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Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"If a government requires the support of oaths, it is a sign that it is not worth supporting and ought not to be supported."

—THOMAS PAINE.

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Threepence

"IN THE SHADOW OF THE BOMB"

ANARCHISTS hold the view that war is stupid, indefensible and a violation of our humanity, and maintain, as was pointed out editorially in FREEDOM last week, that "weapons are in fact still the means of waging war, not the causes of war. The causes are still power politics, vested interests and slumps . . . The menace to world peace is not the H-bomb but the structure of our society". To argue therefore, as many do, that there is something intrinsically evil about the H-bomb which makes it different from other types of weapons, in moral terms, is irrelevant.

But the thought that does occupy the minds of many of us to-day is, can we ignore the possibility of physical annihilation in the light of what knowledge we have of the immense destructive powers of modern weapons? And, if physical survival is of primary importance should we join the ever growing band of pacifists, and the like, in the hope that pressure can be brought to bear on the powers that be, to, at least, call a halt to further tests and to work out an acceptable plan which would ensure the banning of nuclear weapons? We feel sure that if such a plan were possible few anarchists would withhold their support, but so far none has been put forward in terms of world politics which could conceivably have any success.

Last week, in an attempt to achieve this the *News Chronicle* gave a lot of space to three representatives of varying groups who, apart from the pacifist, Dr. Donald Soper, added nothing to the ineffective suggestions that have been thrown out from various quarters in the last few months.

HOW TO EMPTY THE CHURCH

UNTIL recently the church of St. John the Evangelist, Seven Kings, Essex, could boast of Sunday evening congregations of between 300 and 400—pretty good for these godless days.

Now, however, the numbers have begun to fall, and the reason is that the vicar has changed his approach to his job. The Rev. John Wesley Stone decided that many of his flock came for entertainment rather than the gospel, and promptly dropped his attractive pulpit manner for a sterner one.

"I used to be a very cheerful preacher—joking all the time. My church was crowded. Then I realised they were just coming along to forget the worries of the world for an hour or two. So I started preaching the true gospel—for sinners.

"I believe the Gospel was written solely for sinners," declared Mr. Stone. "But, as many of my congregation don't think they are sinners, I have no gospel for them. My labour was redundant, so I've gone on strike."

That's what makes religion so popular—you mustn't enjoy it. And it's an illuminating point of view about not being able to do anything for you unless you believe you are a sinner. In a world of virtuous people, it seems, the Gospels would have no relevance; hence the Church has a vested interest in having a continuous supply of sinners—just as Lawyers would be sunk without criminals.

So even if you don't really think of yourself as a sinner, you must be made to realise that that's just what you are.

"Until they can take it from me that they ARE sinners and let me treat them as such and stop thinking they are righteous and fit for Heaven I can do nothing for them," said Mr. Stone.

Ah well, that's the way to empty the church.

Lord Hailsham, the first contributor to the series said nothing in the "negotiation through strength" argument which has not already been dealt with in FREEDOM. His arguments in favour of the threat of thermo-nuclear reprisals "with the maintenance of strong and more efficient conventional resources" might for a time hold the balance of world politics, but is no answer to the problem when "saturation point" is reached, when both sides will be in an equal position of strength and the economic deadlock has to work itself out in the classical manner.

As Dr. Soper has pointed out: "The economic demands of such military preparedness pervert the production resources and industrial habits of nations, so that cut-throat competition becomes unavoidable and ability to resist aggression means the practice of the very national habits that encourage aggression."

If this solution fails we have to console ourselves with the thought that if the cold war is morally and economically a strain on us, the "Communist Institutions are under a pressure as dire, which in the long run they may be less able to sustain". And anyway, the Communist system will be a victim of its own internal contradictions (like the capitalist system which has been with us so long), it will then either collapse or become capable of "co-existing with our own free societies". In either event, says Lord Hailsham, the cold war will have been won.

This, and the attempt by Aneurin Bevan to effect immediate talks with Russia will convince few of us that superiority of weapons or talks at a "high level" are conducive to world peace. We are always in favour of reasonable discussion as a means of reaching common understanding, but can we have anything but cynical expectations for the success of discussions between rival political groups with conflicting interests? The endless discussions which have taken place between the "great powers" in the last few years have been expensive farces which have convinced no-one of their value, not even the politicians who participated. Bevan must be aware of this, and in advocating immediate talks with Russia he is pandering to a popular feeling that this may be one way out of the impasse.

South Africa Short of White Workers

IN an economy where the vast majority of workers are kept in unskilled positions as a deliberate government policy, a shortage of skilled workers is bound to arise.

This is the case in South Africa where, according to Minister of Labour Jan de Klerk the shortage of white workers is so great that the ability of the white race to maintain superiority is threatened.

The country has not the trained manpower to do the work demanded by its rapid industrial expansion, he told a National Party meeting, and he has ordered an inquiry into the failure of three training centres to attract sufficient recruits.

