

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"If it were possible to make an accurate calculation of the evils which police regulations occasion, and of those which they prevent, the number of the former would, in all cases, exceed that of the latter."
WILHELM von HUMBOLDT.

THE CASE OF Dr. CORT & THE RIGHT OF ASYLUM

AS was to be expected from the Home Secretary, he has rejected the many representations made on behalf of Dr. Cort the American lecturer at Birmingham University that he should be allowed to remain in this country after June 30 when his permit expires. In a written reply to four M.P.'s Sir David Maxwell Fyfe points out that there is nothing to justify him in considering Dr. Cort as a political refugee. According to Mr. Wedgwood Benn, M.P., in last Sunday's *Reynolds News* "the official reason for his expulsion is that the U.S. Government may take away his citizenship and the Home Office will not permit a stateless American to live in Britain". This in Mr. Benn's view is "a pretty thin excuse, and it effectively conceals a much more complicated story" which is that Dr. Cort and his wife are "victims of the McCarthy method of investigation and the McCarran Nationality Law."

The principal argument of the supporters of the Home Secretary has been that Dr. Cort is evading his call-up, while the Americans charge him with actually having left the United States for these reasons. Let us assume for one moment that the Home Secretary would be justified in the action he has taken if these were the true facts. But according to Mr. Benn they are not. He says that Dr. Cort registered with the Army authorities before he left the States and left a forwarding address to help them find him later on.

"I have seen Dr. Cort's registration card, dated two weeks before he sailed in 1951—writes Mr. Benn—and also seen his call-up papers, sent to his address in England.

"I've also seen Cort's medical records—an official U.S. Army document. It records his childhood polio, his T.B. in 1948, his markedly poor eyesight, and the peculiar physical conditions that would make many routine Army inoculations fatal to him. He was rejected once in 1946. He is absolutely unfit for military service."

Mr. Benn then describes how within a few months of arrival in this country Dr. Cort was ordered to return home by the American Embassy in London. No reason was given in the letters which Mr. Benn was able to examine for himself. But Dr. Cort, who had been a member of the Communist Party for two years (1949-51) suspected that it was because of his political "past", and there was obviously some foundation in these suspicions for when McCarthy's inquisitors were carrying out their investigations in American Schools and Colleges Dr. Cort was "named" on several occasions, and it appears that as soon as the press reports appeared in which his name was mentioned four American Universities that had tentatively offered him Assistant Professorships of Medicine "unaccountably" withdrew their offers.

In his written answer the Home Secretary stated that the granting of

America's £10,000 million Arms Bill

It was reported from Washington last week that the Senate has given final Congressional approval to-day to what is financially called President Eisenhower's "new look" defense budget.

The bill for making the world safe for democracy in the next twelve months is 28 billion dollars or ten thousand million pounds sterling! The amount approved is the "smallest" defense budget since the Korean war started four years ago but is more than double the 1950 total.

political asylum implied the government of the suppliant's country employed methods of political persecution and found no reason to believe that this was the case. Even the *Manchester Guardian* in its new political guise, has to concede "it is arguable" that the U.S. government does use methods of political persecution and that "the treatment of Communists by American Courts and popular opinion might be held to be on the "border-line".

Again the Home Secretary points out that

"The traditional test applied to applications is that the applicant's life or liberty would be in danger on account of race, religion, nationality, or political opinion if asylum were refused. I have no reason to think that any of these considerations arise in this case."

Yet it seems quite clear that, even if it cannot be proved that by returning to America Dr. Cort would be prosecuted and imprisoned, as he fears, there is sufficient evidence to show that he would find considerable difficulty in obtaining employment in his profession. And if, as the *Manchester Guardian* points out, one "construes 'liberty' in the broad sense of freedom to continue his academic work . . . then his 'liberty' does seem to be in doubt". But then as if this outburst of generosity might lead one to believe more than is intended, that journal proceeds to point out that

"the question whether Dr. Cort loses his 'liberty' by going to prison for breaking the American Draft Law is another matter entirely; clearly we cannot be expected to give asylum to draft evaders as such. It can well be understood that the Home Secretary is reluctant to do anything that would be construed in the United States as giving refuge to someone that the American Army authorities would like to get at."

We wonder what the *Manchester Guardian's* (and the Home Secretary's) views would be towards "draft evaders" from the Iron Cur-

tain countries. Would they demand that they be sent home to do their military service, or would they join in the welcome extended to them by officials and journalists, politicians and Sunday Press?

This is not a quibble. It is a fundamental test of our belief in the freedom of the individual. Conscription, whether in Russia or Britain, Hungary or the United States, besides being contrary to the most elementary concepts of freedom, becomes furthermore a weapon of political persecution in the case of those who for reasons of conscience, religion or for political reasons refuse to obey the call-up. Conscription is introduced not by some all-knowing superhuman being but by Governments, fascist, Nazi, Stalinist, Peronist, democratic—that is by governments of every political hue and for a variety of motives, though in every case ostensibly for the "good of the people". Let us assume that the intentions of all the governments are good. Why, in that case, would there be political persecution anywhere in the world to-day? And nobody can deny that there is plenty! Presumably because there are people in the various countries of the world who do not believe that their governments are good governments, or that the laws are good laws and so resist their governments and seek to avoid carrying out the laws, including that of military conscription. These resisters are applauded and hailed as real patriots by our democratic rulers if they operate on the other side of the Iron Curtain, but are convicted as ordinary criminals when they resist on this side. It is a part of the hypocrisy and arrogance, that the world outside recognises in the British, which has always denied that anybody in this country is ever sent to prison for his political views. Now it would appear that our government (and the "liberal" press) is prepared to share this poli-

tical halo, during the present crisis, with all those governments which declare themselves to be "anti-communist". Thus not only must it be asserted that political persecution does not exist in the United States, but equally that it does not exist in Spain, Jugoslavia, Greece, Argentine, Portugal and so on

through the list of active democracies!

That, it seems to us, is the logical conclusion to be drawn from the Home Secretary's shameful decision in the case of Dr. Cort. There may still be time to have it reversed if the injustice is not allowed to pass unchallenged.

ETU - TROUBLE FROM THE RANKS

THE Electrical Trades Union, whose Stalinist leaders have tried to enliven the trade union paralysis with a little direct action along "guerrilla" strike lines, has another dispute on its hands at the moment.

It is proving to be a long-drawn-out struggle that the E.T.U. has joined with J. Lyons & Co., the mammoth catering firm. A dispute began two months ago over the employment of a non-union supervisor and after a couple of weeks' unofficial sniping was recognised and made an official dispute by the union.

Since then all E.T.U. members employed by Lyons have been called out, and a boycott has been called for by the leadership. This has asked all E.T.U. members to cease patronising any of Lyons hundreds of tea-shops and to encourage their families not to buy any more of the 25 miles of Swiss roll, 14 million packets of tea, or 3 million ices normally sold by Lyons every day.

