

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Eccentricity has always abounded when and where strength of character has abounded; and the amount of eccentricity in a society has been proportional to the amount of genius, mental vigour, and moral courage it contained. That so few now dare to be eccentric, marks the chief danger of the time."

—JOHN STUART MILL.

This is how Civil Rights are Defended in America

Out Goes the 5th Amendment!

WE had thought that the annoying constitutional right of the American citizen to refuse to testify in courts or before Congressional committees, where such testimony might be of an incriminating nature, by having recourse to the Fifth Amendment, had lost much of its value. Senator McCarthy has long pointed out that silence is a proof of guilt. But not content with his gilt by implication, Congress has now taken steps to make this unconstitutional assumption constitutional by passing, last week, a bill forbidding witnesses to take refuge in silence under the Fifth Amendment in testifying in courts or before a congressional committee in cases involving national security. The bill allows Federal judges to decide whether a witness before a court, grand jury, or congressional committee should be granted immunity from self-incrimination when answering questions about suspected spies and traitors.

Mr. Brownell, the Attorney General had asked for the dictatorial power of himself being able to decide when this grant of immunity should be made. This, Congress refused to do, but it did however grant him the right to submit his views before the Federal judge who would make the decision. Any witness who refuses to give information after receiving immunity would be liable to proceedings for alleged contempt.

The *Manchester Guardian's* Washington correspondent reports that: "Without a recorded vote or even a voice vote the Senate approved the House Bill as if it were a completely routine measure. The Senate seemed unaware that the Bill has been criticised by many Constitutional authorities as an invasion

of the Bill of Rights. The abuse of the Fifth Amendment, however, has so incensed the irritated Congress that it is willing to allow a Federal judge to set aside some of the Constitutional safeguards which have protected the American citizen."

How remote these so-called representatives of the people have become when they can allow their personal "irritation" to decide matters at the expense of the ordinary citizen.

SENATE GOES ONE STEP FURTHER

ONE is not surprised that the Senate approved the bill *en passant*, for it was much busier on more sinister legislation. By 85 votes to nil the Senate voted last week to outlaw the Communist Party and to "rid labour unions of Communist influence". Anyone joining or remaining in the Party would be then liable to five years in jail and a \$10,000 fine.

According to correspondents in Washington, no-one had planned this vote; it was taken against the wishes of the Eisenhower administration which takes the realistic and not the moral, stand that to outlaw the Party is to drive it even further underground; it was sponsored by Democratic Senators "who pride themselves on being Liberals". The vote has plainly created confusion, but "the one thing which produced agreement among all Senators was that it was a master-stroke in an election year to demand the outlawry of communism". This concern with electoral votes was again seen in the recent censure motion on Senator McCarthy (FREEDOM, 14/8/54) on which Senators were anxious to postpone the vote

until after the Summer recess so as not to antagonise electors by a direct vote on such an issue.

From a practical point of view the effect of the Senators' bill—if accepted by Congress—will not be as dramatic and far-reaching as appears at first sight. It would come as the final blow in a whole series of measures which have been, or are being, taken to outlaw the Communists in fact if not in law.

Already the Subversive Activities Control Board has held that the Communist Party must register as agent of a foreign power, and in the event that the ruling is upheld by the Courts then the Party (which has already stated it will not register) will either have to or automatically outlaw itself. Again, last January President Eisenhower told Congress (amid cheers) that he was going to propose that every convicted Communist be stripped of his citizenship. And with the conviction last week in Philadelphia of a further nine Communist leaders, the total to date of alleged leaders who have been convicted for "advocating the overthrow of the United States Government by force" is well over the hundred mark.

The *New York Times* (14/8/54) is obviously embarrassed by the ham-handedness of the Senators. All

Continued on p. 4

THIS IS FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IN ITALY

Anarchists Prosecuted

L'ADUNATA of July 31st reports that five comrades associated with the anarchist weekly *Umanità Nova* of Rome, have been indicted by the Court of Assize on charges connected with the issue of that journal dated Sept. 27th, 1953.

The five anarchists, and the charges, are:

Umberto Consiglio, with having publicly vilified the Republic, the Government and the Armed Forces, by publishing, in his position as responsible editor, six articles in the number concerned; having ridiculed the Pope in another article; and having attacked the State religion by the publication of a cartoon.

Giuseppe Mariani, Luigi Damiani, Giuseppe Sartini and Ricardo Sacconi with having written the articles referred to above. Of these, Damiani has died since the publication of his article. The hearing is to take place on August 17th.

Once again we have the spectacle of a government of the "Free World" using laws based on the fascist Penal Code to suppress the publication of ideas which it dislikes, and in this case there is not even the excuse of external military threats.

It is interesting to compare the firmness of the government's action in attacking the anarchist press with its dilatory methods of dealing with the so-called Montesi Affair. //

Libertario of Milan comments: "While the odium of the scandals is colouring the entire political life of the country, involving the direct responsibility of high functionaries of the State and Government; while proceedings and enquiries reveal that corruption, depredation and unheard of speculation have been operating over a long period under the protective eye of the law; the magistrates can find nothing better to do than to 'uncover' crimes in the anarchist press and to threaten its writers with jail."

There is a sinister significance in this observation. The weak, centre party government of Italy, suffering from the shock of recent events, may be using cases such as this to test the political atmosphere, and to find out what resistance it meets with. If it can invoke existing laws under which a single issue of a revolutionary journal provides material for the prosecution of five of its writers, then it could equally well suppress all organised opposition at any given time.

It is of vital importance to the Italian people that the government be resisted in this, and any similar attacks on freedom of publication, and in such resistance they can be assured of the full support of the British Libertarian movement, as well as of progressive elements throughout the country. P.H.

Comment

MARATHONS & VALUES

IN saying that all the fuss in the Press over the marathon runner, Jim Peters, is a lot of incredible nonsense, let us not be accused of being a bunch of spoil-sports! All we ask is that a proper sense of proportion should be maintained, and we think that to proclaim, and acclaim a runner as a national hero is clearly to show how twisted is the sense of values of our national press and how shallow are the emotions of the public that laps up this kind of stuff.

