

# Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Whenever government assumes to deliver us from the troubles of thinking for ourselves, the only consequences it produces are torpor and imbecility."

—WILLIAM GODWIN.

## GUATEMALA

THE happenings in Guatemala illustrate once again the difficulties in the way of forming a clear opinion of their significance. Some newspapers describe the clash between the government and the exiled Col. Armas as a spontaneous revolt against the Communist-dominated government, while others declare that it is an interventionist coup planned by American capital. One newspaper said it was the Spanish Civil War all over again, and implied that in that struggle General Franco appeared as a liberator from the Communist (Popular Front Government). Some who accept that the Guatemalan government of President Arbenz Guzman is in fact Communist, may well be upset at seeing Col. Armas compared to General Franco.

Actually, of course, there is hardly a single one of these descriptions which is not founded upon assumption rather than fact. The government is probably not Communist dominated though it may well be Communist infiltrated, and it is not yet clear how near this infiltration comes to dominance. Nor is it clear what Col. Armas stands for, though he is clearly a conservative in politics.

The British government are adopting a "don't know" attitude though one can hardly believe that either the British or the American government is really as ill-informed as they claim to be. Here are some indications.

On June 13, Associated Press reported in the American press an interview from Tegucigalpa, Honduras, with Col. Castillo Armas in which he described his resistance movement (known as the Anti-Communist Front of Guatemalans in exile). He was reported as saying that a tiny spark of uprising within the country could trigger a revolt of the entire resistance organization both inside and outside Guatemala. That was almost a week before the first clash of arms, and one may wonder that newspaper men were so well informed, while government are not.

Guatemala's Foreign Minister claimed that two aircraft of North American make had attacked Guatemala City, bombing a house near the city centre, and strafing the national palace. The American Ambassador in Guatemala Mr. John Peurifoy however advised Washington that there was no truth in these charges. Nevertheless, Mr. Eden told the House of Commons on Monday that "H.M. Chargé d'Affaires has informed us that the airport of Guatemala City was bombed and machine gunned by a single aircraft on June 18. There have also been reports of attack by aircraft on the national palace the same day." (*Evening Standard*)

21.5.54). One may perhaps draw the conclusion that the U.S. Ambassador in Guatemala has "misled" Washington, and perhaps that Washington had indicated already the directions in which it wished to be "misled".

The U.S. Government appears to have been upset by reform measures carried out by the Guatemalan Government of President Guzman and the United Fruit Company of Boston which is stated to be by far the largest commercial concern in the country is at the moment in legal dispute with the government. Washington recently refused to sell arms to this government which accordingly bought extensively from Poland and Czechoslovakia. The American government countered this move by selling arms to Nicaragua and Honduras, two of Guatemala's neighbours. The news division of the State Department told reporters recently that it "assumed" that these arms were not being used by the so-called anti-Communist forces invading Guatemala.

The American Government is seeking to impose a blockade on Guatemala. Accordingly the Eisenhower administration asked the British Foreign Office to order the searching of British merchant ships, only to be told by the F.O. that "there was no general right of search on the high seas in peacetime". The irony of all this is that during the first world war the U.S. Government most bitterly opposed the British sea blockade of Germany and the exercise of this right of search. During the last war, American support for the freedom of the seas was such that they never exercised belligerent rights of visit and search but left this to the British authorities!

State Department legal experts contest the British Foreign Office's ruling arguing that any government can exercise the right of search if it is able to maintain an effective blockade. At the same time they refuse

to answer questions as to whether any blockade is contemplated.

While the U.S. Government pretends to maintain a "watchful attitude" there is much openly expressed satisfaction at this attempt by Guatemalan exiles to unseat the government. So open is this satisfaction that the *New York Times* remarks that "It would be dangerously inconsistent for our Government to welcome any revolution in Latin America achieved principally by troops moving in from neighbouring States. That practice, if used by reactionaries to overthrow democratic Governments would obviously seem wrong. We have to withhold judgment on what has happened in this instance. We need not, however, conceal our satisfaction if what is happening now in Guatemala were to result in a new trend towards democracy and towards friendlier relations with other democratic countries."

For what these terms are worth, the Guzman government is the legally constituted government of Guatemala, and the U.S. Government's

Continued on p. 4

## Death of a Press Lord

LORD CAMROSE, whose death occurred earlier this month, had tremendous wealth and power; his life is that of a man in pursuit of power rather than wealth, for the latter he had acquired after the first 14 years of his working life, but power has no limits. It is curious to see that of the one column obituary in the *Times*, three-quarters of it deals with the building up his newspaper and publishing Empire.

He was a hard-working man all his life (you cannot rest on your laurels if you want to maintain your power, there being too many other aspirants waiting their chance to replace you), starting work on a Welsh paper at the age of 14. When he moved to London his first job was as a reporter with, significantly enough, the *Investor's Guardian*. By 1901, when he was 22, William Berry as he then was called, ventured into ownership starting the *Advertising World* most of which he wrote himself.

Now watch his rise to power, the buying and selling, the ramifications, political and financial as recounted in the *Times* obituary:

The paper made a profit. As a result William brought up his brother Collier from Wales, and while the elder of the

two concentrated on the editorial side the younger applied his energies to the business management. This apportionment of responsibilities was to continue for 35 years of the brothers' joint work in Fleet Street. In 1905 they sold the *Advertising World*, bought a publishing business, and founded *Boxing* and a number of other periodicals.

The year 1915 brought to the Berry brothers their first really important enterprise, the acquisition of the *Sunday Times*. William Berry was lunching with the late James White, the financier, when White was approached by West de Wend Fenton, traveller and journalist, who had an option on the paper. Berry took up the option, and then found himself face to face with the principals, who included Dr. Jameson (of the Raid), Sir Basil Zaharoff, the armaments manufacturer, and Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland. All three were anxious about future policy and made many difficulties, but Berry at length brought them into line and completed the purchase without any hampering conditions.

Soon after taking over the *Sunday Times* the Berry brothers bought the *St. Clement's Press*, which printed the paper. With it went the control of the *Financial Times*, which in 1925 was amalgamated with the *Financier*. The operations of the partners now took on ever-increasing pace and momentum, and they acquired, often for enormous sums, large numbers of printing, publishing, and paper-making concerns. Among the more important were Weldons, publishers of magazines for women, with about 20 subsidiaries; the publishing business of Cassell and Co.; Kelly's Directories, and the *Graphic* publications. In 1924 they took over the Hulton group, of Manchester (including the *Daily Dispatch*, and *Manchester Evening Chronicle*, the *Sunday Chronicle*, and the *Athletic News*). In the following year they bought the Newcastle group (the *Chronicle* and others), the Glasgow group (*Daily Record*, *Evening News*, &c.), and sundry journals in Aberdeen, Sheffield, and South Wales. William Berry was now a baronet, the creation dating from 1921.

In 1926 the Berry brothers made their biggest deal, acquiring from the executors of Lord Northcliffe the vast business of the Amalgamated Press, comprising over 100 periodicals and a department which issued encyclopaedias and similar books of reference, the printing works at London and Gravesend, and the Imperial Paper Mills at Gravesend. Further big paper interests followed a year later, when the Berrys bought Edward Lloyd, Ltd., one of the largest paper mills in the world.