Too bad about that rapid industrial expansion. But there are plenty of African workers who would be only too pleased to learn skilled operations. If the stupid Apartheid policy leads to economic stresses in S.A., so much the better. Mr. Jan de Klerk is probably unmoved by human arguments, but perhaps he will be by economic ones.

We might consider a little more seriously, however, the proposals made by Dr. Soper, who suggests that this country make an unmistakable gesture of total disarmament.

He goes on to say:

"The moral effect would be to strengthen, nay, electrify, the peace-loving multitudes of the world, to release pent-up hopes and dammed-up powers—on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

"Some other country, I am sure, would quickly follow our example and the whole international situation be transformed. No country could possibly fear us and the propaganda even of would-be enemies would be hamstrung.

"Instead of motives impugned and statements doubted—we should be able to tell the truth and be believed. Better still, we could offer impartiality to international discussions where at present there appears nothing but ulterior motives.

"In other words, we could provide the single most important prerequisite of a fruitful disarmament conference—a disinterested chairman.

"Best of all, the sense of vocation which such a profoundly adventurous step would inculcate would, I believe without sentimentality, bind us together and help to destroy these marks of decadence which now threaten us.

"But what of the colossal risks of such

German Memories of Guns before Butter

The East German Communist Government has failed to stop housewives hoarding food, particularly sugar, jam, flour and fats.

Alarmed officials are trying to reassure the panic buyers by saying that there is no danger of scarcity.

The housewives are not convinced. They anticipate that East Germany will follow Russia's example and concentrate the national effort on heavy industry.

News Chronicle 14/3/55.

ANARCHIST NOTEBOOK

Smog to Our Aid!

IN spite of the American Atomic Energy Commission's report dismissing as groundless the widely expressed fears that the atomic and hydrogen bomb tests might pollute the atmosphere we breathe and affect genetically future generations, 2000 eminent scientists (of whom about half have worked on nuclear energy) have now expressed themselves as not being as certain as the Government. In a press interview in New York last week, the Federation of American Scientists announced details of its appeal to the United Nations to call a moratorium on hydrogen bomb tests until it could make a study of the world's atmosphere and then set "safe limits of control" for future test explosions.

According to New York reports: "The F.A.S. is well aware that the

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apparent foolhardiness? What of a Russian invasion? The answer is: I don't know, and neither do those who prophesy the worst."

The strength of this argument does indeed lie in the possible effect total disarmament would have on the people of the world. Its weakness is that Dr. Soper would look to the legalised methods of Government to initiate such a venture. We consider this to be out of the question, and can see no hope at all that Britain, any more than Russia or America, would be prepared to relinquish her place in world politics for the sake of such an unprofitable business as total disarmament.

It seems to us that one answer really lies within the grasp of the millions of ordinary men and women who support their Governments. To

suggest that, as a beginning, the people of Britain withdraw their support from the Government *en masse* in the form of strikes, boycotts, etc., is far less Utopian than the arguments we have been discussing. What Alex Comfort has called intelligent disobedience, organised sufficiently, could completely demoralise the ruling class.

It is also the only answer to a less spectacular, but nevertheless frightening piece of information given by James Cameron in his Commentary in the *News Chronicle* (14/3/55). Commenting on the fact that wars have been abolished for years on paper, and that sensible people regard the pieces of paper on which the declarations are made as useless he goes on to suggest that "even allowing for a magical change of heart all round, atomic inspection and control is by now a pipe-dream". To justify this he quotes the editor of the *American Bulletin*

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DOCKERS DEMAND AN INCREASE

THE Transport & General Workers' Liaison Committee in the London Docks (the unofficial committee formed during last October's great strike) is launching a militant campaign to back up negotiations which are now taking place for an increase in dockers' wages.

The wage the dockers are asking for is a minimum rate of 30s. per day, as against the present rate of 24s. This, of course, is the basic pay, and bears little relationship to actual earnings when there's plenty of work about. The point is, however, that portworkers should be in receipt of a minimum wage on which they can live without piecework and overtime, and on this basis they are lagging behind other sections in the same union.

In terms of real wages, the dockers' minimum to-day is worth less than in 1939, when the rate was a mere 14s. a day. And they contrast this with the employers' greatly increased dividends and profit-earning capacity through new plant bought through the port-workers'

labour.

In their demand for a 30s. minimum 'with no strings attached' the Liaison Committee remind the dockers that in many cases employers have tried to establish worsened conditions with wage increases. But, as they say: 'Only by the rank and file showing their readiness to go into action against any such bargaining away of their hard-won conditions, will the employers be defeated.'

And to show how little illusion there is about the T. & G.W.U. officials, they also say: 'Make clear to our officials that they either get on with the job of securing this increase or get out and make room for those who will!'

We don't know if this means that some of those attached to the unofficial Liaison Committee do, in fact, have their eyes on union jobs, but we should advise the portworkers not to think in terms of changing their officials, but of abolishing officialdom in their organisations and relying all the time on their own strength and initiative.

bath, advocated by some politician in authority as a defence against the hydrogen bomb "fall out", the other most effective defence against the bomb is smoke pollution, even if, in the process it kills us off by aggravating lung complaints!

