

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"It is unquestionably true that Government is begotten of aggression and by aggression."
—HERBERT SPENCER.

ENGINEERING BOSSES STILL

IT looks as though Sir Walter Monckton, Minister of Labour, is going to need all his tact and legalistic debating ability in order to find a way out of the deadlock in the engineering dispute.

The employers are adamant. They steadily refuse to offer any increase at all to the engineers, who have in retaliation decided upon a ban to be imposed upon all overtime and piecework to come into operation on January 18th.

At least, that was the intention and the announcement. But the latest move by Sir Walter has been to set up courts of enquiry into the dispute and it now seems most likely that the ban will be postponed in order not to aggravate the situation.

This will probably mean an abandonment of the action, for the courts of inquiry will in all probability make a recommendation for a very slight increase for the engineers, and the union leaders will certainly accept that with a sigh of relief, asking their members to be satisfied with, probably, the fashionable 4s. a week more.

That is assuming that the employers would accept a recommendation of that nature. They have been consistently opposed to any increase whatsoever, but they realise, as we all do, that they are not in a position to hold out indefinitely against direct action by the workers. The one-day token strike did not hurt them very much. They had sufficient warning to prepare for it and a one-day complete stoppage—after all no more inconvenient than a Bank Holiday, and not paid for—did not create nearly as much disturbance of schedules and delivery dates as could a sustained and determined application of a ban on overtime and piecework, or a go-slow, or some other form of delaying tactics on the part of the workers.

Not All Highly Paid

And it would in fact have one very bad effect. It would bring home to the engineers, and, through the ensuing publicity, to the general public, the inadequate nature of their basic wage. This would not be to the employers' advantage, for they are concerned to maintain the idea in the minds of the public that engineers are very highly paid.

Some of them, of course, are. But they are highly paid only by virtue of the scarcity of their skill in the labour market—so that it naturally follows that

PADDINGTON COUNCIL HAS SECOND THOUGHTS

AFTER a two-and-a-half hour session, a special sub-committee of Paddington Borough Council's Housing Committee, has decided not to act for three months on the eviction order they served on the family of one of their tenants who is now undergoing a prison sentence. This, they say, is to give the wife a chance to find other accommodation. The case of the other family is to be discussed again in February (the husband here was sentenced at the same time as the first man).

It seems clear that this represents a climb-down by the housing committee as a result of the publicity which its absolutely indefensible eviction orders have received. The value of publicity in such cases is thus demonstrated. But it also shows up the morality of administrators who are prepared to be mean and unjust if they can get away with it, but have not the courage of their convictions when they are brought out into the light of day.

Doubtless, as in all local politics, it is the election issue which sways them, for we may be sure that the opponents of the Tories will not forget this case when municipal elections come round again. Such considerations, rather than the individual families concerned, almost certainly sway the councillors involved.

there are not many of them, proportionately speaking—and, more especially, by working overtime, on piecework, and through special output bonuses.

That minority of engineering workers, then, who are highly paid, are so because they are worth that to the boss. They produce a tremendous amount of highly skilled work. But for every engineer earning £16 a week, there are many more earning only £8.

For the unproductive middle class, however, who seem to have the monopoly for the expression of opinion through the daily press, a wage of £8 a week is plenty—for a worker. Not for them of course. They have appearances to keep up; they have responsibilities; they have school fees to pay (because they don't like their children going to State schools)—but for the average ignorant worker—£8 is plenty. Workers only begin to get uppish if they get more.

High Profits

But one thing the engineering employers have not been able to hide is the very satisfactory rate of profit they have been making all the post-war years. The railwayman knew that his industry was not a profitable one. He also knew that when it suited the State it paid a substantial subsidy of £40 million a year, during the war, to the private companies owning the railways before nationalisation, and he didn't see why he should now subsidise the nationalised railways through his low wages. But at least he knew the industry was not making a profit out of him.

The engineer, however, has seen the shareholders in his industry raking in very substantial dividends through his skill and hard work, not only during the war, but in the boom years of export afterwards, and over the last three years he has seen the cost of living drawing away from his basic wage, while the profit level has not only maintained itself but actually improved year by year.

Now the engineers have seen the railwaymen granted a small increase and, through the threat of direct action, been promised a little bit more. They then realise fully that if they are to divert some of the owners' profits into the wage account, they will have to use direct action too.

This they did with no immediate success on Dec. 2. Now they are considering further means that will bring maximum pressure upon the owners with minimum cost to themselves. So far the action and the threat of action have been official, but clearly the temper among the rank and file is such that if the union leaders want to keep it that way, whatever they do had better bring results—or else unofficial action will not be slow to develop.

To Hold Them Back

We have maintained that a very strong reason for the threat of strike action coming from the leaders of the N.U.R. was that they saw trouble coming after the 4s. award and thought it better to get in front and pretend to lead, in order to hold back their followers. The leaders of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions are in the same position and are trying the same tactic.

The employers called their bluff by re-

SCOREBOARD OF 'KILLS'

DESPITE the "concern" expressed by the Minister of War after the revelations of competition between army units for "kills" of Mau Mau terrorists at the Nairobi trial of Captain Griffiths, and despite the commission of enquiry, General Templer in Malaya still continues to set the example.

On January 3rd, it was reported that men of the 2/6th Gurkha Regiment had the day before killed six Communist terrorists. "The High Commissioner, General Sir Gerald Templer," the newspaper report states, "has sent a message congratulating the Gurkhas on this success. He says: 'This is a fine start for 1954, and one which will be very difficult to beat.'"

We make no further comment.

STUBBORN

fusing to budge in spite of the one-day token stoppage, and so the unions had to go through with it. In fixing the next stage to begin on Jan. 18, plenty of time is given for some way out to be found—and—as we said at the beginning, most likely the ban on overtime and piecework will be postponed to February and then called off altogether.

The union leaders of to-day will go to any lengths to avoid direct action by the workers—even to the length of calling for it themselves. But they are playing with fire. The rank and file are in no mood to be mucked about indefinitely, and when their patience is exhausted, or if they decide their leaders are leading them up the garden path—well they'll take some holding back then. P.S.

LATER . . .

BAN POSTPONED INDEFINITELY

SINCE the above was written, it has been announced, as we guessed above, that the Engineers ban on overtime and piecework would be postponed.

This decision was taken by the Executive Council—won by a narrow majority. The ban has been postponed until the findings of the Courts of Inquiry have been made known—probably in February.

It has been announced that the employers have refused to consider an increase, whatever the findings of the Courts—which of course are not binding as the decision of a Court of Arbitration is. The Unions, however, are reluctant to show discourtesy to the Minister of Labour and so have agreed to the Courts, although they are clearly nothing more than a delaying measure and an excuse to call off the ban. That in fact is why the unions have welcomed them.

