

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"I am not really free if my freedom and my right do not find their confirmation and sanction in the liberty and right of all men my equals."
 BAKUNIN

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Threepence

THE CAUSE AND THE LESSONS OF THE PETROL STRIKE

ONCE again the great city of London has had a salutary reminder of its dependence upon a small number of industrial workers. The strike of a mere handful of men—3,000 out of Greater London's ten million—has shown the vulnerability of our industrial society, and is once again a pointer to the tremendous strength that could be exerted by an organised working class.

The wave of strikes that has gone through the country recently is an indication of the deep-seated unrest which is simmering just below the surface, and the fairly superficial causes which have sparked off some recent strikes show that it is not taking much to bring into the open tensions and grievances which are only just hidden.

The strike of 3,000 oil and petrol tanker-drivers is an example. This began with the refusal of one man to join the Transport & General Workers' Union, and the equal refusal of his fellow workers to work alongside him if he didn't.

An Ex-N.C.O.

This took place at a fuel-depot in Fulham, where for some time representatives of both the union and of the management had urged this particular driver to join the union. Now it is possible that there may be much more to these particular circumstances than merely concern for the principle of 100 per cent. unionism, for the driver concerned is an ex-sergeant-major from the Army. He may therefore have betrayed attitudes towards his fellow-drivers characteristic more of a sergeant-major than of a fellow-worker.

But whether that is so or not, this incident put a flame to the fuel-drivers' grievances and apprehensions and the strike blew up.

And then it became known that there was much more to the dispute than one man's refusal to join a union. For weeks—since June—union officials and management had been discussing a re-arrangement of the work of fuel distribution. The oil companies have decided that some of their products—paraffin and tractor fuel—shall be distributed by agents instead of directly by themselves.

Strikers' Demands

The tanker-drivers see this as a threat to their earnings—particularly as there is no guarantee that the agents will employ union labour. The immediate effect of handing-over to agents will be a drop in overtime and—as so often happens—the drivers have realised that they cannot live on their basic wages.

The strikes demands then, resolved themselves into a question not only of non-union labour, but also into a demand for a wage-increase of 10s. a week—retrospective to August 1st. They want non-union drivers dismissed, then negotiations for their re-instatement, subject to joining the union; they want an undertaking that all distributing agents will conform to union agreements; and they want 10s. a week more pay.

Now none of this is very revolutionary. This is all business that could be carried out by the Transport & General Workers' Union perfectly well. Why wasn't it? Well, in fact negotiations were going on. And on and on and on. And for all the men concerned could see, negotiations were getting them nowhere. So the strike flared up.

Not only at Fulham. The strike was solid in the whole London area. Drivers at all depots refused to move their tankers and before two days had passed the effects began to be felt, as pump after

pump at garage after garage began to run dry.

Troops Go In

There we began to see just how much London depends on these 3,000 workers to keep the wheels turning—for the wheels were coming to a stop. Taxis began to lessen on the road (not a bad idea, private motorists say), London Transport announced cuts in bus services, those garages with any petrol left began to ration it strictly to doctors and essential users, and by Thursday night (the strike began in Tuesday) the Automobile Association had rescued 400 cars stranded in Central London.

The Government, ever mindful of our well-being, then decided to intervene. Because there had been no official notification of a dispute, no peace-making machinery could be brought into action. (As a matter of fact, the oil companies themselves professed no knowledge of the causes of the strike other than what they read in the Press). But of course the troops could be brought in. First 2,000 Army, Navy and Air Force drivers, and then a further 4,000 with personnel skilled in handling fuel oils, converged on the depots and very soon the petrol was flowing again.

Continued on p. 4

American Post Office Censors Mails

HOW many Americans know asks *Worldover Press* that the Post Office Department and the U.S. Customs Bureau have set themselves up as censors of mail from Europe? And in apparent violation of the law, or at least a stretching of legal authority? Many Americans for reasons of scholarship, journalism, and even the counteracting of Communism, subscribe to the publications issued in Soviet Russia. Some U.S. Communists also subscribe, for their own motives. The P.O. decides, however, with arbitrary secrecy, who may receive such publications and who may not, and among those denied the periodicals are often those known widely for their anti-Communist activities.

Recently, too, travellers returning from trips to Europe have in some cases been compelled to tell customs examiners what newspapers, magazines and books they are bringing with them.

More Official Action Against Communists in the Colonies

THE British action in Guiana has touched off actions against communists in many other parts of what used to be the British colonial empire. For example in Ceylon, the Colombo dock companies on 24th October called on the Port Commission to rid the Port Workers of Communist influence. It is plain that they are more concerned to use Communism as a stick to attack unionism with than to express a real dislike of Communist methods.

The Port Commissioner has shown a somewhat cautious attitude to the employer's request, and has said that he discounts some of their assertions. "Up to now pool labourers had been loyal to the port and had not followed the dictates of the Communist unions—sometimes at personal risk." (*Reuter* message).

Gold Coast Communists Dismissed

Altogether more interesting is the dismissal by Prime Minister Dr. Kwame Nkrumah of two prominent members of his Convention People's Party—especially as the British authorities dubbed Nkrumah himself a Communist before he came to power.

The two officials in question were Mr. Anthony Woode, who had recently been successful in bringing the Gold Coast trade unions under the control of Nkrumah's party, and Mr. Turkson Ocran, the General Secretary of the Gold Coast Trade Union Congress. Together, they had recently succeeded in disaffiliating the Gold Coast T.U.C. from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions with a view, presumably to joining the Moscow dominated World Federation of Trade Unions.

Mr. Woode was dismissed while he was actually attending the Congress of the W.F.T.U. now being held in Vienna. Significantly, the Gold Coast office of I.C.F.T.U., which was given orders to quit at the time of disaffiliation, have ignored it.

There seems a likelihood, therefore, that the Colonial Office's action in Guiana is not to be regarded as merely local. Dr. Nkrumah may well have taken the view that it would be prudent to avoid the situation which Dr. Jagan finds himself in. No doubt, the difficulties of office have made many disappointments among those who regarded Gold Coast nationalism as the solution to all the countries' difficulties; and the Colonial Office is much too wily not to be aware of such results and is never slow to turn such opportunities to good account.

At all events Dr. Nkrumah has declared publicly that he was utterly opposed to getting involved in the international conflicts between the I.C.F.T.U. and the W.F.T.U. "Our purpose," he said, "is to remain neutral during the present phase of our struggle for independence," and he added later that there could never be any question of exchanging British masters for Russian masters. The two members of his government have been dismissed "pending further investigation into their conduct, which may lead to total expulsion". They were "associated with a foreign organisation with which the Convention People's Party had no connection whatsoever", and "it is not in the best interest of our country for any nationalist engaged in the struggle for independence to allow himself to be used by a Communist organization".