Support Declining

A feature of previous E.T.U. tactics has been the high level of response from the rank-and-file. This, of course, is more to be expected from official strikes, with strike pay, than from unofficial actions, with all the pressure that is always put upon the strikers. But nevertheless, although there is nothing to make us believe that the majority of the electricians are in political agreement with their leaders, there was no doubt that the majority supported wholeheartedly the direct action called for by the leaders.

In the present dispute, however, there seem to be signs of some falling off. In fact a week before the boycott was announced some 200 strikers tried a little direct action themselves against their own leadership.

They barricaded a road with motorcycles and deflated a tyre of the car of a union official, refusing to let the car pass until they had been promised a mass meeting at which they could express their views on the dispute. These rebels

maintained that two-thirds of the men on strike are opposed to it.

Democracy?

Now this raises an interesting point. Stalinists are proud of maintaining that the E.T.U. (being officered by those democratic Stalinists) is the most democratically run union in the country.

The present revolt of a section of the rank-and-file (a majority of those involved in the strike) indicates that maybe that democracy exists, like most democracy, on paper only. But even that is not too easy to prove, for two years ago the E.T.U. made an alteration in its rules giving the Executive the right to take action—call strikes—without consulting the rank-and-file.

What seems likely here is that the electricians are not getting tired of direct action as such, but tired of action directed from above in which they have no say. For the official strikes of last year, in support of wage demands, did not in fact bring the results the workers wanted, for the leaders settled for less than the official claim.

Our Attitude

Our attitude to strikes is well-known. We maintain that direct action is the most effective means for workers to achieve their objects, while at the same time demonstrating their strength and organising ability.

But direct actions which fail through the defections of leaders, or which are used for political purposes, or which are directed solely from above, do more harm than good. They lead to disillusionment with direct action, to apathy, and to dissension among the workers. They teach the strikers nothing except to obey instructions from above—which, alas, they know too well already—and give them no opportunity to develop their own initiative and ability.

If the present apparent unrest in the E.T.U. can lead, not to a change of leadership but to a weakening of the grip of the leaders over the membership, it could have a very beneficial effect for the electricians. P.S.

Fruits of Exploitation in Guatemala

THERE are now more facts available about Guatemala, and the political and economic perspectives of the crisis are considerably clearer. At the time of writing the President Jacobo Arbenz Guzman has resigned and left the country, handing over power to a group of Army men led by General Diaz. The invading forces do not seem to have met with either tremendous resistance or with popular acclaim. It seems clear that there are no revolutionary issues present for the Guatemalan people.

Latin American governments generally speaking have expressed sympathy with the Guatemalan Government of Arbenz, though some of them have also expressed concern over the "Communist menace"—no doubt as a kind of lip service to Washington. What is meant by this "Communism" of Washington pronouncements seems to be very much what it has meant for Senator McCarthy—a term of abuse for opponents. Guatemala was first called "a beachhead for international Communism in America" last year by the then Assistant Secretary of State, Mr. Spruille Braden. But this Mr. Braden has now left the government to become an official of the United Fruit Company.

Washington's concern over communism has nothing to do with the dictatorial aspects of this political system. The American government supported the right-wing dictatorship of Jorge Ubico in Guatemala from 1931 when he seized power to 1944 when he was deposed by the present swing to the liberal left. It

official U.S. estimates) at 10 million dollars worth of arms from Czechoslovakia. But Washington supplied the dictator Ubico under lease-lend with 21 million dollars worth, and they were used to maintain his own power by suppressing his own people.

The United Fruit Company

The United Fruit Company of Boston is the largest single landowner in a country where powerful landowners representing less than 2 per cent. of the population owned 78 per cent. of the land. But United Fruit is also the largest business in almost all the other Central American countries as well as possessing interests in Columbia and other countries outside the area. In the Caribbean area alone it owns or leases 2½ million acres, employs over 90,000 people, and its net earnings in 1953 were 44½ million dollars.

The Arbenz administration had sought to curb the power of the landlords by an agrarian reform law passed two years ago but only now coming into effect. This gave power to expropriate uncultivated land of more than 225 acres, and of the million acres of land designated as idle, which have been taken over, 174,000 were owned by the United Fruit Company. The former owners have

been compensated by interest-bearing agrarian bonds deposited in the Bank of Guatemala.

Of this expropriated land 612,150 acres have been distributed to 55,734 peasant families. A further 16,200 families and 6,634 members of farm co-operatives have been settled on State-owned land. President Arbenz claimed this spring that the agrarian reform had increased farm production and slightly lowered the cost of living.

Rail Monopoly

The United Fruit Company through a subsidiary company has also owned since 1904 the railway line which connects the largest port Puerto Barrios (also owned by United Fruit) with the capital.

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PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT! WEEK 25

Loss on 'Freedom' 25x15 = £375
Received in 25 weeks = £214
GAP = £161

June 19th to June 25th

Bradford: A.H. 10/-; Glasgow: T.D. 3/-;
London: R.H. 1/-; Cheltenham: J.B. £2/2/0;
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Headcorn: H.K.H. 5/-; Gt. Bookham: J.L.R. 3/-

Total 7 11 3
Previously acknowledged 206 12 4
1954 TOTAL TO DATE £214 3 7

TWO VIEWS ON THE SPANISH TEMPER

[Besides George Woodcock's review of Mr. Pritchett's book we thought readers might be interested to have the impressions of a member of the Spanish C.N.T. whose knowledge of his country and long association with the revolutionary workers' organisations qualify him to judge *The Spanish Temper* from a unique point of view.—EDITORS].

THE SPANISH TEMPER, by V. S. Pritchett. (Chatto 15/-)

THOSE who have enjoyed Gerald Brenan's books on Spain without necessarily agreeing with everything that is said in them will, I am sure, find a great deal that is congenial in *The Spanish Temper*. It is a hard book to describe—certainly not a travel book in the strict narrative sense, but rather a series of impressions garnered from years of knowledge of the country and arranged in a rough geographical pattern, in such a way that it might well serve as an intellectual guide book for anyone who started at Irun, went down through the Basque provinces to Castile and Madrid, thence to Andalusia, and afterwards up into Catalonia. But in saying that it is a guide book, we must be careful to define the various levels of territory it covers, for Pritchett not only takes us over the mis-used Spanish earth; but also leads us into some of the tragic corners of the Spanish mind.

The picture he paints is not by any means a pleasant one, though perhaps not quite so direful as one might have expected. Spain lives under a physical and an intellectual tyranny—that much Mr. Pritchett sees no reason to dispute. On the other hand, it is evident from what he says about the people he encountered that Spaniards cling very obstinately to their old social ideals, and that those who were opposed to Franco in the past have, by and large, remained in that position. On this question there are two very significant things to be observed. One is that the only Leftist group which seems to retain almost no adherents is the Communist Party; most of its militants, having done their best to turn Spain into a Stalinist dictatorship, seem to have found their way into the Falange—a natural enough repository for them. And the other is that, although Pritchett is very far from an anarchist or an anarchist sympathiser, he tells us that anarchism is still strong in Spain. "Even now," he says, "when anarchism has been driven underground—for it can hardly be crushed; its very defeats confirm it in its hatred of contemporary governments—it is still the only body which sends its agents over the Pyrenees to maintain the underground movement."

