

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"All voting is a sort of gaming
... a playing with right and
wrong... Even voting for the
right is doing nothing for it."
—THOREAU,
(Duty of Civil Disobedience).

NOT THE NON-VOTERS BUT THE GOVERNMENTS ARE

Traitors to the Human Race

MUCH of the persuasion technique adopted for the forthcoming election campaigns is directed at getting us to use our vote at all costs. Failure to do so, we are told, opens the door to totalitarianism or, as that frustrated prophet of the Labour Party dramatically put it to a Lanarkshire audience, those who fail to exercise their vote are 'traitors to the human race'.

From the point of view of the politician busily touting for votes in an endeavour to retain his power, these are anxious times, and when the electorate show signs of apathy and boredom there is further reason for uneasiness. But let the politicians be consoled, because although there are apparent signs of disinterestness we have no doubt when polling day comes millions of reflexes will respond to the call even if the party differences are not very clearly defined.

Anarchists, with their traditional intransigence, are not persuaded by the politicians' promises and pleas, and we are finding many people these days who, while unable to accept the anarchist alternative, are nevertheless beginning to feel uneasy about the behaviour of Governments. Unfortunately, some of those from whom we might expect a reasonable alternative seem to be singularly lacking in vision and are more concerned with the day-to-day frustrations of Government than with real consideration for the wider concepts of a new society as envisaged by the anarchists.

As an example of this let us take a look at the first three contributions to the *News Chronicle* pre-election series, "Off The Party Line".

J. B. Priestley, who begins the series makes the important point that voters have little chance to register an opinion about major issues, such as, Britain joining the atomic race and the manufacture of the H-bomb. Thus underlining the anarchist view that on the important issues the people are never really consulted. But, can we really take Priestley's plea for the middle-class seriously as one reason why we should oppose both parties? He writes that the Labour and Conservatives "regard with cool unconcern the struggle of the middle classes to survive". Even if this were true, which in our view it is not, the survival of the middle class as a class

will effect little change in our society and certainly will not alter the face of Government. The middle classes are strong supporters of Government and as long as they exist they will keep the system going. We are therefore, out of sympathy with the unnecessary concern for the "poor" middle classes.

We are also opposed to the reasons put forward by Malcolm Muggeridge on why Mr. Butler at the Treasury would be more conducive to economic stability than Mr. Gaitskell. He writes:—

"The preference for Mr. Butler is based on the simple fact that, whereas his supporters merely wish to keep their money, Mr. Gaitskell would have the much more difficult task of coping with those who passionately long to acquire someone else's."

National security however, would be better in the hands of Labour. For reasons which escape us Muggeridge claims that:—

"Ernest Bevin would scarcely, like Sir Anthony Eden, have handed over the Sudan to the Egyptians, or have been able to persuade himself that a total surrender in Indo-China was a diplomatic triumph. Nor, in the light of his own experience of dealing with Communists, would he have seen fit to recommend peaceful co-existence (a cynical tactic adumbrated by Lenin thirty years ago) as the hope of mankind."

Muggeridge has an excellent critical approach to the limitations of elected Members, and points to the difference between election manifestos and the "subsequent conduct of affairs if they are returned to power". But, where we take issue with people like this is in the narrowness of their alternatives. There is, in our opinion, little point in opposing any Government for the wrong reasons, and we feel that

there is something basically unsound about this niggardly view that we don't like Government because it robs us of our money. If they questioned the purpose for which the money was used; if they demanded, for example, that it was used for additional social services instead of weapons of destruction then we could feel more sympathetic to their pleas.

Marghanita Laski, the third contributor, perhaps gets nearer to some concept of a different society. She has however, an idealistic conception of Government when she writes that:—

"Good, happy people are the proper end-product of Government, and Government has no other function but to make this possible."

If the prime function of Government is to make us all jolly and contented then it has obviously failed. There is little need for us to enumerate the list of crimes against human life which Governments have encouraged and instigated—they are the traitors to the human race, not the non-voters as Bevan would have us believe.

The function of Government is to rule with authority and when the ballot box fails to produce the right response the truncheon and jackboots will hastily swing into action.

We would appeal to those who already understand the nature of Government but continue to support it because they see no alternative, to support the anarchist programme in the forthcoming election. No Government, no war, no capitalism, better ingredients we suggest for enriching our lives than the Government alternative of the H-bomb.

R.M.

Who is the Cheapjack?

THERE is no more sickening sight than that of a person high up in the income brackets condemning from his comfortable position the efforts of those below him to improve their conditions.

Especially when he is a trade union official, whose very job it is to improve the conditions of those low in the income scale. Especially when we remember that his own high income comes out of the pockets of those with low incomes.

Mr. Tom O'Brien is clearly a very clever man. Whereas most of us find it takes all our time to do one job properly, Mr. O'Brien can do three. He is (or was?) a Member of Parliament; he is and will be for some time yet, general Secretary of the National Association of Theatrical & Kine Employees, and he is this year's vice-chairman of the Trades Union Congress.

His ability to lead this ever-so-useful existence is undoubtedly due to the fact that God is on his side—or he is on God's side. For Mr. O'Brien also finds time to be a practising Catholic. As a Labour M.P. he is presumably a professing Socialist—of sorts—and we have to leave it to his conscience, if any, to reconcile the two, for the Pope has, before now, made it quite clear that you can't be both.

(Incidentally we wish he would make it equally clear to his flock that you can't be a Catholic and an Anarchist

either. Some of the Pope's children embarrass us by being unsure on the correct line).

With all this, you may not think that Mr. Tom O'Brien would have any spare time. But he has, and last week off he went as a fraternal delegate to the annual luncheon of the National Federation of Professional Workers.

There he spoke very fraternally indeed, and was fulsome in his praise of the patient professional classes, who, he said, had shown an example to the trade union movement, unlike those wicked unofficial strikers who were making things so difficult for respectable hard-working trade union M.P.'s.

Value of Negotiation

The unofficial strikers, according to Mr. O'Brien, are simply asking to be repressed by law. His speech is of considerable interest and deserves extensive quotation. He said, for instance, to the professional workers:

"The part you play often goes unpraised and unsung. The very nature of your responsibilities to industry imposes upon you a commendable self-discipline to resist the temptation to remedy your grievances by rash and ill-considered strike action.

Your patient determination to seek redress for your many difficulties by the intelligent use of established negotiating and conciliation machinery which the pioneers of our movement laboriously created, is a challenge to many sections of our industrial workers."

This, at the beginning of his speech, would give us to indicate that the professional classes are enjoying a prosperity they had never known before; that in fact, their patient use of the super-conciliation machinery was paying off. Instead we find Mr. O'Brien later saying that

"the middle class was in a very bad plight indeed. They had to meet de-

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You could Afford to Retire on His Pension

Mr. Benjamin F. Fairless, son of an immigrant Welsh miner retired last week, on reaching the age limit of sixty-five, from his post as head of the \$2,350 million (£800 million) United States Steel Corporation.

