

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

Beware then of those who say: liberty, liberty, and who destroy it by their works

De LAMENNAIS

ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY!

RUTH ELLIS—HANGED FOR HER MORALS?

THE case which has stirred public controversy on the death penalty so much just at this moment is that of Mrs. Ruth Ellis, who was hanged at Holloway last week.

Hers was a sensational story which could not fail to hit the headlines in a big way. She was young, blonde and described as attractive. She was a May-fair club hostess, whose practiced morality did not conform to what is supposed to be proper.

She shot her lover in a Hampstead street, in full daylight, in sight of witnesses. 'In a fit of jealousy' she was described to have shot him, because he was trying to discard her in favour of somebody else.

She made no attempt to hide her crime, no attempt to defend herself. She apparently did not care whether she lived or died. So the State made sure she died.

Ruth Ellis was a neurotic product of a neurotic environment. She was a heavy drinker and was probably always in the company of heavy drinkers and alcoholics. Her lover, David Blakely, was a racing driver, who presumably found satisfaction in the noise, excitement and danger of the racing circuit.

These emotionally unbalanced people found themselves caught up in a tangle of circumstances which were clearly beyond their limited capacities to cope with—or even to understand properly. One can only imagine the stresses and strains, the hysteria, tears and anger, which finally reached such a pitch that the woman could stand it no longer and the situation exploded with such tragic violence.

Jealousy and Morality

A full examination of everything involved is impossible, but one or two points could be briefly mentioned. The first is that the overpowering emotion that pushed Ruth Ellis out of control was jealousy. Now although she did not conform to the restrictive morality which monogamy imposes, she could not escape entirely from its sordid backwash. And jealousy is of this.

Is not jealousy regarded as a right and proper emotion to be felt by the possessive spouse? Does not the compulsive monogamous marriage breed possessiveness and jealousy? Is not jealousy virtually approved of when it is the expression of a stern moralism, with exclusive rights to one partner for life?

But Ruth Ellis was not a moral woman by bourgeois standards. Her jealousy therefore was reprehensible. And here one comes to another point. How much was the Home Secretary's refusal to reprieve Mrs. Ellis swayed by her 'immorality'? Many people have expressed the opinion over the last week that Ruth Ellis was hanged for her morals. In view of the care with which we know our moral welfare is guarded we cannot help speculating on the greater likelihood of a reprieve had she been a jealous wife who shot her husband's mistress—or shot her husband because he had a mistress. We are sure such speculations play their part, although it is deplorable that they should.

Publicity

Thirdly—how much were her chances of a reprieve weakened because of the tremendous blast of publicity given to the trial? Following its sensational exploitation in the Press the eyes of the whole country were upon the Home Secretary when it became his turn to consider the case for a reprieve.

It is no great wonder that our present undistinguished Home Secretary could not find the pluck to make a courageous decision. He weakly played safe, yielding to the bishops and the reactionaries of his own party. He gave their pound of flesh to the fearful, the moralistic, the jealous bigots and the ignorant

HANGING is a filthy business. Unjustifiable on any moral or ethical grounds, there are no longer any arguments even on the shaky grounds of expedience or practicality which can stand up to the light of experience.

Those who defend the retention in Britain of capital punishment have only one argument that even pretends to be based on any logic at all: that it is the only deterrent against murder. All the other arguments are but variations of the 'eye for an eye' theme. Demands for vengeance, behind which lurk all the irrational emotions which lead to resentments, fears, jealousies and the desire to 'get your own back'.

The 'deterrent' argument has been blown sky-high by one simple set of circumstances—that in thirty-odd countries capital punishment has been abolished without any corresponding increase in the incidence of murder.

Now if the death penalty really were a deterrent, in every country where it had been abolished there would have been a sharp increase in capital crime. But there has not been. If anything the figures have tended to decline.

No Connection

This can only mean one thing: that there is no connection between the act of murder and the existence of the supreme penalty. That the murderer does not take into account, when either planning or committing his crime, the enormity of the penalty he will have to pay if caught.

Those of us who have always considered that whoever kills another must be to some extent insane find in this some corroboration. For it is now recognised that a symptom of a pathological disturbance is a disregard of the consequences of one's actions.

Therefore the existence, the knowledge, even the fear of the death penalty on the part of the murderer, will not deter him from his act, because he is in the grip of irrational impulses over which he has no con-

But he did it in our name. Ruth Ellis was hanged by the public executioner, whom we employ. It is up to us to make it clear if we want to dispense with his services.

THE PRESS & ABOLITION

WE state elsewhere that the defenders of capital punishment are on the defensive. One indication of this is the growing attitude in favour of abolition throughout the national and weekly Press.

We had intended to publish a collection of statements from diverse papers, but space is short, so we shall hold them over till next week.

A NEW LOW

THE day after Ruth Ellis was hanged a waxworks exhibitor in Blackpool put an effigy of her on show to the public. He charged 1s. 6d. a head for admission and on the Friday 7,000 holidaymakers paid to go in.

Mr. William Cartmell, managing director of the waxworks, boasted that this number was 'a record for the Chamber of Horrors on a Friday'. And he cheerfully pocketed £252 for that sordid and disgusting day's trade.

It is difficult to find printable words to express what we think of Mr. William Cartmell's actions. Apparently there is nothing that can be done legally about his exhibition. But is there such a shortage of hammers in Blackpool?

He is mentally sick. This is why there is no startling difference on the incidence of murder whether the death penalty stands or not.

Are the British Cowards?

Those who oppose the abolition of capital punishment are usually reactionary in everything else as well. They tend to be conservative, fearful of change, and patriotic. If they are patriots there is one question that should be asked of them: 'Are the British more cowardly than the Scandinavians—or the Germans?'

For if the death penalty is a deterrent at all, it is so because the potential murderer is afraid of being hanged if he commits the crime he contemplates. This means that in Britain at this moment there are an unspecified number of cowards who would murder somebody or other if they were not so afraid of the rope.

This number of cowards did not exist in any of the countries which have already abolished the death penalty. Had they existed they would have immediately, the day after abolition, have sallied forth with their tins of weed-killer, bottles

of sleeping pills, their meat-axes, hammers, guns and strangler's hands, to settle accounts with their intended victims.

But they did not do it. Not even in Western Germany, which we were told only ten short years ago, was populated with cowardly, blood-thirsty monsters—not even in a Germany with the guilty hangover of Belsen and Aushwitz, did the terrible liberation from fear bring its gruesome consequences.

We are assured, however, that in Britain this would happen. That in Britain there is a sizeable population of potential murderers who, fortunately for society, are all cowards. This is what our patriots are saying when they justify the continued existence of the barbaric and obscene practice of hanging in this country.