It is not the fault of the athletes. Generally they seem to be quite ordinary people, who would view their achievements with modesty. The trouble is that when the Press insists on making you a national hero you are expected to play ball and to say things which a normal person, upon whom the spotlight of "fame", or the television cameras, have not been directed, would never dream of saying. Thus, when Jim Peters appeared on Television last week and, looking his audience of several million straight in the eyes, said: "I'm very very sorry England, but anyway a British boy McGhee did win" then, whether it drew tears or made hearts beat faster, we have no hesitation in saying that such kind of talk *should* make people squirm with embarrassment.

The Press spared us none of the details of the closing minutes of this "epic-making" marathon, when Jim Peters felt his legs giving way under him, and proceeded to crawl or drag himself along the track towards an

imaginary finishing tape. The more gruesome the details the greater the achievement on which to build up this "national hero".



LET us now show our readers what we mean when we criticise this sense of values. In June (of last year, or it may have been the year before) we read a nine-line obituary notice in the *New York Times* which so impressed us as an example of the false values of our society that we preserved it for reproduction at some future date. The present moment seems an opportune one.

DR. GUIDO BERGAMO

VENICE, Italy, June 26 (A.P.)—Dr. Guido Bergamo, noted physician and radiologist, died here to-day of radium burns at the age of 59. He had been suffering for years from the painful radioactive burns. Amputation of his left hand and later of the whole arm failed to check the affliction.

So far as we know not a word was published in the British press. So far as the hero-worshipping British sports public is concerned Dr. Guido Bergamo never existed. His sufferings were not displayed in the public arena but were borne quietly and stoically in his hospital laboratory.

Can there be any doubt as to who of the two men deserves the greater recognition? Yet in fact the whole country knows about the marathon runner Jim Peters; and hardly a soul has heard of Guido Bergamo. Sad, isn't it? LIBERTARIAN.

This is Democracy in the Labour Party

Labour Executive Bans a Paper

IT is precisely those organisations which protest most about their democratic structure that have to be most carefully watched. The Communist and Communist-Front organisations are typical examples; the Electrical Trades Union (C.P.-led) is one in which those members who back the Executive are forever protesting (too much!) about the union's democratic structure.

The Labour Party has always attacked the Conservatives because the Tories have a 'Leader' who has the final word on policy, as distinct from Labour where the annual conferences provide the means for all the membership to decide policy—democratically.

This theory, however, has been wearing a bit thin recently. The trade unions, who must bear the blame for the creation of the Labour Party, have been setting the pace (as has been pointed out recently in 'Syndicalist Notebook'), in their steam-rolling or ignoring of opposition to the official lines on 'Gaitskell for Treasurer' and 'Arms for Germany'. And the union block vote—the means by which votes are used to support decisions they opposed—is carried over into Labour Party affairs.

The contempt in which the Executive

of the T.U.C. clearly holds its rank and file is now being adopted by the Labour Party Executive, which announced last week a ban on *Socialist Outlook*, a minority-viewpoint weekly circulating within the Party.

The Boring Trotskyists

In 1949, The Trotskyist 'Revolutionary Communist Party', the unemployed Bolsheviks, decided to give up the unequal struggle, as a separate organisation, against their big brothers the Stalinists and the reformist Labour Party. After many heart-searchings and interminable theoretical wranglings the only true followers of Marx and Lenin split into fragments, the largest of which was the 'Entrists', or those who believed that the only practical way to put the teachings of their masters into practice was to enter the Labour Party and, by working away like maggots in the apple, to influence the reformist Labour Party in the direction of revolution. A Herculean task, one might think, but since the Historic Process is always on the side of every true Marxist the eventual result was never in doubt.

Being good party politicians, the Trotskyists soon began to collect a few Labour Party officers on the lower levels, and to produce a little paper expressing their 'militant, left-wing, rank-and-file Labour Party' point of view. This was *Socialist Outlook*, which has now been a weekly for some time, and claims to have a circulation of about 7,000. The revolutionary point-of-view has been disguised in its columns with articles by people like Mr. Tom Braddock (ex-M.P., Bessie's husband) and some Bevanites, while the editorial chair has been occupied by Mr. G. Healey who was the leader of the 'Entrist' faction in the old R.C.P.

The Members Should Decide

This information we give in order that the situation can be seen clearly for what it is. The National Executive Committee of the Labour Party has sent a circular letter to all constituency and local parties, trade unions, womens' sections and Leagues of Youth, saying that at its last meeting it 'decided that persons

associated with, or supporting, *Socialist Outlook* are declared to be ineligible for membership of the Labour Party'.

Now on the face of it, this seems to be an intolerable interference with freedom of expression, but in fact what appears to me to be wrong is not that it should happen, but the method by which it has been done. The Labour Party has a complete right to decide who shall be members of it, and whether certain people or their activities are opposed to its interests. But the point surely is that the membership should decide those questions, since it concerns activity among the membership, and not the Executive alone.

Democratically, the membership should decide all questions, but an Executive is elected in order to deal with affairs on the day-to-day level. The question as to whether a certain paper should be allowed to circulate through Party channels and whether the persons associated with it should be allowed to remain in the Party, however, is a matter of principle and policy and the concern of all the membership.

Should a democratic organisation allow free entry and access to everybody? Well, if it does, it is signing its own death warrant, and, strangely

Continued on p. 4

PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT! WEEK 32

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ESCAPED LUNATIC

WASHINGTON, Aug. 9 (A.P.)—President Syngman Rhee says South Korea is "crying" for atomic weapons from the United States to help it drive the Communists from the northern half of Korea.

In a copyrighted interview with the magazine *U.S. News and World Report*, published to-day, President Rhee also declared that Britain and France are not anti-Communist nations, and that the United States is restraining him and Chiang Kai-shek from fighting the Chinese Reds by withholding support.

President Rhee said that he is asking the United States "to give us naval support and air coverage" as well as assistance in doubling the 680,000-man South Korean Army.

