from the British Government until the conference is over, thereby keeping the public as much in ignorance of Nigerian affairs as they are of African Federation.

Although our sympathies are with Africans in their attempts to get rid of British domination, we feel, in the words of a member of the African League that it is a waste of time and money to send a delegation to Britain, and what is needed is action on the part of the Africans in Northern Nigeria. After all, whatever constitutional methods are granted by the British Government there will no doubt be a clause where they can get round it when necessary, as is the case in the new constitution offered to the Central Africans through Federation.

We cannot offer our wholehearted support however, to the Africans in their final aim which is to establish another Government "of the people" in the place of the existing one. The only difference will be in the colour of the skin of the governing group, and although the leading speaker for the delegation, Mallim Aminu Kano, is young, able, enthusiastic and idealistic and feels the backward condition of the peasant and the worker very strongly, there is no reason to suppose that power and the machinery of Government won't corrupt him any less than his pre-

decessors. Especially when the Africans are perfectly aware of the corrupting influence of British politics on some of the Chiefs who have been bought by the present administration.

The present voting system in Northern Nigeria operates through what is termed electoral colleges. There are five stages of voting. The people are summoned to attend a certain centre in a local district. There they are instructed to vote for a person, usually the local chief, who has been nominated by the British administration. He in turn votes with the other nominees from other areas for someone else at another centre and so it goes on until the fifth stage of voting is reached. What the delegation wants is to have their elections along the lines of British Democracy. From an anarchist point of view this is no improvement, but the Democrats of this country should certainly not deny this to the Africans if, as they claim, the greatest majority of people there so want it.

We suspect that, since the greatest number of people in this area are peasant farmers they are more concerned about their crops than the political party in power, whether black or white. This was hinted at by the speaker, who nevertheless pointed out that peasants were prevented, through poverty, disease and illiteracy from getting the best out of the land.

We think that this party operating as it must along the lines of Governments everywhere will be unable to completely eliminate this state of affairs, but the process will no doubt continue whatever the anarchists say and we can only hope that when the British are finally kicked out it will mean at least one less corrupting influence for the Nigerian people to deal with. R.M.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS Anarchism and Results

"ANARCHISM originated among the people, and it will preserve its vitality and creative force so long only as it remains a movement of the people", wrote Kropotkin in *Modern Science and Anarchism*. That is, its origins were neither due to scientific research or to any system of philosophy but sprung from the needs of the people. This fact remains true to-day notwithstanding the mutilation of its simplicity by scientific and philosophical jargon.

What scientific researches have done for anarchism has been to give demonstrable proof to many of the ideas held and acted upon by anarchists. Philosophers and writers have merely given coherent (and very often incoherent) expression to a living force.

If we accept this, then to hold "that anarchism deals with values and not with facts" (G. Baldelli *FREEDOM* July 18th) can only be taken as a half-truth, and the use of the word science need not conjure nightmares of Marxian dialectics. Anarchism is surely concerned with values and facts, and few of us are anything but delighted when we see the results of our propaganda; two papers sold and even one convert is an absolute and "pure" result. The convert, not from his vacuum, but from the opposite of the "diagonal of the parallelogram of which anarchism and the other force give the length of the sides". What a sterile existence not to hope for results from our actions. It is in fact, nonsense not to consider any human activity in terms of results; even the yogi gets results from his meditations.

As for the quotation from Schweitzer; he is a Christian, and, noble character that he appears to be, he has an axe to grind. His quotation therefore can only be considered in the light of his Christian beliefs, and is to deny the contention held by anarchists that ethics have their origin in man's nature.

### "PURE" ANARCHISTS

It had been freely acknowledged by responsible Spanish anarchists themselves that many of their actions in Spain were not anarchistic, but one is tempted to add that it is easy to remain "pure" when one never runs any risks by doing anything. This is one of our criticisms of the "pure" type of Marxist. They sit

back and let the historical process take care of the revolution.