### THE "DAILY TELEGRAPH"

In December, 1927, the late Lord Burnham, its proprietor, was in search of a likely purchaser of the *Daily Telegraph*. At a meeting between him, his nephew, then Colonel Fred Lawson, the Berry brothers and Sir Edward (now Lord) Iliffe it was arranged that the three last-named should take entire control as from January 9, 1928. The Lawson family yielded their financial interests in the concern, but Colonel Lawson (now Major General Lord Burnham) remained manager. . . . In 1929 Sir William Berry was raised to the peerage.

At the beginning of January, 1937, the long-continued partnership between the Berrys was at last severed. It was felt by both, and by Lord Iliffe, that the great expansion of their newspaper interests demanded a reorganization. Lord Camrose therefore took over Lord Kemsley's interest in the *Daily Telegraph* and part of Lord Iliffe's, resigned from Allied Newspapers and Kelly's Directories, and took up the Kemsley and Iliffe holdings in the Amalgamated Press, Ltd., and the *Financial Times*, Ltd. (He parted with his holding in the *Financial Times* in 1945.) In August, 1937, Lord Camrose acquired the *Morning Post*, and two months later amalgamated it with the *Daily Telegraph*.

Shortly after the outbreak of war it was announced that Lord Camrose had joined the Ministry of Information as Chief Assistant to Lord Macmillan, the Minister and Controller of Press Relations. He remained there for a few weeks only, and then announced in the House of Lords that in the process of reconstructing the Ministry he had "organized himself out of a job," but stated that he would gladly give Lord Macmillan what assistance he could from outside. In the New Year Honours of 1941 he was raised to a viscountcy.

And there are those who talk of a "free" press!

Continued on p. 2

## Mau Mau and Us

WRITING in *Encounter* (November, 1953) Arthur Koestler states:

"Many intelligent and well-meaning Germans react, when Auschwitz and Belzen are mentioned in their presence, with a stony silence and the pained expression of a Victorian lady confronted with a rude reminder of the Facts of Life: that they happen to be facts never enters her head; they are just unmentionable, and that is all there is to them. Others will either deny the facts, or call them vastly exaggerated, or will, in the same breath use several mutually contradictory arguments without being aware of the contradiction."

"The remarkable thing about this reaction-pattern is that it betrays an unconscious guilt-complex even among those who had no share in the killings—and these are the vast majority of Germans."

Living in Britain to-day one can hardly help noticing a somewhat similar phenomenon—the repressed consciousness of guilt concerned with the steady butchery of Africans which is being carried out in 'our' name. The newspapers keep nudging their readers obscenely: so many killed last week; so many this week; a total of so-and-so this month; R.A.F. bombers wipe out more Mau Mau gangs. The public has a right to be informed, yes, but does not the gloating manner in which the information is conveyed betray an official concern that 'we' shall be deeply morally implicated in this most shameful programme of extermination?

The war which 'we' are fighting against the Kikuyu people, whom 'we' have stirred into civil war as well, is not like other wars. 'We' have such a huge superiority of weapons that it is, in fact, a campaign of deliberate slaughter only

prolonged by the difficulties of the terrain. It is a little like the repression of the Irish in Ireland which 'we' carried out through 'our' Black-and-Tan force—only ten times more brutal.

### The Men of the Future

I do not blind myself to the whole picture. I know perfectly well that the Mau Mau fighters are as ferocious and brutal as any you would find in the world to-day. As a pacifist I condemn their methods, and as an anarchist I condemn their nationalistic aims. As far as I can see they aim at creating an authoritarian nationalist state, and that murder and blackmail are their means. And yet it seems to me that the future lies with the Africans in Africa, and the Kikuyu in Kenya; and so my 'sympathy' is with the Mau Mau and not with the forces of the country which would claim my allegiance. To me it will seem an excellent thing when the British are dispossessed of their power in Kenya. I think that the days of 'our' power there are numbered even though the Mau Mau army may be slaughtered piecemeal.

In the last year, in spite of the frightful punishment inflicted on the Kikuyu troops, and on all possible supporters, the movement of revolt has grown in size and influence, not dwindled. The manner in which 'we' will eventually leave Kenya is another matter: I fear that 'we' will not be able to retreat from Africa as gracefully as 'we' were allowed to withdraw from India.

'Sympathy' in the sense in which I have used it requires some explanation. One has to beware of simple emotional inversion. I have said that my sympathy is with Mau Mau, yet it is not because they are black, the under-dog, the victims of a militarism which I myself have resisted. I have no illusions about what they stand for, and which I personally abhor; yet I recognize them as the men of the future. Their dynamic will outlast that of those who are trying to exterminate them. They have elevated the formerly docile Kikuyu people above the surrounding tribes; paradoxically enough they are the bearers of new hope for East Africa.

### Kenyatta's Real Crime

Let us consider what they have done. Over two years ago notice began to be taken of the outbreaks of violence and civil commotion in Kenya. The first victims of the law were the westernized African politicians, like Jomo Kenyatta, who were running the Kenya African Union. They were charged, among other crimes, with 'managing Mau Mau', an organization which seemed to be a primitive society of jungle sorcerers.

Those who had met Mr. Kenyatta in London were sceptical of the idea that he was really a witch-doctor aspiring to

## Benefits of the Hydrogen Bomb

IT is an interesting speculation, reading of inventions and discoveries which are at present in the experimental stage, to guess at the benefits that will result from them when they become available for public use. Of the hydrogen bomb and similar gadgets, for instance, we have noted that they may: produce a much needed reduction in world population; provide new opportunities for nobility and heroism on the part of individuals; and eventually increase their vision, skill, strength and wisdom of the average person in succeeding generations.\*

But it takes a sales expert, and an American sales expert at that, with his mind firmly in the present and no fantastic ideas about future utopias, to point out what benefits are to be derived from the hydrogen bomb now, whilst it is still in the laboratory. *Industrial Worker* draws our attention to the following report in

the *American Retailers Daily*, April 28, 1954:

"Walter E. Hoadley, Jr., economist for Armstrong Cork company, Lancaster, Pa., solemnly told the annual U.S. Chamber of Commerce meeting that the H-bomb could contribute to the economic growth by increasing 'the tendency of many individuals to adapt a shorter term outlook on life'."

"To Mr. Hoadley, this means consumers will now proceed to increase their living standards substantially over the years ahead, worrying more about increasing their comforts now than securing their futures."

"It apparently was the first time any economist of stature has translated the awesome proportions of the hydrogen bomb into an encouraging sales potentiality."

\*One known effect of radioactivity on the chromosomes is an increased tendency in future generations to have more than the hitherto accepted complement of eyes, fingers, thumbs and heads.

### PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT! WEEK 24

Loss on 'Freedom' 24 x 15 = £360

Received in 24 weeks £206

GAP £154

June 11th to June 18th

Birmingham: A.R.L. £2; London: E.F. 2/-; London: Anon. 11/-; London: Anon. 5/-; London: Q. 1/-; Ipswich: H.S. 10/-; Birmingham: W.S. 10/-; Worthing: W.G.A. 2/6; Mevagissey: L.A. 1/6; Hounslow: W.M.E. £1; London: P.H.S. £1; Glasgow: S.M. 7/6; Hereford: J.H.M. £1; Exeter: P.H. 6/-; London: Anon. 10/-; Fordingbridge: A.J. £5; Peterborough: A.W. 3/-; Swansea: V.P.S. £1; Dovercourt: L.C.W. 12/7; London: D.M. 3/-; London: W.E.D. 6/-; Romford: R.W.D. 5/-; Cambridge: F.C. 6/-; Parma: H.P. £1/9/6; Swansea: H.R.L. 5/-; London: E.F. 2/-; London: C.F. 8/6.