Such declarations may well be aimed at forestalling a Colonial Office *coup* on the Guiana model: they certainly make it more difficult for the British Government to use the current Communist cry in any witch-hunt against Nkrumah's party. This is a diplomatic struggle which will repay further study.

'The Human Dregs' of Fleet Street

A FEW months ago the *Evening Standard* ran a series of articles in which the conditions prevailing at Broadmoor were discussed as well as some of the acts which had brought the inmates within its walls.

An interesting case which could be directly traced to the repressive nature of our society was of a puritanical woman who had strangled her employer's little girl to prevent her growing up into a world of bestial men. The writer of these articles (certainly no anarchist) explained that the woman had a subconscious desire for sexual intercourse, the repression of which had resulted in murder.

This is of course an extreme case in the sense that murder was actually committed, but think of the millions of such "puritans" who contaminate our society and who will perhaps never see the inside of a police court.

Such a one is John Gordon of the *Sunday Express* who featured in the columns of *FREEDOM* at the time of the release of the Kinsey Report on the Human Female, when we tried to analyse the mind of this immature, uninformed individual who unfortunately through the columns of the *Sunday Express* is able to reach millions more immature uninformed people and so arrest their further development.

His latest purity campaign is directed against homosexuals in general and John Gielgud in particular, who foolishly put himself in a position which enabled the police to pick him up on a charge of importuning. We reprint most of John Gordon's vicious tirade to give those readers of *FREEDOM* who never see a copy of the *Sunday Express*, some idea of the nature of this individual who thrives on the tragedies and misfortunes of other people:

"Because the offence to which Gielgud pleaded guilty, with the excuse that he had been drinking, is repulsive to all normal people, a hush-hush tends to be built round it.

Sensitive people shrink from discussing it. Newspapers are disinclined to swing on the searchlight of public exposure, regarding it as a peculiarly unsavoury subject.

WHAT HAVE been the consequences of that delicacy? The rot has flourished behind the protective veil until it is now a widespread disease . . .

It is often pleaded on behalf of these human dregs that they are artistic or intellectual creatures who, because of their special qualities, should have special freedoms.

That is not so. The vice is as prevalent among the lowbrows as it is among

the highbrows. The Assize calendars show that.

THE SUGGESTION that peculiar people should be allowed peculiar privileges is arrant nonsense. The equally familiar plea that these pests are purely pathological cases and should be pampered instead of punished is almost as rubbishy.

It is time the community decided to sanitise itself. For if we do not root out this moral rot it will bring us down as inevitably as it has brought down every nation in history that became affected by it.

There must be sharp and severe punishment. But more important than that, we must get the social conscience of the nation so roused that such people are made social lepers.

It is utterly wrong that men who corrupt and befoul other men should strut in the public eye, enjoying adulation and applause, however great their genius. Decent people should neither accept them nor support them.

And I would suggest that in future the nation might suitably mark its abhorrence of this type of depravity by stripping from men involved in such cases any honours that have been bestowed upon them."

This is not the time to discuss whether homosexuality can be effectively cured, or if indeed such a cure is desirable. But it can be said with certainty that not only does sexual behaviour vary widely from civilization to civilization but even within the narrow confines of our own culture; the variety of sexual behaviour is far wider than could ever be imagined by the "human dregs" of Fleet Street. Further, it is commonly accepted nowadays that most people at some period of their lives have had homosexual experience, generally occurring in adolescence.

The venom with which John Gordon writes against any behaviour not falling into the category which he considers normal leads one to believe that, like the woman in Broadmoor, he has subconscious desires which he cannot put into operation. Let us hasten to add however that we are not suggesting he would go to the lengths of murdering little boys in order to save them from John Gielgud.

The simple economic answer of course is that perhaps John Gordon is writing the vicious rubbish that Lord Beaverbrook and the readers of the *Daily Express* want. But whichever way you look at him, selling himself to Lord Beaverbrook or pandering to his neurosis, he still appears as a very grimy figure.

R.M.

[see Editorial On Toleration p. 3]

The Debate on the British Guiana White Paper . . . And a Good Day was Had by All

FOR six hours last Thursday week the House of Commons debated the White Paper on British Guiana. Fortunately for the politicians Hansard is read by a very small minority, for its 120 columns reporting the contributions from a packed House, reveal the general low standard of thought there assembled. The government motion was quite straightforward:

"That this House approves the action of Her Majesty's Government in British Guiana."

The Labour opposition which could not accept this motion without making a debate unnecessary, therefore introduced an amendment proposing the deletion of all the government motion except the words "That this House" and to be followed by

"whilst emphatically deploring the actions and speeches of some of the leaders of the People's Progressive Party in British Guiana, as set forth in the White Paper, Command Paper No. 8980, and condemning methods tending to the establishment of a totalitarian régime in a British Colony, nevertheless is not satisfied that the situation in British Guiana was of such a character as to justify the extreme step of suspending the constitution."

In other words the Opposition accepted the Government's view that drastic action should be taken against the elected government in British Guiana, but that the Governor had sufficient powers to deal with the situation, including that of dismissing Dr. Jagan and his friends, without having to suspend the Constitution! This was surely a clear admission of the very considerable powers vested in the Governor in spite of the new Constitution.

In his opening speech the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Lyttelton suggested that any impartial reader after studying the White Paper would draw six main conclusions. They were (and we reproduce them from Hansard *verbatim*, including the interruptions):

"First, that Ministers were attempting to gain control of the machinery of government for the sole furtherance of party and not of national interests—[Hon. Members: "The same as you!"] Secondly [Interruption.]—what I am going to say may be very distasteful to hon. Members opposite—

Mr. James Carmichael (Glasgow, Bridgeton): One-party rule!

Mr. Lyttelton: Secondly, that Minis-

ters while holding their portfolios—I hope this will also be greeted by jeers and cheers from hon. Members opposite—first succeeded in inciting strikes for political purposes in the sugar industry and then attempted, though without success—[Interruption.]—to widen the strike into a general strike. Thirdly, that Ministers endeavoured to oust the existing trade unions and substitute unions under their own control—

Mr. Julian Snow (Lichfield and Tamworth): The Tory working man.

Mr. Lyttelton: I hope to expand some of these points. Fourthly, that Ministers incited the population to violence. Fifthly, that they neglected in a most irresponsible manner their duties for administering their Departments, and sixthly, that they were inspired by Communist ideas and were using standard Communist methods which would turn British Guiana into a Communist state with single-party Government."

Mr. Lyttelton's sources may or may not convince the impartial reader, though they certainly have a cloak-and-digger ring about them:

"The information came from police agents. These reports from police agents were again confirmed by conversations overheard by police agents between the thugs who were actually to carry out the arson, and they were ex-

Continued on p. 3

ROOM FOR FREEDOM

THERE are many definitions of freedom, differing in wording, and also in concept and field of reference, some positive, and others negative. But whatever the positive content of the concept to be predicated with reference to the field of experience from which it was abstracted, there will always be found a negative element or condition without which freedom ceases to be operative or is not there at all. I shall not try to define this element or condition, for its exact formulation will depend on what kind of freedom one has in mind, but with a spatial analogy and a biological bias I shall simply call it 'room for freedom' in the same way as one would speak of a plant as having room to grow or of there being room for a seed to be cast and sprout.