Norwegians, Danes, Swedes and West Germans (people without Empires, dammit!) and even some Americans can be trusted without the threat of the rope. But the British cannot be trusted—a situation they share with the people of Russia and China and Franco Spain. For the dictatorships of the

world all cling to the death penalty, while the democratic countries are giving it up. Except for Britain.

Hypocrisy

Apart from the fact that there is no logic in the arguments for retention, we find the hypocrisy which they betray disgusting. By and large, those who argue for the retention of hanging would profess to be Christians. But just as they ignore Christ's injunction not to kill in time of war—so they do in this case.

We are still waiting—and shall wait, we fancy, for a long, long time—for the Archbishop of Canterbury to give a clear-cut and definite statement against capital punishment. We wait also for the Pope to instruct, infallibly, his world-wide flock.

But it seems that the followers of gentle Jesus—who was himself executed—believe that just as there can be a just war, so there can be justifiable execution.

It is not for us to tell the Christians their business, but it is interesting to notice that irreligious anarchists adopt a much more humane, responsible and ethical approach to human problems than do vast numbers of Christians.

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ANOTHER POLITICAL HOAX?

THE main theme of the political commentaries on the eve of the Geneva conference is the apparent change in the Soviet attitude to the Western bloc which has never preceded any other top level conference since the war. On the surface this has been noticeable in the tenor of the statements issued from the Kremlin and in the jovial attitude of the Soviet Ministers to foreign journalists and diplomatic staff. (As a concession to the "new look" Krushchev, Bulganin and Malenkov attended a party given by the U.S. Ambassador in Moscow to celebrate Independence Day—the first time such an invitation has been accepted).

Across the Atlantic this change is further noted in the "moderate" statements issued by the American administration and, we are told, miraculously in American "public opinion". The hey-day of McCarthyism having served its purpose is in its extreme forms now discouraged, and although a statement made a month ago by John Foster Dulles to the House Appropriations Committee was indiscreetly released a few days ago, quoting him as having said that the "Russians have been constantly hoping and expecting our economy to collapse in some way, due to what they regard as inherent defects in the capitalist system, but, in fact it was the Soviet system that is about to collapse," was seized

upon by the Press, it was immediately explained away by the White House as meaning only that the Soviet Union had over-extended troubles at home.

Be that as it may, the combined efforts of politicians and press is directed at convincing the people, as always on these occasions, that Geneva represents a turning point in the history of modern politics. Speculations and prophecies have been expressed in the newspapers over the past week and it is impossible for anarchists not to feel a sense of despair at the faith, simulated or otherwise, placed upon this meeting of the leaders of the world as a means of solving the conflicts inherent in national and international politics under capitalism.

It is impossible for us to assess entirely the many devious political moves, because some are so irrational even from the standpoint of those in power that they defy explanation, but if history has taught us nothing else it is that no lasting equitable or orderly form of society has ever been approximated through political parties representing conflicting national states.

Already on the supposedly unfixed agenda for discussion at Geneva we can see the possibilities of endless wranglings, and if any kind of agreement can be made on the question of nuclear warfare it will only be, as suggested by the Manchester Guardian Diplomatic correspondent that

The stark facts of the nuclear warfare outlook are open for both sides to see, and . . . it would be patiently unrealistic at the present day for either side to consider itself relatively defensible against nuclear attack by reason of dispersion of population.

He goes on to suggest that this realisation may well be the reason for the change in the Soviet attitude. It may also be the explanation for the sweetly reasonable American approach, because it can be said without appearing cynical that if either side were convinced that they could obliterate the enemy without fear of retaliation the position might be different.

It is put forward editorially by the Observer (Sunday, July 17th) that within certain narrow limits there is scope for "changes of policy—from the 'cold war' strategy . . . to the 'cold peace' diplomacy."

"Cold peace" offers at least . . . a chance that internal forces may gradually alter Communist ideology, making an established world order ultimately possible.

The implication is that a world order is possible under "our" form of capitalism, and once the traditional doctrine of Marxist "irreconcilable conflict" has been abandoned States can harmonise their differences. Surely the historical method of settling economic and political differences has been war before the 'communism' of the Soviet Union ever arose, and that if States have to seek new methods of resolving this conflict because of the nature of modern weapons other techniques will have to be found.

Objectives in Geneva

Leaving aside the "problem" of world peace it is worth considering the other issues which will come up for discussion at Geneva, the most important among them being the unification of Germany.

The objective of the Western powers is to establish what is

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I LIKE IKE

Over champagne toasts in Geneva tonight President Eisenhower gave his wartime associate Marshal Zhukov a wedding present for his daughter.

Before the day's session a beaming Mr. Khrushchev spilled his secret to Mr. Eisenhower that Zhukov should have stayed in Moscow for the wedding, "but he wanted to come to Geneva to see you."

President Eisenhower honoured the occasion by interrupting his cordial dinner party to hand over a portable radio and a fountain pen set for Miss Zhukov.

The Russian leaders spent two and a half hours as guests of Mr. Eisenhower. News Chronicle, 19/7/55.

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

ORGONOMIC FUNCTIONALISM

IN our reaction to the letter from the Orgone Institute of your issue of July 9th, we quote a statement found in every copy of *Orgonomic Functionalism*:

OUR RELATION TO THE ORGONE INSTITUTE AND WILHELM REICH FOUNDATION

This journal has no formal links with the above or Dr. Wilhelm Reich. The damage that may be done to science through faulty exposition and interpretation, and which has, in the past, resulted from inexperienced handling by those lacking capacity, has made the above most careful. It is for this reason only that we have been requested by them not to publish. To do so is to accept independence and its responsibilities. From our independence, due to the impracticability of co-operation, we acknowledge our great and unique debt to Wilhelm Reich. His work, his basic discoveries of fact and method are the inspiration which makes feasible the concept of a unitary science of man and his cosmos.

Some time Wilhelm Reich will die. Sincere workers in orgonomy wish him the longest fruitful life possible, but, at the same time one is concerned with the subsequent development of his work and the many inevitable distortions. It is for this reason that we look at the letter from the Orgone Institute seriously. It has the awful tone which forbodes that an abstract institute will make categorical pronouncement of what is, and what is not, orgonomy, and that this will take the place of factual statements and personal responsibility, the criteria in the past. Reich's work allows an understanding of such a situation and makes a positive development possible. And that is our aim.

It is quite understandable and responsible that the secretary of the Institute should make clear that we do not represent it, both in terms of the letter above which followed a mis-statement in a letter in *FREEDOM*, and in terms of a telegram which was sent to the Secretary of the Flying Saucer Research Society before our lecture. But the sad thing is that both go beyond that function. They are outbursts which, not only seem ridiculous to some, that does not matter, but they clearly exhibit emotional plague symptoms publicly, from an Institute which is responsible.

The factual evidence that we are dealing with the emotional plague follows: Orgonomic workers have always stressed, in many places, that to criticise or to pronounce without reference to facts is symptomatic of ulterior motives. The above is a clear instance of just that.

