

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

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"Power corrupts, absolute
power corrupts absolutely."

—LORD ACTON

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Threepence

THE T.U.C. CONGRESS

BLOODLESS VICTORIES

MAE WEST is reputed to have once said: "It's not the men in your life that matters—it's the life in your men." Sir Lincoln Evans is reported to have said last week: "I have too much trade unionism in my blood to forget the ideals for which this movement stands," to which the response should surely be: "It's not the unionism in your blood that matters, it's the blood of your unionism!"

For this year's Trade Union Congress has been a very anaemic affair indeed. Resolution after resolution went through the mangle, to emerge with all red corpuscles well and truly squeezed out, looking not even pale pink, but pallid white with blue round the edges.

It is of course many years since anybody expected anything very startling to emerge from a Trade Union Congress, but it is certainly becoming more and more depressing to read year after year the evidence of the decay and corruption that has followed the knightships and respectability on the platform.

This year not one resolution was won against the opinion of the General Council. Not one important decision was taken which was not thoroughly reactionary—if not defeatist—in its effect. In the elections for next year's General Council not one Communist was elected, which in itself is no bad thing but does show the complete domination of the Deakin-Lawther, etc., influence, and their power to crush opposition.

Public Ownership

How democratic is the General Council? Perhaps if we look at the discussions on nationalisation (public ownership, they call it!) this year and last year, we can see that whatever Congress decides, the G.C. carries on and does what it wants.

Last year, against the wishes of the General Council, Congress passed a resolution calling upon it to prepare a report expressing the desire of Congress for more nationalisation.

This year G.C. presented a report in which it came out opposed to any further nationalisation except that of the water-works. (Maybe it's water that's got into their blood). With this we certainly agree, but for very different reasons, for whereas anarchists oppose nationalisation because we want workers' control, not State control, the G.C. is perfectly satisfied to carry on with private enterprise.

But, after all, last year's Congress did express the wish for a report supporting more nationalisation, but, as Bryn Roberts, of the National Union of Public Employees pointed out:

"The General Council did not want to undertake this task in the first place. That was made clear in last year's debate. It was made clear afterwards in speeches by Arthur Deakin, Lincoln Evans, and Tom Williamson. Before the Economic Committee could settle down

Putting the Opposition "Away"

LAST month in Pittsburgh United States District Judge Rabe Marsh sentenced five Communists convicted of conspiracy to advocate violent overthrow of the Federal government to maximum prison terms of five years.

The defendants included Steve Nelson, former western Pennsylvania chairman of the Communist party, who already is under a ten-to-20-year sentence for violating Pennsylvania's sedition law.

Others sentenced were Irving Weissman, West Virginia party leader; Ben Careathers, western Pennsylvania treasurer; James M. Dolsen, writer and charter member of the American Communist party, and William Albertson, western Pennsylvania party secretary.

the basic line had already been set. The report conforms more closely to the economic conceptions of Arthur, Lincoln, and Tom than to the wishes of the last Congress."

Some of the arguments this year, however, are of interest to us. For example, in presenting the report, C. J. Geddes, of the Post Office Workers pointed out that nationalisation could not bring them all the benefits they wanted nor could it remove all the evils of the present situation. He went on:

"Post Office workers are no better paid than anyone else; there had been no improvement in their working hours for fifty years, in spite of renewed demands.

"No one is so autocratic as a well instructed civil servant. We must be very careful that we do not create the menace of the autocratic civil servants or even more autocratic bureaucracy when we acquire industries for public ownership."

With that of course we agree, but again—what is the T.U.C.'s alternative?

Management

We mentioned last week the resolution demanding 50 per cent. membership on nationalised boards for trade union officials. It was opposed on the agenda by the General Council and so of course was defeated in Congress. But in putting it forward, J. S. Campbell of the N.U.R. said that on the railways there had been "tremendous enthusiasm" in welcoming the coming of nationalisation but this had been gradually dissipated over the years.

The confusion of thought which had led to the enthusiasm for nationalisation was expressed in further words of Campbell's, when he asked "Who could better express the aspirations of the working class than the working class itself? True enough, but how are working class aspirations expressed through having 50 per cent. ex-T.U. officials on nationalised boards? Are the minority they have at the moment doing anything for working class aspirations?"

More Production, Etc.

As a matter of course Congress went on record in favour of increased production—and restraint on wage claims.

On this issue Sir William Lawther had fun at the expense of the Comies, pointing out how enthusiastic they were for production drives elsewhere and how great were the Stakhanovites but how down they were on production increases in this country. Thus do the Communists lay themselves open to attack, but that does not alter the fact that the General Council of the T.U.C., all retired from the rough work of production, are quite prepared to sell the living standards of their members in order to keep capitalism going in Britain.

We could go on dealing with this Congress—but what's the use? It's the same old story of the reactionary leadership and a rank and file completely ignored. The only "rebellion" against the platform came from those with political axes to grind. The workers' voice is not heard.

How democratic is it? Well as Laurence Thompson wrote in the *News Chronicle* (8/9/53): "But no one really listens to the speeches. Hands are raised to vote according to decisions made over the week-end in smoke-filled committee rooms."

McCarthy Attacks Pentagon

SENATOR McCARTHY has taken on a formidable force in attacking the loyalty of the American Army Command. His most recent allegation concerns a secret and hitherto unpublished intelligence report prepared by the U.S. Army Far East Command in Tokyo which he has denounced as "clear cut Communist propaganda". This allegation has brought a sharp counter-attack from the Pentagon through an official Army spokesman.

"Not only," reports the *Times* Washington correspondent, "however, did the Army spokesman disprove with chapter and verse Senator McCarthy's allegations, but he carried the battle over into the Senator's field by pointing out that on the day Senator McCarthy made extracts of the document public to the Press it was still classified information—a charge to which the Senator is only too vulnerable, as for some weeks he himself has been discovering and condemning in Government departments similar breaches of security, and calling for stringent punishment of the offenders."