Guerilla Tactics in Kenya

THE growing military strength of the British forces in Kenya may have demoralised some of the "enemy", but on the other hand it has also had the effect of developing new techniques of resistance among the poorly armed Kenyans, and in this respect they have shown themselves to be intelligent and capable. One example of their tactics is given in a *News Chronicle* report from Nairobi.

Top Mau Mau terrorists are using Kenya's prisons as a refuge from the security forces.

Nearly 200 Mau committee members and small fry—including 20 women—were this week in nine Nairobi prisons.

They tear up the identity cards which, under the emergency laws, they must possess, and allow themselves to be caught. Then they are sentenced to a few months' imprisonment.

In jail they take a rest before starting to spread "hope and cheer" propaganda among other prisoners.

This week the comb-out was launched. In every jail prisoners were made to file past hooded informers who identified the terrorists.

Of course, eventually such ruses are discovered, but in the meantime new ones have been thought out, and in this way the security forces can be harassed continuously.

The barricades may still be effective only in the minds of romantic nineteenth-century-style revolutionaries. But we are not convinced that guerilla tactics are yet an anachronism in the era of the airplane and THE bomb.

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Meanwhile in Nevada, where atomic bomb tests are at present being carried out, other experiments with smoke screens are accompanying these tests, the object of which is to ascertain whether it is possible by means of an artificial smoke blanket to afford some protection against the thermal effect of the bomb's blast. According to the *Sunday Times*' New York Correspondent, two kinds of smoke screen are used in these so-called "asbestos" tests. One is oil fog, of the kind released this morning from 120 standard Army smoke generators triggered by remote control. The second is carbon smoke, much like that often found over industrial areas. The smoke screen does not affect blast or pressure waves.

Perhaps, after all, the advocates of smokeless cities should think again. We may yet be told that besides the hot

ORWELL & ANARCHISM-4

IT will be seen from the quotations in our last issue that, for Orwell, the second world war began in a mood of resignation rather than of belligerency. At the time of the Munich crisis in September 1938 he was one of the signatories of a manifesto which declared:

For the democratic countries which resort to war the immediate result would be the destruction of the liberties of the people and the imposition of totalitarian régimes.

If war comes, it will be our duty to resist, and to organise such opposition as will hasten the end of that war, not by Treaties which represent the triumph of one imperialism over another, and which would only sow the seeds of future wars, but by the building of a new world order based on fellowship and justice.¹

A month later, in his *Political Reflections on the Crisis*, Orwell was declaring that the Labour Party should revert to 'an anti-militarist and anti-imperialist line'², and in July 1939 he wrote that, 'Nothing is likely to save us except the emergence within the next two years of a real mass party whose first pledges are to refuse war and to right imperial injustice'³. But by March 1940, he is declaring that to adopt pacifism is to help Hitler, yet 'let us not pretend that we go into this war with clean hands'⁴. He develops the familiar view of war as the lesser evil a few months later:

The future is with the fanatics, and those who squander their intellects in pointing out that one fanaticism is very nearly as bad as another, are merely making it a little easier for the more evil to triumph.⁵

Orwell was a very honest man, and he describes his feelings at this

time, without pretending that they are based on ponderous thought:

For several years the coming war was a nightmare to me, and at times I even made speeches and wrote pamphlets against it. But the night before the Russo-German pact was announced I dreamed that the war had started. It was one of those dreams which, whatever Freudian inner meaning they may have, do sometimes reveal to you the real state of your own feelings. It taught me two things, first, that I should be relieved when the long-dreaded war started, secondly, that I was patriotic at heart, would not sabotage or act against my own side, would support the war, would fight in it if possible. I came downstairs to find the newspaper announcing Ribbentrop's flight to Moscow. So war was coming, and the Government, even the Chamberlain Government, was assured of my loyalty. Needless to say this loyalty was and remains merely a gesture. . . .

If I had to defend my reasons for supporting the war, I believe I could do so. There is no real alternative between resisting Hitler and surrendering to him, and from a Socialist point of view I should say that it is better to resist; in any case I can see no argument for surrender that does not make nonsense of the Republican resistance in Spain, the Chinese resistance to Japan, etc., etc. But I don't pretend that this is the emotional basis of my actions. What I knew in my dream that night was that the long drilling in patriotism which the middle classes go through had done its work, and that once England was in a serious jam it would be impossible for me to sabotage. But let no one mistake the meaning of this. Patriotism has nothing to do with conservatism. It is devotion to something that is changing but is felt to be mystically the same, like the devotion of the ex-White Bolshevik to Russia. To be loyal both to Chamberlain's England and to the England of

to-morrow might seem an impossibility, if one did not know it to be an everyday phenomenon. Only revolution can save England, that has been obvious for years, but now the revolution has started, and it may proceed quite quickly if only we can keep Hitler out. Within two years, maybe a year, if only we can hang on, we shall see changes that will surprise the idiots who have no foresight. I dare say the London gutters will have to run with blood. All right, let them, if it is necessary. But when the Red militias are billeted in the Ritz I shall still feel that the England I was taught to love so long ago and for such different reasons is somehow persisting.⁶

It is probably not worth while, in this context, to go further into Orwell's attitude to the war, and his

attacks for which he afterwards apologised, on those who opposed it, but it will be seen that his position was very far from that of anarchists in this country. His revolution did not come, or rather, it came in the form of a partial redistribution of income, full employment, improved social services, the recognition of necessity in India, and some limited mitigation of imperialism elsewhere, but by this time, Orwell had, in Mr. V. S. Pritchett's phrase, 'suspecting something fishy in the site, broken camp and advanced alone to some tougher position in a bleaker place'.