There are to be two Courts, one for the Shipbuilders and one for the Engineers. They will be sitting at the College of Preceptors, 2 Bloomsbury Square, London, W.C.1, from Friday, Jan. 8th, and seating will be available for 100 members of the public.

Youth in the Age of Anxiety

FREEDOM has on many occasions drawn attention to the effect of the prevailing insecurity on people's lives and actions. The sedulous cultivation of anxiety by politicians and their mouthpieces, the popular press, is a permanent activity of our society.

A recent sociological survey confirms much that we have written. This was a survey of boys aged 18 in an outer London suburb. Carried out by the Social Medicine Research Unit, Middlesex, and published in the *British Journal of Sociology*, last week. We quote from the *Times* summary of the finding (29/12/53):

"It is stated that although for technical reasons it was difficult to compare the findings on sexual behaviour with those of Dr. Kinsey, it was correct to say that the young men as a group appeared to be somewhat retarded compared with Dr. Kinsey's Americans. The retardation might extend to several years.

The survey of 85 youths, who ranged from labourers to students and professional and administrative trainees, was carried out by Dr. R. F. L. Logan, physician in charge of the student health

THAT GALLANT CHRISTIAN GENTLEMAN

The Holy Father has conferred the Supreme Order of Christ on Generalissimo Franco. This is the highest decoration granted by the Holy See to laymen. —*Catholic Herald*, 24/12/53.

New Evidence on Trotsky's Murder

AN article in the current issue of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Quarterly by Mr. William Rodney has identified Frank Jacson, Trotsky's assassin, as Ramón Mercador del Rio, a Spaniard born in Barcelona on Feb. 7, 1913. Trotsky was killed on Feb. 7, 1940. This identification is the work of Dr. Alfonso Quiroz, formerly professor of criminology in the University of Mexico City.

Del Rio was arrested during a round-up of Communists in Barcelona on June 12, 1934, and his finger prints were taken. These correspond with those of "Jacson", now serving a 20 year sentence in the Juarez penitentiary in Mexico City.

We quote from a newspaper summary of the article sent from Ottawa:

"Mr. Rodney says that it was the murderer's use of the illegally acquired and deliberately altered Canadian passport that made the crime possible, as it enabled him to travel unmolested from Europe through the United States to Mexico. The passport was originally issued on March 22, 1937, to Tony Babich, a naturalized Canadian citizen born at Livinac, Yugoslavia, who was killed in the Spanish civil war while serving with the Mackenzie-Papineau battalion, a Communist organized Canadian unit of the International Brigade. On Babich's death the passport fell into the hands of the Russian secret police, to whom, according to information supplied by the American Federal Bureau of Investigation, the passports of all who were killed fighting with the International Brigade were forwarded.

"When Babich's passport came to be used by del Rio, there was inserted in it a certificate issued fraudulently to a Frank Jackson, who had applied for naturalization in Montreal in 1929.

"This certificate was subsequently revoked.

"During the preparations for the assassination," Rodney writes, "the Russian secret police, realizing that the Jackson certificate had been officially nullified, altered the number from 18586-H to

18506-E. This certificate was then inserted in the passport originally issued to Tony Babich, and the name on the passport was suitably altered to agree with the one on the certificate. There is no evidence available to indicate, why the name was spelled without the "k"—i.e., Jacson—on both documents."

"The man now identified as del Rio was sentenced on April 16, 1943, to 20 years' imprisonment, the maximum permitted by Mexican law, and he is still serving his sentence at the Juarez penitentiary in Mexico City in 'the comparative luxury permitted by Mexican prison rules, provided with funds whose ultimate sources are unknown.' Mr. Rodney points out that del Rio was eligible for parole in December, 1953, 'though when the article was written it remained to be seen whether he was prepared to leave the security of prison and expose himself to the revenge of Trotsky's followers or, for that matter, the M.D.V.'"

This new evidence finally closes the chain linking Trotsky's assassin with the Stalinist secret police.

E.T.U. - Guerilla Strikes Again

THE Engineers can see from the record of the electricians' dispute just how valuable Courts of Inquiry are. Following the Electrical Trades' Union's official "guerilla" strikes of last August and September, a Court of Inquiry investigated the dispute and after the usual delays issued its findings, which were, in effect, that there were faults on both sides—and something to be said for both sides. Arbitration was recommended.

That got the electricians nowhere fast, and continued negotiations showed only the determination of both sides not to yield. The employers have said they are ready for arbitration, but the E.T.U. will not have this, since it entails undertaking to accept the decision of the tribunal in advance, and they will not be satisfied with anything less than "a substantial increase"—they say.

So, at an Executive meeting on Dec. 19th, the decision was taken to start a series of guerilla strikes again as from next Monday, Jan. 11th, to culminate in a complete one-day stoppage throughout the country on the following Monday, 18th—which would have coincided with the beginning of the engineers' ban if it had not been called off.

The guerilla tactics will follow the same pattern as before, with men being called out on selected sites, adding to the number each day.

One interesting feature of the new developments has been the delay between the E.C.'s decision and its being made public. In fact many branches knew nothing of the decision until they read of it in the press—which does not say much for the much-vaunted democracy of the E.T.U.

There is a rule governing members of the E.T.U. which forbids them giving information on union business to the press. But somebody must have informed the press on this matter—and before informing the rank and file. Is there one set of rules for the Executive and another for the members?

"News" of the Year

BANNER headlines in the *News Chronicle*, principal news item in the *Manchester Guardian*, announce the Chancellor of the Exchequer's paltry purchase-tax concessions which will represent a saving of £2 million to the consumer in one year, or approximately 9½d. per head of the population!

Umbrellas and jewellery, electric heaters and corkscrews will now cost us less, and if you are contemplating buying a hand washing-machine it will cost you £21 instead of £25. Even those garden ornaments in bad taste such as elves and toadstools will now have the tax on them reduced from 75% to 50%, as are busts, figures and vases.

This is the principal news item of the new year!

DISCUSSION

WHY ANARCHISTS AT ALL?

THE interest aroused by Arthur W. Uloth's "Why so few anarchists?" is a sure indication of concern in the movement about stagnation or threatening decline. Although faith in all that anarchism stands for is not likely at the moment to be seriously affected anywhere by surmise of increasing or decreasing numbers of professed anarchists, it is obvious that only numbers and type of militancy can be expressive of the actual rôle and possibilities of anarchism as a will and a way contrasted with that of parties, churches or of state-sponsored and commercial pseudo-ethical institutions. Every anarchist, therefore, can be assumed to be in favour of a larger and more active movement, and it would be a pity if the discussion so well started by Uloth should strike a basic note of weakness and defeat or foster moods of sad regret, complacent powerlessness or resigned detachment.