Other aspects of the Spanish scene reveal a process of social chaos which seems bound sooner or later to undermine the present régime. The old pattern is fast withering away, and the problem of the *latifundia* is largely being solved by the mass movement of landless peasants to the swelling cities. Here a great, shiftless urban proletariat is being formed, uprooted and living in great slums of shacks and tents under

the new skyscrapers; having seen this kind of thing in the cities of Mexico, I can imagine how horrible and morally disintegrating these new urban conditions in Spain must be. On the whole, and except in certain regions, there seems to be a great deal of political and intellectual apathy; this impression on Pritchett's part can be confirmed by a study of the blackly nihilist novels which the more talented of the younger Spanish writers, like Cela and Carreño are producing to-day.

But Pritchett is not all gloom. He has a quick eye for the graces of character which are to be encountered among the Spaniards, a miniaturist's sharpness of description, and there is much enjoyment, if much sobering information, to be gained from his book. And what, indeed, could be more Spanish than the pattern of combined grace and gloom, gentleness and violence, that emerges as the dominant impression of *The Spanish Temper*?

★

IN this book, which is a good description of the Spanish geographical and human landscape, Mr. Pritchett ascribes to the Spanish character intrinsically anarchist qualities, but fails to relate them to anarchism as a philosophy. According to him these qualities are to be found among the faithful believers as among the impious. But rather than a Spanish peculiarity would it not be more correct to consider them as generally human, although it might be possible to prove that in the Spaniards this anarchist trait is more emphasised? Mr. Pritchett is not alone in considering the Spaniard as a man extravagantly proud and jealous of his selfhood. Here is how he defines him: "If he is brought to the test, there is only himself in the world, himself and, at the other extreme, the universe."

But Mr. Pritchett is wrong in his specific references to the Spanish anarchist movement. Considering the little attention he pays to the subject he may perhaps be forgiven, especially as the focal point of his work is a psychological type. For instance, he establishes a difference between Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism, which does not exist in the Spanish movement, since as a matter of historical fact both movements have converged and practically become identical. Another mistake, intolerable from a writer who knows so well the Spanish scene, is that of confusing anarcho-syndicalism with the Falange. "Anarcho-syndicalism—he writes, was Red (but, of course, savagely anti-Communist), and, in fact, its ideas resembled closely those of the Falange or the national syndicalism theoretically in operation under Franco's régime in Spain to-day". As a matter of fact, the ideas of the Falange national syndicalism are essentially communist, and not without reason "savagely" hated by the anarcho-syndicalist. So also the idea that anarchism in Spain is a product of the poverty of the Andalusian peasants, and of aversion to industrialization and progress, is false and should not appear in a work which is worthy of high praise in many respects, and of great human interest.

Passages like the following, on the other hand, deserve full quoting: "It is typical of Spain that when the split between Marx and Bakunin occurred in the nineteenth century, the Spanish revolutionaries preferred the decentralised freedom of the Russian anarchist to the central tyranny proffered by the German Jew. The strength of anarchism before the Civil War was phenomenal, and the movement was unique in Europe. Even now, when anarchism has been driven underground—for it can hardly be crushed; its very defeats confirm it in its hatred of contemporary governments—it is still the only body which sends its agents over the Pyrenees to maintain the underground movement."

In this paragraph Mr. Pritchett is on the side of truth when underlying the importance of the Spanish anarchist movement, but, possibly because he feels he is a Spaniard himself, he adds another inexactitude: "Anarchism took strong root in Spain partly because it is a country of isolated towns and villages, each capable of a self-contained life of its own; and partly because it meant the total rejection of industrial civilization in its middle-class or socialistic form". Historically, the main strength of the Spanish anarchist movement developed in Catalonia, the most industrialized and urbanized province of Spain. Socially and economically, the Spanish libertarian movement—that is the anarchist and the anarcho-syndicalist—is fundamentally one against poverty, with strong industrial and civilizing tendencies. The version presenting the libertarian movement as a negative force is incorrect, the same as the one presenting the Spanish masses as hostile to modern civilization. Mr. Pritchett quotes a part of Franz Borke-

nau's book, "The Spanish Cockpit", with which he agrees, and in which it is said that: "in Spain the masses revolted, and, basically, still revolt against all sorts of progress and Europeanization, and, at the same time, take the lead in more than one great historical crisis, of the nation as a whole . . . The Spanish masses hated and hate this modern civilization which is forced upon them."

It is difficult to understand what basis there can be to an affirmation which, except for the phrase "take the lead in more than one historical crisis" is so much against historical truth. The revolts of the Spanish masses were indisputably prompted by an aspiration to economic and moral progress, and without going much further for examples, take the last civil war whose progressive aspect the world seems wishful to forget. It is true that the vague mentality of the West cannot easily understand the violence of the Spanish spirit in the civil war, although we don't know in turn how the West can fit its criticism of the violences of our civil war with the massacres the world has witnessed six years long, and the awful prospect of those that will be the inevitable effect of an atomic war. Maybe, in this terrible and unknown quantity lies the explanation to an opinion which Mr. Pritchett expresses in his book and which I could not understand: "I would still have seen that Spain is the old and necessary enemy of the West". It being true that the Spanish masses are potentially in a state of rebellion against the two major dangers that threaten to-day the human values of our civilization, namely the capitalist and the totalitarian imperialisms, we could accept Mr. Pritchett's thesis, but the Spanish masses, in this case, ought not to be considered solely as "the necessary enemy of the West", but also as the irreconcilable enemy of the East. J.L.

The "Impartial" B.B.C.

IN spite of television the radio remains the most powerful means of sound communication in the hands of a ruling group.

In Britain, where the radio is "publicly" controlled, a myth is commonly held that the B.B.C. is an impartial organisation. The existence of the Third Programme, listened to by a safe minority, gives some justification for this view. An example however, of the limitations of even the Third with its 'impartial' nature manifested itself recently in the form of a public apology by the Governor of the B.B.C. after a complaint had been received from some blimp who 'accidentally' switched on to the Third when a 'juicy' poem by George Barker was in progress. Questions were asked in the house and further recordings of the poems were banned.

Organisations like the Secular Society have made repeated attempts to have their point of view expressed on the air, but this has been refused on the grounds that there is no demand for such programmes. It is quite clear that it is the controversial nature of minority views, striking as they often do at the very root of the 'Christian way of life', which make them undesirable from the standpoint of the B.B.C. and all it stands for.