Total	18 7 1
Previously acknowledged	188 5 3
1954 TOTAL TO DATE	£206 12 4

## Will They Never Learn?

ONE would have thought that by now the limitations of political action would have been obvious to every student of social movements. Further, one would have thought that the basic fallacies of Marxism would have made themselves fairly obvious also.

That this is not so is, of course, in part due to the fact that many students of social movements shove their heads in the Marxist helmet and pull the vizor well down before beginning to study their subject in reality.

In Ye Olden Tymes many a fayre knight fell flat on his back and was unable to rise due to the weight of his armour. He undoubtedly whiled away the hours of waiting for his servitors to come and pick him up, by blinking at the stars through his vizor and cogitating upon the nature of the heavens, becoming blissfully unaware, since he couldn't see it, of the mud all around.

It was a dangerous situation, for while he lay there, supine and helpless but mentally very active, it was an easy task for his enemy to deal him the *coup de grace*.

Ye Goodly Knightes, however, had the sense to learn from their mistakes, and gave up wearing heavy armour, which looked very impressive but was really ineffective—and dangerous.

If only our present-day Knights of the Class Struggle—our Revolutionary Scientific Socialists from the Court of Karl Marx—would learn from the history they claim to study, maybe they would consign their ungainly armour to the museum where it began and leave themselves free to see the modern world as it is—and to act accordingly.

For, believe it or not, readers, a move is afoot to launch A New Revolutionary Party Based On The Principles Of Scientific Socialism. A Crusade is being mounted once again to set out to slay the dragon Capitalism, which is a laudable aim, but made ludicrous when attempted with obsolete weapons.

### Marxist Disunity

The Marxists of the world have been pretty disunited for a long time now. Not split into quite as many fragments as the Christians, perhaps, but as far as mutual hatred is concerned, the Trotskyists and Stalinists have nothing to learn from the Catholics and Protestants, while social democrats of the (successful) reformist parties look down with scorn upon their smaller brethren.

Since the Trotskyists blew themselves

up a few years back with their internal dissensions over such fundamental issues as: Should they enter the Labour Party and bore from within? (or simply remain bores from without?) the lunatic fringe of the Left has been bombarding capitalism with small journals, and the amusing part—for us superior, cynical anarchists—has been to note that the smaller and scruffier and more badly duplicated the journal has been, the more certain have been its editors that theirs is the only true, scientific, socialism.

### Marxist Unity (?)

However, it seems that now the true scientists are prepared to co-operate with the deviationist and therefore untrue scientists in the creation of a new—independent, revolutionary, socialist, workers, mass, true Marxist, broadly-based, non-sectarian, correct, scientific—party, and that the Merseyside Socialist Education Group (and by Christ we need educating to deal with this stuff!) are organising a national conference in Liverpool for July 17th and 18th.

A printed paper has recently appeared, bearing the title *Revolt*, associated with which is Harry McShane, who can only be described in the language of true scientific socialism as "a renegade from the Stalinist renegades". Some of the proposers for the conference suggest that *Revolt* be taken as the basis for the new party organ.

Where will the members come from? Well, apart from the splinter groups already referred to, our attention is drawn to the fact that "All the major working-class parties are now basically reformist,

although genuine revolutionary elements exist in all.

Membership for the new party will clearly be made up of these "elements" winkled out of their present organisations.

### What Will It Do?

Just what the new party's line will be—or whether it will come into being or not—will, presumably, have to be settled at the conference. But since it is going to be a party and all the constituent groups talk in terms of political leadership, we can only assume that it will engage in political activity and will aim at achieving political—i.e. governmental—power.

Being "revolutionary" it will, also presumably, be prepared to achieve this by other than Parliamentary means. Indeed, talk of the class struggle—but with correct political leadership, of course—is prominent in the literature of these groups. We can therefore look forward to more attempts to utilise workers' action for political ends.

This we unalterably oppose. There are already too many parasites upon the working class, benefitting from its struggle and suffering. Political mirage after political mirage has misled the workers into allowing their strength to be used for ends which have not been in their interests.

The strength of the workers lies in industry—at the point of production. Let them be encouraged to organise themselves there for the purpose of achieving economic power, and politics will be shown up for the superfluous opportunism it is.

There are too many political rackets already. We don't want any more.

P.S.

## Mau Mau and Us

Continued from p. 1

power through disembowelled cats, banana-leaf arches and other tit-bits about Mau Mau which the newspapers hashed up. It seemed evident that Mr. Kenyatta's real crime lay in the organization of schools for Africans (which did not teach Christianity and subservience to the white boss), and the political organization of the Kikuyu people. Kenyatta *et al.* being imprisoned, the schools closed down, and the Kenya African Union suppressed, the Kikuyu turned increasingly to murder as means of revolt. At first this was treated as a temporary expression of lawlessness which could soon be put down by firmness, but the influence of Mau Mau seemed to spread like wildfire, and the forests to become alive with guerrilla troops.

What has obviously been a terrible shock to the whites in Kenya is to find that these despised 'niggers' could organize themselves into most efficient fighting units, lamentably armed it is true, but possessed of all the qualities of courage, ruthlessness, discipline and tactical shrewdness which most command the respect of *pukka sahibs*. The Mau Mau forces are being steadily and cautiously butchered by the superior arms of their opponents, but it is taking a long time. And in that time the prestige of the white man is steadily sinking. High-ranking officers have been forced to pocket their pride and seek to obtain military parity with those who could previously be dismissed as 'dirty niggers'—only to be snubbed by the Mau Mau.

The reality of the Mau Mau ritual oaths has to be considered. Mr. Lyttleton caused to be excised from the Report

of the Parliamentary Delegation to Kenya that part which dealt with the details of these rituals on the grounds of their obscenity. Nevertheless, a good deal has been published. The essential part of the rituals consist of a systematic breaking of all the basic taboos, either actually or symbolically—incest, zoophilia, oedipus murder, etc. The whole Freudian gamut, in fact. According to anthropologists this sort of ritual is not a regression to old forms of tribal magic, it is something new, brought about by the desperate plight in which the tribe now find themselves after a long period of misery under British rule.

### Breaking the Taboos

Such childish antics as copulation with goats and the eating of faeces may seem quite pointless when reviewed in a detached light, but as part of rituals which really do mean something to a desperate people, they appear to serve a somewhat analogous purpose to mass psycho-analysis. All the taboos are broken, all the repressions released; a huge flood of energy is let loose and dedicated to the overthrow of the oppressor. The idea of releasing the *Id*, the dammed-up forces of repressed energy, like an unchained demon to tear down the whole social structure which held their tribe in miserable bondage for so long, is, I would say, both psychologically sound and practically effective.

If mass upheaval, putting an end to the too-patient servility of the Kikuyu people, was desired, the curious sorcery of Mau Mau ritual has been tremendously effective. If in the agony of the present time the bulk of the Kikuyu are saying that the cure is worse than the disease, that we have no means of know-

### Whose Guilt?

It would be easy for me to point out the pacifist moral, that violent revolution magnifies the evils of violence, and perpetuates the institutions which it seeks to abolish. Yet the blood-bath of Kenya, with its horrible features of mass arrest, mass hangings and concentration camps, and its wider implications in the whole world picture, poses a more important question for us: whose guilt is it?