About the Theatre

LIFE Versus AUTHORITY

IN his play, *The Adding Machine*, Elmer Rice's stylized portrait of the soulless automatons produced by the State and mechanization of "culture" and labour in the person of Mr. Zero, for whom Heaven is too immoral, was nothing short of brilliant. This play, written in the heyday of expressionism, in 1923, was one of the most original plays of the American stage. *The Adding Machine* shows how technique and science robs men of wisdom and converts them into phantom beings loaded up with facts—dead facts. The sociologists, the logical positivists, all the Pharisees and Sadducees of intellectualism, that horrible intellectualism that poisons the soul, to these nothing in the human soul is sacred from their prying and empty rationalising. *The Adding Machine* is a play with many novel features: Rice triumphs as an ironist and as an observer. It was an entirely new dramatic invention. Modern democratic society is the most stifling, the most anti-personalist the world has ever known. There may have been more poverty, more disease under Feudalism; the tyrants, the kings and the lords, may have been brutal and ruthless. But their sphere of influence was comparatively limited; there was still ample scope for individual initiative and adventure. And

at least the tyrants had courage. In democratic tyrannies each man enslaves and is enslaved by all the others; there is no escape for the individual from this soul-destroying conformity.

The Adding Machine is notable for some daring scenic conceptions. In one of the scenes the characters are seen rising from the dead in the graveyard on their way to some form of intermediate conditions between this earth and some other stage of existence. In further scenes this later stage of existence is partially shown with most unusual dramatic machinery. The mechanics of this play are certainly subtly and yet bitterly indicative of American capitalism and its hypocritical religious basis, by which the exploitation of the bourgeoisie and the worst forms of the rapacity of its millionaires are excused. Yes, religion is a lubricant. And the more it is used to oil the machinery of life and property, the less friction will there be among the parts, and the easier the job of the rulers, the operators of the machine.

Mr. Zero, employed for twenty-five

years as an accountant, is discharged when adding machines are installed, and in a fit of insanity kills his employer. Executed, he goes to the Elysian Fields, where he declines to associate with such indecent company as Swift and Rabelais, but enjoys himself in operating a heavenly adding machine, and renews his friendship with Daisy Diana Dorothea Devore, the middle-aged office worker who has committed suicide to be with him. Mr. Zero rebels at the order that he be sent back to earth, until he is told that he has been doing this in successive incarnations, and is scheduled to continue until he is a complete slave with a worn-out soul who 'sit in the gallery of a coal-mine and operate the super-hyper-adding machine with the great toe of his right foot'. Like all honest writers, Elmer Rice when he wrote this play was an enemy of capitalist authoritarian society, and even more an enemy of those who defend and justify greed and envy and power, those basic pillars of modern social 'organisation'. The State is built on the model of a zoo, where all the animals are confined in iron cages. In

the State the cages more or less skilfully constructed, are ideas, and sexual repression; they keep men divided, hating and fearing each other and make it practically impossible for them to develop a consciousness of the unity of their interests, or the growth of a united, genuinely free, universal human culture.

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WHEN the curtain falls forever on the hideous farce-tragedy of bourgeois society, then men will awake and sing, and will leave the stifling "theatre" of authoritarianism, and will walk out into the real world, the beautiful world of freedom. The stage-managers and the producers tell me I am here to realise I know not what social end; but I feel that I, like each of my fellows, am here to realise myself, to live. Free men do not rely on government, nationhood, or tradition, but on the spirit which is in them. The only rôle he permits himself to play is himself, a real human being. He has abandoned the props, burnt the scripts, on the naked stage of the world and the universe he improvises his lines according to an inner direction. He is *his own*, because he is master of himself, instead of being mastered by God, Man, authority, law, sensuality, religion, the State or anything else. He rejects all the theories, systems and bloodless abstractions. Words, words, words: they choke us, they won't allow us to think. No, he must tear away all these useless abstractions—and then in the silence and the loneliness of his own existence, his own conceptions of life, of the world, of mind—re-think, re-examine all the ideas, feelings, impressions, customs and traditions, which he has hitherto unconsciously or unquestioningly accepted. He discovers his own aims, ideals, objects

Comment

The Man Who Knows His Village

A HUNDRED years ago last week there was published what its latest editor calls "one of the best-read and most influential of all books written in America, which has probably stirred as many thoughtful and imaginative minds in many races as any classic of the nineteenth century". This was Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*, the story of how, having reached the age of 27, the pencil-maker and surveyor of Concord, Mass., selected a piece of land in a wood on the brink of the clear deep green waters of Walden Pond, built a hut with his own hands, and settled down as he put it "to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived."

This was a more extraordinary thing to do a hundred years ago than it is now, when very many people from Mr. Ronald Duncan to Mr. Ben Gurion do it, and most of them write books about it.

The B.B.C. celebrated the *Walden* centenary by broadcasting a recording of an interview with the New England poet, Robert Frost on the introductory remarks by Jack Isaacs were more illuminating than those of the eighty-year-old poet and his unctious interlocutors.

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ANOTHER poet, Mr. Norman Nicholson provided us with some Thoreauvian thought in his broadcast *On Being A Provincial*. Let us not forget, he said, that "the vast majority of mankind does not belong to a metropolis—either in England or in any other part of the world. The vast majority of mankind is provincial. It always has been provincial throughout the ages. And this preoccupation with what is local, this sense of belonging to a small, separate, ingrown, almost hermetically sealed community, has always been the experience of the vast majority. So that it is precisely here, in our intense concern with what is close to us, that we most resemble the people of other countries and other times. It is precisely here, rather than in any vague internationalism of outlook, that we can

and meanings—momentarily and in relation to his whole life and the existences of those with whom he shares experience in this world, knowing that there is no God, no duty, and no compulsion, either to continue living or to accept any taboos or restraints, which he does not feel to be necessary to his happiness or development, knowing that his life matters to himself alone, that he lives for himself, not for Truth, Humanity, God, the State, etc., knowing that he alone is the creator of what he is and what he believes. He is no longer an actor, the agent of a vehicle created for him; he is the means and the end at the same time. The world is his stage, the play is his own, and the audience is his fellow-men. He acts himself without directions, spurning disguises, make-up, posturing, hypocrisy, costumes, stage sets, taking no cue from the wings, with no prompter except his own sincerity, observing no concern for the temper of the audience, obsessed with only one idea, like the anguished characters of Pirandello, to act out the drama which is in them.