The B.B.C.'s aim to avoid controversy was amply demonstrated recently, when a two hour programme was broadcast purporting to 'present every shade of argument' (all done in our name—"This is what the British people think") on European Defence and German re-armament. Questions were asked of trade unionists, housewives, churchmen, soldiers and politicians on what they thought of German re-armament. The conclusions were fairly well summed up by the *Manchester Guardian* correspondent who writes: "The programme turned out to be a fairly straightforward

piece of propaganda in favour of a German contribution towards the European Defence Community. The British Communist viewpoint was not discernably presented, and the position of those within the Labour Movement who dislike the principle of German re-armament was overwhelmed by its supporters'.

With the controversy going on at the moment within the British Labour Party on the question of re-arming Germany, this was surely not a suitable time for the B.B.C. to broadcast a strongly biased programme without allowing the opposition view which has considerable support from the rank and file Labour members.

The inference is quite clear. The effects of the last war have not been totally forgotten, and although German re-armament whether done through the European Defence Community or an independent Sovereign Germany is not, from the anarchist point of view, a factor in preventing war without the understanding of the causes, people have imbibed the propaganda of the last war which was to blame German militarism (among other things) for its causes, to such an extent that it takes some time for the new 'line' to be assimilated.

Therefore, if a programme supporting German re-armament had strong opposition from some influential members of the Labour Party, popular feeling may well be once again roused against Germany. This is not the time to embarrass our Government, who hope we have all forgotten the hate we were expected to feel against all Germans in the last crusade.

The B.B.C. in supporting this chicanery, doesn't show itself in a new light to us, but merely underlines the claims we have always made about these 'independent' organisations. M.

THEATRE

A Question of Fact

POETS and playwrights have often compared life to the stage, saying "life's a long tragedy; this globe's the stage," "our whole life is like a play". At present almost all men are players, they are not themselves; by submitting to authority they are obliged to wear hateful masks and disguises, to do things that they do not wish to do, to say what they do not really believe, to think thoughts which are not their own, to force true sympathy, love and emotion into artificial and unnatural forms. Authority makes the whole world into a theatre, where men are compelled to think, feel and act as convention, custom and law dictate. They are afraid to revolt against the tyranny of Form, and so they waste

their lives in absurd pretence and artificiality. They do not form their own destinies: they are condemned to masquerade as characters created for them by society and other men, slaves in soul who hold no strong control over their own wills, but are mostly what others make of them.

"A Question of Fact" (at the Piccadilly Theatre, London) by Wynyard Browne is a subtle play about destiny and character, guilt and anxiety. Paul Gardiner has returned from Italy with his wife after their honeymoon to take up his post as a school-master in a public school. Before their marriage the woman who adopted Paul when he was a year old thought it best to reveal to him, and Rachel and her parents, that Paul's father was executed for murder. In spite of this, however, they did not break off their engagement, but ever since Paul has been haunted by his origins, obsessed with anxiety and doubts, unable to forget what he knows. At the end of the first act he tells his wife: "I no longer know who I am. I have become a stranger to myself. You do not know what I am. We neither of us know." This is the situation of every individual, who suddenly becomes aware of his own existence. We are cast off into a world where "man as such is guilty" and anguished: as Heidegger maintains we have to endure this cast-offness, this guilt in order to exist, and in the end this means existence-into-death. The free individual must seek on all sides an answer to the riddle of life, and none of the facile answers which satisfy those deluded by belief in God or authority can move him to conviction. Paul Gardiner searches through newspaper files of murders to try to discover who his father was. "The child beaten to death behind the gas-works . . . to think that I may owe my existence to the sudden desire of one of these brutes." Mankind's past is intolerably repulsive: one boundless, barren and hideous Golgotha of dead hopes and murdered opportunities. The future loses itself in utter darkness. Between such a past and such a future he stands upon the anguish of the present. The central existential experience is one of anxiety—not of fear. Fear has a definite limited object, but it is the essence of anxiety that we cannot put our finger on any object. When we fear we always fear some thing, a certain man or beast or some future event: but when we ask ourselves what is the object of our anxiety we can only answer "Nothing", and, moreover, this nothingness and the elusiveness of the unknown I consciousness is corroding; it spreads out over our lives, the movement of this unknown thing through thought, matter and time.

Paul Gardiner learns that his father was a man who posed as an ex-army officer, and had so much knowledge of people and life that he was to convince them that he was genuine. His mother, we are told later in the play, was very grateful to him for teaching her so much, for taking her away from running up and down stairs for an invalid relative: if it hadn't been for him she might have wasted her life. She knew all along that Ronald was not what he posed as, but she was in love with him and did not want to hurt him by admitting this. A girl threatened to expose Ronald as a fake, so he killed her. When Paul meets his mother again after thirty years, she is a wealthy and successful owner of shops. Paul thinks that his father was a monster, that he should resign from the public school, as he has no right to be in a position to influence other people's children. He may have inherited any vice, madness or cruelty. But Grace Smith, his mother, shows him that his father was not a monster: that was only a newspaper story. He had little to fear from the police, but he killed the girl because he was afraid of his wife despising him as a fake, he did not really believe he was loved. Imagination and insecurity led him to murder, and to throwing away his own life. Paul is very like his father, she explains to him. "Don't keep looking at him to see what you are like—look into your own heart to see what he was like." Paul is afraid of himself, too; he is going to resign from teaching, although it is the only thing he is really interested in. His resignation will be his mother. Paul's wife convinces him that she really loves him, but that his doubts and fears have ruined much of their happiness together. At the end Paul says that he believes in the holiness of the heart's affection, and finds courage enough to face the future without resigning. In the third act of "A Question of Fact" the author has to explain a lot of the past lives, experiences and feelings of the characters but this is skilfully blended with the drama of Paul's dilemma, which is in his own mind and attitude to the past. The play is very well acted, and is worth seeing for Gladys Cooper's remarkable performance as Grace Smith, the calm, courageous woman who triumphs over her early horrible experiences and misfortunes, achieving not only worldly success, but inner balance and poise.

D.M.M.

Why Stop Now?

Canadian Baptists refused as "too theatrical" a suggestion that they should pray before fixing their budget at their convention.

Anarchists at War

NO sergeant major, not even of the fiercest sort, could contrive to get a cat on parade. A dog can be drilled to obey the whims of men, to come smartly to attention, and even to seem to enjoy performing these odd antics. The cat is an impossible soldier—individualist, disdaining all authority, a natural anarchist. Yet the Army in Malaya has rightly decided to recruit cats for an expeditionary force to relieve a jungle fortress that seems in grave danger of falling to a cruel siege. The besiegers are a disciplined force of rats (no doubt specially indoctrinated) and they are proving more formidable than a division of human belligerents. It is reported that they are eating the garrison not only out of its stores but out of its clothes. The cats, hastily assembled, and doubtless spitting their protests at the press gang, are on their way by air, and they are to be delivered by parachute. Their unmilitary qualities fit them superbly for this kind of warfare. Utterly untrained, they will land from their drop as if they had been parachute-jumping all their lives. On landing they will ignore each other and the garrison they have come to relieve, and go their separate ways. So much the worse for the rats. There will be no frontal attack, but a series of masterly sorties by individual guerrilla units. The issue is not in doubt, and in a week or so the garrison will be eating and sleeping peacefully (disturbed, that is, only by rifle and machine-gun fire). And the cats? Possibly some sentimental quartermaster will suggest that they should be rounded up and sent back to Singapore. They will see to that themselves. Those that want to return will go, and if these are any form of first-class travel from the jungle they will contrive to find it. Others may prefer the jungle. If the real art of war is to find oneself a comfortable billet, the cat is unsurpassed as a soldier of fortune.