In our Western and Western-modelled civilizations it may be disputed whether there is freedom or not and whether political liberties are instances of freedom, but I contend that room for freedom is shrinking everywhere, and that if we consider civilization the be-all and end-all of present-day humanity we could well be overridden by the gloomy prospect of a not-distant future in which no room for freedom will be left.

The emphasis in our civilization is on activity and efficiency. A man is valued even more than by what he earns by the number of hours he works, the variety of his tasks, and the strain on his nerves and time. Even the idle are idle in a busy and laborious way. Work has become an end to itself, people regret the day has only 24 hours and they should need to sleep. Leisure itself is not left vacant or exposed to chance, but now lulled and now excited by the noise and sight of activities other than those that are one's own in one's social groove and workaday routine. That means that all thought comes to be elicited as a response to stimuli from the milieu, and to partake of the nature of reflexes, though it may be extremely varied and complicated. The milieu, then, has no depths, and is characteristically contingent, baffling in its continuous changes, oppressive in its demands, aggressive in its proximity, hollow in appeals and satisfactions. Thought that is not immediately behavioural, that tries to come to grips with inner and abiding meanings, must be snatched or put together by fragments, with frequent and long interruptions, and it is seldom given the opportunity to feel its shape and grow. There is no time to think, as it is often lamented, though usually with a bad conscience. Too many important things must come before the thought about what things are important.

Now, when the mind is constantly geared to register, select and repel excitations coming from the outside world, when it is too busy adapting itself to new sets of conditions or trying to forestall them, there is no room for thought coming from the depths of memory or the visitings of spirit, without such authentic, non-functional thought all other is more or less automatic, determined and conditioned, and freedom, whatever it is, is thus clogged at its source. Freedom may still, in spite of all, enjoy a vigorous infancy as impulse,

but its adolescence as desire is extremely difficult, its youth as thought is secluded when not precluded, and its maturity as integration in wisdom is very seldom reached.

AUTHENTIC, self-initiated behaviour is even more contested than authentic thought. That is the price not only of this or that civilization but of social living. Communal and primitive societies had their own restrictions imposed by custom or taboo, but these were more than compensated by the readiness of the community to vibrate to any new report from a member who had to tell a message or some unusual experience. In our modern civilization any new report is censored; theoretically at least everything is predicted; a mechanism is contrived to deal with any possible type of behaviour, and when this mechanism breaks it is only under the strain of its own complexity. Whatever is potentially new must fall into recognized patterns not so much because of the power of the law as for widespread social vigilance and mistrust. Conformism is not only expected, but instilled and imposed. The sources of power are all controlled, marshalled and measured, co-ordinated and concentrated. There is no elasticity, no play, no social interstices for individual growth; the social ideal itself is not that of a forest, not even for a house of bricks, but a huge, undifferentiated monolith. The emergence of new types of humanity is almost as unlikely as that of a new continent.

The high degree of socialization, controlled education and enforced organization in the society in which we live is obviously uncongenial to the individual anarchist. More relevantly still, it is stifling to the anarchist movement. This lost its first historical chance when romantic socialism was replaced by the "scientific" brand of Marx's; its second with the outbreak of the first World War, followed by the Bolshevik *coup d'etat* and the founding of the Third International which appropriated to itself and corrupted the revolutionary impetus of syndicalism; and the third when F.A.I. and C.N.T. were squashed in Spain between the might of the fascist powers and the communist counter-revolution. Other chances may still come, but in the meantime the limited size and precarious existence of an anarchist movement are not so much the effect of political persecution or inadequacies in its own ideology and membership as of the general fact that room for

freedom is shrinking, that the many as well as the few are poor in that empirical as well as spiritual quality which Gabriel Marcel called "availability". Boys and girls are urged to decide early about their life, to equip and load themselves as fast and as fully as they can, to organize their personality as a closed system of needs and satisfactions that will not interfere with the working of the social machine. If the temptation to become an anarchist should offer itself it could hardly be inserted, even as an experiment, into the pre-arranged, smoothly running and multi-related scheme of their life. *A fortiori* the appeal to organization on anarchist lines or for anarchist objectives falls like rain on an imporous surface. Everyone is already organized, and the bulk and might of institutionalized Trade Unions makes the revival of syndicalism like the geometrical impossibility of a solid occupying the space already taken up by another solid.

IF freedom is some sort of movement it is from a condition of rest that it can most fully be appreciated, and if a plentitude it is from one of emptiness, if a richness from indigence. It may seem ironical that from an anarchist pen should come a praise of all kinds of having-not, so comfortable to those who have. The reader will perhaps remember Russell's "in praise of idleness" or Lin Yutang's portrayal of the leisure and grace of Old China's privileged class. I have great sympathy for the Chinese outlook, and although there are features I admire in Mao-Tse's revolution, I look with horror at his New China where hate for any room for freedom has been carried as far as it could be. The unpredictable and uncontrollable power that can suddenly explode from vacant grounds and untilled fields is what the enemies of freedom fear most. The technique of government to-day, no longer a prerogative of totalitarian countries, is not satisfied with the non-hostility of its subjects. It wants complete adherence and endorsement. The governed must not only suffer the will of their rulers, but are asked to bless it, to keep

it alive, and make it their own will. Full commitment is what is asked, and the leisure left from exploitation must be devoted to the moral surrender of one's soul. The governed and the exploited in China have been asked to commit themselves to the crimes of their own government in a way destructive of all human worth. According to the report of Dr. Miklos Nyizli, the Nazis compelled some Jews to carry out the most gruesome tasks in the destruction of their own brethren, but they were not asked to rejoice and howl for their death as Chinese workers were for that of some of their countrymen whom they did not even know or, if they did, perhaps loved and admired.

Let the struggle for freedom, however each individual anarchist understands it, be carried on by all suitable and unsuitable means, but let it also be supplemented by a struggle for preserving whatever room for freedom is still left, even if this room is called ignorance, helplessness, backwardness, medievalism or barbarism.

GIOVANNI BALDELLI

American Co-operative Communities

AT the time of my recent visit to England I noticed a wide interest among anarchist friends and acquaintances towards community. The same interest is apparent here as well, and in California especially. We have several co-operative communities in this State, as well as a score or more "international" communities—but I know of no anarchist group. Each year the communities have an annual conference—the co-called Federation of International Communities—and discuss the ways and means of inter-community exchange and co-operation. Products are traded, ideas discussed, and a great deal is gained by all who attend these conferences.