As chairman and chief executive officer of the nation's largest steel making organisation (output 39 million tons a year) Mr. Fairless received a salary of \$259,000 (£87,000) a year. His pension will be a mere \$70,000 (£24,000) a year for life.

What Value is Nationalisation?

THE strike in the Yorkshire coalfields, still continuing at the time of writing, has spotlighted the nationalisation of the mines just at a time when the Labour Party can least desire it.

For the party is still, though to a limited extent, pinning its faith on nationalisation; not so much, true, on the moral arguments for public ownership, but on arguments of efficiency and the 'nation's needs'.

The Party Manifesto says: "Public ownership of the steel and road haulage industries is essential to the nation's needs and we shall re-nationalise them. We shall bring sections of the chemical and machine tools industries into public ownership. Where necessary we shall start new public enterprises."

Governments and political parties striving for government, always claim to be the arbiters of the 'nation's needs'. They always know better than we what is good for us—what we need as against what we would like to have.

Is it impertinent, however, to ask which section of the nation it is which benefits from nationalisation? It is hardly the consumers, since they have to pay more for their goods, with less choice under one controlling body. It is not the workers in the industry, as the reasons behind strikes show. It can only be the State, which, as the stabilising factor in a capitalist economy, must come more and more into control of all facets of communal activity.

Nationalisation, then, appears of value to those who identify their in-

terests with the State. And it has been the tragedy of the working class movement that it has done that, through the application of Marxist theory, however watered down to suit the needs of reformism, that the State can be used as the means of emancipation.

It is true that through State control of industry a greater volume of capital development can be assured where dividends are not likely to be very high. Unlike most private investors, the State can wait for its profits and is therefore in a position to invest huge sums of capital to modernise and stabilise essential industries.

The staggering sums of money which can be subscribed on share issues by private investors, however, show that cash can always be found—if the return is going to be good and quick. The State has our money to play with—and can always get more out of us should the need arise.

But what effect has this upon the workers in the industry nationalised? In mining, it certainly does not seem to have led to greater satisfaction for miners.

The South Wales Miners' Executive, in its annual report says:

"The attitude of the men toward the Coal Board has changed, largely due to experience of colliery disputes where the lodge committee has failed in the first stage of conciliation. The men have found they can secure redress of just grievances in many instances by taking, or threatening to take, action.

"Compared with 1947 the number of stoppages has increased by approximately 100 per cent., and the number of restrictions by approximately 400 per cent."

"A serious deterioration has taken place. The abounding good will evinced in the early days of nationalisation has been completely lost in a number of areas.

"This loss of confidence in the Coal Board is one of the intangibles. The divisional Coal Board and the union have reached many points of agreement as to what is wrong, but concrete remedies still elude us."

We hope readers will forgive us if we say 'We told you so'. For Anarchists have always maintained that for workers to change their bosses from private exploiters to the State still leaves them in exactly the same position. And the only concrete remedy for that situation is bound to elude authority—for it means getting rid of authority.

The miners were full of good will for nationalisation in 1947 because they sincerely thought, having been taught by Socialists, that State control was a step towards workers' control. Nationalisation was the 'transition stage' on the economic field and was to prepare miners for the task of taking over and running the mines themselves.

But, alas, the Coal Board will not wither away any more than the State. The miners jumped from the frying pan into the fire and very soon found themselves more restricted, regulated and bossed than before.

Issues in the Yorkshire Strike

THE issue in the strike in the Yorkshire coalfield, where 90,000 men at 56 pits stopped work, is over a simple matter of principle.

The men want to know what they are earning—while they are earning it, not when they get their pay-packet.

The strikers are demanding revision of the present fillers' price lists and the stabilisation of allowances for different kinds of work underground.

Some men found their pay dropped 9s. a shift in one week following alterations to these allowances by the management without prior warning to the men, and certainly without any consultation.

There has been an average of 15 minor stoppages a week since the beginning of the year on price-list issues. At Markham Main colliery 2,600 men walked out on one issue and took their case to the Doncaster Miners' Panel, representing men from 13 pits. The Panel gave an ultimatum to the Coal Board: 'Open talks on price-list revision in seven days or we strike'.

The Board took no action, so there was a strike. And now, of course, as usual the cry is—"Go back to work and then we'll talk". The leaders of the National Union of Mineworkers are demanding this of the miners, saying that otherwise negotiations are carried on under duress.

The miners are under duress all the time. Why must it always be the workers who start their work first? Negotiation is the work of the paid, professional negotiators. Let them go to work first—then the miners can go back if satisfied.

Nationalisation is a step towards totalitarianism. Socialisation, the means of life being operated for society, not for the State, can only be brought about by libertarian methods. The miners must organise themselves for the taking over of the mines, to establish direct workers' control. No authority will do that for them.

'Australian Snake Pit'

CANBERRA, MAY 8.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Menzies, to-day announced an immediate grant of £A10 millions for the improvement of Australian mental institutions described in a report just published as "appalling". He added that the grant was conditional on the states finding the requisite balance of £A20 millions.

The report, prepared for the Government by Mr. Stoller, a Melbourne psychiatrist, made "unpleasant reading". Mr. Menzies declared. It spoke of mental hospitals hopelessly overcrowded, poorly maintained, and short-staffed. There was "an appalling lack of proper treatment and equipment" while patients existed in some hospitals under "filthy conditions." It also stated:

"A third of all admissions to mental institutions were people over 60, obviously sent in to die, as 40 per cent. of the deaths occurred within a year of admission."

According to the report, some wards were so crammed with floor beds that patients had to crawl over each other to get to lavatories at night.—*Reuter*.

THE LIMITS OF THE EARTH

by Fairfield Osborn, Faber & Faber.

"For now, as we look, we can see the limits of the earth."

MODERN man suffers from an outlook on the world that may be said, at least as far as Europeans and Americans are concerned, to date back to the sixteenth century. It might justly be called "the Eldorado mentality". During the sixteenth century new lands were discovered, and new sea routes to lands already known. The globe began to be opened up. After the relatively static and home-staying Middle Ages this sudden opening had an intoxicating effect on men's minds. They believed that their world was boundless. Beyond the rim of the ocean lay rich lands and strange civilisations ready to be plundered.

To them, and since mental habits tend to persist, to us also, the Earth is huge. What happens in one part can have nothing to do with what happens in another, and no matter what happens there will always be new frontiers to develop. Unfortunately this view is quite wrong. The world, even in ancient times, was and is one country, a small island in space if you like. The terrifically long voyages made by Egyptians, Carthaginians, Vikings and Polynesians, in their primitive craft, show us that even in the past this great truth held good. In modern times, with greatly improved means of transport, it is even truer, if such a thing be possible, and humanity is even more one family than it was before. We have got to get used to the idea of the smallness of our planet.