Dirty Linen in Public

But the controversy has served to bring to light aspects of governmental and army activity which are normally concealed from the public. We quote again from the *Times* (12/9/53):

"The document in question, extracts of which Mr. McCarthy had been attempting to interest the Press in for some months, is a lengthy publication drawn up long ago and dated January, 1952, restricted to about 100 copies for use of intelligence officers who might, in the

event of war with Russia, be assigned to duty in Siberia, presumably as occupying troops. Its purpose was to educate such officers as to 'psychological and cultural traits of Soviet Siberia,' and attempted a sober assessment of the kind of attitudes and opinions prevalent among the Russian people.

"With this aim certain parts of the book—and only those parts which seem to have been noticed by Mr. McCarthy—paint the Russians as human beings with certain understandable attitudes and even virtues, and not as mere Communist automata. In a passage that Mr. McCarthy singled out for censure the report likened Siberia 'in a social sense' to the American Far West in the 1880's, saying that it is a land of wide open spaces where, 'far more than in western U.S.S.R. all citizens are on an equal footing,' and where there are 'abundant opportunities for rapid advancement in the skilled trades and professions, and a man is paid according to what he produces . . . whatever other restrictions of Soviet authoritarianism, one freedom is maintained: that is the freedom of self-improvement, and advancement within an occupation.'

PURPOSE DEFINED

"The senator has made great play with

Do You Like the Human Race?

"I THINK the *Daily Mirror* is, perhaps, a vulgar but decent, awkward, backbiting, courageous newspaper. If you don't like the 'Daily Mirror', which is bought by four and a half million people and read by eleven million, you don't like the human race."—HUGH CUDLIFF.

Agriculture for Need

FOR many years now FREEDOM has been pointing to the disasters which derive from a world food production tied to market economy. Anarchists have urged, in this country at all events, that it is in every way desirable that a population should raise its own food as locally as possible.

Several months ago we reviewed H. J. Massingham and Edward Hyam's striking book *Prophecy of Famine* in these columns. It is with some surprise, but much gratification, that we see many of our cherished beliefs, sedulously propagated over the years in a seeming wilderness, appearing in so respected and widely read a publication as the *Listener* (3/9/53) as though they were the most natural and sensible in the world.

"The authors of *Prophecy of Famine* demand that we do no less, and explain, first, that a start is urgent, and secondly, how it can be done—chiefly by the reclaiming of waste and marginal land, a very much more careful use of the soil to avoid its exhaustion, and the return of the peasant. The authors contend that

France Asks for More Dollars for War

FRANCE is reported to have asked the United States for a further \$200 millions for Indo-China. The main purpose of the extra aid would be to speed up the training and arming of local Indo-Chinese forces on the eve of the expected autumn offensive by the Vietminh.

The French Budget deficit for 1953 is expected to be around £700 millions. M. Faure, the Finance Minister, is reported to have suggested that French military expenditure should be cut by about £70 millions in an attempt to balance the 1954 Budget.

The new request for American aid is additional to the \$400 millions for 1953-4 and the supply of arms to which the American Congress has already agreed.—Reuter.

Britain can be self-supporting, or very nearly so, provided that agricultural policy is one of mixed farming of small farms and that every available acre of usable land is properly used. This may be just possible, though, as the authors are well aware, such a revolution in our way of living would involve a complete change in our existing patterns of thought; something much more than a mere physical change-over would be demanded. Co-operation with the land must be the aim, not that concept of an industrialised, mechanistic civilisation—the 'conquest of nature'. The authors point out that this means considering always not what is economically efficient, but what is socially efficient. Economic 'efficiency' in farming created the great dustbowls of the U.S.A. The excuse that a certain type of farming is economically inefficient, that 'we can't afford it', is invalid when it is a question of seeing that the nation has enough to eat. The plain fact is that as other countries become more industrialised they require less of our manufactured goods and more of the food they once exported to us. For Britain, it may be, presently, not 'export or die' but what is exportable and where."

Particularly interesting here is the recognition that the American dustbowls are directly due to the idea of producing as cheaply as possible in order successfully to capture the world market in grain.

That such ideas are beginning to be current in intellectual circles is encouraging. But politicians are still far behind as the Socialists dream of nationalizing agriculture under large "economic" farming units shows. Nor are property owners, business men, chemical firms likely to take too kindly to the humanly right attitude towards agriculture. Its achievement is likely to remain a revolutionary task.

will be militarily useful in case of war . . ." There is something almost comically topsy turvy about all this. One might have thought that there was all too little of an attempt to understand the Russians going on in America. The Army's study is characteristically practical and thorough—yet it completely disclaims any aim of increasing international understanding, for their study only has relevance to the event of war! The liberal attitude of goodwill and understanding between peoples is neatly turned inside out.

This sort of "revelation" will be welcome to all those in this country (from the Communists and the Left wing of the Labour Party to the business men, scientists and members of parliament who sponsor increased trade with the Communist countries) as further evidence

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SPRINGHALL DIES IN MOSCOW

ACCORDING to a Reuter report Douglas Frank Springhall has died in a Moscow hospital. Springhall was National Organiser of the British Communist Party until his arrest in 1943 on spying charges for which he received a 7 year prison sentence. On his release he went to China where he served as an adviser to the Chinese information bureau in Peking.

Just as in 1943 the *Daily Worker* made no attempt to defend this prominent member of the Communist hierarchy so now it announces his death in four lines. It would be interesting to know in what way Springhall offended that he is dismissed, by the party he served so well, in a four line obituary.

SINCE this assertion is sometimes made by quite intelligent people it is necessary for an anarchist to be clear on the issue of power and freedom. The argument he must meet runs like this: Freedom is the ability to ignore the wishes of others. It is obtained only at their expense. In any society the wishes of its individual members must sometimes conflict. Hence only the dictator is completely free because only he has absolute power.

If he is successfully to disrupt this line of reasoning the anarchist must define his own position carefully. First we must distinguish between sorts of power. No anarchist objects to the power of the doctor to heal, the carpenter to make furniture, or the farmer to grow food. This power in itself is neither good nor bad—it is simply the power of knowledge, and the ethical question can be raised only relative to the ends for which it is employed. Nor can we object to the power to influence the behaviour of others by reasoning with them. This is a capacity which we all enjoy to some extent and without which any form of society is impossible. The sort of power to which the anarchist is fundamentally opposed is that which depends on violence or the threat of violence.