If we turn to Orwell's own utterances about anarchism as a philosophy, we do not find much to justify the description of him as an

anarchist. He knew what the word meant, which is more than could be said of some of his contemporaries in the literary world. He had described his reactions to anarchism in Spain, and on his return from Spain was one of the sponsors of the English section (organised by Emma Goldman) of S.I.A. (International Anti-Fascist Solidarity), the relief organisation set up by the Spanish anarchists. He was a friend of several of the editors of this paper, and was active in the Freedom Press Defence Committee and later the Freedom Defence Committee. London readers may remember his appearances at the Committee's public meetings to demand an amnesty for war-time deserters and to protest against the internment of Spanish

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Non-Violence and the Revolution-2

IN the early stages of a revolution the main problem will consist of the defence of relatively small areas of country against overwhelming counter-revolutionary forces. This may seem a bit different from the conventional view of a mass rising all over a whole nation. But one has to remember that the British Isles themselves are a small area by modern standards. One hydrogen bomb would finish any revolution to all intents and purposes. Several ordinary atomic bombs, such as those used at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, would cripple the country, and make it impossible to continue any sort of effective warfare. Britain cannot defend herself militarily, despite all the complex radar devices. As a famous statesman said years ago, "The bomber will always get through." One bomber would be enough.

Therefore the principles of revolutionary non-violent defence are the same for an ordinary-sized nation as for a single village. The problem is two-fold. Defence against attack from outside, and defence against attack from within. We will deal with the last point first.

No revolution is supported by everybody. Therefore one must expect a fair amount of opposition, and even sabotage, within the revolutionary area, however small. One of the methods that may be used against counter-revolutionaries is the boycott. This is a weapon so powerful, and often so painful to its victims, that one almost hesitates to call it non-violent. Most children know what it is like to send someone, or be sent, "to Coventry". Nevertheless, when I regard the society around me, I do not feel too kindly disposed towards those who actively or passively support it. Unfortunately not all those who would oppose a revolution would be ardent supporters of tyranny. Many would be people who wanted a different sort of revolution. Those who refused to cooperate in the revolutionary struggle, but did not actively interfere should be allowed to go their own way. As a matter of fact this is the basic principle. If the people wish to make an anarchist revolution that is their affair. Those who do not wish to join in must take the responsibility for their own lives, set up and run their own authoritarian society, but must not expect the revolutionaries to help them, or even want to have much to do with them.

In the case of the active saboteurs the

only thing to do is to have nothing to do with them. The boycott must be complete. This has been practised against occupying armies in the past, and could be applied against counter-revolutionary armies invading the revolutionary area from outside, as well as against counter-revolutionaries within. People have served the soldiers in the shops, submitted to having them billeted in their homes, and provided them with all the food and services necessary. But they have not spoken to them, or treated them as if they were anything more than ingenious robots, who had to be nourished and looked after, but who need not be regarded as human beings.

In this case the people suffering the occupation would fear the consequences of refusing to serve the soldiers, and it is to avoid punishment by the occupying authority as far as possible that this method of resistance was devised. But against civilians living in the revolutionary areas the methods could be much harsher, according to circumstances. If enemies of the revolution could not even get their food served to them in shops and restaurants they would ultimately have to leave the district. If this seems harsh one has to realise that "enemies of the revolution" may cover not just philosophical opponents, but those who wreck machines, blow up bridges, or start Fascist militias.

It may of course be urged that the revolution will have many secret opponents, who will act under some sort of cover. However, if the revolutionary organisation is sufficiently decentralised, and broken down into small units, there will be little chance of secrecy. Indeed, one of the arguments against life in small communities, the country village for example, is precisely that there is so little privacy and secrecy.

If a person is found to have committed violent and destructive acts against the revolution, involving damage to communal or personal property, or even loss of life (though in a non-violent struggle this is not so likely), he may well find himself not too gently grabbed and hustled out of the neighbourhood. He may even be kicked out of several communities till he finds some district sympathetic to his point of view. However he is not likely to find himself becoming a heroic martyr, as he would if he was beaten up, tortured, or killed.

ARTHUR W. ULOTH.

THEATRE NOTES

THE Arts Theatre Club at present offers two short plays divided by one interval only. Paradoxically the nature of the entertainment is such that the evening appears to be unusually long, and after the interval decidedly tedious.