The reasons given as to why anarchists are few may or may not be correct, but are instructive insofar as they suggest reasons and means by which we should and could be more. So it would be helpful if now the discussion were turned to some heartening fact-finding, and I propose that the questions now to be answered be "Why are there anarchists at all?" The shrewd surmises of an isolated thinker or the opinions of a vantage-point observer are not likely to be so revealing and interesting as the information supplied by as many readers as possible, stating the special circumstances and influences that made them anarchist. With no intention of belittling the work done by the movement in this country, but wishing on the contrary to comfort them with the thought that they have secret allies and are neither in a desert nor in the clouds, I put forward the guess that a good number of the present readers of FREEDOM

came to anarchism before being reached by specifically anarchist literature, and well before knowing that FREEDOM existed.

Were it not so the existence of an anarchist movement, and the elaboration, application and spreading of anarchist ideology could not reasonably be justified. Only stolidity and obstinacy of an authoritarian type would ask people to follow a path they have no will or inclination to follow. You can tell people "This is the way out of your terrible situation, and you at the end of this path lies the land of your dreams," but they only can decide if their situation is terrible, and tell you what the land of their dreams looks like. But if the assumptions of anarchist doctrine on twentieth-century human nature be correct, and the doctrine be aware and inclusive of twentieth-century experience and formulation of the same, then people will turn anarchist without wooing or barrage. The answers I am inviting should be indicative of the existence of factors and conditions favourable to the emergence of anarchists. I dare not ask for a control or helping along of these factors and conditions for that would be not only to overestimate the power and cohesion of the movement, but also to introduce an attitude towards the historical process suspiciously similar to that of the Communist parties. It is not unreasonable, however, to expect that once these factors and conditions be made manifest and assessed no anarchist should waste his aggressive energies against them, but let them bear their fruit, and look for other land to reclaim, other fields to cultivate.

Having mentioned the possibility of exploiting favourable conditions a mention of the problem of organization imposes itself, though it may merely be a

scratching of sores as old as the movement. There is no need for organization to be a sore topic of discussion among anarchists. Repeatedly, although never to crucial effect, the idea has been put forward that those anarchists who wish to organize themselves be free to do so, and those who do not want organization remain unorganized, with no claims to orthodoxy or excommunications being bandied about. If the overriding principle of the Bolshevik party and the secret of its strength lay in the total submission to the decisions of its central organ once a line of policy had been voted by the majority, the simple principle of mutual toleration I have just recalled may still prove a factor of strength for the anarchist movement. There is a minimum of theoretical agreement among anarchists, and it is time there should also be a minimum of agreement in matters of practice. This could in the first instance take the form of a pledge on the part of all anarchists to attend to the practice and propagation of anarchism as each of them understands it, and never to interfere, except by fair comment, with the anarchism of others. Individualists and partisans of various forms of organization should not insist on the either futile or harmful task of proselytizing within the movement, but concentrate on apostolic work where anarchism is not known or badly known, so that the cumulative effect of the activities of each of them be a spreading and strengthening of the movement as a whole. Outside the strictly biological realm proliferation and not subdivision is the best token and method of growth.

★

ANOTHER inquiry, which if practicable and carried out would yield interesting results, is one concerning sympathisers. There is a considerable number of people who take a keen interest in anarchism for a period varying between a few weeks and a few years, and sometimes take part in the activities of the movement and are considered anarchists by themselves and their

friends. Then, suddenly or gradually, they drop all interest and contacts, and to all ascertainable effects are lost to the cause. Nobody seems to worry or mind. The implicit attitude is that what was lost was not worth retaining, and that the cause will find its men, not *vice versa*. It is, moreover, a cardinal principle of anarchism that everyone is responsible or, rather, irresponsible, for his own actions only. But the respect for the transcendence of the cause and for other people's decisions may just be a noble cover to apathy and indifference, to thoughtlessness, inertia, and lack of will. The enquiry I suggest is into the reasons why some people discard anarchism after having given it admittance to their mind and let it inspire some of their behaviour. If, generally and essentially, as I suspect, it is because they found, after fair weighing, that the *cons* preponderated over the *pros*, then the first task impending upon us is by study, thought, argument and action so to strengthen and enrich the objective validity of the *pros*, and weaken, rout or explode that of the *cons*.

We are perhaps too fond, because it is so easy, of finding fault with the system we live in or the one we just, but only just, live out. Criticism is action, but if we cannot go further than criticism we must not put the blame on other people. We cannot yet reasonably uphold the myth that all brave and intelligent people are anarchists, and wait at the same time for more brave and intelligent people to join us in order to change the system. The truth is that, unless intelligence and courage be too narrowly and arbitrarily defined, there are more non-anarchist brave and intelligent people than there are anarchists—people who know enough of the movement to be able honestly to believe that they can serve better the cause of mankind by holding another creed and militating under another banner. It is the duty of anarchists to prove to them that they are mistaken, but they cannot do so as long as anarchism is unable or reluctant to offer some form of political action

or, if you wish, of anti-political but historically effective action. These brave, intelligent and honest people are the people that matter, the people who make history, and they will make anarchist history, unintelligent and dishonest history, as long as no way is shown, and shown on a fair scale, to make anarchist history. Of course, any movement needs numbers to make history, but what abstractly seems a vicious circle can dynamically turn into a snowball and an avalanche as numbers will be gained according to the movement's ability and determination to make history.

Passing from the elite to the majority who have no training or keenness of thought, but form their opinions and guide their attitudes according to what they see themselves or hear from trusted sources, the best way of making upon them a favourable and abiding impression seems to me that of emphasizing the positive and social character of anarchism rather than its eccentric and iconoclastic aspects. Principles are important and it is right that there should always be somebody to watch over and preserve their purity, but vestals will never make a movement, and if anarchists tend to become embodied principles they will soon lose the ability to feel with and for other men, and will be objects of abhorrence or ridicule. An anarchist should materialize by a process of expansion and not of reduction of human potentialities. It may not matter for a communist what communist way of life is to be realized only when all enemies of the party will be destroyed, and we know what that will be. But the anarchist way of life is to be realized or at least attempted here and now. It is a religion of the living, not of the yet unborn. So anarchists should not be afraid of becoming personalities, of taking part and share of social activities and responsibilities, but marking them all with characteristic tone so that people with discernment should hope and wish sincerely that anarchists were more.

GIOVANNI BALDELLI.

Theatre

THE BIG KNIFE

THE *Big Knife** is a brilliant beginning to the new year in the London theatre; it is unlikely that we shall have a finer and more interesting play during the rest of 1954. Clifford Odets is the most talented American playwright of his generation; the variety of his work, his rich sense of language keen insight into character, his broad, firm handling of dramatic material, his honesty, seriousness and resourcefulness justify this judgment. *The Big Knife* is I think a much better play than his famous *Golden Boy* (1937), which was about a young Italian-American violinist whose desire for wealth and fame leads him to become a pugilist, and who dies in an automobile crash, having attempted to find an escape in speed from the loss of his inner security. *The Big Knife* is an angry, pessimistic work; it is a study of the futility of bourgeois civilization. It ends with the suicide of the film star, Charles Castle. His friend says: "It was

*At the Duke of York's Theatre, London.

the only way he could live a free life. It was his act of faith". As the curtain falls, his wife cries despairingly "Help! Help! Help!" It is the cry of the individual who feels bewildered and trapped in our nightmarish society, in which the flesh is a slave to lust and passion and the mind a slave to the corruptions of the present social system. Odets has never conveyed more effectively his sense of social decay.