Fairfield Osborn discusses the now fashionable theme of the shrinking resources and growing population of our earth. He makes no prophecies of doom, but he does show that a great deal of optimism shown by "experts", on the subject of increasing our food supply to keep pace with population, is exaggerated.

He makes a brief survey of the various civilisations of antiquity that have collapsed owing to bad agricultural methods, usually inspired by commercial practices, or by religious fanaticism in some instances, which ruined the land, and in

some cases turned into a desert.

"At that period, however, with which we are dealing, when Attica was still intact, what are now her mountains were lofty soil-clad hills; her so-called shingle plains of the present day were full of rich soil; and her mountains were heavily afforested—a fact of which there are still visible traces. There are mountains in Attica which can now keep nothing but bees, but which were clothed, not so very long ago, with fine trees producing timber suitable for roofing the largest buildings; and roofs hewn from this timber are still in existence. There were also many lofty cultivated trees, while the country produced boundless pasture for cattle. The annual supply of rainfall was not lost, as it is at present, through being allowed to flow over the denuded surface into the sea, but was received by the country, in all its abundance, into her bosom where she stored it in her imperious potter's earth, and so was able to discharge the drainage of the heights into the hollows in the form of springs and rivers with an abundant volume and a wide territorial distribution. The shrines that survive to the present day on the sites of extinct water supplies are evidence for the correctness of my present hypothesis." This statement was not written by a modern observer. It was written by Plato and he wrote it over two thousand years ago.

Before Greece it had been the civilisations of the Middle East, and after her it was the turn of Italy, ruined by Roman rapacity and militarism, and Spain, destroyed by the triumph of Catholic bigotry and the sheep-farming interests. And now the same process is moving on all over the world, while at the same time, thanks to a variety of factors, the population figures are shooting up. It was not so many years ago that people were talking in gloomy tones about race-suicide, because highly civilised people would not reproduce themselves. France was usually chosen as a "horrid example". But the truth seems to lie exactly the opposite way, and the danger of too many mouths to feed is greater than the danger of too few.

The author studies the situation in Europe, which is not brilliant. Refer-

BOOK REVIEW

The Horizons Close In

ring to France he says, "... France, where the bogey of race suicide and under population has existed for many years, is to-day considerably better off as to essential resources than many of its neighbours and is able to produce the bulk of the food required by its forty-two million inhabitants." So there is something to be said for committing suicide in comfort at least! But the situation is not so good everywhere else.

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WE then pass on to the various countries, Australia, South Africa, and Brazil, which are usually hailed as the lands of the future as regards food-production. The situation however is that these parts of the world are already beginning to feel the pinch. Both in Australia and the Argentine the accent has been on industrialism to the exclusion of agriculture. What a pity we cannot eat motor cars and television sets. But it looks as if they may eat us.

Speaking of the U.S.A. the author gives statistics concerning the manufacture of automobiles. To make a million of them requires 89,000,000 pounds of cotton, 500,000 bushels of maize, 2,400,000 pounds of linseed oil, 2,500,000 gallons of molasses, 3,200,000 pounds of wool, 1,500,000 square feet of leather, 20,000 hogs (for lard for lubricants, etc.),

350,000 pounds of mohair, and 2,000,000 pounds of soya-bean oil. These figures refer to the situation ten years ago, but it appears that it is substantially the same to-day. The old saying, referring to the sixteenth century enclosing of peasant land for sheep farms, "The sheep ate up the men" may now be revised to "The automobiles ate up the men", when one considers the amount of foodstuffs, clothing, or land that could be used to produce food and clothing, that is consumed by their manufacture.

South Africa is likely to be in too much trouble, land erosion and political upheaval, to be able to help the rest of the world in the near future at least. The rest of Africa may indeed be got to produce more food, but it will have to feed its own people first, and that will be problem enough. To make the Amazon basin a great food-producer will be a colossal undertaking. Although it is thinly populated still, it can barely feed itself, and large numbers of inhabitants already live partly on wild foods growing in the forests. Yet for all that its population has doubled in recent years, and will no doubt continue to rise. For the time being little hope may be entertained in that quarter.

(Incidentally for the benefit of those who look upon the river-lands of the

Amazon and its tributaries as an open frontier one must point out that the banks of the rivers, even to the remotest streams, are all parcelled out among landowners. By custom they also own a good slice of the hinterland extending back from the river. Their tenants are often peons, held in the bondage of debt.)

The population of India and the Far East is still going up at an alarming rate. India and Pakistan together now have as many people as there were in the entire world only three centuries ago. The population of India increases every twenty-four hours by thirteen thousand.

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MR. OSBORN is no revolutionary. When he discusses such schemes as developing new land for agriculture, or manufacturing synthetic foods, the wretched word "cost" continually reappears. I started marking the margin every time money seemed to stand in the way of some scheme, but got tired of it in the end. If we escaped the hydrogen or atomic bombs that are being so lovingly prepared for our benefit it is quite possible that the money system may starve us to death.

It would seem incredible that with the future of so many millions at stake, perhaps the whole population of the world, money should still be taken into consideration. But to talk about abolishing it is to talk of abolishing the present system *in toto*, and that—by Gad!—is mutiny.

However the author does come down heavily in favour of spreading knowledge of birth control, and encouraging its use. But even here he is terribly anxious to be polite to the Catholics. Personally I would be the last to condemn the courtesies of controversy, but there are limits, and when a world-wide organisation persists in a policy of downright folly, not to say cruelty, it is time to drop nice talk about how it has defended the "free world" and upheld "the family". The Catholic opposition to birth control is part of the anti-life attitude that the Church always adopts. It may do still greater harm in the future than it has done in the past.

As Plutarch remarked (quoted by Mr. Osborn in another context), "We are more sensible of what is done against custom than against nature." Civilised man has tended to crush his natural desires and impulses in every direction, rather than rebel against the stupid and barbarous customs invented by his remote forgotten ancestors. Rather than alter his society he may yet starve to death.

But perhaps this is after all rather too gloomy an attitude. But one is stung by the way reformers will suggest palliatives at the end of their books, when in fact the whole course and logic of their arguments point to revolutionary conclusions.

ARTHUR W. ULOTH.

EXHIBITION

YOUNG ARTISTS

THE Young Artists Exhibition at the New Burlington Gallery is a competitive show organised by the *Daily Express* and limited to entrants between the ages of 18 and 35. Herbert Read was on the panel of judges which included Anthony Blunt and Graham Sutherland. The prizes were substantial—two first awards of £750 and several smaller ones, and I thought the awards not too far away from what I might have chosen myself. Bryan Kneale's "Pony in the Snow" thoroughly deserved the first prize, but John Bratby's "Table top with oranges" might have received more generous treatment from the judges. It was at least as good as Kneale's and in some ways, particularly in the handling of the paint, much more satisfactory.

The crisp, sharp, razor-blade slickness of Kneale's paint tends towards a commercialism of surface texture which can be distinctly unpleasant.