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IN *The Adding Machine* we see to some extent this desperate drama of identification, the drama in which the barrier between actor and audience and actor and author, is dissolved. The characters do not speak in the "ordinary" sense: but everyday speech is arid, tedious, lacking in poetry and richness. "Matter-of-factness" is a miserable substitute for the beauty and warmth of unchecked imagination. The great dramatists reveal to us how beautiful our language could be, how men could arrive at heights of spiritual understanding and feeling for each other's soaring spirits that they do not dream of in their dreary lives of to-day. Shelley was a voice from the future: the true spirituality, poetry, and wonder which free men and women will some day know, feel and live in the joyousness of unfettered existence.

Continued on p. 3

An Anarchist Utopia

IT is not often nowadays that one finds anarchist ideas in popular publications. Still less does one expect to find them in a magazine entitled "Astounding Science Fiction", nevertheless in the December 1951 issue, that has just come into my hands, there is a story entitled . . . *And then there were none*, in which we have the portrayal of a complete anarchist society, and of the way that it resists colonisation by a civilisation of superior technical efficiency, equipped with troops and the most modern arms.

The story is written by one Eric Frank Russell, whose name is strange to me, but not, perhaps, to the habitual readers of science fiction. He is evidently a disciple of Gandhi, at least to a certain extent, though the Utopia that he describes is too human to please the strict Gandhian.

I seem to remember the title of his story on the cover of other science fiction magazines, so let us hope that the author, and his social ideas, are well known by science fiction enthusiasts. The greater part of science fiction stories that I have read, and they are by no means numerous, so I do not set up as an expert, seemed to stress the smallness and impotence of men in the face of the Universe, and its weird inhabitants. This

almost masochistic streak in science fiction goes right back to the beginning in the gloomy stories of Wells, *The War of the Worlds*, *The Time Machine*, *The Sleeper Awakes*, and so on. This tale is an exception however.

The scene is set on an out-of-the-way planet, settled by Earthmen, but not visited from the Earth for more than three centuries. One day an enormous spaceship arrives, carrying troops and bureaucrats to set up an Earth administration, and turns the planet into a colony. In addition they also have with them a Very Important Personage, none other than an Imperial Ambassador. The invasion is routine. Already quite a number of planets have been taken over in this fashion. The weapons of the Earthmen have always been able to make short work of any resistance. In this story the universe is supposed to have been colonised by all sorts of people from the Earth, many of the emigrants being "cranks" of one sort or another, who go out to set up the form of society that they would like on some new and distant world, where for several centuries they are left alone.

However, from the start things go wrong. Efforts to get into contact with the inhabitants, and particularly with their government, seem fruitless. The ship lands in open country, but the isolated peasants who are met with show no inclination to come and talk to the Earth ambassador, and, even when brought by force, can, or will, tell nothing about any government or authority with whom the ambassador can get in contact.

Eventually a patrol is sent out, and endeavours without success to stop vehicles on the road, and bring the passengers to the ambassador. But the passengers are chained to their seats, and cannot be removed. Meanwhile although the spaceship is the size of a small hill, and is within sight of a town; no one comes out to look at it, and passers-by ignore it. The Earthmen, used to creating a sensation, consider that the entire population of the planet must be mad. Of the few inhabitants with whom they succeed in establishing some sort of contact, not one is the least impressed by the importance of the Imperial Ambassador, and of the expedition in general. They do not even seem surprised at the visit.

Eventually in despair, the authorities send out one of the crew on an old-fashioned bicycle, to try to contact the powers-that-be of the planet. He goes into the town, where the inhabitants regard him as crazy, until they realise that he has come from the spaceship.

He eventually learns that there is no government to get into contact with. He also find out the way the economics of the society work. It functions on a system of obligations, called for short "obs".

"Now," explained Baines, 'you've done something for me. That means you've planted an ob on me. I don't thank you for what you've done. There's no need to. All I have to do is to get rid of the ob . . . I shift it this way: Seth Warburton, next door but one, has half a dozen of my obs saddled on him. So I get rid of mine to you and relieve him of one of his to me by sending you around for a meal.'

As the soldier goes about the town he

learns all sorts of curious things. He finds his way to the fire station.

"Looking for someone?" asked the small man.

"The fire chief," said Harrison.

"Who's he?" . . .

"He's the most important guy in the bunch . . . And he's the fellow I'm going to talk to if it's the last thing I do."

"Nobody's any more important than anybody else. How can they be? I think you're crazy."

And so it goes on. The people don't know what money is. The "ob" system making it needless. There is no wealth, and no ruling class. The Earth ambassador is not pleased with such a scheme of things. A society without rulers and authority is utterly alien to him. "They are antagonistic towards us simply because they don't want to be disturbed." This would seem to be as good a reason as any. But not to those who have a civilising mission to perform!

Eventually one of the planet's inhabitants tells Harrison that they have a powerful weapon that they can use so effectively that they can drive the Earthmen away, but that it is a one-way affair, and cannot be used by the Earthmen in retaliation. He produces a plaque engraved with the initials F.—I.W., which stands for "Freedom—I won't". The people of this world call themselves Gands, that is disciples of Gandhi, who they say invented "the weapon". All other people they call Antigands.

The "Freedom—I won't" slogan soon catches on. The soldiers and crew of the ship start deserting and becoming insubordinate. They find if they all refuse to obey little can be done to them. Many disappear for good. The weapon is having its effect. Eventually the spaceship departs. The captain says that if they remain much longer there will not be enough crew left to work the ship. There is no alternative but to go—defeated. Even threats of violence have failed to move the Gands. Nothing more can be done.