The curtain-raiser is "The Lesson" by Eugene Ionesco. Mr. Ionesco seems to have dug into his mind for some significant nonsense, but without enough vision or an *idée fixe* to guide him, he has potboiled it into an unsavoury melange which turns out to be a sort of Freudian Grand Guignol. It is meant to be phantasmagoric but lacks the essence of a nightmare by failing to

touch the chords in the breast of the dreamer or wishful hater. The author defies us to take him seriously on any plane, conscious or subconscious, and the piece is never funny enough on either of these levels. And while it keeps one feverishly trying to nail down a thread of direction in its crazy maze, it is rather a nerve-racking and barren experience, though decidedly more stimulating than the play which follows it. It fails both as a piece of nonsense and as a piece of theatre because its author adds no conviction to his courage. It offers no release of tension and leaves at the end a decidedly unpleasant flavour. It is very well acted by Stephen Murray and Helena Hughes.

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"Sacrifice To The Wind" by André Obey, may aptly be called long-winded! It deals with the sacrifice by Agamemnon of his daughter Iphigenia to placate the Gods and change the wind of battle.

I have never felt less interested in any Greek characters than in these, though they represent besides Iphigenia and Agamemnon the worthy persons of Menelaus, Ulysses and Clytemnestra. (Though it is a very long time before we realize from the dialogue whom each character is supposed to represent.) The play is nothing more than a plea by Menelaus and Ulysses to Agamemnon to give up his inhuman ambition and superstitious fanaticism, for the value of a human life is worth more than the dead fruits of victory. Unfortunately Agamemnon hardly deigns to counter their arguments and the play becomes a tediously static one-sided affair which goes round and round the same point endlessly.

The English version by John Whiting is too deliberately coined and conspicuous, and I feel cannot be helpful to the author. Surely the essence of a good translation is its unobtrusiveness. Mr. Whiting, in his attempt to colloquialize, has lost any of the poetry the original may have had.

All this is least noticeable when Ulysses is speaking. He is the most acceptable character, and, as played by Rupert Davies has found a natural way of putting his lines across. The servant, played by Douglas Ives, is also easy to listen to and accept. The rest are mere Greek statues pompously posturing and declaiming, but never coming to life. Neither does the tension of war ever permeate the tent. There is a dead soldier whom the Gods have apparently accepted as a sacrifice, so that the death of Iphigenia becomes doubly useless. He tries, in vain, to get into contact with the fourth wall of the living, but this device fails dramatically because of its tedious repetition.

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Winifred Smith

IT was with very deep regret that we learned early last week of the sudden death of our dear friend Mrs. Smith. During the 14 years we had known her, she gave us her warm friendship; she stimulated us in our work by her own enthusiasm and tireless energy; and many have been the occasions when her generosity came to the aid of comrades in need (particularly during the war years), as well as to the many initiatives with which we have been connected.

Winifred Smith was one of those rare people whose curiosity for new ideas was stimulated and sparked off at an age when most of her contemporaries were sadly resigning themselves to the inconveniences of old age and mental stagnation. It was through Rationalist literature and such journals as *The Freethinker* (whose editors Chapman Cohen and Mrs. Cohen were to become good friends of hers), that her interest in anarchism was aroused and the first contact with *Freedom Press* made.

★

AS evidence of her tireless energy she undertook two years ago, when she was 80, the task of writing her memoirs. It represented a formidable task, to cast back her mind over so many

years to her childhood, and to use a medium which until then had served only for letter-writing. But she tackled it almost with gay abandon yet giving to it much thought and feeling. To her recollections of her home and childhood in New Zealand she applied her ideas on rational education, and it is clear that her purpose in writing these memoirs was to convey to others how much damage can be caused to the young by instilling in them obedience through fear of punishment whether from the family or from some unseen Deity. Children, she passionately believed, should be taught from an early age all about evolution, about the origins of man and of this planet. There was no story more fascinating she thought, and at her house in Portishead she was never without an audience of children eagerly listening to her telling them, in her inimitable way, of the history of one of the many geological specimens she had collected specially for such occasions.

Winifred Smith believed that knowledge was the key to man's emancipation, and to this end she devoted these last fifteen or twenty active years of her life seeking to transmit to others that discovery which had transformed and rejuvenated her mind and body. R.

WATCH Mr. FOOT, Mr. BEVAN & CO.!

IF the present struggles within the Labour Party represented an open revolt against the parliamentary system in general, and the quasi-dictatorial powers of the Labour Party-Trade Union executives in particular, we could find ourselves working up some enthusiasm over the events on the home front during the past fortnight. But in fact the Attlee-Bevan battle is being fought within the prison walls of parliamentary democracy. Even Sir Richard Acland, who at first sight appeared to have escaped into the outside world while the party warders were fighting among themselves, has now expressed his intention of giving himself up if the electors of Gravesend will have him in his new disguise; thus showing that his experiences as a Liberal, Common Wealth, and Labour, Member of Parliament have not taught him very much as to the fundamental nature of politics!