Having agreed that the power of the doctor to heal and that of the orator to influence is compatible with freedom, we have now to deal with coercive power.

Implied in the thesis we are examining there is the underlying assumption that man is by nature a competitive rather than a co-operative animal, and that his interests must therefore of necessity conflict with those of his fellows. It assumes that human relations are necessarily based on the exploitation of man by man, that for one to go up another must go down.

The biological aspect will not stand critical examination. In the first place there is no known organic basis for such a drive to compete. In the second place we know that all human behaviour apart from a few simple reflexes such as sucking, swallowing, coughing, etc., are learned. This means that all the more complex forms of human behaviour, including competing, are functions of the society in which the individual is nurtured.

If competitiveness were innate then all societies would be competitive. In fact some are not. True, these are among what we gratuitously call "primitive"

POWER IS FREEDOM

societies, although the professional anthropologist has learned to be wary about equating simplicity with primitiveness. Complexity as such is not patently desirable. However, the fact remains that, "primitive" or not, such societies can and do exist.

Possibly it is their size rather than their simplicity which holds a clue. In general, two people will less often find their interests conflicting than will three. Small communities can be highly integrated in a way that is difficult to maintain in a larger body. Common interests are more readily apparent when all are threatened by the same external pressure.

While it is true that the only society in which we could guarantee no conflict of interests whatsoever would be one in which all are in the mystic's state of non-attachment, i.e. completely devoid of desires, nonetheless, it is also conceivable that matters could be improved. It is fairly obvious that interests could be made to conflict less, and coincide a good deal more, than they do in our own society. Basically, we are faced with an educational problem.

Man has always manipulated his environment to meet his needs, but he long ago discovered that in the long run conservation of natural resources pays better than short-sighted exploitation. Agriculture grew on the realisation that the more you put in the more you get out.

An important part of the individual's environment has always been his fellow man. He is still learning that in the long run co-operation with this particular part of his environment pays better than competition and exploitation.

We owe it to our upbringing that our lust for power is so ingrained. From early childhood we have learned that violence or the threat of violence directed against us by a stronger party has unpleasant consequences for ourselves. We have been mis-educated into a negative way of life. Our socialisation has been carried out not by demonstrating the advantages of freely co-operating, but by inflicting or threatening violence if we did not obey. Partly this is due to the fact that it is by no means self-evident to a child that one reaps a great deal of benefit by becoming well-adjusted to the demands of a cock-eyed society.

The sort of difference in outlook that we must cultivate in dealing with children is illustrated by the alternative formulations: "If you are back in time for dinner it will still be hot". As against, "If you are not back in time for dinner I'll tan the bloody hide off you".

In short, what we are aiming at is enlightened self-interest. Our opponents will claim that a society of free individuals is as self-contradictory as a pack of lone wolves. They will say that if I am perfectly free, then I must be free to kill my neighbour if it so pleases me. This certainly follows logically. What also follows is that I am just as free not to kill my neighbour, but to help him, if I so choose. With a real education, instead of the mis-education that passes for such these days, the individual would see that his own long term advantage lay in co-operation rather than exploitation.

By now we must all be familiar with the gentleman who makes a habit of borrowing money and forgetting to pay it back. While he undoubtedly enjoys the immediate advantage of spending the cash, he suffers the long term disadvantage of being without a genuine friend he can turn to in time of real need. Such mildly psychopathic behaviour would disappear in a society where the child does not feel cheated of its right to be an individual, and is not methodically raped of its capacity for independence and need for integrity from birth onwards.

Sad Reflection

MR. R. H. APPLEBY said at a meeting of the South Derbyshire Education Executive at Derby that it seemed that you had to put the populace in a place of confinement before you could get it interested in culture.

He compared the general public's "small demand" for culture in South Derbyshire with the interest shown by prisoners at the "prison without bars" at Sudbury, near Derby. In the prison, it was reported, 85.6 per cent. of prisoners attended education classes in the 1952-3 session. Councillor J. W. Allitt, the chairman, said that, if the prisoners were outside the prison, they would not

be demanding culture. They would probably be doing something else.

This is not to say that we can hope to solve the entire problem of anti-social behaviour with a rational education system. The unhappy fact is that Mother Nature makes a certain proportion of mistakes and until we have a far greater understanding and control of genetics we shall have to deal with these mistakes one way or another. Just as about one birth in a thousand results in a monster which is left to die because of some gross organic defect, so also do we fall heir to a certain proportion of mental defectives. Some of these, like the cretins, need only regular doses of thyroid extract to become normal human beings. Others, like the mongols, are hopeless cases.

Parenthetically, it is interesting to observe the hypocrisy that is involved in the present "solution" of the problem. The limbless or faceless monster is not disposed of by euthanasia, which would involve the least possible suffering—that would be murder. No, it is simply put aside and left to expire from lack of attention. The mongol, who is just as readily identifiable at birth, is not granted even this early release, but is condemned to an existence of hopeless imbecility. You see, the mongol looks fairly presentable.

However, in a free society the main problem would be posed by those individuals, otherwise normal, whose adjustment collapses under even the mild stresses to be found in the least repressive of societies. For life, either in or out of any society, is bound to involve a certain degree of stress and to demand a certain amount of resilience on the part of the individual. And who would have it otherwise? Life without effort would be just too tedious for words and would be the most unbearable of all stresses. Even in interpersonal relations there are bound to be stresses. What we have to learn is the attitude of give and take which resolves such stresses with the minimum of dissatisfaction. The individual whose personality structure disintegrates under such minimal stresses poses a real social problem. What are we to do with the lunatic who thinks a child's head is a football?

Anarchist Problem of the Spanish Revolution

A WRITER on the Spanish Revolution faces many peculiar difficulties, some of them inherent in the complexity of the subject, but a number quite arbitrary and, so to speak, unnecessary. A bookseller remarked to me as he looked at the present volume under review, "Nobody is interested in Spain, nowadays." And he added that there had been so many books on the subject. . . Indeed, there have been hundreds of books in English on the Spanish War, but almost all of them, all but a mere handful, are trash. Journalists cashed in on the my-experiences-in-Spain line; political books of the Right and the Left selected material, much of it wholly untrue, to suit their own particular propaganda. The most voluminous and vocal of these were the Stalinists, who used

the most lying and tendentious methods to cover up their own counter-revolutionary rôle. But the socialists were also to blame, being so concerned to paint a picture of Spain as a democracy fighting against fascism and therefore deserving of help from other democracies, that they were most careful to refrain from mentioning the revolutionary aspects at all.