Bratby, together with E. C. Middle-ditch both received awards, the latter for a painting "Chicken in a flooded stream" which is strongly drawn and well painted. The other prize winners were somewhat dubious choices, largely because so many of the unlucky exhibitors seemed to come so easily up to their standards. I was sorry to see Peter Foldes "Predator" go unremarked, also Adrian Heath's "Abstract Composition in white and yellow".

Taken as a show representative of today's young painters this is very much what one would expect. There is a tremendous amount of experimentation going on, and much of it is, of course, old ground being scratched over again, and for young painters who work seriously and intelligently this is an excellent opportunity to compare and assess the multiplicity of trends. The standard of work is not high and one could be over-critical and damn it for the fairly obvious pictures painted specially for the competition. There is, however, much that is straightforward and conscientiously done, and these works I found enjoyable, and in many cases, most praiseworthy.

Jack Smith's paintings at the Beaux Arts Gallery, Bruton Place, W.1. are the best works I have seen of his yet; they are genuine and sincere, and his intentions as a painter are clear and direct. Here are no confections nor superficially clever surfaces. Nowhere in these works do we have to consider the probable origin of this or that influence. Jack Smith paints the things he sees around him with a directness which has no time for imported clichés and mannerisms. His paintings of bull fights instantly become the ceremonial brutality that they in fact are, yet so ably are they composed that one feels the universal force of the tragic allusion in these works in a clear, unsentimental way. Jack Smith has no time to waste. He paints with the minimum of fuss on a scale which would scare most young painters, and he does this ably and well because behind every mark on those canvasses there is sound, powerful drawing, and this, together with a restrained and skilful palette makes Jack Smith one of the most interesting of to-day's painters.

R.S.

THE MARCH OF CIVILISATION (Underground)

WASHINGTON, MAY 3.

United States Army engineers will dig tunnels through the Greenland ice-cap this summer with a view to building a system of underground electric railways to transport supplies and troops throughout the strategic northern outpost. The Defence Department announced to-day that the experiment will be carried out with the permission and co-operation of the Danish Government. Advance units of a 240-man party, including sixty scientists, left the United States recently to begin tunnelling through the solid ice. A trench 25 feet deep and 12 feet wide will first be cut into the snow and then covered with snow blocks.

If the experiment succeeds, the Defence Department envisages the linking of its scattered Arctic outposts by trains travelling more than 100 feet under the ice. For several years army engineers have maintained a network of experimental tunnels, trenches, corridors, and shafts in the Greenland icecap, which covers about 700,000 square miles. One

shaft is more than 150 feet deep.

Engineers found that as they dug deeper into the ice-cap the snow became harder packed so that it could be sawed and shaped. Below the ice-cap, air temperatures seldom rose to thawing-point. The Defence Department said that snow tunnels contracted vertically at the rate of about six inches a year, a condition which would call for periodic trimming if a transportation subway became a reality. This would be outweighed, however, by the value of avoiding the almost constant storms and navigation difficulties which made travel slow and exposed men and equipment to considerable hazard on the surface of the ice-cap.

Other work of the present expedition will include studies of ice ramps, crevasses, and ice cliffs as they influence access to the ice-cap; navigation and route-finding systems; experimental roads and airfields built with snow; and underground structures such as storage areas, warehouses, garages, and hangars.

—Reuter.

THEATRE

Canned Zola

IT is the fashion nowadays to scoff at the crudity of Zola's *Therese Raquin*, dismissing it simply as horrific melodrama of the old school, and forgetting that this magnificent piece of realism needs full-blooded acting of a wide range and technical skill. Zola's characters may be without soul, but it takes a good deal of subtlety and sensitivity on the actors' part to show the state of mind and gradual degradation of the guilt-ridden lovers and be equal to the rising tension of the drama piled up with such masterly strokes. When all is said and done they are still among us to-day, the lovers whose animal passion is warped by the spectre of guilt and remorse and culminates in a shattering hatred of each other, though they may not enlist our sympathy, cannot fail to evoke our pity.

Unfortunately Miss Eva Bartok in *Therese Raquin* (at the Winter Garden Theatre) has been tempted into the leading part of *Therese* without adequate means at her disposal. She has not yet mastered the English language, to say nothing of the subtler nuances of voice, tone or gesture.

Mr. Wanamaker, the producer, perhaps aware of the limitations of the actress he is directing, has thought up the convenient expedient of backing every significant movement of the play with canned music which wafts eerily across the auditorium and is presumably meant to lull us gently into oblivion, so that we fail to look for any revelation vocal or visual, from the characters on the stage! Before we have time to recover from this intrusion on our ears there is a swift, ill-timed black-out, which leaves us in no doubt that we are in at the birth of something stark, grim and sinister!

At the beginning of the play Miss Bartok certainly achieves an effect by

being completely silent and almost moronic in her movements. *Therese Raquin*, you will remember, was a down-trodden waif, cursed by the stigma of a Moorish mother, torn from her arms by her father, and forced into a marriage with her sickly cousin, thereby conveniently becoming an unpaid servant kept under the stern and vigilant eye of her husband's mother, played by Miss Helen Haye. Miss Haye is much too well-bred to afford us even a glimpse of the petit bourgeois shopkeeper who dominates the household like a harriidan before she is struck down by total paralysis.

In the beginning of the play the filmic technique employed covers a multitude of sins, or so it seems, but as it becomes increasingly difficult to split the play into a series of short scenes and black-outs, we are left somewhere towards the middle with the bare bones of a gripping drama and a ludicrous inadequacy on the part of the principal players to give what is demanded.

The play is not helped by its present English adaptation. The dialogue is stilted, never life-like, and full of psychological gaps. We are not prepared for *Therese's* gradual awakening of her guilt, her utter sleeplessness and her crying need to confess. These gaps are filled in by a series of eerie noises pertaining to be the howling of the wind through the passage, but more reminiscent of an air-raid siren in the distance. They fail to chill our bones. It is the old, old story of the ghost in Macbeth's chair, or the Eumenides in *Family Reunion*, visible or not? In my view these horrors whether sights or sounds, are always infinitely more real if left to the imagination, evoked by the actors and responded to by the audience.

The setting of the play, a composite of shop, bedroom and parlour is admirable, though I did wonder why everybody

went through the bedroom door presumably into the passage to undress, possibly something to do with the censor, for surely shopkeepers' apartments of the Paris eighties were not quite so spacious as to contain a dressing room. The dressmaker's dummy, though it adds a grotesque air of spookey symbolism, recalls rather a play by Tennessee Williams than adding an air of reality to the present production.

Mr. Wanamaker, as the lover, in a quieter vein than Miss Bartok, one might almost say in a different medium, manages to hold our interest but fails to enlist our pity. Pathos is a quality with which this actor is not endowed. The ensemble scenes, particularly the early ones with Camille are over-fussy and too deliberately played for comedy instead of creating stuffy small-town existence.