Of course this brief summary does not do justice to the excellence and ingenuity of the story. Like William Morris' *News from Nowhere* it makes an anarchist society not only attractive, but also seem eminently practical. Indeed it would not be going too far to say that it seems far more reasonable and possible than the authoritarian schemes of such men as Plato and Sir Thomas Moore.

Such stories as this do far more to convince people of the practicability of anarchism than any amount of pamphlets and theoretical writings. At least I should think they would if there were more of them. It is at all events most gratifying to find our ideas in such out of the expected places. Writing of Utopias can be fun, since one is able to make a world just as one would like. It can be also exceedingly useful, since it inspires others to a sense of dissatisfaction with present conditions, and a desire to have a world more in accordance with their own wishes. Large numbers of people are anarchists at heart, but lack self-confidence and faith in the possibility of a freer society. Tales such as this are just the thing to inspire that confidence. The inhabitants of this libertarian planet are not saints, they are ordinary people, and their system works,

ARTHUR W. ULOTH.

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A WRONG IS NEVER RIGHT

TWO cases have been reported from Nigeria recently in which the (Nigerian) magistrate has passed sentences on Europeans involving not only prison terms but caning as well. One of the Europeans, who was ordered to be caned for setting his dog on an African trader, has decided to appeal, but in the other case involving three European seamen they have decided not to appeal. The fact of an African magistrate ordering Europeans to be caned has, as was to be expected, caused some comment in this country, for what may be considered a "reasonable" punishment for Africans passed on them according to the law, is not so "reasonable" when applied to Europeans by an African magistrate.

According to a report in last Sunday's *Reynolds News* Nigerian and other African organisations in Britain have sent messages to Mr. Begho, the magistrate concerned, "urging him to stand fast on his decision." They point out that he is doing nothing more than administering laws made by the white man. According to one Nigerian:

"Begho is no political fanatic. He has more friends in Britain than he has in Africa, and he has always refused to go into politics.

"It is a common rumour among Nigerians in London that the case in which he first ordered a European to be caned may affect the permanency of his job. A legal board that was due to meet to consider his permanency has postponed the meeting."

The *Reynolds News* also quotes Nigerians in London as expressing the hopes that "now that the indignity of caning has been ordered for white men, the law may be changed to end sentences of corporal punishment in their courts, as they have been ended in Britain."

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APART from the fact that two wrongs never make a right, there are grounds for believing that our Nigerian friends are perhaps a little optimistic as to the intentions of Mr. Begho in passing the sentences he did. Mr. Begho, who is 33, studied law at Hull University and was called to the Bar in London in 1950. Before coming to this country he was a customs officer. Now he is a magistrate. His career so far, does not give us much hope that he has anything but the mind of an official. But let us also quote his comments when passing judgment on the seamen. According to a *Reuter* report he said he would "impose a sentence of caning because of the prevalence of stealing from ships in Lagos harbour and as a deterrent to other people who might commit similar offences."

In other words Mr. Begho recognises caning as a punishment as well as a deterrent. And in that case why abolish it? In this country flogging was abolished not simply because of the pressure from well-meaning reformists, but because the government could not show that such punishment had in any way reduced the incidence of the crimes for which it could be imposed. Home Secretaries have always made it quite clear that they have no moral scruples about flogging if it is effective. After all do they not retain the even more barbarous death-penalty since they are convinced that it acts as a deterrent?

We are convinced that nothing positive will emerge in those territories in Africa which are being given more "responsibility" for their own administration if the indignities to which they have been subjected by the white man are continued by the black man. If they honestly believe that caning is humiliating and

13,000 Factory Girls Strike in Japan

KAKUJU NATSUKAWA, owner of one of the largest yarn companies in Japan employing 13,000 workers, the majority of whom are girls under the age of twenty, has an unshakable faith which leads him to make the claim that—"Mighty Buddha will protect me—I am not an ordinary capitalist." Until recently the apathy of his employees suggested that, if they thought at all, they shared the mighty claims that Natsukawa made for himself.

Two months ago, while Buddha was apparently asleep, the workers of the Ohmi Silk Spinning Company struck against their fantastic conditions. It is only within the last two weeks that the Japanese Government has decided to investigate the conditions at the Ohmi factories although they have been aware of the dispute for eight or nine weeks. As suggested by the *Manchester Guardian* correspondent Hessel Tiltman, the reason is not that the Government has had a sudden burst of sympathy for the impoverished strikers, but that the officials fear repercussions from abroad "liable to invite international misunderstanding towards the Japanese textile industry and may even lead to foreign boycotting of Japanese cotton products".

The conditions existing in the Ohmi factories may surprise the theoreticians who hold that industrialisation is necessary for an enlightened proletariat. Japan, the "Little Britain of the East" has consistently given the lie to the

theory that industrialisation has necessarily any connection with revolutionary tendencies. To-day Japan is even more "westernised" than before the last war and alongside this we have the feudal aspects of the factory conditions. It is true that conditions like those at Ohmi do not exist in all factories, and that Labour Laws exist, ostensibly to protect the workers—the maximum penalty for violating some of them being six months imprisonment or a £5 fine, which can so easily be paid by a wealthy company.

Some of the facts disclosed in this dispute are astonishing and show that it is at the expense of the health and even the life of some of the workers that the Ohmi Silk Company have, in seven years, developed from a comparatively small organisation ("seven ramshackle wooden buildings worth 30,000 dollars") into a 3,000,000 dollar concern.

Girl workers, who form the majority, were paid 4,500 yen (£4 10s.) a month, from which 32s. monthly was deducted for company-provided food, and often other sums for items bought at company shops in the plants, reducing the actual cash wage to from £2 to £3 monthly.