The result is that the available "histories" are now, with very few exceptions, completely empty and valueless. The playing down of the revolutionary struggle has also deprived the events of 1936-39 of their interest for post-war readers, who regard the Spanish Civil War with no greater interest than the Abyssinian War or Hitler's annexation of Czechoslovakia. There are very few who realize the tremendous revolutionary significance of the events in Spain.

These are the external difficulties. But there are also what may be called internal ones, difficulties felt by the revolutionary movement itself. The defeat of the revolutionary forces in Spain, first by the counter-revolution of the Communists and Right-wing Socialists, and then by Franco's military victory, involved the consequences of the policy of the revolutionary leaders, especially of the anarcho-syndicalists of the C.N.T. and the F.A.I. Heated discussion on the question of their policies during the years of struggle for many years took the place of historical analysis and the publication of historical material.

Recently the C.N.T. (Spanish National Confederation of Labour) in exile has begun the publication of some of the masses of historical material which must exist in their archives. Vernon Richards' book *Lessons of the Spanish Revolution*,* has drawn on this and other available material, and it represents, after all these years, the first analysis, in English, of the basic issues which confronted the revolutionary workers in Spain.

This alone makes it a book of very great importance, and it is a matter of tremendous regret that it should appear only now when most of those who were interested in Spain have had their appe-

tites jaded by so much contentious rubbish. It also suffers from another difficulty—the lack of a reliable account of the events as they unfolded from the glorious and heroic days of July 1936 through the counter-revolutionary putsch of the Stalinists in Barcelona during May 1937 to the final military defeat in the early spring of 1939. To have covered this ground and supplied the lack would have needed a volume of very much greater bulk.

Richards' book does in fact give the reader an account of the salient events but it does so in the course of discussing what was the attitude of the workers and the revolutionary "leaders" towards them. The result is an absorbing (though painful) study for the reader who already knows the essentials of Spanish history, but may well tax the concentration of a reader new to these events.

But what a reward is there for those who make the effort to understand the complexities of the subject matter! I venture to think that they will have acquired a far deeper insight into and grasp of the Spanish Revolution, than an account of events as they followed one another in simple sequence would have brought. Here are discussed the elections of February 1936 which brought the Popular Front to power. The military uprising and the workers' revolutionary response to it: the attitude of the Anarcho-syndicalist and the Socialist trade unions, and, in the case of the anarchists, the consequences that flowed from the positions they took up. There are accounts of the agricultural and industrial collectives, perhaps the most important revolutionary activities of the Spanish struggle, and finally of the successful counter-revolution and the political crises engineered by the Stalinists, and how it came about that the revolutionary workers succumbed to these intrigues.

The Spanish anarcho-syndicalists were a more numerous and better organized body of workers than the anarchist movement could show anywhere else in the world. Spain was the only country in which the workers were more inclined to anarchist and revolutionary concep-

tions rather than to socialist and reformist ones. In Spain, moreover, the Communists had a negligible footing. In July 1936 the revolutionary actions of the workers and peasants of the C.N.T. had immensely advanced the prestige of anarchism and revolutionary conceptions. The government was discredited and powerless. Yet before a year had passed the Communists had, with the aid of the Socialist politicians, wrested all power from the workers and achieved a counter-revolution so complete that the anti-fascist elements were utterly demoralized and fell easily to Franco's armies. The question of how the seemingly all powerful revolution came to be so decisively brought to nought, is the most important problem that lies before revolutionists, and it is this problem which Richards faces with an admirable honesty in this book. For the unpalatable truth has to be recognized that such a disastrous result could not have come about but for the mistakes of those anarchists who accepted positions of leadership. The analysis of these mistakes makes the most painful reading to anarchists. Yet it is an analysis which it is absolutely necessary to make if the students of revolutionary struggle are to learn anything from the tremendous losses and sacrifices of the Spanish revolutionary movement. It is not a question of judging, but of learning, and of determination to prevent similar mistakes and pusillanimities in the future. Such matters are not to be made mere material for polemics but for the most searching self-questioning.

And despite the terrible nature of some of the chapters of this book, the outstanding fact that emerges is the basic rightness of the revolutionary anarchist theoretical structure, and the justification for the anarchists' confidence in the revolutionary workers.

Many who are new to anarchist ideas will find in this book a clearer exposition of Anarchism, as it faced the practical problems of the revolution and of war in Spain, than many a theoretical treatise will give them. It should be read and pondered by every reader of FREEDOM, and there will be many for whom it will be a most moving and disturbing experience. J.H.

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**Lessons of the Spanish Revolution (1936-1939)*, by V. Richards. Freedom Press, London, 1953. pp. 154 with an index and a bibliography. 6s.

There are two sorts of answer. One is the *laissez-faire* policy which would leave such problems to be solved by other individuals on the spot. On this basis, after causing widespread destruction and misery the homicidal maniac would himself be killed. This solution seems neither humanitarian nor efficient. The other answer is to regard the lunatic as a sick person in need of psychiatric treatment. This confronts us with the possible necessity of using violence to restrain the maniac in order to give him the treatment he needs. To justify this course of action we may say that if he were in his right mind the lunatic would himself agree with such a decision in his own interests. Just as the patient suffering from delirium brought on by some fever is later grateful for the restraints that were placed upon him at the time and would want such restraints used again if ever he were similarly afflicted.

Thus the use of violence is to be socially sanctioned only when these two conditions are met. (a) The individual against whom it is directed must be a menace to himself and/or the community. (b) It is to be employed only in such a manner as ultimately to favour the individual's best interests.

This is a large concession to have to make against the principle of non-violence, but the alternative seems unrealistic. The trouble with the first condition is that any form of society would claim to be observing it. While the second is so loose that it might sometimes be hard to prove when it was being violated. No such pretence can be made of observing it in our present society, where action against the criminal is frankly punitive and vengeful. This is not a very happy solution, but then it is not a very happy problem. The kernel of this concession lies not in what it looks like on paper, but in how it is interpreted in practice. As we shall see, the ultimate safeguard of any individual's freedom is the freedom of his fellows.