Manchester Guardian, 23/6/54.

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BLACK & WHITE IN KENYA

THE Church Missionary Society in Kenya has estimated, in a recent memorandum, that there are more than 50,000 natives of Kenya in prisons or detention camps awaiting screening and assessment. The *Times* says that "the aim of the Churches was to ensure that the screening procedure be expedited so that loyalists were cleared as soon as possible."

These words carry a whole host of unspoken overtones and can be made to illustrate in a striking way the relationship between a white master race and the black majority whom they have come to dominate.

There can be little doubt that the Church Missionary Society's memorandum springs from a sincere desire that these 50,000 persons should not remain in concentration camps for longer than is considered necessary, and if they succeed in expediting the screening procedure, the detainees may well be grateful to them.

But how do the officials of the Church ever come to accept that men and women are detained in this way at all? The whole procedure does violence to the ideas built up for centuries in this country: that men shall not be imprisoned without charges being brought against them, and without delay: that they shall not be in custody at all before trial unless the prosecuting authority can show good reason why they should be: that they shall have a fair trial by their peers, that is to say their equals, the evidence being heard by twelve good men and true . . . This simple (and for those who know the facts, let us admit, slightly idealized) account of British judicial procedure takes us miles away from the situation in Kenya which the Church seems to accept.

These mass arrests take place after a military operation in a town like Nairobi. The detainees numbering thousands are herded into concentration camps without any charge other than that of being "suspect" being preferred against them. Trial by one's peers is pushed aside in favour of "screening". This elegant term means that each "suspect" is considered by a man or group of men, probably with police training: hearsay and denunciation are admitted and the ordinary rules of evidence placed in abeyance. On the basis of this screening the "suspects" are graded into "whites", "greys" and "blacks".

One may pause here to reflect on the tact and courtesy shown by white officials in terming their grades thus for black persons. "White" equals "good", "black", "bad". Such blundering methods are only possible where there is a master-servant relationship. Even so, they reflect the utmost contempt upon the masters.

But the main point remains: the Churchmen, bred in the tradition of Milton and the English Revolution, taught in their schools to condemn the Star Chamber methods of autocracy, accept this screening procedure as legal and right.

The Missionary Society goes on to declare that "the poison of Mau Mau must first be purged. Full acceptance of the Christian faith would hasten the transition to loyal citizenship". (Once again one finds this equating of loyalty to the Colonial Government with good) but there were no signs yet of any mass acceptance of Christianity."

It is now clear to all thinking people that one of the worst aspects of Colonial Development was the destruction of native patterns of life and their associated patterns of behaviour. With the characteristic superficiality of the institutionally religious, however, the Church actu-

At last a renegade industrial psychologist has blown the gaff. *Work ought to be enjoyable!*

For years the Captains of Industry have worked on the assumption that if the worker seemed to like his job there was something fishy going on somewhere. Either he must have found himself a cushy little number or else he had a screw loose. On this assumption industrial unrest was to be expected and there could be only two remedies. The first was the stick; the fear of dismissal or even police violence. When this became impolitic due to the growth of the Unions the sole alternative was the carrot; higher wages, shorter hours, better working conditions; in short what passes for welfare. All these more recent attempts to sugar the pill have obscured the fundamental question of why work is considered a pill anyway.

Coercion is still practised, of course, in only slightly less crude forms. The domineering manager and loud-mouthed foreman can always be found at the meek worker's elbow. Once the vicious circle of threats, resentment, less work, more punishment, more resentment, still less work, is established, even the most enlightened management in the world will have the devil's own job to halt the deterioration and introduce a benign process. Punishment just does not work the way it has long been supposed to. It may temporarily relieve the fury of the donor, but its long-term effect on the recipient is exactly the reverse of that desired. To this fact our growing prison population and queues outside the psychological clinics bear mute testimony to be read by all except the pathologically purblind. Slowly, it is dawning on Big Business that punishment is simply not economic.

Examining the evidence, we discover that it is only with the advent of the industrial revolution that the worker has ceased to find satisfaction and pride in his job. In the days of the small workshop when each man was either his own master or at least on familiar terms with his employer he could maintain a sense of integrity. He felt that he had a worth-while and secure place in the local community, of which he was a respected member.

Since the small workshop has given place to the massive, sprawling industrial

Contented Cows Give More Milk

plant human relations have become de-personalised. The boss and his labourer have drifted miles apart and Joe Soap is left to feel like an insignificant cog whirling on the periphery of a vast, ruthless machine.

It no longer matters to his self-respect whether or not he turns out a good job. Neither employer nor customer is going to clap him on the back for it. And precious little skill is required anyway for most jobs in the age of mass production. All he has to do is turn up before the clock tells the wrong tale and make himself inconspicuous. That is, not work so little as to attract the foreman's attention nor so hard as to incur the ire of his mates. At the end of each week an unknown hand pushes his pay packet at him through a hole in a wooden partition and he is free to go to the dogs.

Being anonymous he is also irresponsible. Being resentful he is fair game for the agitator—who at least has the guts to revolt against a rotten régime. His passive resistance runs all the way from working to rule to outright sabotage. The overt symptom of his feelings of frustration and inadequacy is the wildcat strike, which breaks out over a minor or irrelevant issue and consequently gets nowhere.

In his recent Pelican book, *The Social Psychology of Industry*, J. C. Brown presents a remarkably clear picture of human relations in industry to-day. Before becoming that impersonal managerial tool, an industrial psychologist, the author had the advantage of studying people as individuals. As a psychiatrist he has been privileged to share the most intimate thoughts and feelings of the victims of this stressful era. So he avoids the all too common blunder of regarding the worker as a piece of perambulating machinery which is plugged into a capstan lathe to make it automatic.

Man, the economic animal, has been with us too long. It was hardly Uncle Karl's fault that he was endowed with the pedestrian scholar's love of painstaking bibliographical research rather than having a flair for psychology. It seems a pity, though, that neither his

disciples nor his capitalist clay pigeons pause to query his fundamental assumption. Whatever Uncles Karl and Sam may say, the fact remains that money is not a man's prime motive for working. A dozen studies in the past two decades have exposed this fallacy completely. And time and again the working man who has come into a fortune has made the unnerving discovery that without some sort of work life becomes flavourless and meaningless. Only by working alongside his fellows can he gain the feeling of belonging and of being socially significant.