A report in *Time* says: "In a published complaint, Natsukawa's workers explained how, before each of the day's three work shifts in their clockless factories, they were marched into the factory yard and forced, rain or shine, to sing company songs and recite such uplifting Buddhist promises as, 'Today I will make no immoderate demands' or 'Today I will not grumble or complain'. Once a week every worker, regardless of religion, is forced to attend a Buddhist religious service. At one rally in the plant several years ago, fire broke out and 23 Ohmi girls were trampled to death. Huddled together in small, crowded dormitories on the factory grounds, girl workers are forbidden to wear lipstick, must be in bed by 9 and may not leave the factory premises without special permits approved by at least seven company officials.

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

Three Utopian Heretics

Journey Through Utopia, by one of the anarchist movement's most active and intelligent workers, the late Marie Louise Berneri, was published in 1950, and was very widely reviewed in the Press, including our contemporary *The Freethinker* in which F. A. Ridley devoted two articles to the book and its author. It is therefore with added pleasure that we find in the current issue of

IN the last year of her lamentably short life—she was only 31 when she died in 1949—Marie Louise Berneri wrote her *Journey Through Utopia* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1950) 16s., a compendium of utopian writings in outline from Plato's *Republic* and Plutarch's *Life of Lycurgus* to those modern satirical works, *Animal Farm* by George Orwell, and *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley.

What may be taken as Marie Louise Berneri's reason for writing her book is given in the opening lines. We live in a "realist" world, she says, in which "visionaries are derided or despised, and 'practical men' rule our lives. We no longer seek radical solutions to the evils of society, but reforms; we no longer try to abolish war, but to avoid it for a period of a few years; we do not try to abolish crime, but are contented with criminal reforms. . . . Wherefore she thinks it salutary to turn to those who have envisaged a human community founded upon the ideal.

This journey through the lands of utopia is fascinating enough and something of an education in itself. But if, as one may suspect, Marie Louise, Anarchist as she was, had a didactic purpose in producing her book, it is hard to discern. For the material it contains seems to be as much of a warning against the evils of authoritarianism attendant upon seeking the realisation of utopia, as a protest against the "realism" that is content with compromises and half-

All workers' mail is censored, and love letters are frequently destroyed. If, by any chance, a romance should flower under these adverse conditions, company officials usually do not allow the newlyweds to live together, may even transfer one spouse to a distant factory. The pay of both is often reduced "because of decrease in efficiency".

In an attempt to crush the strikers the Company hired strike breakers at the rate of £10 a month (which compares favourably with the workers' pay of £4 10s. a month) to beat drums so as to drown the sound of the striking workers; 760 were fired, and a threat made to confine the remainder to their dormitories for a month. One worker committed suicide to draw attention to the "lack of sincerity of the management", and hundreds of ordinary people protested by attacking the Company's mill at Fujinomiya with stones and sticks.

The Company with the full collaboration of the company "union" have gone to fantastic lengths to counteract the

ON TO 1984!

MORE than once, since the publication of George Orwell's terrifying prophecy of life in 1984, have we been able to point to developments which seemed to draw it nearer.

Readers of that book will remember that the Thoughtpolice had two main methods of keeping observation on people—the television screens in every apartment and helicopters continually patrolling outside windows.

A few months ago a report from New York gave news of the first arrest made with the help of a helicopter, from which police observers kept watch on a crook's apartment.

The development of television for observation has also made great strides forward recently, as an article in *Picture Post* (7/8/54) ably illustrated.

At Pye's factory at Cambridge, 'Industrial' TV is being produced. The equipment consists of a small camera containing only 23 valves (as against a B.B.C. camera's 40) and three lenses which can be operated either on the camera or from the screen. These are connected

effects of the striker's published complaints. They have chartered planes to drop leaflets over the main cities denying the allegations of the strikers, and have mailed postcards to the families of all the girls expressing the fear that 'women factory hands are in danger of becoming pregnant as morals in the men's dormitories are disturbed . . . since the present dispute began.'

If the Ohmi Silk Company is forced to modify conditions through Government fear of a foreign boycott on their goods, it will not be because of a change of heart on the part of the owners or the Government. If, for other reasons, foreign markets are made less accessible to Japan, the workers will be the first to suffer. It seems unlikely that the Trade Unions of the World will protest against the treatment of the Japanese workers unless it happens to line up with Government policies of the respective countries. The national character of the Trade Union Movements has become more obvious in recent years, and except for a few isolated cases of united action, "international solidarity" has become a mockery. R.M.

by a cable, and the equipment gives a close-up from 50 yards distance, detailed pictures at 100 yards, and clearly recognisable pictures at 400 yards.

So far this TV is being used for fire-fighting, salvage and similar work, but already it is beginning to be used for security measures. To prevent pilfering in a factory store, for example, and the *Picture Post* reporter writes:

"The most obvious use for this instrument, which could easily become a social menace, is on those who are social menaces already. In America, cameras have been concealed in banks and department stores to enable the guards to keep an eye on several safes—or shop-lifters—simultaneously."

From which it will be only a short step to installation in factories to watch the workers—especially on any dispersed sites—for police crowd control (now done with walkie-talkie radio), demonstrations and any other functions the Government thinks warrant it.

The modern mechanical Peeping Tom will be of great assistance to authorities. On to 1984!

sage addressed to Oliver Cromwell, was published four years later.

Of him Marie Louise Berneri writes: "He did not believe in a personal God, and went so far as to identify God with Reason, and once took the resolution (which he did not keep) to use the word Reason instead of the word God in his writings." She goes on to relate that he disbelieved in miracles, in heaven and hell, threw doubt on the after-life and rejected the doctrine of original sin.

Secondly, we have Gabriel de Foigny, born of a Catholic family in the Ardennes towards 1630. He entered a monastery, but because of "scandalous behaviour" was soon compelled to leave it. He published his *New Discovery of Terra Incognita Australis* in 1676. Concerning this work Marie Berneri says: "His views on religion were 'blasphemous' indeed, for he in fact attacks all the foundations of religion."

Like Winstanley, Foigny jettisons the idea of original sin, believing man to possess innate goodness.

Nothing that sexual intercourse is abolished completely in Foigny's utopia, Marie Berneri puts forward the view that he probably wished to satirise the Christian attitude to sex. If sexual relations must only serve the purpose of procreation, why not do away with them entirely!