From the beginning of his career he showed a strong, constant sympathy with the oppressed. *The Big Knife* is not only an attack on the spiritual squalor and commercialism of our whole lives, on the corruption of the capitalistic system and the State, which are symbolised by the great cinema mogul, Marcus Hoff, a hypocritical tyrant whose mind is distorted by his lust for power, and who compels Castle to sign a contract by blackmailing him, which makes him his slave for the next fourteen years. Charles Castle is a famous actor whose soul is being killed by the shoddy parts his studio requires him to play. But are not all our souls being killed by the shoddy parts the State compels us to play? There is something in all ownership—the desire to seize upon a thing and hold it for our exclusive benefit, that taints the soul. We are all degraded by property and power and authority. In the last act Castle rounds on the cinema Mogul, and denounces him; he expresses his loathing and scorn for this creature, a lizard, as he says, that he mistook for an alligator. Mr. Odets is saying that we must destroy the fantasies that are ruining our lives. Be yourself, lead your own life—he seems to say—give in to love but don't allow it to interfere with your mission; protest against poverty and social evils and unite with others in creating a better world. His implied faith is that the human spirit is never defeated. His characters all lead vivid lives within the limitations which Fate (or the injustices of our society) has imposed upon them, and this fact not only makes the best of his plays exciting but also redeems them from fundamental pessimism, however calamitous the outward events recorded may be.

Mr. Sam Wanamaker acts extremely well as Charles Castle; he proved himself to be one of the finest American actors in two of his earlier plays in London, *Winter Journey*, which was also by Clifford Odets, and in *The Shrike*. Miss Renee Ascherson is unconvincing as Castle's wife. But there is some fine acting in the small parts, notable by Mr. Frederick Valk as the cinema Mogul.

D.M.M.

Why the Indifference?

IN the years that I have read FREEDOM I have yet to find a satisfactory answer to the question of the universal indifference to the ideas the paper presents. The recent discussions to this end notwithstanding. And this has remained a continual riddle to me from the time I first began to think in social terms. Put the question to anyone and you will almost always receive a ready answer, and invariably it will include such words as indifference, apathy, uniformity, etc. The anarchist has added another, "authoritarian mentality", and seems to feel smugly satisfied that he has added the last and final distinction. Considering our position to-day, the fact that all we are talking about is improving that position, and then add the almost total refusal to even question rationally, and we have a picture that gives a distinctly hollow ring to such words.

I am not sure that I know the answer but I feel there is little doubt but that we will have to go deeper than we have gone this far. That any consideration of the state of mind to-day will add little if any understanding. We must face the fact that freedom is not a new idea, and neither is its requirements; and it is certainly not the private property of the anarchist. Everybody lives freedom, it is just the kind that we have disagreement with. Freedom to one man is bondage to another. Nonetheless, man has been held in a strange kind of servitude (or freedom) for at least as far back as we have record of him. It is strange in the sense that it was always self imposed if considered from a historical point of view. If the truth be known he has never had but one master and that was himself. He has always obligingly provided the sword.

FREEDOM has made this mistake many times, and a good example will be found in the Oct. 24th issue while discussing the Israel-Jordan tension. The attitude expressed is that of a poor little people

When statesmen gravely say—"We must be realistic"—
The chances are they're weak and therefore pacifistic:
But when they speak of principles—
look out—perhaps
Their generals are already poring over maps.

W. H. AUDEN.

held in the iron claw of government, etc. I agree, but to what extent is the State alone to blame; or to express it in another way, to what extent is government the expression of the common will.

Of late I am coming nearer to the conclusion that we as people are getting just about what we have asked for; and I think this also applies to the past. We might ask the question: is it not possible that we are not ready for anything better than we have. There are those who will call our attention to those moments of the past when a kind of peace and integration prevailed as proof of man's social sufficiency. This must not be denied, but is it not misleading. For our opinions regarding human potential should we turn to the particular or the general? If to the general, as I think we should, then we will have to realize that enslavement has been the rule and that man has been a willing partisan to his own enslavement. Foolishly and unknowingly but none the less without reasoned refusal. Here might be a point of difference; it could be pointed out that there was a dissimilarity of importance between willingness and refusal; but would we not be quibbling? If we take the long view can we say there is much to choose from, between the man who does something "willingly" and the one who does it without "refusal"?

Recently, neurosis has been offered as an explanation. Neurosis is defined as a functional nervous disease and as such must be acquired after birth. If we use this to explain the widespread indifference to world conditions would we not have to conclude that man has been continuously neurotic for at least 50,000 years. This does not seem likely; and, if that was all that was wrong with us, surely some group would have broken the pattern of submission. There are those too who have listed man's intelligence as being somehow responsible for his undoing. As I understand them they maintain that his imagination and knowledge of things is a continual stimulative to his natural acquisitiveness. Successful acquisitiveness, so they continue, results in property ownership, privilege, and the force to maintain them, and this in turn adds up to the social evils, reaction, exploitation, and the rest. This is true in part but we are still faced with what we began; there is no answer to the question of the general indifference to those problems.

Another school propounds the bad environment idea. Not that it is much

different from that above, nor, so far as I can see, does it have any direct bearing on the question. But as it is often brought up a brief consideration is in order. First, however, let us remind ourselves that we are not overlooking the fact that, as the anthropologists like to put it, the social attitudes are culturally induced. We know this but to assume that bad environment is the cause of our indifference means that we must also assume that we have had such for a very long time, if not as far back as we can go. This is difficult for me to believe, and it seems more likely that, like our question of neurosis, somewhere along the line the exemplar of bad environment producing bad (apathetic) attitudes, and bad attitudes producing bad environments would have been broken. There is, perhaps, one way out and that would be to conclude that as a species we have reached an evolutionary dead end. We have all that is needed to be man except the intelligence to revolt.

This matter of evolution brings to mind another thought and perhaps the most interesting. It relates to this thing we call social instinct. I am not sure that I know what an instinct is but the word is commonly used so we will use it in its usual sense. But regardless of the exact meaning we can be sure of one thing, and that is that there is a strong impulse in all of us to be social, and we have praised it as the main factor that makes anarchism possible. I have been forced to realize, however, that the most powerful deterrent to a person accepting a thought which might lead to a social change, is this very real factor we call sociability. They seem to fear more than anything else being socially ostracized, and, of course, revolutionary ideas are never popular. So the wheel turns . . . we continue our fearful, vulgarian, existence, in order that we may be honoured and respected by our friends and countrymen.