It was this idea of co-operative community living that drew me out of architectural college two years ago. After learning that a new community start was to be made in this rather isolated region of the Sierra Nevada foothills, I came immediately and joined the family who had already paid down for the land—380 acres at \$30 per acre. During the intervening time three more families joined efforts with us. Although not a fully co-operative community, we have worked out land holding agreements providing for common pasture-land, lake, etc. Also our work is scheduled on a

co-operative-exchange basis.

Since I am the only anarchist in the group there has not developed the degree of social empathy that I would like to experience. And as a result of extensive correspondence with other anarchists, likewise interested in community, I have endeavoured to implement a programme for an anarchist Workshop of Living. I hope the statement of this proposed workshop will be of interest to FREEDOM readers, and I invite criticism and comment.

This Workshop of Living will consist of a centre where both creative work and basic self-sufficiency could be carried out. It would be made up of permanent or part time resident members, as well as guests and visitors. At this centre there will be thought and research on all the basic problems of living, including the primary problem of utilizing materials of the natural environment for sustenance, shelter, and clothing. I think of it as an anarchist in nature because of the high value given to free, spontaneous, individual activity; and many such activities could be carried out—creative arts and creative crafts, as well as gardening, building, and the work directly associated with making a living from the soil.

I have given more thought to the technical problems arising from such a scheme: the brush and dirt that could be used for shelter; the common organic

garden and abundant wildlife supplying food for the group; the simple dress and sparse clothing required in California climate; the possibilities of outside work, seasonal or part-time. As for the land requirements, two acres per family—part common, part individual—would provide adequate privacy. The cost of this, \$60, is the average weekly wage of the American working man.

A small group of actively thinking anarchists living together in material co-operation, and adopting a basic standard of values, could by combining their talents and abilities accomplish a great deal. Knowledge and experience of freedom in social living would be made available, through the common "workshop", to others; it would be a living demonstration of anarchist thinking. Among the tools of craft and art activities a small printing press could be operated to disseminate the lessons of practical anarchy.

Box 134, Oakhurst, California.
30 Sept. 1953. KEN KERN.

No Conscription in India

NEW DELHI (W.P.)—A debate over compulsory military training, in India's House of the People (Assembly) has presented the anomaly of former Gandhi followers recommending it, with a Defence Minister in opposition. Movers of a resolution for the training, to be provided for all high school and college students, declared it would "resurrect the youth from a sense of frustration" and increase their physical fitness. The Deputy Defence Minister, Satis Chandra, argued that the cost would be prohibitive, and the points made by proponents were unconvincing.

Currently, almost 45,000 students between the ages of 15 and 26 are being given semi-military training under the government-sponsored National Cadet Corps scheme, which is purely optional. The cost runs to 19,000,000 rupees annually. A universal training plan, for 2,500,000 boys, would cost nearly 700,000,000 rupees annually—or as much as the Damodar Valley Corporation, one of the biggest land reclamation projects in the world.

The debate was inconclusive, but observers expect the proposal to be dropped, since the mood of the country is not thought favourable. Hostile Congressmen are, on the whole, among the more influential.

Special Appeal

October 11 to October 23rd.

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Total ... 30 16 3
Previously acknowledged ... 361 5 2

1953 TOTAL TO DATE ... £392 1 5

* Readers who have undertaken to send regular monthly contributions.

About Books

Friday, October 16. Raining; the mountains surrounding the glen almost obscured by enveloping heavy mist, I decided spade-work is off for to-day. Cultivation of the mind, which also demands a bit of spade-work, is however, an occupation over which Jupiter P. has no direct control, so I enter my garden of books, look around and finally select a volume of Chapman Cohen's *Essays published in 1939*. The first of these is entitled "About Books" and whilst perusing this I discover it has an intimate link with the article in FREEDOM of the 10th instant, headed "Blue Pencil over Boots". Of current interest, I am now submitting a portion of the essay and trust it may eventually come under the hawk-like eye, and perchance penetrate to the inner recesses of the shocked mind of the industrious professional sleuth who instituted, under the *Obscene Publications Act of 1957*, the recent charge of infringement of the Act, against Messrs. Boots.

H.T.D.

at the revelation. The parent who foolishly forbids his child to read this or that is not, as he imagines, guarding the innocence of his children, he is giving them their first hint of where to find something they would never have sought, and would probably never have discovered but for the prohibition. He is teaching them to be sly when he should encourage them to be open. It would be a good thing for those who are so ready to mistrust the tastes and instincts of their children to commence by mistrusting themselves—at least to the extent of doubting whether they are really fitted to be the infallible guides of their children. And if books harbour dust, they dispel fog. I have said nothing about what books one ought to read. I do not know. Lists of the best hundred books are of little use. The world of books is not to be most profitably traversed along beaten paths. One may be a blockhead with a multitude of books or a philosopher with a few. The great thing is to acquire the reading habit, and the younger one is when it is acquired the better. That should be the parent's aim. Surround your children with books—all sorts of books—and don't bother too much about 'improving their minds' so that they may become copies of yourselves. It is originals the world needs—not copies. Encourage your children to read. Do not force their reading, neither restrict it. Take no notice of your own tastes, let them indulge theirs. Perhaps, one day, parents themselves will acquire enough wisdom to realize that self-education is the only form of real education, that each must teach himself if he is ever to learn anything worth acquiring. Each reader will ultimately select the books that suit him; and each book will in turn select its reader. It is a selective operation on both sides. We judge our books but they just as surely judge us. Happy is the man who has chosen the best books, for it means that he has been chosen by the best books.

He has been admitted to the company of the immortals."

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ON TOLERATION

THERE are many indications that the present trend towards a more intolerant attitude in public policies all over the world is being observed uneasily by thoughtful people. If the world were a simpler place to live in than it is, anarchists might be inclined to regard this uneasiness as so much hypocrisy. For the second world war has only repeated the lessons of the first—that the very ideals which were supposed to be defended have proved to be the readiest casualties. The fight against Fascism included the struggle against intolerance, and it was our own ideal of toleration which was claimed to be both the object of our defence and the source of our strength. The fact that the previous war was said to be to make the world safe for democracy was conveniently forgotten. Unhappily, this is all platitudinous to-day for it has been said so often . . . but, for all that, it is tacitly overworked, disregarded still.

But can one say that such flagrant disregard for facts is due to hypocrisy? Many would reply that to accept the lesson that the war for democracy ushered in red and black fascism, while the second one against fascist intolerance, succeeded in outlawing toleration from democratic practice—to accept all this is only possible for the cynic. Cynicism is certainly an unattractive state of mind, cynics most disagreeable companions. Anarchists will point out however that the refusal to be gulled by political slogans however idealistic—and their idealistic content is usually highest when in the service of so questionable an activity as modern war—does not necessarily stem from, or lead to, cynicism. But such an avoidance is only possible to those who have a positive attitude towards life and a positive philosophy for society. It is these qualities which are strikingly lacking in our increasingly intolerant socio-economic system.