Having defended the anarchistic position we may now sail into the attack against the power-hound. He maintains that he can be perfectly free only when he is world dictator. In fact such "freedom" is severely limited. He is trapped in his own machine. He can trust no-one because he is universally hated. He can never know the warmth of a genuine friendship. He can never know the truth because his henchmen will tell him only what they think he would want to hear. He can never be sure that the volcano he sits upon is not about to explode and destroy him. And even if he wants to he can never renounce his power. Like the gentleman who rode a tiger, he finds it difficult to dismount.

In truth, I can be free only when my fellow man is free too. For, so long as he holds power, lusts for it, or submits to it, my freedom is limited by the State machinery that he controls or serves. To free myself I must free my neighbour. His subjection, far from being a condition of my freedom, is incompatible with it, whether it be myself or another to whom he is subject.

There is just one further issue which the anarchist must face if he is to be consistent. According to our earlier

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Exhibitions

Children's Art

EXHIBITIONS of children's art are almost invariably delightful, and this present one at the Royal Institute Galleries at 195 Piccadilly, is no exception. Children have no difficulty about expressing themselves provided they are furnished with adequate means in the way of large pieces of paper, large pots of colour and brushes of a really good size, and the intelligent encouragement of a teacher.

This art, which blossoms best between the ages of five and fourteen, is most enjoyed if it is accepted as a complete art form practised only by children—that it is, in fact, solely concerned with childhood and has little relationship with more adult forms of art. It is an ability to charm without artifice which almost every child possesses.

The first experience I had on entering the Gallery was one of immense relief at so much uninhibited energy and unselfconscious colour. One can scarcely pass a single picture without something of its gaiety and delight catching at one's attention.

I left this delightful exhibition with the firm intention of informing all who enjoy pictures by children that on no account must they miss it. R.S.

THE IMPORTANCE OF REVOLUTIONARY HISTORY

MUCH discussion in Anarchist circles has a disappointingly unreal character. One is always hearing generalizations like "the workers will never do such and such" or that they "always do this" when a knowledge of revolutionary history shows them doing exactly "such and such", and teeming with instances which makes nonsense of the claim that they "always do" whatever it is. The satirical epigram to the effect that the study of history shows that men never learn from history is probably even truer in revolutionary circles than in men generally, as also is that other observation that the revolution always takes the revolutionaries by surprise.

History in general is often regarded as a tedious subject and it may be that one effect of their education for which anarchists do not fully allow is the antipathy for this subject which the schoolroom type of history book engenders in them. At all events those who organize weekly lecture series know well that a fair attendance may be expected for a lecture on sex or a debate on some controversial issue but a lecture on a historical revolution calls forth a very poor attendance indeed.

How many anarchists in this country to-day know the salient facts of, say, the Paris Commune or of the Kronstadt Revolt? And how many have not said to themselves that study of these questions is all very well, but what relevance do they have to the problems of the future? Too often they turn aside from the historical study of revolutionary episodes and lose themselves in speculation of one sort or another.

Now the fact is that every revolution poses similar problems and it is the study of these problems which, in the past, has resulted in the main tenets of practical revolutionary theory. A knowledge of revolutionary history provides a factual basis for the discussion and pondering of many a problem which, one may be fairly sure, will become a practical issue on the next occasion when a revolutionary situation presents itself.

Moreover there is on the positive side a development of revolutionary conceptions as to practical questions. During the Russian revolution of 1917 one of the most daring and forceful figures was the anarchist Nestor Makhno whose "peasant army" held at bay both the interventionist armies in the Ukraine and the forces commanded by their nationalist protégés, Skoropadsky and Petlura. Makhno's armies were finally set upon from the rear by the Red Army, and Makhno himself had to escape into exile, later to die from tuberculosis in Paris.

But before he died he had met in Paris Buenaventura Durruti, then also an exile—from the Spain of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship. Durruti later became the inspirer of the workers' militias in the early days of the Spanish revolution—those voluntary militias which achieved almost miraculous victories over Franco's armies. It seems almost certain that Durruti learnt a tremendous amount from his friend Makhno, for his successes and influence were just in that field that Makhno had himself made outstanding advances in. Here we have an example of continuity in teaching from one aspect of the Russian revolutionary experience which was to bear fruit less than twenty years later in Spain.

But we must also be careful about revolutionary history. The school books tell of kings and the dates of battles, but very little of the life and struggles of the populations. Most histories of revolutions follow the

same pattern. One hears of the deposed leaders, and of the leaders who followed them: much about Louis and Marie-Antoinette on the one hand, and of Robespierre and Danton and Bonaparte on the other. But the moving force of a revolution is the anonymous mass of the people and of this the bourgeois historians seldom speak. Nothing indicates the truth of this observation more powerfully than a perusal of Kropotkin's great book *The Great French Revolution*. In it he is chiefly concerned with tracing what the people themselves did, how they reacted to the events which they had initiated, and how they were shepherded and controlled by the "revolutionary" leaders. For many such a study will open their eyes to aspects of events they had never before considered, and which will permanently alter their thinking.

Such a method also informs V. Richards' study of the *Lessons of the Spanish Revolution* recently published as a book by Freedom Press and reviewed in this issue. The understanding of revolutionary history is of an importance which we cannot overstress. It makes for our understanding of contemporary events, a greater sureness in assessing revolutionary problems, and a much enhanced respect for what Kropotkin called "the creative power of the masses".

POWER IS FREEDOM

Continued from p. 2

analysis the only sort of power to which we were objecting was that based on violence or threat of violence. In which case it might be argued that in Huxley's *Brave New World* we see the perfect anarchist society. No coercion is necessary because all are conditioned to be content with their pre-ordained lot.

The anarchist's objection to this must be fundamental and probably metaphysical. Huxley's satire derives its horror from the materialistic set of values which it glorifies. Although everyone in the *Brave New World* is satisfied, in the sense that no-one but the hero conceives of a state of affairs more worthwhile striving for, from an anarchist's point of view this sort of contentment is tawdry, hollow and mechanical.