Certainly one could continue almost indefinitely to raise questions that might relate in some manner to this problem; but in so far as the psychological reaction to living and all that it means as herein considered I feel we can summarize with the one word *fear*, with emphasis on the fear of being left alone. This fear seems to be behind the whole social conditioning process; if we consider patriotism, love of country, or even more to the point, the zealous support of authority and war, are we not face to face

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THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

Vol. 15, No. 2 January 9, 1954

TO ALL OUR COLLABORATORS

SOME months ago, in this editorial column, we explained for the benefit of our comrades and sympathetic readers some of the administrative, economic and editorial problems with which our group, as publishers of a weekly newspaper and of books and pamphlets, has to contend, and we put it to them that for the success and effectiveness of this work, as well as for its continuation, we needed to increase the circle of our readers—both of FREEDOM and of our publications. This would incidentally have the effect of relieving our financial difficulties, in that the contributions to the *Special Appeal* could be used for new publications instead of being absorbed, as at present, in meeting the weekly deficit incurred in the publication of FREEDOM. The further point we made in that Editorial was that if FREEDOM is to maintain and improve the standard of its contents, widen its horizon and its appeal, discuss more problems of the day and of the to-morrow, bring to its readers the kind of news that interests them from all parts of the world . . . if we are to do this we need the support of those among them who have been, and could be, regular correspondents.

One has only to glance through the files of FREEDOM during, say, the past two years, to see that there is no shortage of comrades with something to say, and who know how to say it! Yet during the past six months hardly a word has appeared in our columns from correspondents whose names, or initials are well known to our readers. It is not our notorious waste-paper basket that has been receiving their contributions, but rather that the needs of FREEDOM appear to have become of secondary importance to them. With the honorable exception of one correspondent whose manuscripts never fail to reach our office every Tuesday morning, the main task of filling the paper has fallen on the shoulders of three editorial writers, a task we have accepted because to us, at least, it is important that the anarchist point of view should continue to be expressed at all times, whether there is a "public demand" for it or not. Obviously if the work of *Freedom Press* were our bread-and-butter our concern might be motivated by other considerations. But just because we have to earn our bread-and-butter in other ways, the time available to us for the work of publishing FREEDOM and for our other activities connected with anarchist propaganda is limited. Not only our time, but our energies have limits too. Some of us have been connected with the work of this group since 1936, and during these seventeen years we have issued nearly 500 issues of our various periodicals, and have been writing more or less throughout this period. We are not professional hack-writers, who can sit down and write the allocated number of words on any subject under the sun . . . but this is in fact what those who have withdrawn their collaboration are more or less forcing us to do, and is contrary to our whole concept of what an anarchist paper should be. We do not wish to fill the paper simply for the sake of getting out yet another issue. Every issue of an intelligent journal intended for intelligent people should have a *raison d'être*: it should be informative, full of stimulating ideas, challenging to current thought, and even controversial within the sphere of anarchist thinking itself. Such a journal can only be published if a sufficient number of collaborators look upon it as an essential part of their lives, as

part of their responsibility, as something on which the time spent, in the preliminary thought and writing of articles, is well spent and cannot be sacrificed to other new initiatives.



WHEN we wrote in the Editorial referred to earlier, that among us there are those comrades who read too much and write too little and others who write too much and read too little, we were including ourselves in the latter category, and quietly protesting! It is not that we are averse to reading, but that the "defections" of some of our principal collaborators has imposed such a burden of writing on us that we are just able to read the daily and periodical press and no more. (It had for instance been our intention to publish this year a volume on Malatesta, whose ideas on anarchism and social problems are of the first importance, and are still virtually unknown in the English speaking countries. But the project had to be postponed indefinitely because the work on FREEDOM makes it impossible for one editor to withdraw his weekly collaboration for a few months so as to carry out the reading and research required for such a task. Yet two years ago this would have been quite feasible).

We will not unduly prolong this personal note to our collaborators. We have published it in our editorial column rather than in private letters to them because when we ask them for their collaboration we are not asking a personal favour, or that they should feel a responsibility to us as the editorial group of FREEDOM. We believe there are many readers who would share our disappointment if FREEDOM were to cease publication mainly through a lack of collaboration to its columns. Yet unless the challenge, which remained unanswered the last time we formulated it, is answered this time, such an eventuality must not be excluded from the realms of possibility. Those of us who have carried the editorial burden for so long are feeling a certain mental and intellectual exhaustion; we need to stimulate our thought by reading, by re-examining what those who have come before us have contributed to social thinking; we need a little more time to think out our own contributions to the columns of FREEDOM; and finally, we need to feel a flush of goodwill and understanding from those comrades who have until recently been our esteemed and valuable collaborators.

BUREAUCRATIC MADHOUSE

THE Devon Agricultural Executive Committee was criticised by all three members of the South-west province of the Agricultural Land Tribunal during the hearing of an appeal at Exeter yesterday.

Sir Leonard Costello, chairman of the tribunal, said that two different sets of directions had been served on the appellant landowner, one ordering him to convert existing buildings and the other, made a year later, compelling him to scrap them. There was nothing to show that the first set had been cancelled. "It is not unreasonable for the man to make a protest about that," said Sir Leonard.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Henry Imbert-Terry described the case as "a glorious muddle from beginning to end." He told Mr. J. P. Hall, representing the Ministry of Agriculture, that he was wasting the tribunal's time though the fault was not his.

The third member of the tribunal, Mr. R. L. Leach, pointed out that, in effect, it was possible to argue that the first direction was still in existence.

The appellant, Mr. J. E. Skuce, of Burnett Road, Streetly, Staffordshire, owner of Bigport Farm, Dunsford, near Exeter, who was not represented, appealed against the proposal of the Minister directing him to provide certain items of fixed equipment on the farm.

The tribunal adjourned to visit the farm. *Manchester Guardian*, 5/1/54.

A New Publication from Denmark

A SEX-POSITIVE ATTITUDE

From Denmark we have received the first issue of an attractively presented journal with the title *Du og Jeg*.

The editors, foreseeing that few English readers are familiar with the Danish language, have included a summary of the contents in English, which we feel will interest our readers in that it gives them an idea of the official attitudes to sex questions in Denmark as well as the efforts being made by independent groups to bring enlightenment on these subjects.

FREEDOM sends greetings to the authors of this new venture.