Twenty-five times, approximately, have the publications of the Orgone Institute dealt factually with dangerous and harmful interpretations of orgonomy. Never in any other way. This is the first time opinions are given categorically without evidence. And the use of the words "incompetence", "irresponsible", "usurped", "harmful" and (bitter irony) "factless", are meaningful.

Extreme statements are suspicious: How can it be true that "the term orgonomic functionalism" applies "not at all" to our activities when Ola Raknes has written: "The articles have been very interesting, applying in an original manner the orgonomic way of thinking to subjects of great importance", Wilhelm Reich: "the impression of your endeavours is rather good", "you understand the workings of Bioenergy", A. S. Neill: "to me it is a very good synopsis of Reich", Elsworth Baker: "I am very much impressed by your work." (From letters in our possession).

To say, without qualification, that our activities are looked upon as "harmful to the reputation and seriousness of the task of orgonomy" by the Institute, contrasts with the following facts: Wilhelm Reich: "The Orgone Energy Bulletin may be interested in the future in re-printing some of your material", the previous secretary of the Institute allowed publication in O.F. of some of the Institute's material, Walter Hoppe thanked us for forwarding him the journal regularly, Ola Raknes and A. S. Neill have thought it quite feasible to contribute; the present editor of *Orgonomic Medicine*, Elsworth Baker, wished us success.

If all this evidence makes it unquestionable that this attack is of the plague, it does not mean that we are blaming. It must be expected that workers in orgonomy have plague attacks. It is just unfortunate that this one has appeared as a public statement in the press. We feel what Reich has expressed in Character Analysis: "In our circles, such attacks of emotional plague, if slight, are handled by one's withdrawing for a while until the attack of irrationalism subsides . . . To me and close co-workers, the acute attack of the emotional plague is such a familiar phenomenon that we take it with calm and master it objectively . . . It happens, of course, that such an attack of the emotional plague is not mastered . . . We take such accidents in the same manner as one takes a serious physical disease . . . of an esteemed co-worker."

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THE OPEN EYE
FIGURES IN A LANDSCAPE

EVERYONE suddenly burst out singing . . . well, not really, but it felt like that for a moment as I came out of the pub in Dean Street. It was actually a team of girl revivalists singing hot-gospel songs beneath the boozy mural that Feliks Topolski had painted for the Soho Fair, Good old Topolski—for years in his various enterprises he has tried to make us metropolitan feel that living in a city, even an appallingly gargantuan one like London, can be a festive and stimulating thing, that, as Plato says, the city arises for the sake of life, but is for the sake of the good life. An illusion, no doubt, when applied to London with its steaming millions of *Subtopians*.^{*} All the same the Soho Fair was the best idea to hit London since 1951, despite the elements of bumbledom, despite the sales-promotion, and despite the fact that Golden Square, one of the few possible places for a large open air assembly in Soho, has recently had its usefulness halved and its plane trees cut down by the Westminster City Council who, as Peter Shephard said in a recent broadcast,

chewed it up to provide one of those hideous little parodies of gardening, with rockeries, wrought-iron gates, urns, crazy paving and mock-rustic stone walls, which seem to be inspired by that verse beginning "A garden is a lovely thing, Got wot", which I believe Edith Sitwell once said was like being hit over the ear without provocation.

The result of this was that there was no room for dancing in the square, and precious little in the streets because of the traffic so that, officially at least, it was confined to a few mews and courts, and on the evening of the 14th of July, ("Should we not dance on Bastille Day who still have many walls to breach?"), the Soho streets were jammed with cars and taxis and traffic cops. What a pity the authorities turned down Mr. Berlemont's request that evening traffic should be diverted, just for a week. One of the delightful things about the 1951 Exhibition on the South Bank was that you could stroll around its concourses without being chivvied and harassed by cars. And it seems to me that the thing that makes Venice about the most enjoyable city in Europe is not so much its canals as the fact that no vehicles enter it—it's a pedestrian city and not an obstacle race with death at every corner.

^{*}See *Subtopia: The Expanding Ugliness* (FREEDOM 9/7/55).

PROBABLY nothing better could be thought of, as likely to bring new interest to our towns, than some form of annual festival like the Welsh Eisteddfod, wrote W. R. Lethaby forty years ago, "such festivals have been general in all times and countries, and the people are starved for the lack of them." Well, there's no lack of them now, and this is the Festival season. From Haslemere to King's Lynn something festive is happening, and somewhere between the two, at the village of Great Bardfield, the painters and designers who live there have been holding their Summer Exhibition, which gave me more pleasure than most of the exhibitions I have seen in London for a long time. I adhere to the William Morris, Eric Gill view of art ('the artist is not a special kind of man, every man is a special kind of artist'), and I am not fond of the idea of Art (which in present-day English means easel-paintings, in the same way as the word morality is equated with monogamy). I don't like the idea because of its narrowness and its pomposity. Imagine the people who have been going to Ben Nicholson's retrospective exhibition at the Tate Gallery this week, gazing at his exquisite nothings in their frames on the walls, talking a lot of pretentious Art-jargon, and going home, priding themselves on their visual enlightenment, and oblivious to the visual squalor of their homes, their places of work, their streets and their cities.

I didn't feel this preciousness and falsity at Great Bardfield, a very attractive village, which like its neighbours Thaxted and Finchingfield has escaped being mucked about by our visually illiterate century simply because of its inaccessibility. The painters who live there have congregated accidentally, either because they were born round there or because the place is beautiful, peaceful, and relatively cheap to live in, and their trade does not make it neces-

sary for them to live in towns. They don't form a 'school': their work is individual and diverse. For a week they have been showing their work in their homes to whoever cared to come and see them and their work. John Aldridge showed paintings and wallpapers; Edward Bawden, watercolours, lithographs, book-jackets and beer-bottle labels; George Chapman and Walter Hoyle showed paintings, engravings, wallpapers and posters; Audrey Cruddas her stage and costume designs for the Old Vic productions of "Macbeth" and "Henry IV"; David Low showed cartoons and coloured drawings; Michael Rothenstein, lithographs, lino-cuts and engravings; Clifford Smith and Joan Glass, paintings and textile designs; and Marianne Straub shows her furnishing fabrics.

WHAT an astonishing wealth, all in the High Street of a rambling North Essex village! In the workshop which Mr. Rothenstein has added to his house, the visitor could see the means with which he produces his colour prints—the zinc and copper plates, the stones and lino-blocks and the star-handled press. Miss Straub's fabrics, which are made by a firm at Braintree are simple and avoid modishness, and at the same time have a wonderful deep and varied texture. Clifford Smith, whom I last met twelve years ago when he was painting airy landscapes, shows the most deeply felt pictures in the exhibition, sombre figures with heavy outlines and a richly worked surface of paint.