In the *Brave New World* happiness is a by-product of drugs. The sort of sterile and uncreative euphoria experienced by a hebephrenic schizophrenic. Nor are the joys of rich, varied and sincere human relationships to be found in it. There is no room for the creative artist, be he painter or poet, novelist, composer or playwright. The philosopher is redundant and the scientist hamstrung. As a society it is at a dead-end. With the quest for the Eternal Verities of Truth, Goodness and Beauty abandoned, man becomes no more than a consumer—a set of cold, Marxist digestive pipes. In other words it is an *inhuman* society.

As anarchists we are bound to have a set of humanistic values and be prepared to defend them, even at the cost of being exposed as metaphysicians or mystics. To conduct our personal affairs we may well find ourselves left with such a woolly principle as "The sum total of happiness in the Universe", but a more specific ethic would probably be too rigid for use in a truly free society. Without some such set of values our ideal of a free society becomes meaningless, for then we might as well embrace the *Brave New World*.

BOB GREEN.

Let the Government Choose Your Bride!

FROM the personal column of the *Times* (14/9/53) we cull the following:

"IRANIAN STUDENTS.—According to instructions received from the competent Iranian authorities no Iranian student should marry, or become engaged to marry, a woman of foreign nationality without first obtaining the permission of the Imperial Iranian Government.—Swedish Embassy, Iranian Division."

Until diplomatic relations with Persia are resumed the Persian government will have to continue to conduct its diplomatic business through a "good offices" government such as Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries provide—nowadays by frequent necessity.

THERE is only one good reason for the coining of a new word, and that is the necessity of referring to something no word already in use can adequately describe. The family of isms, however, is already far too numerous, and new additions to it usually do no more than regroup traits and instances perfectly familiar under different words. This may be also the case with my *limitationism*, but a new word sometimes is lucky enough to arouse fresh interest in old controversies and ideas. To be thus lucky limitationism would have to supersede that old acquaintance 'the sense of realities' which caused unpopularity to many anarchists who, thinking they knew it on more intimate terms, wished their comrades to pay it as much respect and consideration as they did themselves.

The sense of reality is opposed to dream and desire, and when definitely acquired or sedulously cultivated, it means the end of both. It also means a surrender of the individual's autonomy, the damping of his creativeness and joy, and submission to external forces. It leads one to recognize reality only in the latter, and by denying it to dreams and desires, it takes all strength away from them, and dooms them to defeat without a battle. These are sufficient grounds already to justify the anarchist's aversion to the sense of realities, but there is the further reason that the concept, thus understood, fits only within the pattern of a rudimentary and childish psychology.

In an adult and clear-minded individual dream does not come into conflict with outside reality because he does not mistake the one for the other nor does he expect the one to beget the other. He has transformed the active force of dreams into ideals, that is he sees things and persons not only as they readily lend themselves to analysis and classification, but in a meaningfulness they themselves suggest and have in them to achieve. He knows also that the ideal becomes actuality not through some effortless miracle, but through his faith in the persons and things he loves, and his generosity in helping them in their growth. Similarly, desire in him is not a vision of the object desired and blindness to anything else, but also knowledge of obstacles and conditions attending both its pursuit and attainment. The more adult and the more clear-minded he is the more all realities tend to lie for him on the same plane so that not only does he want the ends in the means, but also the means in the ends, with no need for justification or moral alibi.

This quasi-parity and interpenetration of ends and means affords the first and central meaning to the word limitationism. The anarchist in particular is disciplined by it in his contemplated and actual behaviour because he will not let himself desire ends the attainment of which entails means that are repugnant, while by his commitment to means that are not repugnant, he fails effectively to compete against men of other creeds in the change of conditions and circumstances necessary to the realization of his cherished ends.

★

IT may appear thus that the position of the anarchist is contradictory and self-defeating. According to the general opinion, in fact, anarchists will never achieve anything. If they are strong enough to affect a political situation they are regarded as a nuisance and treated accordingly as soon as circumstances permit. The political weakness and incapacity of the anarchists may have, of course, other causes, but it is only the self-imposed limitations in the use of

"LIMITATIONISM"

means limiting in turn the range of ends likely to be achieved which is a particular feature of anarchism and will always be there.

The choice of anarchism, from the individual's point of view, has obvious and unparalleled advantages. It means the fulfilment of one's ideals and of one's satisfactions, without distinction between higher and lower, with no postponement or deputation. The recognition of other people's autonomy, discomfiting to the child, is to the adult the source of a richer and abiding personality.

This choice, however, is not often made, partly because the individual's freedom of choice has become little more than a legal assumption, partly because of the unusual courage it demands in a civilization of devolved and anonymous responsibilities, but also because having not yet been tried on a social scale it is considered to be short-sighted and doomed to failure at the striking of each hour of historical decision.

In history books written by the winning party, hours of decision shape things as they do thanks to the foresight of some leader of genius and to the compact will of the supporters of his cause. Such hours, however, strike when the situation is most fluid and undecided, and the victory obtained by one party is mainly the result of luck and of their opponents' blunders. Victory, moreover, never brings the fruits it promises; the cause that emerges after victory is not the one contemplated by its initiators; many of its original supporters have died, and the more recent ones are differently motivated, and, under pressure of new problems and conflicts, abandon it the more completely the more loudly they swear their loyalty to it in words. Under such circumstances an individual's choice of a cause other than the anarchist offers no more than greater chances of physical survival, though a crypto-anarchist will probably stand just as many.

★

LIMITATIONISM in its second sense can now be defined as the anarchist's refusal to set himself aims beyond the possibilities of his individual power. With humility and common sense, which if generally shared he believes would save the world its chronic misery and the massacres of its historical hours, he declines to offer a solution to problems that cannot be settled by immediate and direct action on his part. He also declines responsibility for other people's evils, and when he addresses the oppressed it is not to pose as their saviour but to urge them to achieve their own salvation themselves.