This journal, the name of which is: "YOU AND I", is a descendant of a sex-educational journal "SEX & SOCIETY" published some 13 years ago and discontinued on account of the occupation of the country in 1940. During its three years of existence it became extremely popular, as it was sold at a very low price in order to spread sexual education to all those who could not afford to get it through high-priced books like those of Van De Velde, and other physicians. This educational work was not looked upon with benevolence by the authorities, and the editors were fined time and again for printing "obscene" matters, in spite of the obvious educational character of the journal—of course, contributors of repute were always acquitted at trials. It was an *idé fixe* on the part of the authorities, that "Letters from Readers" were printed with the sole object of furnishing "lewd reading" for "perverts" who were supposed to buy the journal "with the sole aim of prying into 'Sexual Depravity' of the sort displayed in the journal". As an example of the sort of "perverts" meant—"lonely farmhands" were mentioned! This perfectly stupid attitude, characteristic of prurient Western Society and of this country in pre-War II-days, is still prevailing in some circles but the authorities realize that some developments have taken place since 1940 and that they can not very well charge a paper with obscenity for what children of to-day are told in kindergartens.

While the need for sexual education is still there, this new journal will not be a mere continuation of the old one since the real need of to-day is rather a pro-sexual atmosphere—than plain education. After all—some education has leaked out during the past 13 years, but education is in itself not enough when the general attitude is still a hush-hush one making the application of the knowledge gained difficult to practice. It is still more 'proper' to ignore facts than to remind a

young girl to take precautions against unwanted pregnancy before she leaves for a picnic—and then blame her for lack of foresight later, when she has become pregnant.

It is a change in these atmospheric conditions this journal will strive to bring about. We do not hope to make SEX directly accepted as decent, but merely an indisputable important aspect of a human life, tolerated, so each one may make of it what his or her nature dictates. We deem it indisputable that homophiles are human beings—fellow-men and women with equal human rights—and that they should not be out-lawed but accepted—especially since their riddle will never be solved, if they are doomed to hide themselves for ever, instead of coming "out from the bush". Only then their problems may be discussed and eventually tackled properly in a factual manner.

In this first issue we publish a first instalment of René Guyon's pamphlet "HUMAN RIGHTS—AND THE DENIAL OF SEXUAL FREEDOM" which is expected to cause some stir. At least, we hope it will do so and afford the editor a most valuable contact with the readers—whether they agree with Guyon—or disagree violently.

Since, however, this new journal stands for a somewhat different view than that of the late 30's, we should like to stress the importance of a harmonious existence in general and as an example of fine living we publish an authentic and very new account of the life still to be found on the South Sea Island of Raroia—perhaps the last spot on earth to-day where human beings act sensibly. It is the book by the Swedish zoologist, Bengt Danielsson—"DEN LYKKELIGE O"—"THE HAPPY ISLAND"—who was a member of the famous KON-TIKI raft-crew, shipwrecked on Raroia after a four months trip across the Pacific Sea. He was invited to return by the chieftain of the

FRENCH POSTAL STRIKE ENDS

PARIS, JANUARY 4.

Representatives of the postal workers' unions which have held up mail services for the past fortnight voted to-night to resume work to-morrow. This decision by members of the Independent and Communist unions promised to provide the nation with normal deliveries for the first time since before Christmas. Union spokesmen said that the Ministry of Posts had agreed to rearrange night shifts and to give workers a monthly cost-of-living bonus, but the exact terms were not disclosed.—*Associated Press*.

Why the Indifference? Continued from p. 2

with this same factor, fear of disapproval. The thought has been expressed before but it will bear repeating that when we witness the brave marching off to war, we are in reality seeing the depressing effects of a social conditioning which results in a man being more willing to kill and risk being killed, than to face social condemnation. Are we not as anarchists faced with a paradox if we recall all that we have said about sociability, mutual aid, and so on. But is this seeming paradox real or not? To answer this we will have to understand the nature of the instinct which effects such a binding control over our social responses, and how it is transmitted. Can we rightfully claim that the social attitude is a product of environmental conditioning, or are we creatures of habit forever to be moved by an unknowing instinctual pattern of behaviour? These seem to me to be unanswered questions.

Arthur W. Uloth (FREEDOM Oct. 24th) lists many reasons Why so few Anarchists? He seems to put most emphasis on the long reign of authoritarianism as explanation for our social indifference. I do not disagree with this or his other reasons, but should we not ask why we have put up with this royal dominion for so long, and likewise for the other reasons he gives. If the reason is instinctual social behaviour, as it seems to be, does not our only hope lie in progressive evolution, and what can be done about it? We know the difficulties of eugenics, and to date at least, there is no known way to influence mutation advantageously. Too often it seems we anarchists look at ourselves and thereby arrive at the conclusion that our perceptions are possible for us and therefore must be possible for others, if they only would. It may be that we will have to conclude that the revolutionary is, anthropologically, a deviant, and his hope vain. This

again brings up the question of the intellect and how much we can expect from it. I am not prepared for an exhaustive statement of the matter, and particularly I wish to avoid any discussion of free will, I believe simply that the repeated decay of cultures indicates as much as anything that the rulers as well as the common man, don't know how to keep a good thing once, as in a few instances, they have found it. It seems rather that the social instincts drive us to create authority, to bind life into a tight authoritarian package, to be the more sure that no one escapes the social duty of upholding the virtues, no matter how sordid, of the group. Are we destined to deny the individual because the instinctual mass man, conforming as he must to a norm, is forever at odds with himself and therefore in continual need for imperfect gods. He does not trust himself because his biological uniqueness never fits the social pattern in which he lives, and he satisfies this distrust by establishing a system of crime and punishment.

It might be well to consider for a moment the inception of the instinct in question. To do so we will have to go back beyond the period of history. In passing let us note that the bronze and iron age together constitute only about 10,000 years, or 1 per cent. of the million years generally estimated to be the time since man began to use stone tools. There seems to be general agreement that man arrived at his present development during the neolithic period, some twenty to forty thousand years ago, and that biologically there has been little if any change since. Man then is a stone age creature with no doubt stone age instincts, which, we can be quite sure served a useful purpose. So the question emerges . . . can we expect a coinciding development of individuality now that

island, and did so with his wife. For a full year they lived with their friends, studying their Freudian sex life and their sound disregard for Western Way of Life—all of which imbued them with a capacity to LIVE and to enjoy LIFE, in a manner completely unknown to us.

We know all too well, that it is quite impossible for the crippled Western mind to "go native", but at least we may enjoy the account of such life and learn a few things of importance to a revision of our own 'way of life', the pattern of which is fast becoming a Crazy-Quilt. We hope to bring more material of this sort in future issues.

With this short summary for readers in other countries we hope to establish new contacts which may be developed later in the form of support and contributions—perhaps an exchange of contributions and news with similar journals abroad.

We do hope to make this journal a "live wire" and not a cut-and-dried educational journal of the "Surgery Stage" level, at which most such ventures land. We are convinced that: SEX IS NOT A DISEASE and that it does not belong in the surgery—except in certain specific cases. Nor does it need the medical stamp, it should become accepted without the doctor's signature on a prescription. A more natural attitude towards SEX is our distant aim.

STEEN HINRICHSSEN.