In several Great Bardfield houses you could see 'corn dollies'—shepherds crooks, anchors and so on, worked in straw by Mr. Fred Misen whom I saw in the village pub. He made the great straw figures in the South Bank exhibition, and like the professional artists of Bardfield, he must have had a lucrative week. As well they deserved it for their enterprise, and for opening their hearts and their houses to all comers. C.W.

Comment for a Summer Evening

A Frenchman at the Court of Old Bailey

THE popular notion in this country is that France, besides being the world centre for good food and choice wines is also the symbol of "sex uninhibited". Knickers, kisses and letters seem to acquire some special glamour, sexyness and naughtiness when they are prefixed by the word "French". Kinsey and life however, convince us that the magic word "French" applied to sex is the invention of enterprising advertising men to attract tourists from the cold north to "gay Paree"; that in reality it is all a myth, a monopoly based on false values, that perhaps the real avantgard is to be found among the nose rubbing Eskimoes or among foot fetishists of China. Yet . . . we must confess that we warmed to the idea of a French monopoly in sex as we read through the sordid columns of the News of the World last week and came across the report of a case of an eighteen-year-old French tennis player who had come to our shores to take part in the Wimbledon championships but instead had ended in the dock at the Old Bailey, simply because the chambermaid at his hotel, a young German girl, had taken his fancy. The traditional frontiers of hostility were in a short time broken down . . . by a kiss (French or German?).

What in fact endears this young Frenchman to us is not so much his technique as his attitude to this sex business. After all his technique was a little old-fashioned. His opening gambit was to ask the German girl whether she would like him to give her French lessons. Of course, she saw through that one right away, and with a laugh told him "I know what you mean" (clearly indicating that the myth had even crossed into Germany). He then asked Miss Germany whether she knew "what love means in French" and she defensively replied "No". And so it went on until words were followed by action. Our fraulein "did not mind a kiss so much" though "that was bad enough for me because I had only seen him five minutes be-

fore". It was what followed that really disturbed her. "She still did not seem to object" said our French boy answering counsel on the subject of the second kiss. Indeed he "kept on kissing her and she didn't try to get away". But did he not notice, later, that she was crying? But Yes! Our French Romeo even noticed that she had "big tears" in her eyes, and he apologised. Not only did he lend her his comb to tidy her hair but apologised a second time. And when she left he asked her to kiss him. "She kissed me with the end of her lips". We all know what he meant. But Justice takes nothing for granted, and the dew-kissed pastoral scene being unfolded by our impetuous boy was suddenly interrupted by the equally innocent yet neutral voice of the judge with his "I don't understand". Our young hero, more accustomed to the romantic surroundings of the Bois de Boulogne than the dock of the Old Bailey, asked "if he could demonstrate what he meant" and "leaning forward . . . lightly kissed the back of his left hand". Charmant!

Kissing is one thing but, said learned counsel for the prosecution, "pushing her on the bed" . . . "surely there is a more artistic method of approach?", and, betraying his own pro-French prejudices where love-making is concerned, added: "This is not your general approach is it?" And here our French boy, ignoring all the rules of the Old-Bailey-game, of being shamefaced, apologetic, and contrite (and so placate the vindictiveness of the Law) replied: "If the girl was willing, why not?" In this one sentence an eighteen-year-old boy blew off the wigs of the Law, broke through the iron curtain of "respectability", hoisted the flag of freedom (note: "if she was willing"), and melted the hearts of eleven (or whatever it is) true men and free . . . quite apart from perpetuating the myth that there is something magical, outside the law and the "respectable", in the word "French"! R.

CINEMA

ACROSS THE WINE-DARK SCREEN

THERE can be no disputing that the *Odyssey* is the best story in the world. And as it consists almost entirely of flashbacks it was inevitable that one day it would be filmed. That day has now arrived, and you can see *Ulysses* at the Marble Arch Pavilion. The result can only be described as disappointing.

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Nowadays it is fashionable to believe that Homer is the trade name of a poetic syndicate; but they at any rate were successful, which is more than we can say for the seven script writers whose joint labours are responsible for this opus. The modern team have kept the bare bones of the plot, but why they should treat it as they have done would make an interesting study for our writers on psychological matters.

They have left out a great deal. Zeus and his rollicking crew of gods and goddesses get no more than a casual mention from the mortals who monopolize the screen. This, I think, is a pity. The bedroom scene with Hephaestus and Aphrodite would have provided some light relief, and this film could certainly do with some. A glimpse of the bright-eyed Athene and Iris of the slim ankles would have been very welcome, too.

But the charmer I missed most of all was Calypso. I have never understood why Odysseus should have wanted to leave her. If he had not, of course, there would have been no story. But that is hardly a good reason.

As it is the film cuts straight from the suitor-beset Penelope (Silvana Mangano) in Ithaca to the beach in the kingdom of Alcinoos where Odysseus (Kirk Douglas) has been washed up. There are still some clothes clinging to him, and he has no need, in this decorous version, to hide his manhood behind a branch when he is found by Nausicaa (Rossana Podestà).

In the film he is suffering from a bad attack of amnesia. When it is dispelled we are shown something of his wanderings in a single flashback, a restraint that is perhaps the result of oversensitiveness on the part of our script writers to the strictures of certain reviewers.

We see the sack of Troy. Then our hero, loaded to the gills with loot and hubris, sets sail for home.

by a different ruse from that in the Homeric version. The change is not an improvement.

On sail our heroes, past the Sirens, whose song the makers have (wisely, I believe) not attempted to reproduce. No doubt we shall hear that at a later date, in stereophonic sound, when somebody decides (as somebody is sure to do) to turn the *Odyssey* into a musical.

Next stop: Circe (Silvana Mangano again). This episode sticks closely to the original and, perhaps for that reason, is one of the most successful.

With memory now happily restored, our hero leaves the disappointed Nausicaa for home to deal with the importunate suitors, who are duly wiped out in one of the most impressive bouts of butchery to be seen on the screen for a long time. Here again the film is most successful when it sticks to the original.

And there you have it. On the credit side there is some beautiful photography in Technicolor, which is still, after 21 years, the best of the lot. And there is a good performance from Kirk Douglas, who succeeds, in spite of the script, in bringing the title rôle to life.

The debit side is a good deal longer. Two of the actors are American (Anthony Quinn, as Antinous, is the other) and the rest are Italian. Consequently most of the dialogue has been dubbed, much of it breathily, close to the microphone. And what dialogue! It seldom rises above the comic-strip level and effectively drains from the story all the magic that lies in the language used. The tempo is too slow and the emphasis usually in the wrong place. At the risk of editorial disavowal I would add that there is too much lovey-dovey and not enough blood and thunder.