Yet the anarchist, while refusing to exert power over any man, does not condemn its use against men that can be recognized as the oppressors of others. If he refused all power he would be powerless himself. Whether limitationism, in its second sense, is responsible for his generally anodine and negligible contri-

bution to the actual fight against oppression is a question worth going into. His fight as an individual is made largely ineffective by compromises, renunciations and actual submissions made necessary by the fact that he lives in a non-anarchist society. But as soon as he joins hands with other anarchists in the publication of a paper, in a workers' union and other forms of organization which, as in the case of the Spanish F.A.I., can even approximate in size and efficiency to a political party, his power against oppression is no longer negligible, and may indeed acquire historical significance. Limitationism still obtains, but when on an associational and organisational plane, compromises, renunciations and submissions are limited in turn by the responsibility of the individual towards the organisation, and of the organisation towards its members and those sectors of society it most immediately affects.

An anarchist organization does not impose power upon its members but receives it from them through their number, loyalty and ardour. It intends to use it against all oppressors within striking distance. But will it strike only with anarchists and for the cause of anarchism, or will it assume responsibility also for classes and groups of oppressed who lack the initiative of rebellion or simply don't understand it in the anarchist way?

There is no doubt that the success of the communist parties all over the world is due primarily to the fact that they have assumed the responsibility of managing and defending the workers' cause. If it is true that they used the revolutionary spirit of the working class to further aims alien and indeed harmful to its interests, it is not less true that they often had to sacrifice these aims and give valuable support to workers' grievances in order to secure a loyalty without which communism would lose entirely its international appeal.

The problem of limitationism is a problem of responsibilities. Apart from the competition of parties and other organisations, the anarchist movement will not stand a chance of appreciably increasing its size and importance unless

Continued on p. 4

Those Scientists!

"MOST scientists are illiterate, inarticulate, and irresponsible," Mr. Ritchie Calder, chairman of the Association of British Science Writers, told the Assembly of Corresponding Societies. They were illiterate because the test of literacy was the capacity to communicate ideas and scientists had become the hostages of their own professional slang; inarticulate because they could not or would not express themselves intelligibly; and irresponsible because they would not accept their responsibility to explain how their work would affect ordinary people's lives.

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THE degree of reform that has been gained so far has not been won by direct action. It has been more by the threat of it. The political Labour Party has had behind it the industrial might of the trades unions, and the ruling class has seen that it is wiser to collaborate with the Labour and T.U. leaders in their modest demands than openly to flout them and run the risk of direct action with its attendant awakening of revolutionary spirit among the workers.

This shows the tendency of reformism. Seeing their leaders getting some of the things they want, and being most of the time neatly sidetracked on really important issues (by their leaders) there is a complacency widespread among workers expressed through the words "Things are not so bad". And finding that conditions have improved during the last fifty years—the years of growth of the Labour Party—workers give that party the credit and are prepared to let it carry on doing things for us.

Blunted and Softened

And this is the great danger of parliamentary reformism. The danger in an anarcho-syndicalist organisation is that it will become so involved in fighting day-to-day issues that it will lose sight of the final goal, but at least its methods are such as to encourage self-reliance and the development of working class strength where it is most effective. It's function will be the forging of the revolutionary weapon, which will be sharpened and tempered in the present class struggle.

But the parliamentary reformist way, in the first place, does not hold up any clear final goal to be striven after. Who can tell us exactly what sort of society

REFORM & REVOLUTION—5

the Labour Party wants to lead us to? What precisely is the Trade Union movement aiming at? All one can get is vague references to "Socialism", or "Industrial Democracy" which can mean, it seems, dozens of different things to different people. And the weapons they forge blunt and soften what revolutionary aspirations the people have.

In Order of Priority

There are, however, limits to the reforms that can be gained through Parliamentary means, and there are indications that we are reaching those limits now, or will be reaching them in the near future. The reforms that have been given us during the Labour Party's period of office since the war are being tampered with—the Health Service, for example, is no longer even nominally "free"—and the honeymoon period of the sellers' market during which the capitalists could afford to give us concessions is now ending with the re-emergence of competition from abroad. The grand reform given to the dockers by Ernest Bevin—the decasualisation scheme—has had to be reconsidered in the light of unemployment in the docks. The hardening attitude of employers towards wage increases is an indication that wages are not going up any more if they can help it.

The thing is that reforms won under capitalism are subject to the ability of capitalism to maintain them. And under capitalism a lot of things come before social services and the wellbeing of the workers in order of priority. First and foremost come profits—the motive

for which the system is maintained. Then come defence needs—themselves also a source of profit for many capitalists. Then comes stability, the needs of Empire, and all sorts of important considerations before the people who produce all the wealth can be considered.

So that social reforms are wide open to attack in time of economic crisis—which is most times! They are at best of a temporary nature and can only be regarded seriously as stop-gaps. The only reformist measures which will remain secure are those which operate in the interests of the ruling class. In this country these are the nationalisation of the unprofitable basic industries

Access to Benefits

For we have often pointed out that although the Tories are very keen to get their hands on steel and road transport again, they are very careful to say nothing about coal mining and railways, which were not profitable under free enterprise.

But these are reforms in which I don't think we should be interested anyway. Those reforms which should be fought

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GIOVANNI BALDELLI.

"Limitationism" Continued from p. 3

it takes upon itself the task of alleviating and terminating concrete forms of oppression with a clear view of the action to be taken in each case, and a determination not to disavow results, however unexpected and unpalatable they may be. Workers, however, do not turn to anarchism even if they find it supremely beautiful and right, but to organisations like the Labour Party in England and the Communist Party on the Continent, that offer them tangible support, visible signs of determination and strength, leadership and assurance to see the struggle through.

As the course of history cannot be given a turn which it might have taken some fifty or one hundred years ago, it is extremely unlikely that the working class will shift their allegiance from the

parties to which they belong at present to an anarchist organisation which, even if it should materialise as a specific working class organisation would probably soon take forms very similar to those of the above-mentioned parties. Limitationism then seems to require another basis for anarchism than the working class basis on which the Labour and the Communist parties rest. This other basis is to be found if anarchism is to expand. On the other hand it must be ready to take responsibilities towards the society it intends to revolutionise. So long as it does not, people will continue to regard it as an antisocial movement, a movement for the promotion of anarchy defined by dictionaries as synonymous with disorder and chaos.