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we understand the nature of our environment and have it at least somewhat under control? Kropotkin in his *Ethics* gives us insight regarding the growth of moral systems and some understanding of the forces that produce them, but continues to talk about teaching "fundamental principles of morality" and "a system worthy of the present scientific revival". Such thoughts appeal very strongly to a few what about the rest. Do people now or in the past pay any attention to moral teaching? In words perhaps yes, but otherwise have they not followed the course of the social matrix which collectively they form? Are ethical systems just fine playthings for intellectuals and will never have any perceptible effect on the patterns of cultures, or is teaching in order? I am not prepared to say decisively that teaching is of no avail, but we can with certainty and dismay view its results.

These perhaps are unanswered questions, and may remain so for some time; but there is one question that can be answered and it is of considerable importance to us. It is the thought that, assuming this premise, is there any point in being an anarchist? I would say yes and for good reason, for this same premise must also apply to us. To take the position that the human mind is greatly effected by instinct still does not preclude change, and we can just as well assume the possibility of evolving a coinciding instinctual behaviour pattern of individualism to supplement the existing subservient sociability. Also there is the fact that our hereditary endowment is such that we must assert the absolute uniqueness of each. The possibility of any two beings, living or having lived, having identical sets of genes is almost non-existent (identical twins excepted). A statement that we must act in accordance with this singleness of kind seems only a matter of commonsense, and, deviants or not, let us comply with that. *California*. LEE BEECH.

FROM PENN TO McCARTHY

LEGITIMATE INVESTIGATION of genuine subversion, in view of what we know about Communism and other philosophies inimical to democratic law and practices, is justified and needed. But where do we draw the line? Few countries are blessed with a finer historic guide in the documents wrought out by the nation's founders to safeguard basic freedoms.

WHAT COULD APPLY MORE APTLY to our current situation than the Act of Virginia, passed in 1786? Think of recent methods used by Congressional investigating committees, and compare them to this standard: "To suffer the civil magistrate to intrude his powers into the field of opinion and to restrain the profession or propagation of principles on supposition of their ill tendency, is a dangerous fallacy, which at once destroys all liberty; because he being, of course, judge of that tendency, will make his opinions the rule of judgment, and approve or condemn the sentiments of others only as they shall square with or differ from his own. It is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt acts against peace and good order."

SUCH KEYSTONES in the arch of liberty were not found ready at hand, but were developed out of concrete cases, usually through the protests of liberty-minded individuals at specific attempts to suppress freedom. How painfully have the ideals of freedom been developed is dramatically shown by the famous trials of William Penn in 1670. Penn, at the age of 26, had gone with William Meade, a former colonel in Cromwell's army, to worship at a Friends meeting in Gracechurch Street, London. But under the Conventicle Act, which barred all worship except that in accord with the Church of England, the meeting place was closed by soldiers, whereupon Penn began to speak in the street.

ARRESTED BY CONSTABLES, Penn and Meade were charged as follows: That they did "with force and arms unlawfully and tumultuously assemble . . . to the great terror and disturbance of the peace", etc. When Penn, who knew the law, challenged the sheriff, one Brown, the latter said: "You are not here for worshipping God, but for breaking laws." Penn repeatedly asked what law, but the persecutors, confounded, could not cite any statute that applied. Nevertheless, Penn and Meade were sent to jail and kept for two weeks in a place described by the young Quaker as so "noisome and stinking that the Lord Mayor

would think it an unfit sty for his swine."

WHEN TRIED at Old Bailey, Penn demanded a copy of the indictment, but was refused. The Recorder called him "an impudent fellow." Penn: "I have asked but one question, and you have not answered me, though the rights and privileges of every Englishman are concerned in it." Recorder: "If I should suffer you to ask questions till to-morrow morning, you would be never the wiser." Penn: "That is according as the answers are." Dragged away, Penn was still volubly declaring, "I am not to be silent in a case where I am so much concerned; and not only myself but many ten thousand families besides."

THE DECENCY OF THE JURY in that trial, and the attempts of the judges to override and terrorize it, suggest why, in our day, committees prefer their own ways rather than legal trials. For that jury came in with a verdict that simply exonerated Meade and found Penn guilty of nothing but speaking in Gracechurch Street. The Recorder was furious. "Gentlemen," he said to the 12 jurymen, "you shall not be dismissed till we have a verdict the Court will accept, and you shall be locked up without meat, drink, fire or tobacco; we will have a verdict or you shall starve for it." Under those conditions the jury was held overnight. Next day, its courage was unbroken. The Lord Mayor warned Penn that if he spoke again he would be placed in fetters and staked to the ground, when that young man replied: "I mind not your fetters."

TIME AFTER TIME the jury's brave spokesman, Edward Bushel, reported the same verdict. A second night, still without food or drink, the 12 were locked up, but stuck to their refusal to satisfy the bullying of the judges. Bushel was told at one point that if he did not yield he would be mutilated, but he did not quail. The jury now voted definitely "Not guilty". The Recorder exclaimed: "It will never be well with us till something like the Spanish Inquisition be in England." As the jurymen were sent away to prison after suffering fines, Penn called out to Bushel, "You are Englishmen, mind your privileges. Give not away your rights." To which Bushel an-

"A PLEA FOR ANARCHIE"

Peek-a-boo or spelling revealed
Mr. Edwin Peeke
Is up a most un-navigable creek.
If we spell as we hear
How do we know when a bier's not a beer?
Ashtead. M.G.W.

The Years of the Demagogues

TRUMAN has defined Brownellism very clearly—so far as it lies in the power of a liberal politician to do so. *Brownellism is the attempt of the Republican administration to incite people with Demagoguery and Inquisitorial Circuses, in order to distract attention from its practical failures.*

Like most liberal ideas, this interpretation contains a great deal of truth—and misses the point completely.

The really crucial point is: What forces are creating the mass-following of Demagoguery? Why does McCarthyism have such strong appeal in all sections of the population? Why has Demagoguery become a successful political method? These questions have to be answered, for the vicious system cannot be understood and combated, until the underlying pathology is exposed.

Demagoguery, an old and recurring phenomenon, has a distinct anatomy. On the surface, it "incites"; in reality, it exploits, it brings to fever and action an existing mass state of mind. In ordinary times, people tend to be conservative, they vote for a traditional party, are basically apathetic to politics. A Hitler or a McCarthy preaches in empty halls. Demagoguery appears when the population has deep grievances about which nothing is being done—when a deep social crisis stirs furious resentments, the institutions do not give satisfaction, and the people have no knowledge of a constructive solution. At such times, the successful political party is the one which panders dishonestly to this resentment with promises of magical solution and with the persecution of scapegoats.

answered: "Nor will we ever do it." Eventually the jurymen were released under *habeas corpus*. Bushel at once brought suit against his judges, and won, the Court of Common Pleas asserting that judges might "try to open the eyes of the jurors, but not to lead them by the nose."