After the war the Allies plastered Germany with pictures of the concentration camps, demanding—whose guilt? We tend to think that it was monstrous for the German people as a whole to support a régime which slaughtered millions of Jews as a matter of cold policy. Koestler claims to detect a persistent anxiety in the German mind because of this grisly fact, yet the Germans had no free press, no freedom of speech, no 'democracy'.

Let those who glory in the liberality of the British régime at home, the security of the 'welfare State', just ponder on the following. In Britain 45 out of every 100 available hospital beds are taken up by patients whose troubles are mental. Hospitalization apart, 1 in 35 of the population are actually certified as suffering from some mental illness at some time in their lives. As to the proportion who suffer from mental illness without seeking medical aid, that we do not know. These facts speak for themselves as to the nature of the civilization which is upheld as a model for the 'backward peoples' with so much outward assurance. Perhaps the British, like the Germans, have something nasty in the national unconscious. Perhaps, like the Kikuyu, they have been docile for too long.

G.

strong in the possibilities of liberty. This is the inspiring message of *The Cherry Orchard*. "Materialism reigns supreme; it lords the orchard with mighty hand, and in the frenzy of its triumph believes itself in control of the bodies of men. But in the madness of its conquest it has discounted a stubborn obstacle—the spirit of idealism. It is symbolised in *Peter Trofimoff*, 'the perpetual student', and *Anyá*, the young daughter of Madame Ranevsky. The 'wonderful achievements' of the materialistic age do not enthuse them; they have emancipated themselves from the Lopakhin idol as well as from their aristocratic traditions," wrote Emma Goldman. All Chekov's work is an emanation of a personality so simple, humane and honest that a biographer would be stumped if he tried to exploit it in the market-place. He never lost his inner optimism, that faith in man which is the essence of optimism. For him there were no failures, even if few of his characters succeed in the world or integrate themselves. Although he diagnosed their complaints with the objectivity of a physician, for him there were no completely hopeless cases. In each of his characters he discerned longings that revealed a hidden power to beautify and ennoble life. Each of them is a seeker and dreamer within the limits of his personality and beyond the limits of his environment.

D.M.M.

## THEATRE

### THE CHERRY ORCHARD

IT is thirty-seven years since the volcano of the Russian Revolution erupted, and poured its molten lava of anger on to the Tsarist régime, utterly destroying it, and yet to-day how ironical and bitter it is to reflect that the individual enjoys less freedom than he did then, the value of his soul and destiny is denied, he is simply a means towards social collectivization and its development. It is fifty years since Anton Chekov died; and have any plays comparable to *The Three Sisters*, and *The Cherry Orchard*, of which there is a revival at the Lyric, Hammer-smith this week, been produced under the Soviet régime, which is by its very nature intolerant and exclusive, by virtue of its very "idea" it cannot allow any freedom to its opponents and those who think differently? How can art flourish in such an environment? Under the Soviet régime no new great novelists, philosophers, poets or playwrights have appeared. There is no sign of the birth of a new soul; she remains the old soul of the old Adam, full of envy, greed, the lust for power and the spirit of revenge. There is no sign of a new proletarian culture, there is no new proletarian achievement. Proletarian culture is a contradiction in terms; proletariat means a mass of oppressed, exploited, dehumanised, governed people, enslaved by society and the collectivised consciousness. In a free society, in which alone true culture is possible, there will be no classes or masses, but free, unique individuals. Socialism thrives on middle-class "culture" and draws its intellectual nourishment from the materialism of bourgeois prophets. All the ends and values of life are swallowed up by the State, by an inhuman collectivism, a new Leviathan. Creative philosophical thought cannot flourish in such a society, and it amply accounts for the shuffling, the endless repetition, the monotony of Soviet philosophy and Socialist realism in art, its petty sophistries, the reciprocal accusations and denunciations, the fundamental necessity of lying; neither talent nor genius can make any headway.

If Chekov were alive to-day there would probably seem to him to be as much spiritual stagnation and futility in Russia now as when he wrote *The Cherry Orchard*, which leaves on the mind the impression that the only idea the Russian aristocracy had in connection with the cherry orchard—Russia—was to cut it down for coffins in which to bury the "souls" of retainers on the estate; in other words, the Russian people were, as now, the mere instruments of the pleasure of their rulers. The symbolism of the cherry orchard expresses one of the recurrent themes in Chekov's plays; the destruction of beauty by those who are utterly blind to it. "All Russia is our garden," Trofimov says to Anya at the end of Act II, and he adds: "The earth is great and beautiful and there are many wonderful places in it. And his words are meant not only as a consolation to Anya, but as a warning against the Lopakhins of the world, since the menace of the speculative builder has been felt not only in Russia. The pro-

gression of a Chekov play is the gradual uncovering of the subject and the situation—by accidents, if you will, but by accidents which have been deliberately planned by the playwright on dramatic and rhythmical—one could almost say—musical principles. The purpose of Chekov's pretence to Naturalism resembles the purposes of Ibsen's pretences: Chekov wishes to establish an ironic relation and a tension between the surface and the substratum of his art. In *The Three Sisters* Vershinin avows his trust in progress and the Baron, who renounces an idle military life in favour of a more active world declares: "Something formidable is threatening us . . . It will soon sweep our world clean of laziness, indifferences, prejudice against work, and wretched boredom . . . I shall soon work, and within twenty-five or thirty years everyone will work—everyone." These words were written before the revolution that transformed Russia into a nation of bustling workers—but this has not increased the happiness, dignity and freedom of the individual. Only the destruction of all authority can

## DEBATE

RELIGION is an instrument of exploitation, a spiritual poison, and a class phenomenon. So said young Mr. Douglas Muir MacTaggart, the self-styled Anarchist, of Windsor, during a Slough Youth Forum debate on Friday, June 5. He spoke against a motion that the world needs a religious revival.

"Christianity has had 2000 years to prove that it is a noble and beautiful thing," said Douglas, "and it has failed. War, imprisonment, assassination, and falsehood, deeds of unexampled and incomparable atrocity, have made Christianity what it is."

Douglas also said religion had led to the enslavement of man. With the existence of fear in God, he said, there was no freedom for the individual.

"What we really need," he said, "is a revival of the individual, the championship of liberty, the freedom of the human spirit against all forms of oppression."

In support of the motion, the Rev. B. L. Bate, minister of Crippenham Free Church, said a religious revival was necessary for its philosophical, psychological and moral values to civilisation. The only alternative to religion, he said, was to live in "unyielding despair."

Regarding moral values, the minister said religion was a secure footing for morality. Without it we would go back to live by the laws of the jungle.

When the debate was thrown open, Forum members talked for more than an hour before deciding it best not to vote on such an important and significant subject. The chairman (Mr. Peter Carr) said it was impossible either to prove or disprove the truth of religion. It was a vicious circle of conflicting opinions, he said.

(Windsor, Slough & Eton Express, June 11, 1954.)

do that. Chekov was convinced that hard work was the key to future happiness, but this has not proved so.

It is precisely because Chekov is so positive a person, not the muddled, aimless, listless intellectual that he was once considered, that his Russia is so sorry a place. It is a cage for wild birds; it is a mantelpiece for stuffed seagulls. The central conflict is between the outgoing, loving impulses and the circumstances that thwart them. Chekov's characters, like their creator, seek joy, laughter, courage; they are active and surge to overcome the hard and unbearable impasses into which life has plunged them. The social implications of *The Cherry Orchard* emerge clearly in the character of Peter Trofimov, who is the kind of idealist who not only dreams, but also works for the fulfilment of his dream.