With reference to the other types of anarchists and in particular those who give their loyalty to the Kingdom of God. I have always believed that anarchism and religious loyalties were quite incompatible, and that sooner or later a conflict would necessarily arise. This coincides with the experience of those people who have attempted such a marriage.

Finally, I suggest that there are two courses anarchists can take. Either they retire into a philosophical shell, or propagate anarchism by whatever means is available to them. If the latter is the chosen course, I suggest we could ponder on the following words of M. L. Berneri: "We are not going to build up a movement on obscure ideas. We shall have fewer ideas perhaps, but each of us will understand them perfectly and be able to explain them to others." R.M.

## Negro's House Stoned in Chicago

"NEGRO'S HOUSE STONED. A thousand jeering people yesterday stoned the house of the first Negro tenant to live in a housing estate in Chicago."

Scottish Daily Record, 12/8/53.

Somewhere in America I believe, there is a statue of a nude Negro with outstretched hands, uplifted head and eyes, the work of the distinguished Negro sculptor, Richmond Barthé. It is a memorial to the great Negro poet, James Weldon Johnson, author of the verses:

### THE NEGRO ASKS—

How would you have us, as we are—  
Or sinking 'neath the load we bear?  
Our eyes fixed forward on a star—  
Or gazing empty, at despair?

Rising or falling? Men, or things?  
With dragging pace, or footsteps fleet?  
Strong willing sinews in your wings—  
Or tightening chains about your feet?

Sculptor and Poet both speak symbolically of the challenge which the non-white peoples now make to the white world. Argyll. H.T.D.

## The Dragon and the London Anarchist Group

YOUR correspondent's quotation from Kenneth Rexroth's *The Dragon and the Unicorn* makes me wonder why George Woodcock did not quote that particular passage when telling us of the qualities of the poem.

I know that one should appreciate a poem for its imagery more than for its subject matter, but most members of the L.A.G. are egoistic enough to be more interested in knowing when our British activities are noticed by foreigners.

Some of us however can remember when the poet deigned to shun reality long enough to pay us a visit in our ivory tower, an experience which has inspired one of our members, Denis Poxwreath, to compose the following epic\*

When Kenneth Rexroth  
Visited the  
London Anarchist Group  
Nobody took much  
Notice.

No red carpet was laid  
Down no brass bands played.

To be treated like  
Anybody else must be  
Galling for an  
American Anarchist Poet.  
But as somebody  
Said,

"You're not an American  
Anarchist Poet  
You're just American."

\*Denis tells us it's easy to write this sort of poetry. You simply write prose and tell the printer to set it up in lines of unequal length.

PHILIP SANSON.

## Tut! Tut! Gentlemen please!

TOKYO, Aug. 3 (U.P.)—Violence flared in the Japanese Diet Saturday night after a representative called an opposition party woman law-maker a "streetwalker".

Mrs. Tsuruyo Tsutsumi, Right-wing Socialist, was heckling Ichiro Honda, a Liberal. Suddenly Jiro Arita, secretary general of the Liberal party, turned to the Socialist seats and shouted: "Shut up, you streetwalker."

Irate Socialists rushed at Mr. Arita, leaping over desks and shouting. Liberals tried to stem the attack. The free-for-all forced Vice-Speaker of the House Hyo Hara to call a recess only six minutes after opening the session.

## MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

#### OPEN AIR MEETINGS

Weather Permitting

HYDE PARK

Sundays at 3.30 p.m.

TOWER HILL

Tuesdays at 12.30 p.m.

INDOOR MEETINGS Watch this  
column for announcement of  
new meetings in September.

### NORTH-EAST LONDON

DISCUSSION MEETINGS  
IN EAST HAM

Alternate Wednesdays  
at 7.30 p.m.

AUG. 26.—General Discussion  
FREEDOM AND THE CHILD.

### GLASGOW

OUTDOOR MEETINGS  
from now until further notice

at

MAXWELL STREET,

Sundays at 7 p.m.

With John Gaffney, & others

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London, W.C.1 England

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