Comments

UP-TO-DATE MISSIONARIES IN AFRICA

MONSIEUR LEO PETILLON, Governor General of the Belgian Congo, in an interview in the capital, Leopoldville, said that his Government:

"did not want to install democracy yet in this country, but to teach democracy."

After seventy years of Belgian rule, even the most uncritical democrats will surely admit that these objectives are very modest indeed!

Acting on the advice given by Livingstone some hundred years ago that "sending the gospel to the pagans" must also include the development of commerce, the modern missionaries to the Belgian Congo have arrived in motorized banks on wheels, and with the aid of loud-speakers, advertising and propaganda have in the space of two years induced more than 120,000 natives to invest their "savings" in the Caisse d'Epargne (savings bank). To be sure, their "savings" are not very large; 40,000 of the accounts are of less than seven shillings, and the average account is of no more than thirty five shillings. So no one can assert that these banks on wheels—these bank missionaries—are getting fat on the proceeds. Indeed the State savings institute in its official report expresses its "satisfaction" that the new accounts are getting progressively smaller; that they are so small that book-keeping and administration costs make them a burden rather than a source of profit to the bank! These bank clerks go about their work with the

same fervour and zeal as any Salvationist in the slums of the West. They set up their little tables at strategic points on the roads of temptation that lead from the natives' places of work to the beer house—the greatest menace to the savings movement—and, stary eyed, they cajole the natives bent on drowning their sorrows to think of the morrow, the future of their country and of democracy!

Thus the Congo native—who has been described by his white saviours as "only a couple of generations from cannibalism and fetish worship"—is being taught his first lesson in democracy, the fetish worship of the West: Money!

World Hunger

IT is the proud boast of the supporters of the Welfare State that acute poverty and under-nourishment have been abolished; that infant mortality has decreased and the expectation of life has increased. That is true if one limits one's survey to a few favoured countries in the world. But, unless one can ignore the fate of one's brothers and sisters throughout the world, certain hard facts must be faced-up to. According to figures published by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation last Sunday world production of food during the year 1952-53 is higher than ever, yet

an estimated 70% of the people in the world do not eat enough to maintain their health and strength.

The immediate problem is one of distribution. Whereas in the Far East, excluding China, production is 15-20 per cent. below the insufficient pre-war level, in Latin America 5% below and in Europe about pre-war level, in N. America that level has been exceeded by 20%. The result is that whereas the number of hungry people has increased in some parts of the world, surpluses have piled up in others. Capitalist economy cannot solve this problem other than by cutting down production where there is a surplus (that is in the most fertile and developed areas) and by encouraging cultivation in the less-developed regions, for, it is argued, there are not enough ships to carry the food required nor money enough to pay for it.

There was no shortage of ships to transport vast armies and armaments across the world to make war (and only recently we read of a proposal to "scrap" 1,000 Liberty ships which were laid up in America and declared "obsolete" by the experts), and there was no shortage of money to wage a world war for six years, and to carry through an armament programme during the past eight years surpassing that of the previous six. Yet now we are asked to believe that there are not the ships nor the money to solve the problem of the world's hunger—for food!

LIBERTARIAN.

for as an educational practice should be those which carry immediate benefits for workers. Nationalisation does not fall under this category—the Health Service does. State control of industry has simply meant a change of masters, the Health Service has meant access to benefits which has improved the well-being and every-day life of millions.

McCarthy Attacks Continued from p. 1

of the dastardly war mongering of the United States. No doubt it will be seized upon by the "peace-loving" government of the Soviet Union and the devoted band of dove fanciers on the other side of the Iron Curtain. But it is as well to have a sense of proportion. Such activity has become a normal part of military preparedness. Successful conduct of the task of occupying enemy territory in time of war may make the difference between adequate and calm organization of supplies and communications with the advanced front, and grappling with a resistance movement well supported by a sullen and hostile population conducting a harrying rearguard campaign. Every military command of the great powers must prepare for such eventualities, in this country, in France, in Russia—as well as in the United States. And the neglect to conduct such studies would be bitterly stigmatized by "responsible" politicians if the event showed them to have been inadequately prepared.

Only those can object to such activity who denounce military preparations altogether. To anarchists there is a dreadful moral obliqueness in the Army attitude of only being interested in understanding a people the better to conquer and reduce them to subjection. But there is little to recommend a pacifism which merely denounces military preparations without considering other means of dealing with the undoubted hostility between the major powers.

Such Army preparations may shock one—the more so if one realises that every great power is engaged in being so prepared—but merely to denounce it is to accept a feeble, and to most normal people, wholly untenable position. Obviously the expansionist and self-protective aspirations of rival imperialisms offer a threat to the security of ordinary people and will continue to do so while the world is divided into mutually hostile states uneasily organized in power alliances. Security can only come by the disappearance of such a state of affairs—clearly a revolutionary state of affairs.

Anarchists are also very much interested in the Russian people, but they see them only as ordinary folk who are part of the common people all over the world whose human hopes and aspirations are the same, and are easy to understand. We see them as allies against their governments in the struggle to set up a free and secure world. But we can scarcely be so naive as to imagine that the Russian people will see us or the American

And it is precisely the worth-while reforms which will be attacked first, and which therefore will have to be defended. But how? It seems that the reformists in Parliament have means of bringing in their measures when circumstances allow, but no means of defending them when circumstances dictate their end or adjustment. P.S.

(To be concluded).

people in that light if we are marching behind the Pentagon or arriving in the wake of a saturation bombing drive. The peoples of the world can only reach a free and equal mutual understanding if they all seek it in despite of governments and military leaders.

Liberals and humane folk will do well to ponder these considerations. Either one supports governments and military preparation with all the moral unpleasantness this Pentagon document reveals; or one rejects them altogether and goes over to revolutionary conceptions, which offer friendly feelings between peoples without the deceptions and fearfulness that conceals a weapon behind one's back "just in case".

Understatement

A SENTENCE of six months' imprisonment passed on David Alfred Thomis Skeggs (28), of Narrow Way, Bromley, for stealing a pint of oil worth 1s. 6d. from East Croydon railway station while employed as a labourer by British Railways, was reduced to 14 days on appeal at Croydon Quarter Sessions yesterday. The Recorder (Mr. G. R. Blanco White, Q.C.), commented: "I think the sentence is altogether too severe."

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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