Finally, in comment upon William Morris's *News from Nowhere* she remarks: "A truly happy people do not need to believe in a happier life after death or to find solace in the love of God. The Christian religion has been replaced by the religion of humanity, and men love their fellows not out of duty, but because they are worthy of their love."

Altogether this is a most interesting, thoughtful, and even scholarly book. What a pity that the independent, courageous, and intelligent young mind that produced it is now no more, silenced for ever before the fulfilment of its greater promise.

G. I. BENNETT.

4
LABOUR EXECUTIVE BAN A PAPER Continued from p. 1

enough, this has been recognised throughout the Labour Party for years. The present attempt by the Executive to suppress *Socialist Outlook*, however, has caused a howl to go up in some quarters.

Is Foot so Innocent?

In *Tribune*, for example, Michael Foot says "This is an Outrage", but is hard put to provide logical arguments. In the first place he thinks that referring to the Trotskyist associations of people connected with the paper is an attempt by the National Executive "to appease the N.K.V.D. and the Un-American Activities Committee at the same time"—a clever piece of rhetoric which would go down well from a public platform but does not stand up to examination in print. Why should the Executive be regarded as trying to appease anybody in this matter? The *Socialist Outlook* has continually attacked its policy and has thereby earned its enmity. The Executive is defending itself by the use of its power.

Both Bolsheviks

"The proscription of a newspaper because of the past association of some of its contributors" says Michael Foot, "smacks of McCarthyism". The trouble about McCarthy is not only what he is and does himself, but his very name has now become a swearword for use by his opponents. Foot must know as well as anybody else the Trotskyist policy of boring from within, and to speak only of "past associations" is to imply that the Trotskyists are no longer Trotskyists because their organisation no longer exists openly—although they disbanded their party precisely in order to work within the Labour Party.

But Michael Foot puts his foot in it

when he goes on to say: "There is a case for proscribing certain organisations, although many people believe the National Executive have carried it to fantastic lengths; such action may be justified as an unavoidable measure for dealing with Communist methods of infiltration." Apparently Mr. Foot cannot recognise Communist methods of infiltration unless they are clearly labelled 'Stalinist'. May we remind him that Trotskyists and Stalinists are, though mutually hostile, adherents of the same ideology, practitioners of the same methods, and that the only distinction is that one faction won the fight for power and the other lost? The behaviour of Trotsky himself, especially, with Lenin, in his ruthless suppression of the Kronstadt workers in 1921, showed that the Russian people would have been no better off under Trotsky than Stalin. The dictatorship of the proletariat means in fact dictatorship by the Bolshevik Party, and the Trotskyist faction are prepared to use the same methods to that end as the Stalinists.

Different Aims

Michael Foot drags in the *Daily Worker*, *Daily Mail* and *Tribune* itself in his arguments. But these are not relevant. The first two do not masquerade as Labour Party papers, and are not circulated within the Labour Party as expressions of genuine rank-and-file viewpoints, as does *Socialist Outlook*. *Tribune* is the organ of a largish section of the Labour Party, who are not something else in disguise. Mr. Foot gets almost hysterical in his denunciation of his own Executive's 'suppression' of the *Socialist Outlook*.

In fact, of course, the Executive has no power to suppress any paper whatsoever. It has simply declared that 'support and association with' this paper is incompatible with membership of the Labour Party. And surely they have the right to say that? As an Anarchist I should oppose most strongly the entry into any anarchist organisation with which I was associated of persons whom I knew were out to use it for ends opposed to the declared aims of that organisation.

Free expression by comrades working sincerely for a common end is part and parcel of an anarchist organisation. That is a very different thing from allowing your organisation to be infiltrated by politicians seeking to use it for their own purposes.

Where the Executive has gone wrong is in despotically handing out its order without consultation of the membership. Which was foolish of them. Had they waited until next month, enough support could have been whipped up at the party's Annual Conference to have made it a democratic decision, and then everything would have been alright. That way the effect would have been the same, with a virtuous Executive carrying out members' wishes.

Those anarchists, incidentally, who think that either the Labour Party or the Trade Unions (or the Co-op Party?) can be infiltrated by libertarians and 'guided' in our direction, can perhaps draw some lessons from what is happening to *Socialist Outlook*!

P.S.

VIEWPOINT ON ANARCHISTS

NO, I am not one of the chaps who know everything better. But two articles in *FREEDOM* during the last few weeks made me honestly shudder. Arthur W. Uloth's review of the French movement's new manifesto seems to suggest that they have already capitulated to the Communist Party (in spirit at least if not in fact), and R.M. taking a holiday from her attacks on the devil in *excelsis*, i.e. the Roman Catholic Church turns right round to state categorically: "Viewed objectively the ex-communists are generally a pretty unsavoury bunch." Objectively, my foot!

I know quite a number of ex-communists, more perhaps than R.M. will ever be able to meet. And all of them, bar none, are in no way "unsavoury". In fact, I dare state definitely that every progressive-thinking person at one or the other moment of his life must have been either a member or a fellow-traveller of the Communist Party. In the years after the first world-war progressive people all over the world looked to Russia for the dawn of a new and better age. It was just this longing for a dream come true, which made people like André Gide, Valerin Marcu and yes, even Arthur Koestler so bitterly disappointed, when awakened they saw just another tyrannical government.

One is not born into the Anarchist movement. Adolescent people are hero-worshippers, they like to model themselves on other people and are therefore easy prey for any leader or politician. An Anarchist youth-movement is impossible. But whilst growing up, one looks around for an Ideal in life and what better and more beautiful ideal could

one have chosen, than the country where the people freed themselves, etc., etc.

To be an Anarchist means, to have grown up, to have discovered the shallowness, nay, emptiness of hero-worship; the need of starting one's own way again by rebuilding one's own individuality. There is no need any more for slogans and political hysteria, Stalin and McCarthy, Eisenhower and Malenkov are just so many people as they are names. No more. No less. One does not belong any more to a party, nation or bunch. One becomes an entity, responsible for and to oneself, a person.