Brown throws an interesting sidelight on the "born leader" cult. He points out that leadership is specific to each particular situation. Unless the leader can help the group to achieve its ends he ceases to be a leader. Either he goes out on his ear, or if he hangs onto the reins it must be as dictator. In order to meet the group's needs it is necessary for the leader to be in close contact with the group. It is this problem of social communication which has to be solved to maintain any free association of human beings. Without information passing in all directions an organisation is like a machine with no self-regulating principles built into it. Placed under stress it blows up.

How is it possible to satisfy these compelling needs in a modern society? Briefly, research has shown that for harmony in any organisation, large or small, industrial or otherwise, each member must be able to feel that he is allowed to participate to the fullest possible measure of his ability. If decisions affecting him have to be made

then he should have his say in making them, or at the very least, be informed in an intelligent and sympathetic manner why they are necessary. In all cases where such a system of group consultation has been instituted industrial unrest has ceased, production has risen and absenteeism dropped. Once the individual can take an active creative part in the business of running a factory he no longer feels the impotent, anonymous cog. Once channels for the airing of complaints are left open his resentment need never build up to boiling point. The key to the problem is decentralisation.

You will have to read the book for yourself to see how well Brown presents his arguments, what a fascinating story lies behind the grim industrial exterior, and what exciting possibilities are opening up. If only management could get it out of their heads that workers are not paid to make decisions we may yet see a bloodless social revolution that will atone for some of the horrors of the earlier industrial one.

Certainly, contented cows give more milk. Sooner or later our industrial tycoons are bound to wake up to the fact that workers do not happen to be cows. Then the awful truth will dawn that the remedy is not more "welfare", but a radically different social structure in which a man can be himself instead of a cardboard cut-out. For it seems that what Brown advocates and research has shown to work amounts in the long run to mutual aid and syndicalism—though, of course, we shall have to find politer names for this sort of commonsense. R.T.G.

POLITICAL CIRCUS

The Minister Read the Wrong Speech

THE Committee stage of the Financial Bill had been resumed in the House of Commons last week. Ministers and M.P.s were all talking very knowledgeably on a government amendment dealing with capital allowances in income tax when the Solicitor General interrupted the discussion in order to point out that he had found out (which probably means that some civil servant had tipped him off) that the speech he had made on the Clause under discussion was the speech he should have made involving the next amendment on the paper! "I made the wrong speech on the wrong amendment," he said, adding "and I am glad the member for Sowerby did not correct me," as if to blame members for not noticing that he was talking through his hat. We are always pointing out that Ministers are simply the mouthpieces of the permanent officials, and this was certainly a perfect example of what we mean. The man just didn't know what he was talking about, or he would have realised as he was reading his speech that what he was saying had nothing to do with the matter under discussion. They are our rulers on whom the left and death of a whole nation depends. What an awful prospect for mankind!

When is a Politician a Gentleman?

THE Security Council had met to consider Guatemala, and was immediately bogged down in a procedural wrangle which was relieved by Mr. Semyon Tsarapkin, the Russian representative. He wanted to take the floor a second time when Mr. Cabot Lodge, the president asked: "For what reason does the gentleman wish to be recognised?" Mr. Tsarapkin: "I am not a gentle-

HAMLET A LA RUSSE

Russian critics let themselves go in a dithyrambic manner when describing the Leningrad production of Shakespeare's "Hamlet", with music by Shostakowitch. This is an entirely new version of the play; a considerable number of changes have been made, and it has been given a Marxist interpretation. Responsible or the production are Messrs. Kozintzen, Altman, and Shostakowitch Hamlet, in their interpretation, recognises the evils of the feudal system, but is compelled to realise that he is unable to bring about a revolution. "Hamlet", the programme states, "is a son of the Renaissance. His progressive ideas clash with the hated feudal system." When Hamlet dies, he does so with a sonnet of Shakespeare on his lips. "Shakespeare has," according to the press, "found a second home in the Soviet theatre."

from *Elseviers Weekblad* (Holland), 12/6/54.

American Rabbis & McCarthyism

AT a conference representing 600 Reform Rabbis from every section of the United States which was held in Pike, New Hampshire last week, Senator McCarthy was labelled the "most flagrant and immoral symbol of the hysteria commonly known as McCarthyism". The rabbis urged that the Senator should be stripped of his chairmanships.

In a resolution adopted unanimously, the conference declared that "no free society can long survive if its citizens are encouraged or permitted to inform indiscriminately on one another."

"By creating an atmosphere of suspicion and fear," the resolution asserted, "uch informing inevitably becomes a vestibule to the police state. The repeated use of professional informers, motivated either by personal grudges or psychopathic needs of their own, destroys the morals of Government officials and the confidence of the people."

Other resolutions adopted termed the

a "vicious and unjustified perversion of ally wants still to "impose" Christian ideas on these peoples. And like sales talk, they speak regretfully of no "mass acceptance of Christianity". Most anarchists would feel most uncomfortable about any sudden "mass acceptance of Anarchism". But churchmen are like political party secretaries, signing the party card (baptism) is enough.

The humanity of the Kenya churchmen may make them wish to see this business of detainment and screening done as quickly as possible: but they can only deserve contempt for the superficiality of their own propaganda ambitions. And for the fact that they stand uncritically for the idea that everything white, everything in the Western way of life, is right and proper. Neither they nor their governmental and administrative counterparts have any idea that a proper relationship between men requires mutual respect both for individuals of a different race, but also for their creed and culture. Criticism is likely to be effective only when it is criticism between equals, and where it is not backed by the big stick of administrative and economic exploitation.

phrase "Fifth Amendment Communist" a law intended as a basic guarantee of American freedom"; advised that no Reform congregation impose political loyalty oaths on prospective members and rejected the "compulsory imposition by Government of an oath of loyalty to men and women who administer religious institutions."

These resolutions which one cannot but applaud for their farsightedness were nevertheless somewhat tempered by another resolution deploring the "encroachment" of one branch of Government on the prerogatives of another in which the Rabbis emphasised their approval of all "legitimate efforts" to protect the United States against subversion and sabotage. Who is to determine what is "subversion" and what are "legitimate efforts"? After all telephone tapping is now "legitimate" since it has been approved by Congress.

The safeguards "for the rights of individuals" as proposed by the Rabbis indicate to what depths the government and press have descended in their efforts to "root out" subversion. They are:

1. Abolish "one-man" investigations.
2. Make adequate provision for the submission of minority reports.
3. Provide opportunity for persons to refute adverse testimony before it is made public.
4. Retain in committee files confidential material not yet released in the form of an official report.
5. Permit the blackout of radio, television and photographs at the request of a witness.