"Are we making Parliament a Sham?" asks Michael Foot in last week's issue of *Tribune*, and, using similar arguments to the ones advanced in recent issues of *FREEDOM*, demonstrates in a most convincing way that this is the case. He does not pause however, to question parliamentary democracy, but seeks a scapegoat in the Labour Party Standing Orders. Mr. Foot in spite of his experience does not question the principle of government; he even wishes us to believe that "the people can participate in the government" if only they are "put in a position to judge the conduct of their representatives". All this is necessary is that "the proceedings of parliament should be conducted in the open, that both the debates there and the voting lists should be made public".

Mr. Foot quotes extensively and with approval from the writings of Edmund Burke, and his choice reveals that the only revolutions Mr. Foot will join are palace revolutions; not for him the street!

Mr. Foot believes in "public men"—however much Mr. Bevan may deplore, in another column of *Tribune* that mankind should "hold its breath on the edge of the precipice until the British Prime Minister recovered from his partial paralysis"—and what is more, for him "parliament without parties to-day would become a rabble incapable of accomplishing anything". (Can one imagine how horrified Mr. Foot would be at the suggestion that the destinies of the country should be in the hands of the people, all 50 million of them?) He quotes Burke in defence of party politics: "When bad men combine the good must associate; else they will fall one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle". A very good quotation which anarchists could quote as well as Mr. Foot, the only difference being that he assumes—against all the evidence—that there are good politicians, whereas the anarchist contends that the people can only defend themselves where they are strongest, not through "representatives" in Parliament but at their places of work, in their affinity groups, and in larger groupings where organisation is spontaneous and controlled from below.

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MR. FOOT also quotes Burke in defence of "action" at all costs:

"All virtue which is impracticable, said Burke, is spurious. We should rather run the risk of falling into faults in a course which leads us to act with effect and energy than to loiter out our days without blame and without use. 'Public life is a situation of power and energy; he trespasses against his duty who sleeps upon his watch, as well as he who goes

TO men who are fairly uninhibited, the idea of devoting one's life to dominating others is rightly considered a vicious and demented purpose. Politicians, as with other kinds of ambitious position-seekers, have been the subject of numerous studies in the field of psychopathology. More powerful or less powerful, Hitler, Napoleon, Peron or 'little-man' Strydom, certain characteristics are common to all, and to the societies they dominated.

In the most personal sense, moods, irrationalities and a variety of com-

plexes, have frequently taken the place of reason, intelligence and objectivism. The driving force of leaders and supposedly great men is always weakness or disease well disguised. In a more general sense, however, their strength and position is relative to the will to submit of those they dominate. In South Africa, for example, without in any way being guilty directly, the ignorance, inertia and fear of the non-European is a primary reason for the rise of men like Strydom. The relationship of the will to surrender of the masses of men like Mussolini and Hitler, to the political machines of communism and neo-fascism, is too well-known to need repeating. The power of the State or a Leader is at once the measure of the mass will to surrender.

From Caesar to Strydom, from Cleopatra to Ava Gardner, the mystique of the build-up has helped to create an impressive myth. Without the bluff of ornate churches and the tradition of the verity of the Bible, Christians would be left to find religion for themselves. Without crowns, titles, exclusiveness and wealth, royalty would have to maintain itself on its true merits. In the case of Strydom, it is known that he had in his youth ambitions to be an actor. Although his ability did not take him far, it has served him well in his political career.

He is known to silence opposition by the intensity of the stare of cold blue eyes. Movements of arms and head, giving force to rhetoric, were perfected in front of a mirror. Like Mussolini, he makes the most of what is commonly referred to as a strong jaw. He has accepted from communists the technique of slogans and their hammer-effect.

The build-up goes further, however. While the number of lions in the forests of Africa is falling away, the title of Lion is becoming commoner. Strydom shares this honour with the Lion of Judah, the late Lion of Neghelli, the British lion at Simonstown and the Cardiff wrestler Abdullah, the Lion of

over to the enemy'. This, as I have said, is the classical defence of the party system. . . . Certainly I dissent from not one word of it".

Not the wilderness for Mr. Foot and his friends! They seek the limelight and power, and time is pressing for these middle-aged politicians thwarted by old men, and threatened by a bunch of ambitious, up-and-coming yes-men. Their only hope lies in the exploitation of the goodwill and aspirations of the rank and file of the Labour Party and the Trades Union movement since the Party and Union machines are in the Attlee bag. But let no working man or liberally-minded person be misled into confusing means with ends. For the Bevanites the goal is political power, and if, and when, they occupy the government benches they will conduct affairs in much the same way as their predecessors. Their means—their tactic, is cunning and dangerous, for they appeal to, and pose as, the real champions of the common man. Yet when they should dare to voice their criticisms they will treat them as the "rabble" just as Mr. Foot has suggested Parliament would become once Members voted according to the dictates of their conscience (or according to the wishes of their constituents?)