It is at this station that I discover the threat of those people, who try to jump on the bandwagon of the Communist Party by so easily accepting its slogans. "Banish the H-Bomb!" "Down with McCarthy!" "Hands off Guatemala!" And off one goes "to urge the masses" to protest. Shower leaflets, organize, demonstrate, march, march

... till something new turns up and one starts the whole business all over again. How the Rosenberg campaign started just at the moment when these two people refused to budge, not one moment earlier, how it was stepped up, to be forgotten from one day to the other and is replaced by the campaign against McCarthy is just such an example of political treachery and trickery, that it has to be re-read again and again, to be believed.

The Anarchist has to state his own case, The Individual versus The State. The "progressive" Government of Guatemala still was the Government of Guatemala. The H-bomb is a killer, but so is a bullet. McCarthy is a power-drunk politician, but so are Malenkov, Franco, Tito, Peron and *ad infinitum*.

It is time the Anarchist movement re-orientated itself. Let us re-state the principles of Anarchism loud and clearly. And let us stick to them at all costs.

MAX PATRICK.

Out Goes the 5th Amendment!

Continued from p. 1

the "strictly practical" arguments—they point out—are against the Senators bill, while on

"moral and legal grounds alone, many of the strongest and most effective anti-Communists in the United States believe this to be the wrong approach. They point out that outlawry of a group or class is contrary to the spirit of our institutions, that each man should be condemned for his own crimes and not because he belongs to a criminally inspired group, and furthermore that it is folly to attempt to outlaw ideas and political theories. To do so would be merely to drive their advocates underground—to which the proponents of outlawry reply with some cogeny that the Communist party itself is already mostly underground."

It is a historical mistake to believe that you can wipe out an idea, or a loyalty, or a faith by legislation or by the heavy hand of force. It never succeeds in the long run, whatever may appear to be the immediate results. When the F.B.I. director opposes outlawry of the Party on the grounds that it will drive the Party even farther underground than it already is, he is talking common sense. The effect of declaring a movement illegal is to close its ranks, the waverers will drop out, leaving only a nucleus of determined, courageous and even desperate men and women to carry on. There is so much evidence of this throughout the world to-day, whether in Malaya or Kenya, in Spain or Jugoslavia, in British Guiana or Czechoslovakia, for it to be necessary to elaborate on the truth of this statement.

For these reasons, the American Senators have once again shown that besides having no respect for, or faith in the basic freedoms, are from all other points of view plain stupid!

Later

As we go to Press it is reported that the House of Representatives approved, by 305 votes to two, a substitute for the Democratic Party's Bill outlawing the Communist Party. It is in every way similar to the Senator's bill except that it does not automatically render individual members liable to prosecution.

THE authorities in this country seem to be obsessed by obscenity! And the views of magistrates vary according to the parts of the country in which their Courts sit. Thus in Swindon *The Decameron* has been ordered to be burnt, while in London, on the strength of that judgment it is prominently displayed in most bookshops in the West End.

But it is becoming obviously more and more difficult to define obscenity in law, without creating a hundred and one complications and precedents. Thus, at Clerkenwell Court last week, at which twelve defendants, including three limited companies appeared before the magistrates on summonses alleging a conspiracy to publish obscene books with bloodcurdling titles such as *The Big Sin*, *Shameless, Soho Street Girl* and *Academy of Love*, a ticklish problem arose as to definition.

The magistrate, Mr. Davis, said that he had read the books, and he asked Mr. E. G. MacDermott, counsel for the Director of Prosecutions, to direct him to any passages in *The Big Sin*, in particu-

AN OBSCENE MUDDLE

lar, and to show why he suggested they were obscene. Mr. MacDermott supplied a number of quotations, and submitted that the passages were calculated to have a pernicious effect on young persons. Mr. Davis said that the point was: Were they obscene?

Counsel (referring to a passage he had quoted): "It might incite a young person to do something?"

Mr. Davis: "Murder?"

Counsel: "Yes, sir, as described here."

Mr. Davis: "Have you any authority for the proposition that writing which incites to murder is obscene?"

Counsel: "I should have thought that the law amounts to just that. Immorality does not necessarily mean sexual immorality."

To which the bewildered Magistrate commented:

"Edgar Wallace might be obscene according to this definition. I don't know where we are getting."

Quite so, but to our minds for rather different reasons! As things are at present the description in detail of love making, or the publi-

cation of photographs of nudes in which the pubic hair or the male genital organs have not been obscenely removed stand a fair chance of being condemned in the courts as obscene. But horrible murder films and books, lurid descriptions in the daily and Sunday Press of murder trials and of the last days of a condemned man, or sneaked photographs of the condemned man as he is hurried out of court to a waiting car, and in whose features one sees the startled, or haggard look of the hunted creature... these are News.

Even the harmless posters, with their feeble puns, and gaudy presentation, offering this week's striptease programme at the local variety theatre, have been the subject of questions to the Home Secretary by three Labour M.P.'s. They asked Sir David Maxwell Fyfe to intervene after the Lord Chamberlain said he was powerless to suppress the posters.

The Home Secretary replied: "I appreciate that advertisements of this type give offence to many people, but they do not appear to be obscene in the sense in which the word is normally interpreted in the courts."

When will all these busybodies stop minding other people's business for them? It is probably quite true that there is a great deal of disgusting trash being published to-day, starting with the mass circulations daily and Sunday Press, and ending with the gory little paper backs largely distributed by newsagents (and not booksellers) for their Sunday press-reading public. If one wishes that these people should engage in more "elevated" reading the solution will not be found in the present obscenity-witch-hunt. The problem is much deeper, in the very roots of our present society, of which all this literary filth is simply one small manifestation.

MAT KAVANAGH

A comrade has given us several copies of photographs of our late comrade Mat Kavanagh. She suggests that some of his old friends may like to have one and contribute a small sum to the *FREEDOM* Special Fund as a gift in memory of Mat.

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