There seems to be an innovation—at any rate I cannot recall it as being Zola's—where old Madame Raquin, though completely paralysed tries with a supreme effort of will to move her hand and painfully but deliberately forms the dominoes into the names of the murderous pair. It is an almost superhuman effort to prove their guilt in front of strangers. The attempt is inconclusive, a sort of red herring adding a twentieth century thriller element. At its best a production stunt which seems misplaced.

I am glad to say that no amount of ingenuity or flamboyance at the Winter Garden has been able to wipe from my mind the film of *Therese Raquin* made by Jacques Feyder in 1927 with its terrifying claustrophobic atmosphere of the Paris petit bourgeois.

Is it only in the film that we can truly recreate this atmosphere? Has the theatre of to-day lost the art of reviving the great past dramas which were made for it?

D.

FREEDOM BOOKSHOP

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EQUALITY AND UNIFORMITY

HERBERT READ has written somewhere* that "many anarchists are unconscious authoritarians because they cling illogically to the notion of uniformity (they may call it equality); not realising that the human species, like any other species in nature develops individual variations. Uniformity must be enforced, and can be enforced only by a centralized power, i.e. by the State."

By Read's own logic these "many anarchists" are not anarchists at all since they believe in force and the State! Furthermore, Read reveals the weakness of his charge when he confuses the anarchists' advocacy of equality with a "notion of uniformity", as if the two concepts were automatically interchangeable. A curious notion, indeed!

THE society in which we live with its mass-production and its mass-communications tends to produce a uniformity which, at the same time, reflects the class structure of society.

The equality which we advocate has not as its aim a classless uniformity. We believe in the equal rights and opportunities for everybody to live and to develop in the way that is for them most satisfying. There is, if you like, a uniformity in the basic economic needs of human beings; namely food, shelter and clothing. That the tendency is to uniformity in the form these needs are expressed (or more exactly, satisfied) springs from a whole number of causes determined, not by the consumer, who after all is the victim of these causes, but by a small section of society which controls production and the machinery for creating a mass "demand" for their goods. (Incidentally the same can be said of the purveyors of things cultural).

In this connection the reports of the conference of the Advertising Association, recently held in Brighton, make interesting reading. An executive of the British Motor Corporation for instance referred to the importance of press advertising by the fact that "you can hit the whole country pretty hard in one day by the judicious expenditure of not much more than £5,000". Lady Pakenham who also addressed the conference maintained that advertising set the housewife higher standards.

"It was the best way in which we could find out what other people were eating, wearing, reading, and growing."

"Is it a good thing to take notice of other people's standards? Is it not just a case of keeping up with the Joneses? To me 'keeping up with the Joneses' is a much maligned social habit. The ordinary housewife means two things by 'a higher standard'—keeping up with the Joneses, and passing them."

The very fact that fundamental to the ideas of anarchism is the need for production for use, which implies the closest contact between consumer and producer, presupposes that there will not be a uniformity of taste and of needs. It may be argued that advertising is the means of maintaining this contact. As the Minister of Supply pointed out at the Advertisers' conference: "Advertising could help . . . in enabling the consumer to realise the possibilities open to him as British industry advanced". But that is just the swindle, for the contact to-day is only one-way. It is the industrialist

who determines what shall be produced and how, and the consumer lured into believing that that product is indispensable to his well-being or happiness, quite apart from such small-minded considerations as outlined by Lady Pakenham.

★
WE believe in equality just because we believe in the diversity of human beings. The expression of diversity depends on the rights of all to dispose of their time according to their wishes. Mass production far from increasing man's leisure hours has ensnared him into creating new material needs in order to keep the machine working at full pressure night and day. The equality we demand is a freedom of choice for every human being. Today there is no such equality. Freedom of choice is available to a few people with money (though more often than not their money destroys their freedom!) or to those who have a rare skill which is highly remunerated (who also often become the victims of the demand!). (We exclude most tramps and "simple-lifers" for whom the actual process of scraping together the necessities of life becomes an end in itself). But for the majority, living and providing for dependents is a routine occupation of working, eating and sleeping. And whether their demands include or not a motor-car, a television set or a refrigerator, they all seem to be obliged to work the same number of hours. Indeed it is more than apparent that those who work the longest hours, in the dulllest jobs, in the worse conditions, are also those who have the smallest share of the cake.

★
IN a society based on equality, in the first place no man could be an employer of labour. Secondly a distinction would be made between the basic needs, for maintaining life and health, and those needs which for a section of the community at least might be considered non-essential. In such a society all, or most, people, would be willing to share in the work of producing those basic goods and services. Having discharged what they feel to be their social obligation they should be free to choose what they did with the rest of their day. Is this unreasonable? Or Utopian?

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*In a footnote to his essay on "Revolution and Reason" in the volume of Essays in Politics bearing the title "Anarchy and Order" (Faber & Faber, 16/-).

NOTES FROM THE NEWS

Free Speech - Within Contracting Limits

"FREE speech" sounds as if it means the freedom to say or publish what one likes. But when upholders of the British Constitution speak of the freedom of speech which exists here, they mean the freedom to say or publish anything which does not contravene various vague laws prohibiting, for instance: horrific matter for young persons, publication of official secrets, statements likely to cause a breach of the peace, incitement to crime or immorality, "anarchist and atheist dissemination among other ranks", insulting language, swearing in unenclosed premises, libel, slander, sedition, blasphemy and obscenity . . . especially, recently obscenity.

Last week the Home Secretary gave figures of proceedings relating to obscene libel (i.e. obscene matter published in permanent form) during 1954, 1953, and 1939. The following table shows how free speech has recently become more and more under attack in this particular direction:

Year	1939	1953	1954
Convictions	7	49	111
Total fines	£69	£2,783	£12,677
Max. prison (mths.)	12	12	18

Destruction orders:

Books & Mags.	3,006	44,130	167,293
Photographs	344	20,141	10,803
Postcards	—	32,603	16,646
Miscellaneous	7	1,950	18,609

May Day - The Saints Join in

WHEN the delegates to the Second Socialist International resolved that there should be a one-day international general strike every May 1, to

demonstrate working-class solidarity, they must have thought they had hit on an almost unanswerable method of struggle. Since the idea caught on among workers, however, some very effective answers have been found.

In Britain, the Labour Party got the majority of workers, in 1922, to agree to the shifting of May Day from May 1 to the first Sunday in May, which is a holiday anyhow; elsewhere the method has been favoured of making May 1 itself a State holiday. The Russian government have celebrated May Day since 1919 with military parades, and the erection of their own portraits all over the place; the German government from 1933 to 1944 made May 1 into a public holiday called Adolf Hitler Day; and of course Russian May Day and Adolf Hitler Day have been celebrated by the appropriate international political movements, which has confused the meaning of May Day everywhere.