One would have thought that, in these days when the right of the individual to decide on his own life, to be "master of his fate" and to hold his own values is seriously threatened on every side, the individual would have turned to the author of *Emperor and Galilean* rather than to the author of *The Cherry Orchard*, to Ibsen, who was a champion of individual happiness in the modern world which for all its worldliness is constantly denying personal happiness, which for all its philosophy of individualism in economic enterprise hampers the development of free and rich personalities, who fought a half-century battle against every convention and tendency that impoverishes the individual, not only oppressive social customs and traditions, but also ideals that ignore his happiness: respectability, bigotry, ambition, the refusal to compromise, rather than to Chekov, who offers no comfort save the reflection that "some day—in two or three hundred years' time—this life on earth will be unimaginably beautiful and wonderful." How is it that Chekov's exhibitions of a culture that had no roots, no destination, and no sense of direction, a theatre with no heroic struggle, no message of encouragement, should appeal so widely to an age that has lost its bearings and so urgently needs an affirmation? Sometimes it seems as though we had acquired the attitude of mind of the old army doctor, Chebulkin in *The Three Sisters*, glancing eternally through the newspaper, humming the up-to-date equivalent of *Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay* and dismissing heartache and bewilderment with the answer to all philosophical speculation: "What does it matter?"

Sir John Gielgud's production of *The Cherry Orchard* at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, is both imaginative and faithful, a perfectly creditable one, and Chekov's plays with their rapid alternations between shine and shadow, their shifts of emphasis and their small but vital climaxes, depend more than most on the producer. David Markham plays the part of Trofimov perfectly; he gave a performance rich in imagination and sincerity.

Far from being a pessimist, as charged by unintelligent critics, his faith was

## NEW LIGHT ON APARTHEID

DR. MALAN'S actions against the Native populations of South Africa have often been discussed in FREEDOM. Though disapproved by British intellectuals and liberals, British governments have passively supported Malan's right to do what he does. And the attitude he openly espouses is more and more obviously the one which white administrations in Kenya and the Central African Federation feel driven to carry out in their own territories. Just what Malan's policy really adds up to is discussed in a despatch from Cape Town to the *Observer* from John Worrall, from which we quote:

"The 'Bantustan' conception of the Dutch Reformed Church, which means the absolute division of South Africa into Black and White territories in which the Blacks would have their own industries, a form of self-government and social organisation, has been finally rejected by the Malan Government. The session's three big Bills, which will control and direct the lives of the Union's 10 million Africans for generations to come, have shown that the Government intends to make these people 'statutory nomads,' in the phrase of a political commentator.

"Urban Africans will have no property rights whatever, no right to remain more than a given length of time in any one place. 'I recognise the permanency of the natives but not of individuals,' was the phrase of the Minister of Native Affairs, Dr. Verwoerd. The three Bills were the Native Trust and Land Amendment Bill (Squatters Bill), the Natives Resettlement Bill (Western Areas Bill), and the Natives (Urban Areas) Amendment Bill. The basic design of all of them is to uproot settled communities of natives and set them on the move. The Squatters Bill will force hundreds of thousands of Africans off European farms where they are now tenants."

This applies also to Africans who have lived on their own land for generations but offer their labour casually to white farmers. They will go to reserves or to "where their labour is needed". It is also intended to uproot Africans who have become permanent residents in urban areas, on the pattern already started in Johannesburg.

Furthermore the government intends to take over native education from the mission schools. "The object seems to be to ensure that the Africans will get just as much basic education as the State thinks is good for them, and no more.

There is a striking parallel in all this with the attempt in the First Five Year Plan to uproot the Russian peasantry and make them available as wage workers amenable to labour direction.

English people who have seen colonisation destroying African patterns of social life—among the Kikuyu in Kenya, for example—will now see that this disastrous process has actually become an object for Malan's endeavour. Realization that this is so will not alter the British government's attitude to Malanism however. The same trend has been so obviously demonstrated in colonial territories. Meanwhile, in the larger context, the real face of *Apartheid*, illustrates the tendency of all governments to try and bring all their peoples into subjection by making them dependant on wages, and depriving them of whatever independence attachment to the land may confer.

# PROBLEMS OF THE INDIVIDUAL

THE latest issue of the American anarchist journal *Resistance* to reach us (June, 1954), is in the present writer's view one of the most interesting and thought-provoking yet published. We are strongly tempted to reprint some of the material, but the real effectiveness of the particular issue under review is

## I. Responsibility for War

THE two principal articles, by Alex Comfort on *The Individual and World Peace* and George Woodcock's *Libertarians and the War* complement each other. Whereas Comfort seeks the answer to the question "What is the actual extent of the responsibility which the individual bears for world peace", Woodcock attacks those radicals who, as others did in 1939, have, so far as a possible World War III is concerned "shouldered their harps of peace and, like the minstrel boy of the ballad, are now to be found in the ranks of war". To this attitude Woodcock opposes movements of resistance "in the case of the imposition of foreign—or home-grown—totalitarianism".

Comfort, as is to be expected, approaches the problem of peace with a scientific mind:

"If we believe that crime is due to a choice of wickedness by individuals we shall try to get rid of it by moral exhortation. If we believe it is hereditary we shall have to rely on eugenics. If we believe that it is a function of environment we shall try to change the environment. This, after all, is the process of isolating a single contributory cause, to work upon, which we use in tackling any process and modifying it."

Similarly with the "problems of society, of which war is perhaps the chief, by way of scientific study instead of along the traditional lines of what we can call Western political thought". This leads Comfort to reject the widespread conclusions of orthodox sociologists that we carry our part of responsibility for war by

in the relationship of each article to the whole, and we can therefore do no better than suggest that FREEDOM readers should obtain a copy for themselves either from the publishers (*Resistance Magazine*, Box 208, Cooper Station, New York 3, N.Y., U.S.A.) or from Freedom Bookshop (4½d. post free).

virtue of our own aggressive impulses and that law is necessary as a means of keeping these impulses under control. He agrees that the first assumption in so far as it is based on the study of *group conflicts* is "unquestionably true" but it cannot be thus applied to modern war. Indeed, Comfort points out that:

"No aggressor nation within the last three centuries with the possible exception of England during the Boer War, has been able to dispense with military conscription, enforced by the direst punishments. If we look at the history of recent wars, and still more if we select the two most serious single acts of delinquency in the last war, the German pogroms and the Allied policy of indiscriminate bombardment, we shall see that neither originated in the aggressive impulses of the public. Both were imposed from above and cultivated by intense propaganda from the centre, and both, if we trace them further, turn out to be the work of individual psychopaths in office."

And from the evidence available, Comfort concludes that "under modern conditions there is no will to war among large urban publics. There is the material from which wars can be made, but they originate not in group conflict but in the personnel of government, in individuals who are mentally deranged and who secure office." He then goes on to show how this "possible theory of war" fits in with work in general psychiatry and in anthropology, which in its turn "also underlines something which most of us already

realise, that war cannot be regarded as a problem apart from the larger issues of the form of society, the control of delinquency, and the problem of power". Nevertheless Comfort holds the view that though wars do not "originate primarily in the warlike impulses of whole publics" they do originate in

"the warlike impulses of a particular group of personalities which have become deviant as a result of forces acting in childhood. Some of these are personal, others cultural, so that certain nations and cultures may produce more than others. Modern government, so far from being the epitome of a group will to order, is the mechanism through which power-centred personalities obtain the means of working out their psychopathy... Without a great deal of undischarged aggression in the general public, wars would probably not occur, but aggressive impulses contribute to war by giving the individual psychopath in political office the means of securing acquiescence. In other words war is a function of the coercive conception of power."