Finally, the conference recommended that a convocation of "distinguished" religious leaders be called to "apply the ethical insight of Judaism and Christianity to the problems confronting us." Obviously if the religious leaders accept they will be undertaking an almost impossible task, for the ethical position surely is that you can only fight bad ideas with good ones, bad actions with good actions and so on. The present persecution of alleged Communists and "subversives", far from convincing them must simply strengthen their resolve besides increasing the numbers of sympathisers simply by reaction. You cannot defend freedom by denying it to those who disagree with you.

But these are wasted words so far as governments are concerned, for they are concerned with holding on to their power and not with encouraging the growth of freedom.

man, I am the representative of the Soviet Union."

Mr. Lodge: "The two are not necessarily mutually exclusive."

And so it goes on month after month, year after year.

The Advantages of Being a Horse

IN the House of Lords last week the Duke of Northumberland was moving the second reading of the Slaughter of Animals (Amendment) Bill. He described vividly the conditions of slaughterhouses which had

"open pounds where horses and ponies were herded together, where hay was often musty, and water foul or stagnant, where bedding was damp, or non-existent, and where there were totally inadequate provisions for the swilling away of blood and the disposal of waste and offal. Even if the degree of apprehension of a horse was less than was commonly thought, the general environment under which horses were brought to slaughter certainly caused considerable distress. Such conditions are unnecessary, they can be avoided, they offend the public conscience and must be stopped."

In the House of Commons, on the same day Mr. Hale, Labour M.P. for Oldham in the course of not a debate, but questions and answers, on the use of the napalm bomb asked the Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Defence:

"Have you seen accounts of the results of the use of these bombs on the civilian population in Korea? Have you seen that jellied petrol attaches itself to the skin so firmly that it becomes like crackling? Victims are normally blinded and lose the use of their limbs, and would you not apply the same consideration to this as is applied to the use of the gin trap for rabbits?"

In the House of Lords, Lord Woolton welcomed the Bill for the Government "which recognised the importance of the problem. The bad conditions under which the slaughter of horses had taken place, whatever the effect they may have on horses about to be slaughtered, certainly offend public taste and public conscience in this country. The proposals in the bill were reasonable, practicable and humane."

In the House of Commons Mr. Birch for the Government said that "in the absence of any agreement prohibiting such weapons the Government must preserve the right to use the napalm bomb" adding that "the results of all weapons of war are terrible."

But what about "offending the public conscience", or do we gather from the above that the public conscience is only offended by the way horses are slaughtered and not by the way man slaughters man?

It is high time a league was started for the protection of the dumb friends of "our dumb friends"! R.

SYNDICALIST NOTEBOOK

BOYCOTT AGAINST (SOME) SLAVE LABOUR

A TRADE boycott was advocated by the International Confederation of Trade Unions. Speaking at the International Labour Conference at Geneva, Mr. Oldenbroek, the I.C.F.T.U. general Secretary, made an appeal to "Governments everywhere to refuse to import goods from any country that are produced by slave labour."

He was, of course, hitting at Russia, which has just recently entered the International Labour Organisation. Mr. Oldenbroek said that the I.C.F.T.U. did not quarrel "with the nature of an economic system or the degree of public ownership," but "with the absence of fundamental human rights." The right to work should not entail becoming a slave; yet "slave camps are an integral part of Communist political dictatorship, they are a part of the police terror, and they are closely linked with such other dictatorial practices as the uprooting of populations, genocide, the exploitation of prisoners of war, and the refusal to allow people to emigrate."

Quite right, Mr. Oldenbroek, but have you forgotten the findings of the United Nations committee of enquiry into slave labour everywhere, last year?

This committee found what they defined as slave labour existing in Portuguese Africa, in Spain, in South Africa, and, as a result of British policy, in Malaya, as well as in Russia.

On the other aspects of Communist dictatorship, don't we find them elsewhere? Police terror in Spain—now the ally of the "democracies"; uprooting of populations in Malaya; genocide in Kenya, the refusal to allow emigration in America (where Paul Robeson is refused permission to visit Britain to sing to Welsh miners!)

We hope, therefore, that Mr. Oldenbroek will urge a boycott in all the countries sending delegates to I.L.O. of rubber and tin from Malaya, oranges from South Africa and Spain, or any of the goods that flow from Kenya and Portuguese E. and W. Africa.

But the I.C.F.T.U. makes distinctions. The absence of freedom of association in any country is, they say, an obstacle to fruitful co-operation but while such offenders had to be "condemned by public opinion the world over" they did not quite qualify for punishment by boycott. An I.C.F.T.U. spokesman, when asked whether there was not an inconsistency in this distinction between slave labour and violation of trade union rights, pointed out that while moral condemnation of, for instance, the violations in Venezuela might lead to a rectification, much stronger measures were needed to bring about a real change in the slave-labour policy of Russia.

[Venezuela, be it noted, can be safely mentioned, but not Spain, where the U.S. is building atom bomber bases.]

Let us repeat what we have said before. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions is a stooge outfit for the non-Communist countries.

They both use the International Labour Organisation as a means of propagating their government's policies—

and no freedom-loving worker can have any interest in that.

'ELECTRONIC BRAINS' TO REPLACE CLERKS

THE possibility of eliminating a lot of useless human labour comes a step nearer with the report that electronic calculating machines can now be produced for a few hundred pounds.

It is estimated they will take over the work of nearly 250,000 book-keeping and pay clerks in British factories and offices during the next five years.

One of Britain's biggest catering firms is using a machine called "Leo" which can work out the costing of miles of swiss roll, a payroll for thousands of employees, and running costs of the firm's transport fleet.

Another model is claimed to be able to handle the invoicing, stock control, and accounts for an organisation having 2,000 employees and 30,000 customers.

First details of it will be disclosed at next month's convention of the British Institution of Radio Engineers, whose experts say there will be no unemployment because there is a shortage of office workers. In the same breath they say that the need for married women and part-time workers will be removed.

Qualifications for clerks will be raised. An electronics manufacturer says that

clerks of the future will have to know how to feed information to the machines. They will need a secondary school education up to the level of advanced mathematics—and they will be paid higher salaries.

It is certainly a good thing that so much dull and monotonous work, which to-day keeps armies of men and women tied to their desks, will be eliminated by these computers. Anarcho-syndicalists, however, have had another solution for a long time: abolish the need for the work to be done at all by abolishing the wages and money systems that create it.

PUZZLE CORNER

GUESS which trade union has never had a strike in all its 49 years of existence?

Yes, we might have known. It's the National and Local Government Officers' Association.

Some of its members, however, are getting curious. At its recent conference at Scarborough there was a motion asking the executive "to investigate the financial, legal, trade union and general implications" of strike action being taken.

Dare we hope?

ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST.