The producers have come to grief in their attempt to steer that famous middle course. It is clear that they have tried to make a film that will be popular with the morons in the suburbs without greatly upsetting the dons. In the event they have fallen foul of both Scylla and Charybdis. E.P.

THE FORGOTTEN REVOLUTION

JULY 19th, 1936 is, for pre-war generations of the progressive movements of the world, a date whose significance remains, in spite of the passing of the years and of events which, alas, may have relegated it to the depths of the unconscious. For the post-war generation the Franco rising in Spain, and the heroic resistance of an almost unarmed people which frustrated the militarists plans in two thirds of the peninsula, are vague and confused events about which they have heard occasional references but about which virtually no literature exists in the English language. One can understand, therefore, when the young find the reminiscences and the references to the struggle in Spain by their elders somewhat irritating because not only did they not live through the excitement, the hopes, the frustration and the disappointment of that period, but, even assuming they had the curiosity to seek to reconstruct for themselves the atmosphere, which so obviously swept us off our feet at the time, they would find no trace in contemporary literature—apart from a few novels which use the Spanish scene as a background. And to-day the young have too many "important" things to do—whether it is training to be specialised cogs in the industrial machine or meekly submitting to two years training in the "art" of killing—than to delve into the files of the newspapers and periodicals of the time or the literature which poured from the presses, partisan, uncritical, superficial though they may have been. Yet if they took the trouble to do so, they might conclude with us that the Spanish "civil war"—or revolution—depending whether you were a liberal or an anarchist—is the most significant social affirmation by the "ordinary" people since the Russian Revolution.

That it ended in defeat does not detract from its greatness; the silence that surrounds this struggle that cost more than a million lives is an artificial one. Why is it that nearly forty years after the Russian workers "voted with their feet" the books, the interpretations of that struggle appear in an unending stream, yet our historians choose to ignore the Spanish struggle which ended only sixteen years ago? Is the answer perhaps that the histories which have been written of the Russian revolution are in fact histories not of the social revolution (which failed) but of the political struggle which ended with the victory of the Bolshevik party? Is there no significance for instance in the fact that Professor Carr in his three volume history of the Russian Revolution hardly mentions the Makhnovist movement in the Ukraine? Is there no connection between such an attitude and that of the liberal Press and progressive writers of this country to the struggle in Spain which ignored completely the social revolution that was taking place contemporaneously with the armed struggle against Franco's armies? Voline was right when he gave the title of *La Revolution Inconnue* (The Unknown Revolution) to his study of the Russian Revolution and he offers us a profound answer to the question we have asked ourselves when he writes:

"... With very few exceptions, the rare witnesses who leave notes, and also the historians, are disgustingly partial. Each one deliberately seeks and finds, in a revolution, the elements which will support a personal thesis, or will be useful to a dogma, a party, or a caste. Each one carefully hides and discards all that might contradict his own theory. The revolutionaries themselves, divided by

THE articles in the May *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* are important for a balanced view of what Americans may expect in the way of danger from radiation poisoning, in the event of atomic or H bomb attack.

In particular, the article, "Fall-out and Candor," by Ralph E. Lapp, should be read for specific criticisms of the Atomic Energy Commission's official release on fall-out, made public on Feb. 15, 1955. It is plain that Dr. Lapp regards the AEC's version of the danger as misleading. We are not going to "argue" this matter, since it is a subject on which experts should be consulted, but simply suggest that when experts disagree on a question of such vital importance to the entire population, all, and not just selected or "official" experts, should be heard. Dr. Lapp, for example, has the following objections to the AEC report, which are listed as section headings in this article:

1. The AEC report is not candid on the persistence of fall-out.
2. The AEC report does not define the nature of the super-bomb.
3. The AEC report glosses over the internal hazard of fall-out particles.
4. The AEC report is irrelevant with respect to genetic effects of fall-out radiation.

These statements may stand without comment, except for item No. 2, which requires a slight explanation. No "secrets," Dr. Lapp says, need be revealed in order to inform the public of one important fact about the super-bomb. A single sentence would be enough, and Dr. Lapp gives it—"The fall-out radioactivity is the same as that from the simultaneous detonation of several hundred Nagasaki type A-bombs." One thing more: In connection with the Lapp article, an extract from the Congressional Record, reporting the Kefauver Hearings (Feb. 22, 1955, Civil Defence Subcommittee on Armed Services), should be of special interest, since it tends to show that individual scientists writing for *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* and the liberal press are providing better information to the public than the releases of the Atomic Energy Commission.

We have heard a great deal about the death-dealing capacities of atomic bombs—so much, perhaps, that we are sated with the horror of it all. Scientists, however, anticipating conditions which must

their theories, try to dissimulate or distort whatever does not agree with such and such a doctrine...

In the last analysis, who then can seek to establish the real and only truth? No one—or practically no one... and the fundamental truth of the real revolution remains unknown.

However, it is this hidden revolution which carries with it the seeds of future upheavals... *

The histories of revolutions are seldom written by revolutionaries but very often by University dons and ex-leader writers of *The Times* who are professional historians, more often than not hostile to their subject and to those who participate in these social upheavals. The histories of a revolution can either be a distorted picture of a series of events or an analysis which seeks the causes of the defeat. Only those sympathetic to the ends of revolution can write the latter and no commercial publisher undertakes such ventures. Not even the "distorted picture" is a commercial proposition where the "revolution" has failed. That is the fate of the Spanish struggle. And the intellectuals of the thirties who found their inspiration and based their hopes on the determined resistance of the Spanish workers and peasants not only have betrayed that cause by ignoring its lessons but have connived at Franco's victory by sunning themselves in Santander or on the Costa Brava†. Their cheap holidays are being paid by the sacrifices of the Spanish workers in July 1936 and their accumulated sufferings after sixteen years of "Christian" despotism.

*Voline: 1917—*The Russian Revolution Betrayed* (Freedom Press).

†See "Holiday in Spain" in *Tribune* last week.

THE COMMONPLACES OF ATOMIC WAR

be met if America suffers attack, have been obliged to consider every aspect of this kind of warfare. In the issue of the *Bulletin* under review, Donald N. Michael writes on "Civilian Behaviour under Atomic Bombardment," being concerned with the preparations needed to ease the almost impossible task of evacuation in case of bombing, and to face the problem of medical care for the wounded. Mr. Michael draws on the available literature on European behaviour under "ordinary" bombing and Japanese reactions to the atomic destruction of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, but concludes that the information is "almost useless as a basis for predicting whether, in the period immediately preceding the attack, Americans will panic wildly, be reduced to terrified paralysis, or carry out a disciplined evacuation." He feels a similar uncertainty as to how Americans will react to actual bombing:

One can speculate about the sustaining virtues of the pioneer spirit of co-operative assistance in times of crises. But one can also speculate about the traumatic consequences of finding that there is nothing to assist with. As the bombs grow bigger and more numerous, will our capacity to cope with the physical and psychological consequences of atomic war grow apace? If not, then this writer fails to find anything in the literature which leads him to believe that we can predict for us a more encouraging state of morale than existed for the Japanese. Will our morale even be as good?