Comfort also notes that the "tendency for power to select psychopaths is proportional to the size of the community, and offers it as one argument against the tendency among many sociologists to rely on world government as a solution to our problems, for such a government would offer 'still greater scope for the dramatisation of power, particularly when it is likely to be drawn from existing national governments."

And now to the conclusions. What can the individual do? Comfort does not believe that he is powerless to resist government. If we recognise that even the most tyrannical orders rely on "public acquiescence", that the "very extensive enforcement machinery of governments is designed to deal with active individuals, not passive majorities", then one realises that they have "no defence against loss of morale". Thus:

"I would suggest to you that in such

societies, and even in our own society, the conscientious objector who really matters is not the man who openly fights against war and goes to gaol for doing so, vitally important as his example is. Far more important is the unconscious objector, the man who deserts, or goes slow, or even becomes ill with perfectly genuine gastric ulcers as a result of a loss of morale and a growing psychosomatic illness. But psychiatry does, of course, talk in terms of conscious choice, and if we are asked what to do to-day we can answer that question. What is needed in modern societies is not increased government but the growth of rational and responsible disobedience, of an awareness of the existence of a life-centered community which is normal to the human race, and from which the power-centered idea has sprung through maladjustment."

Comfort uses as an illustration of the "practical meaning" of the foregoing the attitude of scientists in America and "possibly" in England, where, he believes, "we are on the verge of a widespread withdrawal by scientists and technologists from the support of the kind of psychopathic policy which the atomic bomb exemplifies".

"Some will withdraw militantly, as Dr. Norbert Wiener has done. Others with less insight or courage will suddenly discover pressing commitments outside military research. Others will quite genuinely fall ill. All those reactions will exemplify parts of the same process, a conscious or unconscious re-acceptance of personal responsibility. It is the duty of psychiatry to bring about the same process in the general public. Let us add that these are the weapons which would enable us to defeat not only domestic psychopaths but also foreign ones."

And finally to the task of the "revolutionary", "the individual committed to the purposive changing of the pattern of society toward the life-centred values". For Comfort this task can now no longer be treated as "a task of political intrigue". For, according to him "it is a branch of medicine—its main weapons are study and conciliation upon one hand, and readiness to disobey, based upon combined love and self-interest, upon the other".

## 2. The Case Against the Lesser Evil

GEORGE WOODCOCK in his article on *Libertarians and the War* develops his arguments in the form of an analysis of Dwight MacDonald's *The Root is Man*, principally of the appendices which have been added by the author to the present edition to explain his latest attitude to war in general and World War III in particular.

While agreeing with MacDonald that there is no comparison between the "nature of life" in the West and in the East, Woodcock points out that this is not to agree that

"the political aims of the rulers of the Western States are good, or that the superiority of Western culture is a logical excuse for war, or that this superiority will necessarily last for ever—that it will last, for instance, more than a few weeks in the event of an atomic war."

Indeed, in Woodcock's view: "Atomic war... is a more certain way of bringing about the collapse of what we regard as civilised values than any amount of Soviet aggression." And for this reason I consider any State that includes in its political and military manoeuvres the threat of atomic war to be as much an 'enemy' of mankind in general as any other similar State."

But Woodcock does not share the view of those who predict that an atomic war would literally destroy civilisation, a view which he considers "a little on the rhetorical side", (and, one would add, which

underestimates mankind's fantastic powers of recovery, as evidenced in those cities of Europe which were virtually bombed and atom bombed out of existence, yet which in the space of barely ten years have arisen from the ruins). Any more than he shares the view that cultures are defended or encouraged by states and politicians:

"I personally do not think the contests of States and politicians can have anything to do with cultures (except, of course, to harm or destroy them). Culture is a product of the talents and thoughts and spiritual impulses of individuals and peoples, it thrives on peace, and lives by other means than the political. Certainly the next war will destroy a vast part of the material capital of twenty-five centuries of world culture; what is worse, it will probably encourage the spread of circumstances that will inhibit renewal. Already, the very shadow of the Bomb seems to be causing a drying up of the spontaneity of art that is being felt all over the world; in England and France alike, for the first time since the middle of the last century, there are no real *avantgardes* in literature and the arts, and all over the world we are dimly lacking in those achievements of renaissance which followed the peace of 1918."

These are things that need to be said again and again to those who seek to propagate a pro-American policy through a kind of intellectual blackmail. Such people as MacDonald furthermore show the weakness of their case when they admit, as he does in an appendix to *The Root is Man*:

"The only historically real alternatives in 1939 were to back Hitler's armies, to back the Allies' armies, or to do nothing. But none of these alternatives promised any great benefit for mankind, and the one that finally triumphed has led simply to the replacing of the Nazi by the Communist threat, with the whole ghastly newsreel flickering through once more in a second showing."

**Have you renewed your Subscription to FREEDOM If not please do so NOW!**

## FREEDOM PRESS

- VOLINE :**  
*Nineteen-Seventeen (The Russian Revolution Betrayed)* cloth 12s. 6d.
- E. A. GUTKIND :**  
*The Expanding Environment* 8s. 6d.
- V. RICHARDS :**  
*Lessons of the Spanish Revolution* 6s.
- MARIE-LOUISE BERNERI :**  
*Neither East nor West* cloth 10s. 6d., paper 7s. 6d.  
*Workers in Stalin's Russia* 1s.
- SELECTIONS FROM FREEDOM**  
Vol. 1, 1951, *Marxism* 7s. 6d.  
Vol. 2, 1951, *Capitalism* 7s. 6d.  
Vol. 3, 1951, *Communism* 7s. 6d.
- TONY GIBSON :**  
*Youth for Freedom* paper 2s.  
*Food Production and Population* 6d.  
*Who will do the Dirty Work?* 2d.
- PHILIP SANSON :**  
*Syndicalism—The Workers' Next Step* 1s. paper 6s.
- ERRICO MALATESTA :**  
*Anarchy* 6d.  
*Vote—What For?* 1d.  
*Railways and Society* 3d.  
*What is Anarchism?* 1d.  
*The Basis of Communal Living* 1s.
- PETER KROPOTKIN :**  
*The State: Its Historic Role* 1s.  
*The Wage System* 3d.  
*Revolutionary Government* 3d.  
*Organised Vengeance Called Justice* 2d.
- JOHN HEWETSON :**  
*Sexual Freedom for the Young* 6d.  
*Ill-Health, Poverty and the State* cloth 2s. 6d., paper 1s.
- F. A. RIDLEY :**  
*The Roman Catholic Church and the Modern Age* 2d.
- ★  
**Marie-Louise Berneri Memorial Committee publications :**  
*Marie-Louise Berneri, 1918-1949: A Tribute* cloth 5s.  
*Journey Through Utopia* cloth 16s. (U.S.A. \$2.50)
- ★  
**K. J. KENAFICK :**  
*Michael Bakunin and Karl Marx*
- 27, Red Lion Street, London, W.C.1.**

To which Woodcock rightly re- torts:

"And if the Communist threat followed the defeat of the Nazi threat, what, one might ask, is likely to follow the defeat of the Communist threat? Is World War III any more likely to produce a peaceful and civilised world than World War II and World War I did? Of course not, unless there is a complete reversal of the attitude of the common people on the question of war. And since that reversal must appear somewhere and at some time, if it is to appear at all, there is no reason why we should not seek for it now just as well as after another destructive war."