The B.B.C. recently presented a series of lectures on tolerance which were remarkably revealing. For most of the contributors were clearly ill at ease about the retreat from the freer attitude of our forefathers. Yet their prescriptions for the path of freedom in the actual world were full of equivocations and ambiguities. The effect of the series was to show up how thoroughly intolerance has eaten into the fabric of what is regarded as democratic thought.

Unhappily this decay of the tolerant attitude, the willingness to accept the fact of differing opinions, of non-conformity, has progressed not merely in the political sphere where such justifications as the struggle against the greater intolerance of communism, or the plea of 'security' have been plausibly advanced. It has also been very evident in activity against sexual irregularity and in so-called obscene or pornographic publications. There has been a whole crop of prosecutions against homosexuals recently, culminating in the openly expressed wish of a magistrate that he could send the hundreds of cases who pass through his court every year to prison, "as we used to do". Elsewhere in this issue a contributor draws attention to the unashamed attitude of prejudice and persecution of the prurient-puritan brigade towards homosexuals.

How great a retreat from the attitude of broad tolerance all this represents can be seen by contrasting with it the approach of Dr. Kinsey and his co-workers in their recently issued second volume. Here we find minds whose concern it is to record

facts, to discover the truth, and not to moralize or to condemn. Nor is it that Kinsey and his team start from a merely non-moral, spectatorial neutral position: on the contrary the unprejudiced reader of their report feels himself in contact with warm sympathetic persons of wise and humane judgment. By comparison, the magistrates and judges and journalists who make themselves the spokesmen of intolerance and ignorance appear simply trivial, less than human.

Such too was the feeling invoked in that farcical and unpleasant trial in which a soldier returned home from eighteen months in a North Korean prisoner-of-war camp was further punished by an Army Court Martial for cowardice. The *Observer* drew attention to this retrogression to the attitude of the first world war when men were shot for "cowardice"—meaning battle-shock or hysteria, and remarked: "here seems to be something inappropriate, almost vindictive, about the belated punishment of Private Lydon."

There can therefore be little question as to the fact of a decay in toleration. Nor can one feel even that it is due simply to the rise to power of inferior types of men, for even such finer representatives of our age as George Orwell undoubtedly was were not immune from this cancer. For with all his concern for civil liberty, and his willingness to struggle in its defence, Orwell had a very intolerant attitude on many political questions.

Why? The example of George Orwell may well show the causes of this decline. For if one reads the English political writers of the past from before Milton onwards, one finds them willing to be so much more downright than, say, the cautious lecturers of the B.B.C. They were far more ready to accept the disadvantages of freedom of opinion and of action, because they were confident of the value of freedom itself. Now, the intellectuals of to-day have no such confidence because their philosophy is one of fatalism, of despair. And for all his courage, Orwell shared this fatalism. It lay behind his acceptance of politics, though he saw it as a prostitution of honesty; behind his support for the Labour Party despite his contempt for it and its middle class ideals. And it is because of this despairing fatalism that tolerance to-day makes so many concessions to intolerance. A lack of faith, of a positive attitude to life both individual and social, prevents those who value tolerance from effectively resisting the partisans of intolerance, the practical politicians and the frank totalitarians, the puritans and the admirers of the police.

The same fatalism underlies the current devaluation of the individual, which makes robot-members of massive political machines docilely accept that policies are more important than individual men and women. It is an attitude to life which is repugnant to anarchists—indeed to all who love life, and respect their fellow men

U.S. Security Dismissals

WASHINGTON, Oct. 25.

"The White House has announced that between May 27, when the revised security programme came into effect, and September 30, 863 federal employees were dismissed for security reasons and another 593 resigned in the knowledge that the Government had adverse reports on them. This makes a total of 1,456 individuals who left Government employment as a result of the new programme in four months, and only five of them, according to the President's Press secretary, were given their jobs by the new Administration.

"These figures obviously failed to impress the reporters as much as was intended. For one thing it was not easy to compare them with what happened under the previous Administration. During the five years in which Mr. Truman's loyalty programme operated 570

people were dismissed and 2,748 resigned or withdrew their applications for jobs when they discovered that they were suspect. But no figures have ever been published of how many left the "sensitive agencies" under the separate security programme. Now the two programmes have been combined, and it is therefore impossible to tell how serious were the allegations against these 1,456.

"They may have been traitors, spies, saboteurs, or anarchists, or they may have been drug addicts, sexual perverts, drunkards, incurable neurotics or merely over-garrulous individuals; and the figure presumably includes a number of State Department officials who were sacrificed on the altar of McCarthyism."

(*Times*, 26/10/53).

And so it goes on. What happens to these ex-Civil Servants dismissed without a reference? Who employs them next?

The White Paper Debate

Continued from p. 1

pressing at that time their impatience that the operative order had not been given. Another piece of corroboration of the evidence of the police agents appears in the White Paper, and is that a sinister increase in the sales of petrol and kerosene in small quantities to people without motor cars was being widely reported."

In dealing with the effect of "all these events" upon the economic life of the country, Mr. Lyttleton pointed out that the investment of capital on a large scale was necessary in British Guiana for its development (a startling discovery, and suddenly a very urgent matter, though the British have had 150 years direct rule during which one would have thought something could have been done about it!) But, he went on:

"There is no surer way of arresting all these possibilities of development than by creating conditions which are inimical to investment either domestic or overseas"

an admission, surely that only by

Britain's Legacy in British Guiana

IN his speech for the Opposition in the Debate on British Guiana, Mr. Griffiths referred to the grants in aid given by Britain to British Guiana during the years 1918-1953, which the Colonial Secretary revealed amounted to £6½ million in all.

"Of this £6½ million which we have given since 1918, more than half of it has been given since 1946. So that for the whole of that period up to 1946, all this country gave in grants in aid to that Colony beset with these problems was about £3 million. These are enormous problems. The bulk of the population of British Guiana live on that strip along the coast. It is a bit of Holland in America. The land has had to be reclaimed. They have had to fight hard to wrest a subsistence, to build their townships and to maintain them. I have refreshed my memory, and I have discovered that of the £3 million which we have given in grants since 1946, nearly £2 million has had to be spent on the basic necessity of irrigation and reclaiming land. The consequence is that there is widespread poverty.

To begin with, like many of these Colonies that we developed in the 18th and 19th centuries, their economy was built not to meet their needs but to meet ours. That is true, and no one can deny it. Every one of them has got an ill-balanced economy. It is true of all the West Indies. They depend upon sugar to a very large extent. Other industries are growing and the pace of growth has been accelerated very much in the last two years. But we all know the history of these territories in the inter-war years. The sugar industry, at best, provides a seasonal occupation. The workers in this industry get a daily wage, and this is an industry in which very few people are able to get work for more than half of the year.