Reviewing the work of eye-witnesses of the atomic bombing of the Japanese cities, Mr. Michael quotes from *We of Nagasaki*, by T. Nagai, concerning the break-down of moral values among the survivors.

While the victims helped one another in some measure—especially the members of their own families—this was not the rule. Nagai reports:

In general, then, those who survived the atom bomb were the people who ignored their friends crying out in extremis; or who shook off wounded neighbours who clung to them, pleading to be saved... in short, those who survived the bomb were lucky, in a greater or lesser degree selfish, self-centered, guided by instinct and not civilization... and we know it, we who have survived.

This is not a pleasant subject, but there is no reason to restrain ourselves

from examining the uglier aspects of an atomic attack. No nation which contemplates using atomic weapons should let itself be ignorant of what happens when such explosives are released over inhabited places. Nagai has this to say of the tragedy at Nagasaki:

Hundreds, perhaps even thousands, of corpses lay in the fields around town, the ground completely covered by them in some places. They were already swollen round, and looked a little like watermelons in a patch; and some people were saying as a joke, "If only they were watermelons you could eat them."

The doctors and nurses... had been working without sleep or rest for five days. I went upstairs to see Hatsue. I had to hold my nose—regular streams of filth were pouring down the stairs and I had to hop from one clear spot to another. Some of the people on the second floor were on the point of death, and had no control over their functions; many had thrown up on the concrete floor, and the whole place was one foul pool. The patients lying on the floor were bathed in it. It poured over the floor and down the stairs.

This is the sort of thing that is invited by those who are eager for atomic war, or eager to do things which may make atomic war inevitable. Michael comments:

Bear in mind that these descriptions refer to a people who place a deep ceremonial emphasis on cleanliness and on the proper treatment of the dead. Other descriptions reveal a helplessness and hopelessness engendered by the mysterious, delayed appearance of radiation sickness and death. Moreover, if to all this is added the jump in miscarriages, abortions, and premature birth from 6 to 27 per cent, a not unlikely prediction would be that these people or any others subject to such experiences would bear psychological scars for the rest of their lives...

In another place, Michael cites a passage from Nagai telling of the psychological disorientation which overtook persons who were relatively unharmed. They did not hear when they were spoken to, could not stop searching the sky, did senseless things without meaning. "From that time to the end of the war," said Nagai, "everybody seemed to be going crazy." This persistent excessive state of anxiety, Michael notes, afflicted those who lost loved ones and who themselves barely escaped death or serious harm. He also remarks that the more powerful weapons of the present would greatly enlarge the number of "near-miss victims" of this sort, "because of the expanding periphery of partial destruction."

Michael says one thing which has a bearing on the policy of the AEC in respect to the danger of radiation poisoning from fall-out, explaining, perhaps, the official tendency to minimize this hazard. The Japanese, he points out, being victims of the first atomic bombing, knew nothing of the radiation sickness, while Americans not only have in-

formation on the subject, but are also "health-conscious," or, as Michael puts it, "anxious about disease." He expects, therefore, that atomic bombing of American cities will bring serious emotional disturbance from fear of poisoning: "pseudo-radiation sickness, presenting a serious morale problem which, by the very nature of the situation, will be an unprecedented one."

Can this anticipation be taken as justifying a hush-hush policy concerning the dangers of radiation poisoning? In the Kefauver Hearings, there was this interchange between Senator Symington and Dr. Willard F. Libby of the AEC:

Senator Symington: What I was wondering is why there is so much classification around this question of how much people will be hurt if a bomb exploded. Why isn't it something that should be given more freely, and, following Senator Kefauver's line of thought, why does it sort of leak out, you might say, instead of being announced by the various responsible people in the government?

Dr. Libby: Well, the only general answer I have is that we have a great responsibility to be correct.

Over against the argument that care must be taken to prevent national hysteria is the view that, without full information concerning the effects of atomic bombing, those in charge of preparing to meet such a disaster are left in the dark as to what to do. At the hearing in which the above question was asked by Senator Symington, Governor Val Peterson, Federal Defence Administrator, told the members of the subcommittee:

"I might mention that this is the first time that as Civil Defence Administrator, I have been called before the Congress, other than the Appropriations Committee, at the time we were requesting funds for the ensuing year."

Dr. Lapp remarks that the facts of the fall-out observed at the Bikini test have been available "to those inside secret circles" since March 1, 1954, but that almost a year intervened before some of those facts were made public.

The writers in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* are chiefly concerned with the government policy in how atomic war is prepared for. The *Journal* takes another view, the view embodied in the question—Ought atomic war to be even contemplated, much less prepared for?

(Condensed from "Manas", Los Angeles, 22/6/55).

SUMMER SCHOOL

Applications for accommodation and meals during the Summer School (August Bank Holiday weekend, Malatesta Club, London), must be in EARLY.

All correspondence to:

JOAN SCULTHORPE,

60 Kenninghall Road, London, E.8.

LETTERS Continued from p. 2

We must stress one vital point: It is established that our work was called "important", "very good" and "impressive", and some of these statements were published. The only responsible action of the great men who had made these comments would have been to point out, at once, any weaknesses and any harm whenever they spotted it, to us and our readers. In spite of their reading O.F. and their correspondence with us during the last year and a half they did not do this. Thus it is understandable that we believe, having the highest regard for the sense of responsibility of the men in question, that weaknesses are not of decisive importance and that no harm was done. It is so much simpler to assume that the incident represents an attack of the plague "a familiar phenomenon to me and my close co-workers," than as an act of irresponsibility on the part of Wilhelm Reich, Ola Raknes, A. S. Neill, Walter Hoppe, Elsworth Baker and Nic Waal.

Our work will continue. "Love, work and knowledge are the well-springs of our life. They should also govern it." Not categorical denouncing, that just hurts.

Liverpool. PAUL RITTER.

Conscientious Objection to end War

Re Bertrand Russell's manifesto. Why does not that warning point to the only thing (except horrible events), that will end war, namely, Conscientious Objection. Say that scientists should resign from science, take the risk of losing their livelihood, be prepared to suffer imprisonment sooner than continue manufacturing war.

Then and then only would I consider the manifesto as a power for abolishing war—one genuine objection would be worth a million words.

July 15. CLARA COLE.

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S. AFRICA'S SLAVE EDUCATION ACT

ON April 1st the Bantu Education Act was brought into force by South Africa's Nationalist Government and its object was clearly summed up by Dr. Hendrik Verwoerd, the Minister of Native Affairs, in his declaration: "There is no place for the Bantu in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour." It is hardly surprising therefore that the parents of the children involved should call it the "Slave Education Act".