This year the greatest international political movement ever, the Roman Catholic Church, joined in. Some 150,000 working-class Catholics made a pilgrimage to St. Peter's, where the Pope announced that a new feast, that of St. Joseph the Workman, would henceforth be celebrated on May 1 every year, "in order that Labour Day may receive Christian baptism."

He added that there was no truth in the accusation that the Church was allied with the ruling classes against labour; on the contrary, the Church recognised the injustice of the social order. Furthermore, the Church did not stop at invoking a more just social order, but set

down the fundamental principles for that end . . . and urged their application by "the rulers of nations, the legislators, and employers and directors of industry." All the people, in other words, who would lose power if a just social order were created, should bring it into being; and the workers who would gain from it should, presumably, just wait, and pray.

The Pope said May Day would no longer be "a stimulus for discord, hate and violence". He may be said to hope it would be a stimulus for the flocks of Jesus to gather again at the shearing pen.

A Successful Strike

Mr. Sidney Wilkin, whose dismissal by the management of J. J. Habershon and Sons, Ltd., a Rotherham steel rolling firm, led to a fortnight's strike at the works, is to be reinstated. This is the decision of a neutral committee of three employers and three trade union officials which has studied the case.

Mr. Wilkin, who is chairman of the works branch of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, was dismissed for switching off a machine which he alleged was being operated in contravention of an agreement on starting and stopping times.

No statement was issued after the meeting of the committee, and Mr. Wilkin himself declined to comment, but it is understood that the committee found he had acted foolishly but ought to have been suspended rather than dismissed. He is to start work on May 9, which will mean, in effect, that he has been suspended for six weeks.

—The Times.

IN DEFENCE OF THE POUJADISTES

THE French anarchist press has been trying to minimise or even to ridicule the Poujade anti-fiscal crusade and I am really sorry to find that FREEDOM ("As Ye Sow . . ." 23/4/55) is following suit. I can only ascribe this attitude to envy or jealousy, because Poujade is about the only man alive who has had the guts to incense his followers to direct action, whereas anarchists have confined themselves to theorizing and to rhetorical protests, of which the ruling powers take not the slightest notice.

Lack of positiveness is often lamented by anarchists and their sympathizers and you have published not a few letters lately to that effect.

That small shopkeepers are actuated in the main by the resented inroads on their purses may be psychologically quite true; nevertheless the success of the Poujade movement provides ample evidence that "fed-upness" with bureaucratic domination is on edge, that the spirit of revolt is rife and spreading not only in France, but all over the world. For it is being generally realized that this bureaucratic domination on army lines will be a far worse evil than capitalistic exploitation ever was.

Three State institutions are in existence which have been devised with the definite purpose of subjecting both the individual and the masses: the army, the police and the fiscal. Of these, the fiscal is the most detested because of its arrogant and vexatious methods.

Theoretically taxation is intended to obtain from each individual his proportionate contribution towards the cost of running the State machinery. If this principle were honestly applied, taxation would be at a very low level indeed and no citizen would object to contributing his fair share. One single tax, to wit: income tax, would be quite sufficient to provide the State with all its requirements. Actually however taxes are used to take from the producer in order to give to the unproductive, undeserving parasite. It is with the precise object of making bureaucratic jobs and thus extending the power of inquisitorial officialdom that the citizen is burdened with the multitudinous variety of taxes, each variety necessitating its own trained personnel of civil servants. The tax

regulations, worded in official jargon, are intricate and made purposely obscure beyond the understanding of the average citizen, so as to make him "pay up" without much quibbling.

Add to all this that corruption and even blackmail by tax officials is not infrequent and you will agree that Poujade has a good valid case.

Anarchists should support every movement which tends to oppose bureaucratic dictatorship. And they should make it their duty to enlighten the masses on the ways and tricks used by their tormentors to mislead, humbug and persecute them.

France, May 3. R. ANSAY.

It is possible, of course, that Mr. Wilkin's position in the Trade Union influenced his colleagues to strike for his reinstatement. But be that as it may, if there had been no strike it is most unlikely that any "neutral committee" would have been called to consider his case.

Our Affable Police

One of seven accused members of a dining-car staff said at Leeds Assizes yesterday that a British Transport Commission detective who served him with summonses shook him by the hand, slapped him on the back, wished him the best of luck, and said: "If it hadn't been you it would have been someone else."

—The Times, May 5.

VIEWPOINT

LESSONS OF THE A-BOMB TESTS

YET another nuclear device has been detonated and now we have some more illuminating information as to the destructive powers of these horrors of the modern world. We are told that one of the lessons learned from this latest test is that the area of total destruction is smaller than had previously been supposed. This sounds fine indeed, but if we look a little further into the details we see that the scientists have the good news well under control.

This last device had a yield equivalent to 35,000 tons of T.N.T., the damage caused within an area of approximately one mile was frightful and the effects of the explosion reached about three miles. We are informed that concrete affords the best protection and white colours increase chances of survival. This all seems to be quite encouraging, for there is an excellent chance that we shall not be within a mile of the explosion centre, but will be comfortably seated in our concrete shelters wearing white flannels and tennis shoes.

But—and of course there is always a but—it was pointed out that a 10-megaton bomb, which is about 250 times as powerful as the 'midget' device just unleashed, would have an outer damage ring of sixteen miles; shelters which were effective at less than a mile would only be equally good at five or six miles. Not so encouraging.

Presumably this means that even if we are in shelters five miles from the explosion we are not safe from the effects of the device. But there are not so many cities in the world which would escape practically total destruction if one of these bombs were dropped in the centre. Even if one were fortunate enough to escape instantaneous death, the problem of survival in that city would become acute: if a few cities in this country were blasted in this way,

overcrowding would occur in those cities which remained, the difficulties of supply in country districts might be insuperable, chaos and disorder would reign, and the loss of life would eventually be fantastic.

But let us suppose that these 'difficulties' are overcome, by better and deeper shelters and improved emergency supply lines. Is there any reason to think that the scientists will not be able to make devices 2,500 times as powerful as the one which has just been detonated? Can there be much doubt in our minds that this, or worse, is their aim? In fact they may well have succeeded already. In this event, as the history of nuclear weapons clearly shows, whatever precautions may be taken, the bomb will always be made that much more powerful as to render defences inadequate.

Therefore it is useless to gather this sort of information, even though the Daily Telegraph tells us: "Future planning for the protection of civilians against possible atomic attacks will be guided by what is learned. The Americans are already sharing their knowledge in this field with other friendly countries without reserve." (Surely their knowledge in this field should always have been shared with all countries, friend or foe, since we are assured that military measures are never directed at civilians.)

We would say that the only really useful information which can now be gained on the subject of atomic warfare is to discover the number of people throughout the world who wish to have the H-bomb banned. The figure would undoubtedly exceed the T.N.T.-yield of any bomb yet invented, and might even persuade the suicidal authorities that we can all manage to survive without the assistance of nuclear weapons, and in fact it is probable that only without them shall we be able to survive.