In the inter-war years prices went down. When I hear, as I sometimes do, some people talking nostalgically of what they call the good old days, I remind myself that a part of the good old days that they talk about was bought at the expense of poor people elsewhere."

"It is a pity Mr. Griffiths did not give the figures of the profits derived from the sugar plantations during those years. It would perhaps make the £6½ million grants in aid seem even more paltry than they already appear."

having a government in British Guiana which is acceptable to British and American or any other Capitalism, can development succeed. That is to say that government is not the "will of the people" but the mouthpiece of Capital Investment.

The "Opposition" Replies

MR. GRIFFITHS, a former Colonial Secretary who opened for the Opposition was at pains to show that his party's differences with the government on this issue were simply of degree:

"I wish to put a thesis to the House, and I hope that the Government will reply to it. Although the Colonial Secretary may contend otherwise, my view is that it is only when it is the only way to meet the situation that it is justifiable to suspend the Constitution. That is the issue between us, which we have raised in our Amendment."

And Mr. Griffiths' speech was simply directed at trying to prove that the Governor had all the powers necessary to achieve the same ends; that is, by-pass the Constitution without suspending it! Perhaps the impartial reader will agree with us that Mr. Lyttleton's action was less Machiavellian than the Opposition's alternative.

The Liberal Party's position was expressed by Mr. T. Grimond, who from his lofty perch on the fence was able to view the opinions on both sides with a certain detachment, though when it came to voting he dropped into the Government lobby. His cryptic comments about "democracy" make interesting reading.

"The whole language of cells and Communist plots is the common currency of propaganda to-day," he said. "If we succeed in setting up a good organisation and getting a lot of people to vote for us, that is known as the fine flower of democracy; if our opponents do it, it is the sinister planting of a cell."

In the White Paper itself there are pages which read to me suspiciously like the kind of things put out from behind the Iron Curtain. I am afraid it shows how far we have come in the modern world."

Or his concluding remarks:

"What I am quite sure we have to realise is that Communism to-day offers an alternative, and one to which the people of Asia, Africa, South America and elsewhere will turn unless they see that they will get from the Western democracies a form of life and of government which will meet their needs. We are much too smug about our own form of government and also about the form of government which we have exported. We can do a lot to improve it at home and we must look very carefully in future at the brand which we send abroad."

But as a political realist Mr.

Grimond cast his vote with the forces of Law and Order.

"Our Best Ambassadors"

Mr. Attlee, winding up for the Opposition said nothing for twenty-four minutes. He reminisced about his many years in the House, said a few kind things about the late Stanley Baldwin. He was deeply hurt that it had been suggested from the government side that the Opposition was opposed or afraid to send troops. "We would not have been. We have never criticised it at all". Later he even asserted that "we often find that our troops are the best ambassadors we have anywhere," and everybody in the House felt really good, and made mental notes of how many ambassadors we had in the world at present, and how well they were being received, particularly in Malaya and Kenya.

Of the situation at the time of the elections in British Guiana, Mr. Attlee reminded the house that "there was an election with inexperienced people" (why were they inexperienced after enjoying British tutelage for 150 years?) and the only organised party got control of the Government though it polled only 51% of the votes. "The important point—said Mr. Attlee profoundly—is that the whole of the country was not behind the P.P.P. . . . there is great opposition to the P.P.P." Who can now say that Mr. Attlee, who leads the party with a majority of votes but with a minority of seats, is not a Big Man when he uses such arguments? And what good advice he gives on the way the struggle against Communism should be waged: "The way to counter Communism is to prevent the Communists getting the lead". Sound common sense from a sound statesman, that's what it is.

The Government wound up this "interesting day's debate" with appropriately enough the Minister of Housing and Local Government. His masterly half-hour was much too unimportant to be summarised here. Of interest to those readers who recall FREEDOM's editorial last week (*Democratic Illusions*) the following remark by Mr. McMillan comes as an authoritative confirmation of our thesis.

"Parliamentary Government, as we know so well, depends upon a high degree of mutual forbearance and good will. We differ often in this House and disagree on many things; but the only reason our system works is because we know that in the last analysis we agree about a great many more—and these more important and fundamental."

And these "important and fundamental" things are that Labour and Conservatives are united in defending the *status quo*, the foundations on which capitalist society is built.

The Spanish-Vatican Concordat

A CONCORDAT has been signed in Rome between Spain and the Vatican after more than two years of negotiations conducted by the Minister of Foreign Affairs through a committee made up of the Ministers of Justice and Education, the Secretary of the Falangist Party and himself. It is said that Franco often presided. The negotiations were held in secret so that at no time were Spanish Catholics consulted on the details.

The greatly increased power of the Catholic Church in the political life of the country is clearly indicated by Article XXIX which states that "the institutions and services for the forming of public opinion, in particular the programmes of radio broadcasting and television, through priests and members of religious orders" will be brought under direct Church supervision and control.

An independent observer in Spain reports that these provisions are disquieting to many fervent Catholics, adding that, however, far more find themselves "aroused and alarmed" at Article XIX which says that "the Church and the State will study, by common accord, the creation of an ecclesiastical patrimony that will assure a fitting endowment for worship and the clergy." The Church is not only to be indemnified for past expropriations of its properties, but is to be sustained financially by the State, no

matter what happens to the economic well-being of the people.

In a country like Spain, where the poorest classes can barely survive, and where the middle class finds subsistence hard to obtain, the Concordat provides that the Church and its functionaries are to be supported and guaranteed, regardless of worsening economic conditions. This is the text: "In the future a notable alteration of general economic conditions takes place, such endowments will be made adequate to the new circumstances, so that the sustaining of worship and the proper support of the clergy will always be assured." And provision is made now for "appropriations for archbishops, diocesan bishops, coadjutors, assistant bishops, vicar-generals, cathedral and collegiate chapters, the parochial clergy, as well as apportionments for seminaries and ecclesiastical universities for the exercise of worship."

Is it surprising that the Church in Spain, which even before the signing of the Concordat enjoyed economic privileges as well as interfering in non-ecclesiastical matters, is one of the first institutions to be attacked by the people when they rise against their rulers? The present Concordat only makes it even more certain that this will again happen when the Spanish masses finally succeed in overthrowing the Franco régime.

NOW here comes another political pest into the trade union movement.

As if the craft structure of the unions is not dividing the workers enough; as if the original affiliation with the Labour Party did not corrupt the movement enough; as if the infiltration tactics of the Communists and Catholics are not enough—now we have to get the Conservatives as well!

Of course, there have always been Tory trade unionists, but now, according to a statement from headquarters, they are going to organise themselves on the same lines as other pressure groups and really get down to the business of exerting an influence among industrial workers.