THE RISE OF CIVILIZATION is marked all the way by similar stepping stones. It is not those who remain silent toward the bully or the despot who contribute anything, but those who openly protest. In 1953 it is not different from 1670. As William Ellery Channing said during the War of 1812: "If men abandon the right of free discussion: if, awed by threats, they suppress their convictions; if rulers succeed in silencing every voice but that which approves them; if nothing reaches the people but what would lend support to men in power—farewell to liberty." That must not happen, either at the hands of Communists, or of reckless anti-Communists. To speak out, as William Penn put it in those tense days nearly 300 years ago, is an "indispensable duty".

DEVERE ALLEN,
(Worldover Press).

To understand the present American Demagoguery, therefore, we must look to the grievances the McCarthys espouse—or, even more meaningfully, the grievances the millions of "independent voters" sent Eisenhower to Washington to remedy. When we understand these grievances, we know what drives the masses who follow the Demagogues.

Without ignoring independent issues—the Eisenhower personality, the publicized bureaucratic corruption—we can identify the chief grievances as the burden imposed on the daily lives of Americans by the world military and economic struggle the taxes, the draft, the casualties, the tension of a state of permanent crisis and fear. The Republican Party promised, explicitly or by implication, that it would by some magic alter these facts of our life. Now it has to answer to the millions of disillusioned "independent voters", who are beginning to suspect that this, as much as Democratic administration, is "government by postponement".

This mass susceptible to Demagoguery now holds a balance of power in American political life, as the Republicans are aware. As politicians who want to survive, they are compelled to adopt policies which are obviously uncomfortable for their titular leader, are disastrous abroad, destructive of governmental efficiency. They are compelled to it, because they have no better substitutes for the impossible actions the voters expected, the impossible promises they themselves have made.

It is a rhetorical question, to ask whether the Republican Party, or the Democratic Party, can propose any alteration in the foreign politics which prepare the ground for Demagoguery. The Republican Party has shown its powerlessness to take advantage of the succession-crisis in Russia—perhaps the last opportunity for a long time, probably already irredeemably lost, to take advantage of a relatively unaggressive foreign policy in the Kremlin, to ease a little the ferocious imperial struggle. The Democratic Party, on the other hand, was the author, through the Truman Doctrine of 1947, of America's declaration of Cold War. It was the Truman administration which joined the military issue in Korea. And even as an Opposition party, the Democrats have in the last year scrupulously adhered to "bi-partisanship" in foreign policy.

At this point we find ourselves in a familiar and very formidable dilemma. The Demagoguery is a consequence of the international struggle, and it is superficial to attack the symptom and not the underlying pathology. But the American government cannot disentangle itself from the world-struggle: its participation is dictated by reasons deep in the structure of the social order.

In such a case, most people seek comfort in clinging to a superficial view and hoping for the best. But the first step toward a clear grasp of our situation, the first step towards practical action, is to recognize how, in detail and on broad issues, the national politics deal invariably and helplessly with symptoms, and

persistently confirm the pathological social process. Recognizing this, we are then compelled to address ourselves to the hard underlying problems: How to show the people deluded by the Demagogues that though their grievances are real and just, the action they are supporting is the revenge of liberticide—which will not remedy their grievances. How to show them what is needed, if the Permanent War is to be ended. How to being to create, little by little, the spirit of community, of solidarity and freedom, which can be the basis of a warless non-governmental society. R.

(From *Resistance*, Dec. 1953).

Punishment of Homosexuals

With regard to your article: "Judge on Punishment of Homosexuals", *FREEDOM*, 19th December. It is true that at present no study of the actual effect of homosexual experience upon boys is available. It would be of interest and instruction to know, in the case of a boy who, during his adolescence, has had any sort of homosexual experience with other lads, or with men, if, as a result of such experience, he has been (to use a favourite popular expression) "TURNED INTO" a homosexual. I fancy such a thing is almost unknown: in spite of the popular notion to the contrary.

If, as I believe, most boys have had some sort of homosexual experience during their boyhood, (very often with other lads: more occasionally with men), unless such a lad has *inborn* homosexual feelings, (in which case they would, in any event, manifest themselves later on), the effect of indulging in homosexual experience during boyhood has no permanent effect at all. He, in time, develops ordinary sexual feelings and indulges them with the opposite sex, forgetting all about his previous excursions into homosexuality.

Edinburgh. A.J.

DEBATE

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"ARE ANARCHISTS HUMAN?"

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Speakers: Mark Kramisch, Hugh McCutcheon and others.

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JAN. 22—Giovanni
GROWING A BEARD.
JAN. 29—Thomas Mullin
EDUCATION OR DEVASTATION.

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The Spanish Tradition

SPAIN resembles Europe of the Middle Ages, when communes had a great deal of autonomy and when each member played an active role in the running of the communities. Unlike the communes in Mediaeval Germany, France and Italy, which flourished mostly in the towns and were composed of artisans and merchants, the communes in Spain existed mostly in the countryside and were composed of peasants, herdsmen, shepherds. There were also communes of fishermen on the coast. Provincial and municipal feeling was therefore very strong and every town was the centre of an intense social life. This autonomy of the towns and villages allowed the full development of the people's initiative and rendered them far more individualistic than other nations, though at the same time developing the instinct of mutual aid which has elsewhere been atrophied by the growth of the state.

It is difficult to understand Spain if one has not read *Mutual Aid*, and, indeed, some of the pages of the *Spanish Labyrinth* would form a valuable supplement to Kropotkin's work. Spanish communal institutions would have offered Kropotkin a tremendous amount of material to illustrate his theory of Mutual Aid, but it is probable that the material was not available to him at the time. Brennan's book has filled the gap to a great extent by giving examples of agricultural and fishermen's communities which have survived through centuries, independent of the central authority of the government. While communes in the

rest of Europe were gradually absorbed by the state and had lost most of their liberties and privileges by the middle of thirteenth century they survived much longer in Spain. . . .

When one takes into account the fertile growth of communistic institutions, the mutual aid displayed among peasants, fishermen and artisans, the spirit of independence in the towns and villages, it is not difficult to understand why anarchist ideas found such a propitious soil in Spain.

The theories of the anarchists, and of Bakunin and Kropotkin in particular, are based on the belief that men are bound together by the instinct of mutual aid, that they can live happily and peacefully in a free society. Bakunin through his natural sympathy for the peasants, Kropotkin through his study of the life of animals, of the primitive societies and the Middle Ages, had both reached the conclusion that men are able to live happily and show their social and creative abilities in a society free from any central and authoritarian government. These anarchist theories correspond to the experiences of the Spanish people. Wherever they were free to organise themselves independently they had improved their lot, but when the central government of Madrid through the landlords, the petty bureaucrats, the police and the army, interfered with their lives, it always brought them oppression and misery.

—Review of THE SPANISH LABYRINTH.
(Now, No. 3, 1944)

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