Fruits of Exploitation in Guatemala

Continued from p. 1

Freight charges on this line are said to be the highest in the world, and a recent economic survey recommended alternative methods of transporting goods as a necessary step in developing the country. The Arbenz government accordingly began in 1952 to build new wharves at Puerto Barrios and a motor road to Guatemala City. The Foreign Minister Torrello declared that this would break the monopoly and "will free Guatemalan producers, merchants and consumers from the high freight rates charged by the United Fruit Company in order to subsidize the low rates which it charges itself on its fruit."

The new government head, General Diaz, has supported these reforms in the past and it is difficult to see how any government could easily go back on them. The United States will in any case appear in the reactionary rôle of obstructing economic development. The obvious next step for Washington is to recognize the situation, compensate the United Fruit Company and proceed to invest money in the development of Guatemala so as to be the controlling economic force in industry as well as agrarian fields.

But this situation does shed light on American political actions. If the agrarian reforms put in hand by Guatemala, and its anti-monopolistic drive against American stranglehold were to become general

throughout Central and Southern America, U.S. imperialism would receive a most serious setback. This seems to explain why Washington seems so concerned about a trifling matter of Guatemalan politics. And remembering that "Communism" means reform in Washington's eyes, the labour situation throughout Central America is probably critical. As *Worldover Press* tartly remarked, Latin Americans will not "believe that Communists were required to foment the recent strikes in Honduras, knowing most of the workers earned only 62 dollars a month."

With this background it is also easy to understand the American Government's insistence that the Guatemala crisis is an affair for the Organization of American States. The representatives of other Latin American governments are not likely to be unmindful of the political repercussions of reform nor to take an unrealistic estimate of the power of the United States. But one wonders what the U.S. Government would say if it were insisted that affairs in Asia be handled by an Asiatic organization and not by the United Nations?

In this connection the British government's attitude has been fiercely criticized by Mr. Philip Noel Baker both in Parliament and in the correspondence columns of the *Times*. He points out that under the Charter the United Nations have an absolute duty to deal with the matter and the government of Guatemala have the right to insist that its claims be dealt with by the Security Council. However, the actual attitude adopted by the States shows once again that international bodies are there to be manipulated by the most powerful. No doubt pressures can be brought to bear upon the Guatemalan government also to make it consider whether it is "worth-while" to exercise its rights in this matter.

Have you asked for VOLINE'S NINETEEN-SEVENTEEN at your local PUBLIC LIBRARY

Some Doll

While pub-crawling in Manhattan, Columnist Leonard Lyons bumped into bumpy Cinematress Jane (*The French Line*) Russell, who seldom lets her religion interfere with her movie career and vice versa, and got from her a profound theological thought. "I love God," bubbled Jane. "And when you get to know Him, you find He's a Livin' Doll."

Time, June 28, 1954.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS
A New Sexual Morality

I WAS interested in the summary of Dr. Helena Wright's article, published in *FREEDOM* (June 12th, 1954). *Woman and Beauty* is not, I must admit, one of my favourite magazines. Indeed the times that I have opened its pages could be counted on the fingers of no hand at all. But it is encouraging to see that even into the pages of conventional women's magazines libertarian sexual ideas have found their way.

However there is a point on which I should like to join issue with her.

The summariser writes: "The dispiriting effects of casual sex experiences which really represent a too low evaluation of sexual emotion, are touched on by Dr. Wright. She points out that such bad effects are worse for women."

The hurt that a woman receives when a relation breaks is generally deeper and more painful than it is for the man. She finds herself more involved than she had thought and the loss and the suffering is correspondingly greater than she had imagined it might be.

And she mentions also the destructive effects which a succession of such experiences can have upon women.

This seems to me to be sentimental feminism, which is, I suppose, just what one would expect in a woman's conventional magazine. It is a novelettish sort of generalisation, and seems to show that, though Dr. Wright may understand her own sex, she does not understand men.

In our society men are expected to crush down their emotions, and keep "a stiff upper lip". They must not show how much they suffer, they must not even admit it to themselves.

When a relation breaks, he may well suffer quite as much distress as the woman. After all, in many cases the woman is a "mother substitute" to the man, and for a relationship to founder is for him extremely painful, since he is somewhat in the position of a child abandoned by its mother.

In fact women have the power to hurt men, quite as much as men have the power to hurt women. Of course there are tough, cynical, or extraverted types of both sexes, who do not suffer much from the casual affairs that Dr. Wright attacks, but for a sensitive man the failure of a relationship is terribly painful, just as for a sensitive woman.

Dr. Wright is taking up a line very common among feminists, that women are softer, gentler creatures than men, and consequently have to be treated with more consideration. Her attitude is the same as that of those women's organisations, criticised in *FREEDOM* some years ago, who agitate for the improvement of conditions in women's prisons, but don't bother about the men.

Women are as tough and ferocious, and as weak and cowardly, as men are. They support all wars, and form a large proportion of the audiences of boxing and wrestling matches. Despite the patriarchal structure of our society, and the

MISPRINTS

Being myself a poor proof-reader, and knowing well how easily errors can slip by in one's tiredness towards the end of the *n*th galley, I cannot feel moralistic about the strange errors that occasionally creep into my articles in *FREEDOM*. Sometimes, indeed, I appreciate their unconscious humour, as when recently I was made to call Whitaker Chambers and his ilk "pubic informers".

However, there are other times when the meaning is quite radically changed, particularly in the case of one sentence in my letter on 12/6/1954. After I have criticised R.M. for the hyperbole of saying that organised churches are "life-destroying", I am made to say: "I agree that they are life-destroying and life-frustrating in proportion to the degree of their influence over their devotees." This, of course, is absurd, and what I actually said was: "I agree that they are life-distorting and life-frustrating in proportion to the degree of their influence over their devotees".

Vancouver. GEORGE WOODCOCK.

For Birth Control

Birth control was unanimously approved last week by the 95th annual convention of the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church (500,000 members), meeting in Los Angeles. Said the resolution: "An unrestrained production of children without realistic regard for God-given responsibilities involved in rearing children . . . may be as sinful and as selfish . . . as is the complete avoidance of parenthood . . . The power to reproduce is His blessing, not a penalty, upon the sexual relationship in marriage."

Time, June 28, 1954.

nature of their own physique, women have frequently distinguished themselves on the field of battle, as history bears witness.

Her argument that women suffer more from casual relationships, and from their disintegration, than men do, could easily be used by the supporters of compulsive marriage, and of the pre-marital chastity that goes with it. "Women," they could say, "need marriage as a protection. But to obtain this protection they must be prepared to sacrifice some of their freedom."

What then is left of the "New Sexual Morality"? It seems as if Dr. Wright has left open a loophole through which the "Old Morality" may return, using new phraseology to justify itself.

London.

A.W.U.

Malatesta Club

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As the club is now well on the way to becoming self-supporting it has been decided not to ask for payment of the regular sums that were guaranteed by a number of friends so as to provide us with a minimum regular income. Once again we thank all those who have contributed so generously to the club: without their help it would have been impossible. If the steady increase in membership continues it is hoped that it will be possible to reduce the amount of the subscription.

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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.

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