And again we are entirely at one with Woodcock when he points out that the "malign trend" towards totalitarianism, which MacDonald recognises in the world as a whole, can only be resisted

"by those who are willing to go the whole hog and point out that all and any states are the seedbeds of tyranny and war. The folly is in those who try to pick and choose, who say, like MacDonald, that they wish to support the Western states but to declare objection to certain aspects, e.g. 'the Smith and McCarran Acts, French policy in Indo-China, etc.'"

As to the possibilities of World War III Woodcock does not believe that the "aggressive militarism of Russia is any more a threat to peace than the American 'sabre-rattling' of recent months."

"It is just as possible—he writes—that war may come through the blundering blusters of Dulles as through the machinations of Malenkov; in this particular moment, it seems certain that, for purely practical reasons, Russia is even less anxious than the United States for immediate war, that the perilous game of bluff and counter-bluff will actually one day spark off a genuine war."

In all this world of intrigue, of moral cowardice, of, in Comfort's words, these "psychopaths in office" what can the individual do? Woodcock takes the view that every day that war is delayed should be a day of hope not of despair; that "the

The Lesser Evil (continued)

third front of the people against the militarists" is not, as MacDonald suggests, out of the realms of historical possibility. And he gives the examples of the growth of negative movements such as the Bolsheviks in Russia and Hitlerism in Germany from infinitesimal beginnings in order to suggest that it is therefore not beyond the power of positive movements of the peoples to grow beyond their present insignificance.

"And therefore I still maintain that a movement of the people that will carry through a formidable resistance to the threat of war, that will percolate through the weak points of the iron curtain—East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia—will only become impossible if there are no men to take the initiative, if there are no men with the imagination to conceive the right way to strike the thoughts and hearts of the world. There are those pessimists who contend that such a hope is Quixotic and that the day of movements of enthusiasm and faith is past. I would claim that in such times of crisis as our own we learn that the uncompromising rejection of negative forces—which our critics call Quixotism—is in fact the only realistic hope of saving ourselves and our culture."

**HAVE YOU INTRODUCED A NEW READER TO FREEDOM?**

**MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP**

LECTURE-DISCUSSIONS  
Every Sunday at 7.30 at  
THE MALATESTA CLUB  
155 High Holborn, W.C.1.  
(Nearly opposite Holborn Town Hall)  
JUNE 27—Arthur W. Uloth on  
Aspects of Anarchism (3)  
NATIONALISM & IMPERIALISM

OPEN AIR MEETINGS  
Weather Permitting  
HYDE PARK  
Sundays at 3.30 p.m.

**NORTH-EAST LONDON**

DISCUSSION MEETINGS  
IN EAST HAM  
Alternate Wednesdays  
at 7.30 p.m.  
Apply to Freedom Press for details

**GLASGOW**

OUTDOORS  
(Weather permitting)  
MAXWELL STREET  
Every Sunday at 7 p.m.  
Speakers: Hugh McCutcheon  
Mark Kramirsch  
Hugh McKeefery

INDOORS  
at Workers' Open Forum  
50 Renfrew Street, Glasgow.  
Every Thursday at 7 p.m.  
JUNE 24—George McKechnie on  
PROBLEMS OF TO-DAY

**EXETER**

An anarchist group has been formed in Exeter. Readers in the area are invited to:  
Meetings every Wednesday at 7 p.m. at 109 Portland Street, Exeter.  
Correspondence to:  
Philip Holgate, U.C.E.W. Exeter.

**3. The Economic Bases of War**

BEFORE passing on to the remaining contributions to this remarkable issue of *Resistance* we would comment on what in our view is a very important omission in both Comfort's and Woodcock's contributions. No direct reference is made to the economic bases of war anywhere in the issue. But there are references to possible origins of war by both writers with which I must profoundly disagree. It is true that Comfort writes at the beginning of his essay "... war is perhaps the chief [problem of society]" and one could assume that he would link war to the economic problem of society. But later we read "[Wars] originate in the war-like impulses of a particular group of personalities which have become deviant as a result of forces acting in childhood". And this is in fact his main theme in the present essay as well as in many of his other writings on the subject. Woodcock makes one reference to the origin of wars which has been quoted above, where he talks of the "blundering blusters" of Dulles and the "machinations" of Malenkov, as well as the unplanned war which is set off by the "perilous game of bluff and counter-bluff". I feel that Woodcock's statement is an oversimplification,

and that Comfort is being carried away by his theory that all politicians are power maniacs lustful for war. I think we would be as unrealistic in suggesting that wars result from the personal whims or perversions of a group of politicians or are the result of a misplaced word at the conference table, as we believe are those radicals who considered the last war was, and the next will be, a struggle between ideologies, or in MacDonald's words, "between radically different cultures". Modern war, on a world scale just cannot be compared with say a South American war, or the present incidents in Guatemala. In the latter case it is quite possibly a struggle between power maniacs, but the scale of the operation is limited, is no more than a *coup d'etat*—as was the case in Egypt for instance. But world wars are of such a nature that the politician is the pawn of complex forces; he is the mouth-piece, not the dictator.

I believe, and have expressed the view on a number of occasions, that practically no one consciously wants war, that if the alternative to widespread slumps is war or a war economy, then the ruling classes will prefer the latter to the former.\*

**4. What can we Anarchists do ?**

PERHAPS, in face of the magnitude of the task we should accept defeat. One contributor to *Resistance* in his *Notes on the Boredom of Politics* suggests that

"In the light, the gray light, of our social boredom, it is not to wonder why the radical youth of this country, and perhaps other countries, is disappearing. Where is the radical youth? Perhaps, as a well-known poet says, they're all on reefer. And if opium is not the religion of the young people, certainly a good proportion of them are trying to keep cool, so completely complacent and polite, so frozen, that they're immune to the treadmill of injustice and ugliness in the world. Perhaps being on reefer, trying to keep cool, is as good a defense as any.

And yet it may be that this same boredom so many of us feel, if we don't admit, can be a way to social grace. A thorough boredom, devoid of arrogance, an honest indifference to the irrelevance of so much that is being done, can at least, in time, center our awareness on what is possible within our grasp. If we can't change the world, perhaps we can begin to help ourselves; begin to recognize the splendor of nature, the honest virtues of friendship and good workmanship if only in spare time, all possible. Perhaps if we ride our boredom far enough we may attain in our own ways the creative realism of a Leonardo da Vinci who was once taken to task for his complete indifference to the political troubles of his native city, Florence. "Indeed," da Vinci replied, "my whole heart is taken up with the study of beauty."

Who knows, it may be this very lack of devotion to beauty, this concern with Florence and its counterparts, which is the core of the never-ending troubles of Florence and the world; that, as Pascal said, all the evil of the world comes from men not being able to sit quietly in a room."

Such an attitude might be considered by S. Z. Perkoff (*Freedom in Action: Suggestions for a Positive Anarchism*) as an example of the "desperate" situation in which "we despair of action, love, solidarity, community, etc. For the most part we are occupied with problems of little or no significance, merely because we find it impossible to attack problems of larger scope on anything like a libertarian basis. And so we limit our activities until they become not activities but actions, we limit our actions until they become smaller and smaller, until they finally disappear, and we spend our time talking to each other (to ourselves)..."

Now we find ourselves isolated, fragmented, small in number, hopeless, in a word: desperate. We see too much of the consequences of any action, we see that almost anything we do has repercussions of a non-libertarian nature, it builds someone's power, it oppresses some segment of someone's personality."