One of the results has been that seven thousand children have boycotted their schools as a rejection of this compulsory "inferior race" education. Dr. Verwoerd's answer was typical of the present administration's attitude, for he decreed that if the 7,000 children did not return to school by a certain date they would be barred altogether until the end of the year at least. This decree may be reviewed next year if the Africans can satisfy him that the school boycott movement is dead. If this happens then 3,000 pupils will possibly be readmitted; if all parents obey orders probably all 7,000 will be permitted to return to their lessons by the end of 1956. Thus many of the children will miss nearly two years school education. Dr. Verwoerd has added "with great emphasis" that these concessions must be earned by good behaviour—a committee will be set up to screen applicants for readmission to schools.

Africans Defiant

In spite of the risks involved—six months in prison or a £50 fine—African parents have started a movement to give their children proper education. But it is illegal in South Africa to teach anything to Africans unless the school is registered, and, needless to say, the power to register and de-register schools rests entirely with the Minister of Native Affairs. So it is almost inevitable that there will be prosecutions against the organisers of the movement including influential whites in political, religious and educational bodies.

The basic aim is to establish as many legally run schools as possible by taking over those registered before the Act came into force. Recently a small school of this category, with only 50 pupils, was taken over, and within a few weeks enrolment went up to 1,000. In addition to this sort of activity African parents are uniting to start "cultural clubs" where their children can get an "adequate" education. Most of these will probably be in the open air and may have to use methods of storytelling for history and geography, and possibly games will be used to teach arithmetic. But premises, teachers and money will be desperately needed and inevitably a hard struggle is ahead for the "African Education Movement".

In order to achieve worthwhile results the movement's aims must of necessity be carried out with future prospects in mind—the territory to be covered is enormous, and the numbers of children concerned very considerable. At the present time there is concentration on three groups of children: 1. the 7,000 debarred by Dr. Verwoerd; 2. those who have had no schooling whatsoever; 3. pupils at "Bantu education" schools whose knowledge will badly need supplementing.

Long Term Objectives

At this early stage of the affair it is hard to judge what may happen, but it would seem very unlikely that Verwoerd will allow the situation to develop very far without taking fairly drastic action. The African National Congress has decided to continue its boycott, despite the threats, and when the new school term starts next month there will probably be new developments of an unpleasant character.

We stand on the sidelines watching the struggle between the forces of totalitarianism being opposed by a repressed race, and can only hope that the efforts of a united people (for upon this issue there is more widespread unity than at most times), will prevail at least to some extent. The fundamental nature of education, and its consequent effects on the eventual outcome of the Africans' struggle cannot be over-emphasised. Upon the result of this conflict may rest the future of South Africa for the next century. H.F.W.

euphemistically termed as free elections and unification of Germany with of course the ex-enemy allied to the West. The Russian bloc favour the neutralizing of Germany and the withdrawal of troops.

This, as has been pointed out in the *Observer* would firstly require the Russians explicitly to accept the rearmament of Western Germany, under the Paris treaties, up to whatever level is finally agreed; and it would require the West to accept the present East German régime as a treaty partner—a step to which the West German Government has already declared its solemn opposition.

Thus, it seems, that on the most important political question due for discussion at Geneva the possibilities of an agreement acceptable to both sides are remote unless a compromise can be reached on the militarisation of East and West Germany.

A statement in *Time* gives us some idea of the American attitude when they say that the U.S. will not yield to a neutralized German State, and there is little in the Soviet attitude which leads us to believe that they need make a compromise at this stage, although they have not opposed the idea of "free" elections.

After the international status of such a united Germany, and in particular its exclusion from any one-sided military alliance with West or East, have been settled in advance among the powers.

There are other issues which will be discussed at Geneva; East-West trade, China's entry into the U.N. and the position of the countries under Soviet domination. But the central issue is Germany, apparently taking precedence over the world problem of total war, and there has been more speculative gloom evident in the last few days over this than the possibility of mankind's annihilation feared by so many scientists.

The latest reports before going to press are summed up by a "Student of Soviet Affairs" writing in the *Manchester Guardian* on the first day of the Geneva conference:—

"When one gets down to brass tacks, like the specific issue of Germany, the Soviet and Western positions are as far apart as ever, and so firmly held that it is difficult to see how negotiation could bring them substantially nearer to each other."

Anarchists are the last to suggest that reasonable discussion is not a way to arrive at a solution to human problems. But reasonable discussion is only possible between rational people with a common aim.

Therefore, one may ask, is the collective aim of the big powers identical, and are the leaders at Geneva interested in the people they are supposed to represent, or only in their separate national states and their positions as leaders within them?

Even if we assume that the leaders of the powerful nations have had a change of heart, either through circumstances or conviction, the six eight-hour days fixed for the Geneva conference can do nothing but make official policies which in the main have already been decided beforehand.

Nevertheless all the countries represented are anxious to appear friendly and reasonable so that if the discussions break down completely all will say to the world "We did our best, it was the other side that failed".

As we see it, this conference at Geneva with its battery of policemen and pundits is yet another hoax in the desperate game of power politics. R.M.

SETTING THE PEOPLE FREE

WHILE the Labour Party were in office, the Conservatives consistently attacked the 'austerity' Budgets and economic policy of Sir Stafford Cripps. 'Set the People Free!' they cried, assuring us all of the good times to come once we were let loose with all our money to spend as we liked.

Controls were to go, rationing to end, bulk buying to be abolished, so that British merchants could once again adventure abroad in search of the best for the British people. And the best, freed from the burden of doctrinaire bureaucracy, would be the cheapest.

How is it working out? In the particular case of the good red meat that Lord Woolton promised us, it seems to be working out very well—for the butchers.

Freedom . . .

The *Sunday Express* (17/7/55) published the story of a reader who found that her piece of good red meat was working out rather expensive. This is how the *Sunday Express* reported it:

'If you find your butcher is overcharging, what can you do about it? Answer: NOTHING.'

That discovery was made by a *Sunday Express* reader who was charged 4s. 6d. for 11½oz. of steak. She took it to another butcher and asked him how much it should have cost. He told her 2s. 7d. In a letter to the *Sunday Express* the reader describes her efforts to do something about it. As well as a housewife and broadcaster she is a public servant—and asks that her name be withheld. She writes:—

Having returned the steak to my butcher with my courteous protest, and bidding him a tender farewell, I phoned: 1. My rural district council. Meat? Oh we don't touch meat. Only drains and houses and that sort of thing.

2. The office of the Ministry of Food. Meat? Oh no, no, no! Only dried milk. You see we're really the Ministry of Labour now.

3. The Citizens' Advice Bureau. Very charming they were. Told me there was a man in Bristol who inspected food who might help me. They know so little about meat.