H.F.W.

Don't forget the DEFICIT!

THE BOY FROM STALINGRAD!

THE articles in FREEDOM of 2/4/55 and 16/4/55 as well as the article in *L'Adunata dei Refrattari* of 9/4/55, induce me to tell of my small experience in these matters.

When the Nazis during the last war brought about 2 millions of slave-labourers from Russia into Germany all the Anarchists, and also the Communists were eager to get to know them, but for different reasons: the former to hear that the régime in Russia was rotten, the latter that it was first rate!

These undertakings were of course dangerous for the Russians as well as for the Germans, because if the Nazis heard of this sort of relations it would mean concentration camp, perhaps death for all persons concerned. And the traitor never sleeps in a dictatorship. This applies to Russians and Germans, because some Russians were pro-Nazis when they first came to Germany simply because they were sick and tired of the Communist rule, yet later they had to realize that they had jumped from the frying-pan into the fire.

There was the obstacle of language, yet some Russians learned German quickly, some of them already spoke it more or less. So the relations were on the run, they were sometimes blocked but they were on the run, well enough to give at least a fairly good idea of what the Russians thought of the Communist régime in Russia.

The general impression I had was that the average Russian is indifferent to Marxian ideas and Communism, and that he agrees only by force with his government. I have been acquainted with several hundred Russians, and with a few of them I was really friendly but I was surprised how little the Russian cared for anything Marxist after all the years of Communist rule. I have only known two Communists amongst them, but that was after Hitler was already overthrown, and every Russian who declared himself a Communist got a reward from the newly arrived Commissars of the Russian Army.

The German Communists were disappointed with the Russian workers for their indifference towards Marxism and

Communism. They had expected their "Russian Comrades" would tell them of the wonderful life and socialism in Russia, and welcome them as comrades. Nothing of that sort happened, the Russians remained indifferent towards the German Communists.

The majority of the Russians came from the Ukraine, the home-country of Nestor Makhno. Consequently I asked them whether they had known Makhno. Nobody had known him as they were almost all young men. But they had heard stories told of him, by older people.

One of my comrades, with the name of Glotzbach who worked in another workshop had better results. He was in possession of a book written by Archinoff on the rebellion in the Ukraine under the leadership of Makhno. In the book was a photograph of Makhno. Comrade Glotzbach took this book into the workshop and showed several Russians the picture and asked them whether they recognised the man in the picture. One of the Russians must have been fighting against Makhno, for as soon as he saw the picture he burst out: "That is a counter-revolutionary, a counter-revolutionary!" Another Russian acted differently when he saw the picture, he said: "Makhno, Makhno, revolutionist, a very good revolutionist!"

I agree with the proposal of FREEDOM's editors which was endorsed by the editors of *L'Adunata* to help any resistance movement that may exist on the other side of the Iron Curtain, and to penetrate the Eastern side of the curtain with our ideas. That in the near future some first steps may be taken to fulfill this intention.

Well, Comrades, into action! I propose the office of "Freedom Press" or the office of *L'Adunata* for "clearing houses" or "places of exchange" for plans to bring about this aim. Publications or discussions in our newspapers of these plans is out of the question, because that would be the acme of stupidity and bring the N.K.V.D. on our track. We in Germany have already worked with propaganda on the other side of the Curtain, and have some experiences in that line. The crucial point is the distribution and diffusion of the propaganda; that is all-important, the rest of the work can be carried out with money and goodwill.

WILLY FRITZENKOTTER.

Germany, May 1.

The New Industrial Revolution

Concern about what was called a "new industrial revolution" and the "press-button era," brought in by electronics, was expressed last week by members of the National Committee of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, in conference at Blackpool.

A motion, which was referred to the Executive Council, recorded appreciation of the application of science and new techniques in industry, but recognised the dangers inherent in them concerning wages and conditions in engineering. It called for an inquiry into the application of electronic techniques to engineering, and an examination of the possible effects on the labour force, wages, and conditions.

Mr. W. Aitken, of Kilmarnock, said that a fact-finding committee should be set up, as had been done in the United States by the Auto-Workers' Union. The effects on the labour force could be judged from the fact that in one factory the work of 117 machinists was now done by 41, while in another, radios were being assembled at the rate of 1,000 a day by two men, where formerly 200 were employed. In a plant for producing car engines, 55 different operations were controlled by one man. American trade unionists, he said, were worried about the position.

"We are facing what is, in fact, a new industrial revolution," he added, "and the sooner we start thinking and talking about it the better."

PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT! WEEK 18

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THE DEMON OF PROGRESS

I MUST join issue with your critic on his interesting review of the *Demon of Progress* (FREEDOM, May 7). I have not yet read the article in *Encounter* which he uses as a background to his observations, but the general thesis that British intellectuals have rallied to the 'establishment' in recent years seems broadly true. I query, however, whether Wyndham Lewis, in the *Demon of Progress* has "submitted to the conservatism, conformism and authority of contemporary England".

In the first place, Lewis's political attitude since he wrote *The Art of Being Ruled* in the late twenties has been at odds with the broad trend of "progressive" ideas. His position has never been that of an anarchist and he cannot be blamed for maintaining a different point of view. His argument, as I understand it, is that all politics is a matter of power and that "democratic" politics is a particularly virulent means of strengthening the power of the rulers. He accepts the power-situation as inevitable and objects mainly to the form which it has taken in the past half-century. Certainly this position is conservative in a sense, but I do not see that Lewis has retreated into conservatism in the way your reviewer implies.

Nor do I think that the argument of the *Demon of Progress* can be called conformist. Lewis argues that "contemporaneity", as he defines it, is the present day conformity. In other words the *avant-garde* and the establishment are brothers under the skin. The problem

of the serious artist is not to break through a tradition as that tradition was understood in, say, 1920, but to free himself from the pressure of a vogue of "violent orthodoxies of the moment".

I do not endorse the whole of Lewis's argument, but he does seem to me to put forward a sensible proposition. There have certainly been *avant-garde* fashions at all times. What is peculiar at the present time is the relatively broad appeal of such fashions. Mr. Berger is reacting against them one way in the pages of the *New Statesman* and Mr. Lewis has reacted against them in another in the *Demon of Progress*. The reactions are, however, very different in their assumptions. Mr. Berger argues for a new mode of social realism (and where that mode joins company with the much older one which Mr. Lewis rebelled against before 1914 is anybody's guess). Lewis himself although infected with a nostalgia for fifty years ago, before "the supreme and ultimate rot began", is making a plea for the artist as an individual, and for the "mystery of the craft", against the "word-men", whether these be Marxist pundits or theoreticians of abstraction. Such a position, surely, is one with which FREEDOM's contributors must broadly sympathise.

Hampton, May 8.

P.J.H.

The Aesthetic Murderer

ON Sunday the 1st of May Mr. F. A. Ridley addressed the members and the guests of the Malatesta Club on the ethics of assassination.