No action is possible without running the risk of making mistakes. Agreed. But in the first place action which is in contradiction with one's fundamental principles is doomed in advance to failure and disaster. Secondly, it is one thing to be responsible for the consequences of one's actions, quite another to have to shoulder the consequences of the actions of others in which one has had no voice. This is the tragedy of the political systems of to-day.

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THE issue of *Tribune* before us, is essential reading for those who may harbour illusions or pin their hopes on the Bevanite group or on parliamentary democracy. They have nothing to offer which any other group of politicians could not offer equally well. Their hopes of peace rest on the meeting table around which the Big Three will thrash out their differences. Bevan's article is an attack on the vanity of Churchill on the one hand and a call for a meeting of Churchill, and the leaders of the great powers on the other! He does not look to the workers of the world to end the tension. On the contrary he is fostering the view that "the ordinary men and women throughout the world are looking to their statesmen for courage and sagacity—and endless patience" (our italics) . . . And if only they had the good sense to put Nye Bevan in power! And Michael Foot in a straight-from-the-shoulder attack on parliamentary democracy, which he confesses is both a "sham" and a "farce", has nevertheless neither offered any suggestions as to how the voice of the people might, under a Foot-Bevan régime, play a dominating rôle in their deliberations, nor has he decided to resign from that talking shop of which he surely despairs when he asks:

"What is the use of judgment which can affect no votes, thought which can influence no one else's thinking, a speech which may satisfy a man's conscience or ego but which cannot affect the action of his audience?"

Poor, twisted, Mr. Foot! Is he really so naive or does he think his readers that stupid?

SOUTH AFRICA

Notes on Men Like Strydom

Libya. In the case of Strydom, he began as the Lion of Waterburg, his first constituency, became the Lion of the Transvaal as his political status improved. As Prime Minister of South Africa, he is now, of course, The Lion of Africa.

The terrible truth has been noticed before that war and oppression can come from the caprices and weaknesses of single individuals. The shortness of Musso and Napoleon, Hitler's First War military rank, the lameness of Goebbels, are all significant factors. Toothache, frustrated love, tight collars and a look in the mirror must also have played their part. Even during the last few weeks we have learnt that a unique opportunity to lessen East-West tension was called off because Winston Churchill became ill. Although a parliamentary democracy, Britain was apparently rendered impotent by the sickness of the great man.

★
THREE particular failures in Strydom's life have contributed to his obsession for power and the bringing nearer of the police state in South Africa. His first failure was as an ostrich-farmer; he had just become established when the First World War caused the collapse of this venture. The second was his marriage to an actress, Marda Vanne, but she divorced him after a very short time. Among Afrikaner Nationalists this is a particular disgrace. The third failure was his attempt to become an actor. Frustrated by events, Strydom then withdrew to the less spectacular occupation of a law practice. His ability to express himself forcefully, however, soon led him to politics, that other field of oratory, persuasion and chicanery. Purposely feeding the prejudices and traditional hatreds of uneducated farmers and poor-whites, he achieved immediate and remarkable success. The acclamation his eloquence received no doubt proved flattering to the unsuccessful actor.

The problems of politicians and auth-

oritarians vary in different countries. The extremes to which they go are occasionally related to the traditions and lawful practices of their countries—but always related to the ends they can safely achieve and what they believe to be the absolute limits of their power. In the case of Strydom, he has stated his own ultimate position as follows: There is no halfway house between domination and equality. Is there anyone in South Africa stupid enough to believe that if there was equality the white people would be able to maintain themselves in South Africa?

Having stated the problem in this unequivocal manner, he had to decide the ultimate position to which he can safely advance. To destroy physically the non-European communities would be a simple and permanent solution. His power does not go that far, however, and there is the real truth that South Africa could no more function as a modern state without its non-European labour force than Britain could without its working class. The most practical solution, then, is limited apartheid. If the non-European can be made to submit to this, they will be socially and geographically separated from the modern state they have helped to create and will remain a labour force to be drawn on as the situation requires. Complete apartheid is not, of course, a practical reality.

Strydom and his supporters have been the object of much hostility and criticism by more moderate groups in his own country and in Britain. Yet if his purpose could be achieved without social unrest and economic chaos, it is certain that many of these hostile groups would be relieved. The moral principles of this purpose being of no importance, it would then be left to the various bourgeois-capitalist opposition parties to fight elections on more promising issues. As it is, Strydom has correctly estimated 'white' opinion in South Africa and is certain to achieve increasing success for his policies. Instead of the inefficiency, vacillation and hypocrisy of groups like the United Party, he shows a clear-sighted and determined resolution. If the non-European is to be an oppressed labour force, let it be done efficiently and "sensibly".

C.H.

Conformity by Persuasion

The principle: 'He who moulds public sentiment goes deeper than he enacts statutes or pronounces decisions'.

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

The technique: 'In the long run basic results in influencing public opinion will be achieved only by the man who is able to reduce problems to the simplest terms and who has the courage to keep forever repeating them in this simplified form despite the objections of the intellectuals'.

—from Goebels' diary.