Perkoff reflects the restlessness and impatience of those who want action and more action.

"There can be no free society until all men desire freedom, have the will to

Comfort may argue that in saying this I am saying that it is for the purpose of maintaining their power that the ruling classes are prepared to plunge the world into war. And I would agree with him! But that is not the same as saying that "war originates in the war-like impulses of a particular group of personalities". If it were then I would openly advocate (assuming I had the courage of my convictions) acts of individual terrorism and certainly not Comfort's "readiness to disobey, based upon combined love and self-interest". And in one sentence in his essay he concedes my point when he writes:

"I believe that it [the hypothesis that the impulses which lead individuals to acquire power, and to attempt to secure office, are in very many cases closely similar to the impulses which lead other individuals to become delinquent] provides the theoretical basis for what we may say and do about the responsibility for war, but it also underlines something

\*The interested reader is referred to two articles in which I attempt to substantiate the view that because modern wars create as many problems as they solve, from the capitalist point of view, that the trend of capitalism is to seek to survive by means of the cold war rather than the hot war. *The Economics of Rearmament* (FREEDOM Selections Vol. 1) and *Permanent War Economy and Conformity* (FREEDOM Selections Vol. 2).

ideas by force might take a very long time to overcome). We must, I think, seek the answer in ourselves. Anarchists have to a large extent succumbed to the society around them; as one contributor to *Resistance* rightly says "the anarchist conviction demands the greatest patience" and "is most susceptible to boredom on that score alone". We live in a world of speed, of results, of action... but they are all short-term and soon obsolete. "What can we do here and now" means in fact "what can we do which will give tangible results, will show that we do count and are taking an interest in the world around us".

To satisfy this craving for results means that we must take those roads which we know beforehand lead nowhere, or even to disaster. It is the position of a Dwight MacDonald who admits that support of war provides no benefits but rather leads to further disasters. Even Rudolf Rocker who championed the allied cause in the last war confesses in his *Memoirs* that "no wars have succeeded so far in resolving problems of decisive importance, but instead have always been the cause of new complications and frequently of even greater catastrophes". And here we come to the second point: conviction. The apathy and sloppiness of present day society is born of the general lack of conviction, that process of thinking out problems to wherever it may lead and then acting in accordance with the conclusions one has reached. Too many anarchists to-day lack conviction; for some the ethics of anarchism has almost become a source of embarrassment and a hindrance in their lives. And at every crisis—World War I, the Russian Revolution, the Civil War in Spain, World War II, and now the struggle between the two power blocs—the international anarchist movement has had its victims which have involved the movement in internal discussions, scissions and bitterness. Thus the world crises instead of drawing anarchists together have on every occasion divided us. I agree with Perkoff that we must "begin at the beginning" but suggest that the beginning must be *ourselves*.

"... The book does, however, offer a study of a man who fails to see that his ideology is a personal adaptation, and that those who act differently than he may be motivated by something other than want of courage. It is valuable to speak of this, if not very charitable, because the prestige of Hennacy's way in certain radical circles is a source of confusion, guilt and bad action.

Because we live in a deeply Christian society, Hennacy is used to shaming professing Christians for their hypocrisy, and finally drawing admissions of cowardice. So he thinks that what makes him different from other people, from other radicals and anarchists, is courage. It happens, however, that there are those who differ from Hennacy not from want of courage but, as we have said, from want of shared belief."

I wholeheartedly agree with Woodcock when he writes:

"I would claim that in such times as our own we learn that the uncompromising rejection of negative forces—which our critics call Quixotism—is in fact the only realistic hope of saving ourselves and our culture."

And I commend to all anarchists and men and women of good will the very last paragraph in the issue

which most of us already realise, the war cannot be regarded as a problem apart from the larger issues of the form of society, the control of delinquency, and the problem of power" (my italics).

Yet he proceeds, in fact, to argue his whole case on the basis of the "war-like impulses of a particular group of personalities..."

I am too much in agreement with most of Comfort's ideas to wish to over-stress our differences. But the effect of what are differences of emphasis, is that we attempt to tackle the problem at two different levels: he seeks to "treat" the power maniacs with the same methods as psychiatrists propose for the treatment of delinquents, while most anarchists, I think I am right in saying, concentrate their activities on the "victims" of the power maniacs, seeking to make them aware of their "power" as producers and as individual human beings.

In spite of the apparent failure of libertarian ideas to penetrate their conditioning I am convinced that eventual success is more likely among the people in the factory and on the land, in the office and in the street, than in persuading Malenkov and Eisenhower, du Pont and Krupp, Tito and Mao Tse-Tung, Churchill and the rest, to subject themselves to six months on the psycho-analyst's couch!

of *Resistance* under review. It is by David Wieck, and is the most profound and moving statement of the strength and dignity of the individual that I have ever seen in print:

"Vanzetti, a great man whom Hennacy admires without, I dare say, understanding, is the key to all this. The quality of Vanzetti that Hennacy fails to perceive is *patience*. Like other anarchists in his tradition who do not happen to be orators or writers, Vanzetti was the most inconspicuous of men, a working-man, not a 'leader'; he was a militant, made propaganda, agitated strikes; during the war he 'pipsqueaked' (to use Hennacy's term of opprobrium) and went to Mexico to dodge the draft. He was a patient man, who was not looking for martyrdom or anything like it. Yet it happened, and he knew how to act; each step of the way, he knew which step to take next. This is all his greatness consisted of, that he had the power to act greatly when the occasion demanded it; he had an ideal, he believed in it with his life, he was not the first nor the last to die for it. Suppose it did not happen to be his 'luck' to be arrested? With unfeigned humility he tells us that he and Sacco would have been nothing, were destined to live out their lives as simple workmen. We must not believe him; true humility is extremely misleading.

There lies the real strength, the historic rôle of anarchism and of anarchists. V.R.

**Guatemala**

Continued from p. 1  
attitude shows just how hypocritical are their assertions about standing by law and so on. Mr. Eden fobbed off some questioners by remarking that "this sort of thing was not absolutely unique in Central American history", but it is not absolutely unique for the great powers to engineer "spontaneous" revolts either. In such circumstances the governments are absolutely unconcerned about the loss of life involved.

The attitude of the Russian delegate to the United Nations Assembly makes it clear that the Guatemala insurrection is to be treated as part of the propaganda war between America and Russia. It may well be that we are once again seeing Russian and American arms being used by other peoples on other people's territories—a further example of the vicarious warfare of Korea and Indo-China. At the same time the alleged Communism of the Guatemala government is rather doubtful, and one should be wary of accepting at its face value a term which is used freely by American officials as simply political abuse. The Guatemala business may then prove to be simply an episode of American Imperialism. By the time these words are in print, the whole position may have become clear.

**FREEDOM**  
The Anarchist Weekly  
Postal Subscription Rates:  
12 months 17/- (U.S.A. \$3.00)  
6 months 8/6 (U.S.A. \$1.50)  
3 months 4/6 (U.S.A. \$0.75)  
Special Subscription Rates for 2 copies:  
12 months 27/- (U.S.A. \$4.50)  
6 months 13/6 (U.S.A. \$2.25)  
Cheques, P.O.'s and Money Orders should be made out to FREEDOM PRESS, crossed a/c Payne, and addressed to the publishers:  
**FREEDOM PRESS**  
27 Red Lion Street  
London, W.C.1 England  
Tel.: Chancery 8364