During the question period Mr. Ridley was asked if any person had committed an act of assassination (or murder) for purely aesthetic reasons and no one present at the meeting was able to quote an instance of this particular motive for assassination/murder.

May I rather belatedly offer a candidate for this rather dubious honour?

The *Evening Standard* for Monday the 2nd of May published a letter headed "The Broadmoor Curate" from which I would like to quote the following:—

"The most interesting case given in Forensic Medicine is that of the curate who murdered two vicars because they complained of the way he intoned and was twice released.

When Broadmoor found his record he was permanently detained in Broadmoor."

London.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

ARE YOU HELPING TO FIND NEW READERS FOR FREEDOM?

promises that in defence of executives' authority and of solemn agreements about which the workers were never consulted, repressive legislation is bound to be introduced.

And what would his position be, if it should come to that? We do not hear him pledging to fight such legislation. His well-paid position in a democratic Parliament, representing Trade Union and Labour Party members and voters, would not, as far as he has indicated, lead him to fight tooth and nail against the introduction of totalitarian measures. Rather he is getting the scapegoats lined up, apportioning the blame in advance, and taking the side of totalitarianism.

And of course nothing more could be expected of him. His whole speech is the sort of appeal to middle-class fear and hatred for the workers' advance that is a feature of fascist propaganda on the European model. Particularly the Spanish model, where the gallant Christian gentleman, O'Brien's co-religionist Franco, has had the sort of powers he is clearly anticipating here.

It Depends on Us

With only one statement could we agree. "Our standard of life will not depend on Governments and employers but on ourselves." This is true, though not altogether in the sense that O'Brien meant. The tremendous strength of the working class can be controlled and crushed by leaders such as he. But if the workers really organised themselves to fight their battles the direct way, there would certainly be nothing governments or employers or Catholic labour fakirs could do about it.

We assume that Mr. Tom O'Brien is standing for Parliament again this election. Our advice to all workers in his constituency cannot be urged too strongly: Do Not Vote. Don't worry that maybe a Tory will get in—what's the difference? And to keep out of power a man uttering the threats that O'Brien is, is a better service to the working class than voting blindly for his Labour ticket.

P.S.

Vote for JOE SOAP

THE London Anarchist Group has dreamed up a candidate for the General Election. He is Joe Soap, the man who does all the work, fights all the wars, overcomes all the economic crises, builds all the houses and carries out every election promise that is carried out.

Joe Soap is fighting every constituency. His interests are opposed to every parliamentary candidate who is looking for a career running other people's lives. Joe Soap has suffered unemployment under free-enterprise and full-employment under State planning. He is at last realising that no political party will operate in his interests once it is in power, and he is therefore an independent.

An election address has been prepared by Mr. Soap's election agent and is already in circulation in London. A copy is being sent out with each copy of "Freedom" this week and supplies will be available for readers in the provinces if they wish. Joe Soap is you—

Do Not Vote for Anyone Else!

O'Brien's Threats Continued from p. 1

mands of taxation, the demands of daily life, and the demands of trying to bring up their families in a decent and proper way. All these demands they were beginning to find impossible.

"Mr. O'Brien said that the professional classes of Britain were suffering more than many of the industrial classes as a result of differentials.

"He knew hundreds of his friends in various professions who had to take their children from school and higher training because they could not afford it.

"It is no use the industrial masses saying 'Send them to elementary schools.' That is a form of class prejudice within a class."

By this time, what with the wine and all, Mr. O'Brien seems to have been seeing classes all over the place. Even the accountants present were losing count. The solid argument, however, was there for all to see: the middle class is down on its uppers, and is therefore setting an example for the working class to follow. If you want to be in a very bad plight indeed, use the established negotiating and conciliation machinery with intelligence and patient determination.

Threats of Repression

Perhaps more significant, however, were Mr. O'Brien's remarks when he turned to consider the workers' position. Here he said:

"We welcome the great improvements which trade unionism has brought to our industrial workers. We sincerely hope these gains will not be thrown away by the irresponsible activities of groups of workers and their self-appointed leaders, who apparently believe that the more you inconvenience and damage the interests of millions of fellow workers the more you will hurt the boss.

"The totalitarian States would punish by imprisonment and even death those who in their countries sought to resolve their industrial grievances by the type of tampering now known as the unofficial strike which our democracy in recent years has been obliged to tolerate.

"In former days it was hostile Governments and hostile employers who raved against the right to strike. To-

day it is those workers who allow themselves to be duped by the pedlars and cheapjacks of phoney trade unionism who will destroy this basic right to strike.

"Continuous and contemptuous disregard by sections of our workers' executive authority is bound to invite sooner or later the introduction of repressive legislation to prevent such conduct. In consequence, the whole trade union movement is likely to be penalised by the actions of reckless minorities.

"Our standard of life will not depend on Governments and on employers but on ourselves. Workers of this country can tear down the industries which provide their sustenance. They can tear you down with them, and those you represent, if they wish to, or they can make them strong and prosperous to stand up to the growing competition of the world markets.

"It is our job to see that the prosperity achieved is fairly and fully shared. I would rather negotiate improvements for my members with a millionaire than with a bankrupt. There would be more and great prospects of success."

Would He Resist?

These words give us a very clear indication of O'Brien's trend of thought. He seems almost envious of the totalitarian States, with their power to punish strikers by imprisonment or death, for he refers to unofficial strike (wherein rank and file unionists defend their interests themselves, directly), as 'tampering' and appears to bewail the fact that our democracy has been obliged to tolerate them.

In former days, he reminds us, hostile Governments and employers raved against the right to strike. To-day, as we can see from his own example, they are joined by hostile Trade Union M.P.'s who, having the power to take part in the passing of laws, threaten those who use the right to strike.

This right, it seems, is like many others in our democratic way of life. It is allowed to you as long as you don't use it. When you do, and effectively, the right may be taken away. O'Brien

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

LECTURE-DISCUSSIONS

Every Sunday at 7.30 at THE MALATESTA CLUB 155 High Holborn, W.C.1.

(Nearly opposite Holborn Town Hall)

MAY 15—Sybil Morrison on THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT

MAY 22—G. J. Deverell on MODERN TRENDS IN HUMAN EVOLUTION

MAY 29—No Meeting

JUNE 5—Mani Obahiagbon on THE ROLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN HISTORY

June 12—Tony Turner on WHAT MAKES MAN—HEREDITY OR ENVIRONMENT?

INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS

Every Thursday at 8.15.

OPEN AIR MEETINGS

Weather Permitting HYDE PARK

Sundays at 3.30 p.m.

GLASGOW

INDOORS

at 200 Buchanan Street Every Friday at 7 p.m.

OUTDOORS

At Maxwell Street Every Sunday at 7.30 p.m.

MANNETTE STREET

(Charing X Road) Saturdays at 5.30 p.m.

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