4. The man in Bristol. Meat? Oh, no! Not on your county. I can't do anything about meat all that way away.

5. The police. Meat, madam? No! But you might try the county authority.

6. The county council—weights and measures department. Ah! I was running my fox to earth at last. They told me, with extreme clarity that:—

(a) My butcher could only be prosecuted for selling meat *underweight*. (b) Provided that he put the meat on his scales and told me its weight, he could charge me 2s., 6s., 10s., or anything he jolly well liked for it, and nobody could stop him.

(c) Because this is so—nobody can do anything to him except leave him.

A Ministry of Agriculture official said last night: "There are no controls on the price of meat. A butcher can charge what he can get for it."

The amusing feature of this report is that it is published in one of the papers which screamed loudest for freedom from controls—now the tenor of its remarks is that somebody should be responsible for controlling the price of meat!

. . . With Restraint

In the same issue of the same paper, our Chancellor of the Exchequer was quoted.

Mr. R. A. Butler, at Woodford Green, Essex, said that we are in a situation

where it is necessary to RESTRAIN the demands of the home market for a time.

He said that Britain must solve the problem of the 2,000,000 working days lost by strikers in a year.

"It is new attitudes, in management, trade unions, and shareholders alike, that will be required."

"We must always be ready as circumstances change and as the times require, to apply more restraint or less, less incentive or more. To judge the proportions and the timing is a very delicate task."

With Cripps it was Austerity, with Butler it's Restraint. Same thing, different name. Both Cripps and Butler had to face the same problems in the course of running British capitalism, and are solving them in the same way, allowing for the circumstances of the time.

But under either the general public do not have free access to the means of life, which is what freedom really means.

AMERICAN C.D. ANTICS

The antics of the authorities regarding Civil Defence in the event of an H-war do not seem to be limited to this country. In America too, they seem to be going through these futile motions to lull the people into a false sense of security, as the following despatch from Devere Allen in New York (Worldover Press, 1/7/55) forcibly shows.

"THE POWER OF THE ATOM has changed everything, except our ways of thinking." Thus spoke Albert Einstein once, according to the Swiss publication, *L'Essor*. And with what words could we more appropriately describe the official American attitudes toward civil defence? From the very beginnings up to the ultimate farce called "Operation Alert", the story of civil defence is one of lateness and lag, of falling behind

actual developments by two to five years. And a story of consistently kidding the public.

AT NO TIME for the past three years have underground shelters been anything but a guarantee of death, should a genuine super-bomb raid take place. Yet our big cities have gone on displaying shelter signs, and even some halfway scientific spokesmen have urged the public to build them. At the same time, other defence officials have been franker and have explained that nothing now could be of value save evacuation. In Operation Alert our top governmental officers skeddaddled off to safe retreats—leaving their wives and children behind—while in city after city, by conjuring up small enough bombs, many of them dropped theoretically in the least damaging areas, evacuation by masses of the people were made to appear practicable. And yet, along major highways, the signs are still there: "In time of emergency this highway will be closed to traffic." A defence system that can't even get around to removing misleading and outdated signs can hardly be expected to act in accord with up-to-date scientific knowledge.

NEW YORK CITY gravely went through the motions of handling a bomb dropped next to the East River, when the veriest fool of an enemy would drop it in the harbour, where its lethal effect would cause a flood of almost 100 per cent. destructiveness. Yet credit should be given to Mr. Merrill Eisenbud, manager of the New York Operations Office of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, who, in sheer honesty, reported that the use of monitors on foot was impracticable, since these functionaries would be immolated by radio activity. Washington, however, wanted no criticism and fired an equally honest if more outspoken Deputy A.E.C. Administrator for stating the simple truth: that Operation Alert was ridiculous.

THE MAIN IDEA was to educate the public in ways of self-protection—or so it was said. Then what do you make of sending schoolchildren out of their rooms merely into corridors? Or of having subway trains stopped just inside their tunnels with the doors open—presumably so that radio activity could get down inside and do its job quicker? And what do you make of glib assurances that after a certain time the wind will take away radio activity—unless, of course, rain comes and carries the radio active particles of the upper air down to the ground, as actually happened at Hiroshima 15 minutes after the Old-fashioned little bomb was exploded? If we are to endure the disruption of civil defence tests at all, the people deserve to be told the truth, kept up to date, and never treated like so many morons to be deceived, fooled, and cynically lied to. Blunt words, these; but they need saying.

Abolish the Death Penalty

Continued from p. 1

This is because anarchists are concerned with human beings more than with anything else. We do not raise deities, or abstractions like States or nations, above the human personality in importance. And when any member of our society 'goes wrong' in some way or another—breaks down under stress too strong for them to bear—we feel responsible for their failure as if it were our own.

For in fact it is our own failure. If we allow poverty in our society and people starve to death, it's our fault. If they don't starve but become diseased, it's our fault. And if we allow emotional poverty to bring in its wake its particular diseases of the mind—that's our fault too.

Emotionally secure people do not commit murder, any more than materially secure people steal, unless their material security has not brought them mental stability as well—which can often be the case.

Abolition Only a First Step

Crime will not be eradicated until its causes have been removed. The elimination of crimes against property will only come when the twin evils of privilege and want have been eliminated from human society. And crimes which result from a disordered mind will continue until we create a form of society that does not subject the human mind to unnatural pressures in the name of

morality, breeding fears and anxieties and guilts in the quest for conformity.

Thus, simply stated, is the Anarchist position. We are faced, however, with the problem of what to do now.

Our self-appointed task, as anarchist publicists, is to try to influence our fellows towards anarchist attitudes in their thoughts and actions. The more our fellows are prepared to be understanding rather than vengeful, considerate rather than blindly angry, careful of human life rather than bloodthirsty, the easier our task becomes.

The abolition of the death penalty in Britain may appear to be a small contribution towards the eventual establishment of a world-wide anarchist society. But it is a contribution nevertheless and this is the salient point for us to-day—it is something which appears to be immediately attainable.

The defenders of the gallows are on the defensive. They are on the run. Every one of us who can be vocal in any way, who can string two sentences together with his tongue or his pen should hammer away at this chink in the armour of reaction. Try to convince the hesitant and the doubtful—success in this one thing is not far off and our society will be the cleaner when it goes.

Hanging is a filthy business. IT MUST BE ABOLISHED!

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)

JULY 24—Edwin Peeke on Subject to be announced.

INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS

Every Thursday at 8.15.

OPEN AIR MEETINGS

Weather Permitting HYDE PARK Sundays at 3.30 p.m. MANETTE STREET (Charing X Road) Saturdays at 5.30 p.m.

GLASGOW

OUTDOORS At Maxwell Street Every Sunday at 7.30 p.m.

The Malatesta Club

155 HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.1. Saturday, July 16th THE UNITAS Old Nic Company presents a play 'Is Monogamous Marriage Conducive to Sexual Happiness' or—'Glamorous Night'.

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