PERSUASION is the most effective technique used by democratic governments to maintain the status quo. Democratic government, as it exists today, is not government of the people, for the people, by the people; it is government of the people by an élite. That élite may be composed of politicians or of bureaucrats, or of both, and their actions will be influenced by many factors, but not sufficiently to transfer the real power to other hands. Their power is not absolute, because, except in the last resort, they are not entirely dependent on force for maintaining their position. The élite depends on the power to persuade the people that it is governing itself. This is the great myth of democracy which at all costs has to be propagated as truth; it is the first principle of all liberal government.

The spread of education and the improvement in methods of communicating ideas have made people more aware of how they are governed. They can no longer be told what to do, they must be persuaded—or, more accurately, they must appear to be persuaded. Election campaigns are conducted on the assumption that one candidate will convince a majority of the electors that the party or policy for which he stands will provide a form of government which will look after the electors' interests. But, of course, in fact it makes little difference which candidate is elected—the important point is that the elector should be persuaded that he is making a decision on how he shall be governed.

This myth that individuals can influence governments by what is known as 'public opinion' is unwittingly exposed by Ian Harvey in his apologia for the advertising 'industry', *The Technique of Persuasion* (Falcon Press).

"In order to form public opinion it is necessary to plant the seed of opinion unobtrusively in the right place at the right time. The important thing is that irrespective of the origin of the seed the

fruit must appear to be the fruit of the individual concerned'.

and
'The technique of persuasion is the technique of persuading free people to conform to a pattern of life.'

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ADVERTISING is illogical, immoral, and anti-social; but it succeeds. Advertising can create the 'character' of a product to such an extent that, in spite of the Advertising Association's claim that 'advertised goods are good', it is immaterial whether or not the product does what is claimed for it. Again in the words of Mr. Harvey (*op. cit.*)

'Advertising gives the product prestige and simultaneously it establishes the confidence of the public in that product which transforms the desire to buy it once into a habit.'

Governments can learn much from the specialist in the art of persuasion, the advertising 'industry'. The objectives of both government and advertiser are the same, that is to persuade people to conform to a particular pattern. In the case of governments to the acceptance of authority, and in the case of advertisers to the habit of buying particular products.

Emotions have to be moulded so that a particular reaction is obtained. Advertisements are designed to play on the desires and anxieties of ordinary people: the appetites for food and drink and sex; the fear of being looked down on. The natural instincts are perverted into secondary, artificial drives—the instinct of self-preservation is perverted into ambition and its corollary 'keeping up with the Jones's'. Both are emphasised as virtues and they are frequently appealed to by advertisers. The type of advertisement known as 'gracious living' is the most typical of this class. It can be used to sell almost anything. For instance:

'An advertisement in the *New Yorker* of January 27, 1951, was headed "Introduction to Social Poise". The text began: "Give your children the right roots to grow on. Let them absorb the grace of tasteful, relaxed living from their earliest experiences and memories". The product advertised would "help to give growing children social poise . . . free from self-consciousness, awkwardness and unnatural restraint". Prolonged guessing on the reader's part would probably fail to identify the product: a brand of dinner-table candle.—from E. S. Turner's *The Shocking History of Advertising* (Michael Joseph).

If it is quite obvious that you are not going to be in a position to enjoy the fruits of gracious living then the advertiser adopts a different technique. Here is an extract from an American publication *Modern Radio Advertising* by C. H. Wolfe (Funk & Wagnalls).

'Lower socio-economic group, *Stella Dallas* [a radio serial] has as its heroine a lower-middle-class woman who champions virtues that have nothing to do with wealth. The rich appear only as blind souls who must be guided back to righteousness by the direct, unsophisticated Stella.'

One wonders just what virtues they are that have something 'to do with wealth'.

Appealing to fantasies of wealth or of moral goodness, fantasies that compensate for the lack of colour and vital interests in people's lives, is the most common method used by advertisers. This approach includes the appeals made to ambition and the desire for 'gracious living'. Another technique, which has not been so widely used in this country as in the U.S.A. is that of playing on the fear of physical hurt or of a personal catastrophe. A particularly unpleasant example is an advertisement now being published by a firm making fireproof plasterboard. It shows a very realistic photograph depicting a frightened man and woman watching their house burning in which their children are trapped. The moral being that it wouldn't have happened if they had used the right plasterboard. The *Advertisers' Weekly* (24/2/55), discussing this advertisement with approval, said:

'Is it, however sound advertising psychology to play fear in adverts? . . . Well, the modern school of evangelism believes that the conscience of the people needs a more direct awareness of the frailties of human flesh—and it gets results; perhaps advertising, too, can occasionally be more direct and less squeamish'. That is, anything that gets results is justifiable.

Governments are, of course, old hands at persuading people to conform by playing on their fears. Its most obvious use is in war propaganda, which aims to rouse up hatred by inducing fear of the barbarism and cruelty of the enemy and then canalises it into the 'respectable' desire to fight in the armed services. First arouse the emotion and then put it to work for you, at the same time implying that it is spontaneous and not due to suggestion from without. This is the essence of the technique used by both advertisers and rulers.

M.G.W.