The Conservative Party claims that there are three million trade unionists who vote Conservative. Sounds incredible, doesn't it? Of course, in view of the increasing similarity between Tory and Labour, both in theory and in practice, many of these voters may do it by accident, not being able to tell 'other from which.

Double Loyalty?

That many—let's be charitable and say most—of these three million do, however, vote Conservative from conviction, is yet another indictment of the trade union movement of to-day. How can there be this sizable section of dues-paying workers with this double loyalty?

True enough, the Labour Party has been becoming more and more Conservative in all but name. Certainly exactly the same can be said of the Trade Union Congress. But the Conservative Party are openly the party of the boss class, the defenders of big business, imperialism and everything reactionary. How is it that so many members of organisations supposedly defending interests opposed to these, can support the Tories?

Many of them, no doubt, are the result of the closed shop, which forces membership upon workers whatever their wishes or political or social ideas. The immediate result of this is to bring into the unions unwilling dues-payers who in fact are very unreliable unionists and pay more allegiance to the bosses' interests than to those of the workers in general—or even of themselves in particular.

What is the use of unionism on this basis? Of very little use indeed to the working class. Of considerable use to the boss class in general and to the trade union leadership in particular.

He Knows His Place

There will be others, however, who are sincere and enthusiastic trade unionists,

Tory Trade-Unionists

following Winston Churchill's approval for the unions, and see in them a stabilising factor for the British economy. And they are quite right. When one looks at it like this, one can see that the question of double loyalty does not really arise.

The trade union function to-day is to help stabilise Britain's place in the capitalist world. It is a disciplinary factor, aiming at keeping the workers quiet in the interests of the national economy. And the Conservative worker knows his place and is content to be kept in it. He knows that to maintain British markets, productivity must be at least maintained—if possible increased. He knows that "we" must compete with other nations and produce more cheaply than they can—and the British trade union movement agrees with him about that and encourages him to be the servile ass he is.

But all this has been there for a long time. What is new is that the Conservative Party, as an organisation, is now going to pay attention to the unions in the same way as the other bodies with axes to grind outside industry have used their minorities inside to further their causes.

The Communist tactics of infiltrating unions and capturing official positions is well known. In areas where Catholics are strong, and encouraged by the

Church, they have done the same. Moral Rearmament is nibbling away like a rat among the industrial workers.

Vultures

Now to join them come the Conservatives, late on the scene, because of their traditional distaste for anything to do with the "lower orders", but starting off with the advantages of their political power to help them.

The Tory move is a sign of the times. Just as the T.U.C. has veered to the Right, the Tories have veered to what is thought of as the Left. They are now wiliier, subtler, than in the past; they have learned that a head-on collision with the organised workers' representatives does not lead to the best results—there are better ways of influencing trades unionists than by brow-beating them from outside.

Supposing the Tories are successful—shall we soon be hearing about "Tory-dominated unions"? Shall we still hear about "no industrial action for political ends"?

★

Poor Trade Union movement! What a mess it is in! How it is at the prey of all these vultures who come and tear peices off it for their own parasitic sustenance.

The London Anarchist Group's Outdoor Platform

NOW that the summer has ended it is a suitable occasion to give some account of the Anarchist outdoor activities (which are still going on).

We in London are not strong in number as regards orators, and unfortunately the burden falls mainly on one, Philip Sansom. Of him at least it can be said he is as fine an orator as you are likely to hear anywhere.

The two main outdoor pitches are Tower Hill and Hyde Park. At Tower Hill Philip Sansom is assisted by Rita Milton, who is fast developing capabilities as an outdoor speaker, and on more than one occasion has held a very attentive audience at Hyde Park.

Syd Parker very often opens the meetings at Hyde Park and has received astonishing publicity in unexpected quarters. His style is of quiet assurance, which is treated with great respect by the crowd.

Nobody of course can expect powers to develop in a matter of weeks, and the writer knows this only too well, having regard to his own deficiencies and from personal experience on the platform. This outdoor speaking is however, a vital part of Anarchist propaganda, and is

fascinating, infuriating, funny, dramatic, monotonous and unpredictable. One can never tell what will happen at the Anarchist platform. For a brief moment you might ever hear the voice of Winston Churchill (or something strangely resembling his accents). An explanation of this calls for a P.S., but I will refrain from further comment.

Very often our meetings bring new contacts and lead to unexpected indoor meetings in far flung parts of London. There is, however, one thing of which we are sure, and that is that the anarchist case is too strong for any heckler whether he uses a battering ram or a rapier, ridicule or reason, humour or venom.

A word must also be said about our literature sellers, foremost among them being Leah Feldman, Jim Peake, and Lilian Wolfe, who have stood for long hours at Hyde Park while the meetings were progressing. It must be remembered that Leah Feldman and Lilian Wolfe have both been in the Anarchist movement for about 40 years, and the fact that they are still so active in this particular sphere says a great deal for their tenacity of purpose and on many occasions great courage.

It is right that the final tribute should be paid to Philip Sansom, who has been speaking from the Anarchist platform for nearly ten years. Many times he has been the only speaker and carried on as long as four or five hours. Without him it would be difficult to imagine what our platform would be like. It was Philip who gave me every encouragement when my faltering steps ascended the platform, and I knew that whatever hash I made of it, he would straighten things out when he followed.

"We are closing the meeting now, our paper FREEDOM and other Anarchist literature are on sale at the gate; we shall be here again next week at approximately 3:30. Good Night Everybody!"

J. BISHOP.

CATHOLICS AND BRITISH GUIANA

WE pointed out in our Editorial columns last week that in spite of 150 years of British rule in Guiana a high proportion of the population was half starved, ill-housed and illiterate, which made Lyttleton's claim that the life, liberty and happiness of ordinary men and women were threatened by the menace of the present elected government rather foolish.

Another claim, from a different source, who say that they warned the authorities months ago of the coming "crisis" indicates one other reason for the poverty of the Guianese people. A member of a Jesuit order who has just arrived in this country from Guiana tells the *Catholic Herald* that the Catholic schools are considered the best in the colony, both for results and "the kind of information they impart". And knowing the record of the Church in other countries, perhaps one is justified in asking if some of the

reasons for the starvation and illiteracy can be placed at the door of the Catholic Church, precisely because of the kind of information they impart.

The missionary goes on to say that as far back as three years ago, when the Warrington committee were making their Constitutional enquiry, the priest in the Colony told the committee that "their proposals for immediate adult suffrage and self-government were hopelessly premature, and said so.

"British Guiana has a high proportion of illiterate people. In the towns there is also a lazy, irresponsible element. In addition we have a section labelled 'unemployed' but often unemployable.

"Every priest in British Guiana was certain that the ill-timed Constitution, by establishing the legal infallibility of illiterate voters, had played right into

the hands of the local Communists and their friends. It was only a question of time before the showdown took place."

Considering the Catholic Church depends for its support, in those countries where it is dominant, on the illiteracy and superstitions of the people, we are not persuaded that they are very anxious first to impart knowledge and then to allow the people to make a free choice. No, we are afraid that the reasons for the Church opposing self government at this stage, are as usual very materialistic.

Firstly, although the missionaries claim that they are slowly but steadily gaining strength in B.G., out of a population of 425,000 there are only 65,000 Catholics, and there are only two constituencies in Guiana which returned a Catholic candidate. They had too, the fear that when a left-wing government was returned to power "they would quickly turn and deal with the Church". But the fear of the Catholic Church is not so much the shade of the political party in power but that any party with a programme containing the mildest reforms, especially where there is a high proportion of poverty, offers a threat to their existence. People who are hungry and deprived of their rights will generally support a Government which attempts to feed them and will very often turn away from the spiritual solace of the Church. If then, a Government is reformist it has an enemy in the Catholic Church.

Secondly, in the words of the Jesuit missionary:—

"The blackest factor now, is the rate at which members of the Portuguese community are leaving British Guiana for Canada. The 10,000 local Portuguese are the wealthiest and most responsible Catholic group, whose disappearance will leave the colony as a whole much worse off than before.

"Perhaps the first prevention measures that are being taken may check the exodus.

"What the Guianese need is time to develop and prepare themselves for citizenship."

Readers will recall that a few months ago we discussed briefly in FREEDOM the findings of an international committee set up to investigate slave labour, throughout the world, and Portugal was among the countries listed as being guilty of using Africans as slaves. How comforting it must be however to know that a large cheque slipped into the hands of a priest can absolve one from the crimes committed against other human beings.

To return to British Guiana. We suggest whether or not the people there can read or write they can still feel, and although we have no brief for the so-called left wing Government, if the Guianese people feel that their appalling conditions will be temporarily alleviated by any Government then they must be allowed to make that choice. R.M.

Have you renewed your
Subscription to
FREEDOM?

The Petrol Strike

Continued from p. 1

you may have one more official against you.

It is not in your interest to show so much loyalty and to make sacrifices for an organisation which not only does not work for you but actively works against you.

The next step after this strike—which looks as though it will be beaten—is to consider seriously the establishment of an unofficial transport workers' movement. The road haulage men have the basis for an organisation which could have going into action against denationalisation; the busmen are not very satisfied with the present set-up, and while all sections of the industry are divided as they are at present, they will be beaten piecemeal every time they take action.

The immediate effect of your strike on the life of London showed the tremendous power that is in the hands of the working class. But this power must be organised and harnessed if it is to be

used effectively in the struggles that are to come.

Are the present trade unions adequate to this task? Clearly not. Is it not then time that the workers showed themselves capable of creating organisations that will do what is wanted—defend and extend our standards of living now, and prepare the way for workers' control of industry as soon as we are sufficiently organised to take it over.

One last word of advice: Keep politics—of all shades—out!

For Anarchists the value of this oil-transport strike lies in that once again it has proved the economic strength of direct action. Whatever the strike was for and even if defeated, it gives us an indication of what pressure could be exerted on the ruling class if the workers were conscious of their power.

The fact that the Government were able to break the strike by the use of troops should only give more determination to our anti-militarism. P.S.

The Strikers Go Back

SINCE the above was written, it has been announced that mass meetings of the strikers have voted to go back to work.

The crack began to show on Sunday when a mass meeting at Wandsworth voted by a slender majority to go back, although another meeting at Stratford voted solidly to stay out. It was clear, then, that with the intervention of troops, only one thing could bring back any chance of victory and that was the extension of the strike.

This was shown as beginning, when tanker drivers at Jarrow came out, although they could not persuade men at Sunderland that it was not a Communist-inspired action. Then busmen at two London garages (Peckham and Dalston) joined in when "black" fuel was delivered by troops, and drivers at a British Road Services depot in Silver-town came out as well.

The support was slow in coming, but was just beginning when the tanker-

drivers' strike committee decided to climb down and go back. This they did precisely because the support necessary for victory was beginning to appear!

A strike committee spokesman, Frank White, told an *Evening Standard* reporter:

"What has come out of our discussions is the alarming fact that this is spreading too far. It is getting out of control.

"It has been our job to keep it in our industry. It is becoming something now in which we could be accused of starting a revolution of some kind.

"The position is now that we have got to get to some settlement somehow."

This makes rather a sorry end to a strike which started so well. It has turned out to follow a somewhat similar pattern to the recent E.T.U. strike, which started off with a flourish, then fizzled out with nothing gained.

We shall discuss this further next week.

Little Support

Support for the strikers was promised, but at the time of our going to press had not materialised on a big enough scale to be effective. Several London bus garages had threatened to strike if oil was delivered by troops, but so far only one—Peckham—has backed up their promise with action.

The strike is of course unofficial and opposed by the union leadership. It is rather pathetic to see this action, costing the men their wages every day they are out, being fought to establish 100 per cent. membership of a union which will not fight for its members. Which, in fact, fights against its members.

Deakin's Unionism

For Arthur Deakin, not content with ordering the oil-transport men back to work for him to continue his interminable negotiations, has also done his best to prevent any expression of solidarity being shown by busmen. Deakin has sent to every London garage a letter appealing to the bus workers to stay at work. To the strikers he said:—

"To continue the stoppage is a betrayal of the principles of trade unionism. Mistaken loyalties are being played upon. I understand that in the minds of some of the men it is felt that to answer the appeal to go back might make them guilty of a betrayal of their mates. There would be no such betrayal."

Whatever conception of trade unionism it is that has helped Deakin to climb to the dizzy heights from which he now contemptuously surveys the working class, it is clearly not that which motivates the rank and file.

The oil transport strikers are showing a loyalty to each other and to their union which Deakin obviously feels for nobody but the boss class to which he now belongs.

The Next Step

To the strikers we should like to make the following points:

What purpose is to be gained by forcing an ex-non-com. from the army to take out a union card? If he is a boss's man now, he will still be one after. In fact he may find, once he is in, that the T. & G.W.U. offers opportunities for advancement for bosses' men—and then

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.

NORTH-EAST LONDON

DISCUSSION MEETINGS IN EAST HAM

Alternate Wednesdays
at 7.30 p.m.

NOV. 4th—Arthur Uloth
POLITICAL TERRORISM

NOV. 18th—Philip Sansom
SEX, SYNDICALISM & THE EGO

TYNESIDE ANARCHIST GROUP

A group has recently been formed in this area and will hold meetings on alternate Sundays at 7.30 p.m. at the home of D. Boon, 53, Louvaine Place, Newcastle-on-Tyne to whom enquiries should be addressed. The first meeting will take place on October 10th at 7.30 p.m.

GLASGOW

OUTDOOR MEETINGS

from now until further notice
at
MAXWELL STREET,
Sundays at 7 p.m.
With John Gaffney, & others

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