

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"People ask me why I will not apply 'pressure' on the government to frame laws. Well I am, in fact, not interested in it. What I am interested in is wiping out the government itself and the creation of a new society."
—VINOBA BHAVE.

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Threepence

MUST THIS VILLAGE DIE ?

A Constructive Policy for the Condemned Pits

THIS week-end two pits, the East and Sheer in the South Wales village of Gwann-cae-Gurwen near Swansea, are to be closed down by order of the National Coal Board. One thousand and sixty-five miners who work in these pits are being dismissed, and there is no alternative work for them in the village.

The reason for the existence of Gwann-cae-Gurwen is the existence beneath it of the coal. If they close down the pits the village will die. The men, their wives and children will have to scatter far and wide, leaving behind the homes that some of them are buying, to find employment in the coalfields in other parts of Britain. Nobody will want to buy the houses they leave behind, so the hard-earned savings that have gone into them will be lost, tied up in bricks and mortar crumbling in a deserted village. The miners and their families will have to start completely afresh in new parts of the country, the women and children strangers in the community, the men with no seniorities in the pits.

They have been condemned to this by the National Coal Board because of 'indiscipline' over a long period. Since the mines were nationalised in 1947, there have been 249 stoppages, disputes, go-slows, strikes. Relations between the men and the management have got worse and worse until now the whole set-up of nationalisation is hated by the miners. Time and time again 'agreements' have been made between the NCB officials and union representatives acting 'on behalf of the men', only to be broken by the men down the pits as some new piece of bumbledom by Coal Board officers goads them to 'indiscipline' again.

Losing Money

Because of the interminable disputes, output has fallen in East and Sheer to a fraction of the average for the area as a whole, and the

NCB has been losing money. Now money is almost more important to the National Coal Board than coal, and certainly much more important than miners and the reasons for what seems to be their almost pathological addiction to disputes.

Being an authoritarian, centralised organisation, the NCB can only act like one. And its only answer to the continuous disagreement at East and Sheer has been to close them.

But this, of course, is not a sensible solution. The coal the pits were producing is lost altogether, the coal still underground isn't going to come up at all. Thousands of embittered people are going to be scattered throughout Britain's coalfields, spreading their knowledge of mishandling, misunderstanding and grievance. From the point of view of both the NCB and the National Union of miners the present decision is an admission of abject failure in labour relations. Both the union and the management have completely failed to understand the men and the reasons for their behaviour. The use of the big stick is always an admission of the failure

of reason. From the anarchist point of view this incident is one more lesson in the wrongness of the authoritarian principle, and of the unlikelihood of solving human problems by its use.

A Human Problem

For the problem at these Welsh pits is a human one. This is shown by the fact that during the last two weeks, after the NCB's decision was announced, the men have been working like mad and have so improved their output that they are now producing more than the area average. There is therefore no technical reason why output should not be consistently high—only the human one of bad labour relations.

And so far nobody seems to have come forward with a constructive solution to the human problem—except the anarchists. Last August the Coal Board closed its first pit in South Wales—Brynhenllys Colliery at Brynammon—and FREEDOM (3/9/55) declared 'Give this mine to the miners—now!', claiming that only by turning the pit over to workers' control would the problem be solved.

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The Government's Reaction to Moscow's Army Cuts

IN our assessment of Moscow's New Look foreign policy we wrote last year (FREEDOM, July 16, 1955) that, in our opinion,

If the Russians were to play the card of disarmament unconditionally they could throw the diplomacy of the West off-balance, or if the West accept then we can expect to see in coming years a drastic transformation in the economic set-up in the West . . .

At Geneva, last summer the Russians limited their activities to extravagant toasts and big smiles all round, which in a world that has been trained by its popular press to thrive on the superficial, obviously went down well and brought sighs of relief from the innocent millions. But none of the Western powers suggested that on the strength of these diplomatic smiles they were preparing to cut expenditure on armaments or reduce their armed forces. And the Disarmament Committee of the United Nations which has been sitting for the past nine months has made no progress in that direction. This diplomatic stalemate has now been exposed by Russia's announcement that irrespective of what the West might do, she is about to reduce her armed forces by 1,200,000 men and hoped that her

lead would encourage the Western Powers to do likewise. Russia's "gesture" will not prove to be a political bombshell but it has succeeded in putting the cat among the pigeons, if one is to judge by the reactions in political circles in Europe and America.

★

DR. ADENAUER has declared in Bonn that the Moscow statement should be treated with the "greatest reserve" for no one knew whether the Russians were "changing their fundamental policies, or simply their tactics", and by way of illustration he added "dictatorship remains dictatorship and terror is still terror, whether it is the work of a single man or of a collective". In so doing the German chancellor was simply trying to confuse the issues, presumably in an attempt to make the German re-armament programme (and the arrival of the first American consignment of such obsolete weapons as medium tanks, self-propelled guns and tank recovery vehicles) seem less ludicrous. The "fundamental policies" of the Russian government, as we are always pointing out, are no different to those of other governments. Dictatorship is as much a tactical weapon for the establishment of internal "law and order" as armed forces are weapons in the armoury of international power politics. The "fundamental policies" of governments however are the same, but since each serves sectional or national interests it is inevitable that so long as governments exist there will be crises and conflicts. The present political alignments are not in fact a reflection of two different, and opposing, "fundamental policies" in the world, but simply marriages of convenience, tactics, and from which each national government hopes to draw the greatest advantage so far as its particular interests are concerned.

One has to study the reactions in the various capital cities of the West to the Russian announcement in order to appreciate how slender is the bond which unites the Western powers. It is significant that even

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Letter from France

Trade Unionism Scorned and Envied

THE European Labour Congress met recently in Paris. It brought together several hundred militants belonging to the socialist parties and trade-union organizations of the countries that form part of what it is convenient to call "little Europe", that is to say Germany, France, Italy, and the three Benelux countries of Belgium, Holland, and Luxemburg. For the greater part of these regions the socialist and trade-union forces constitute a reality, at least by the number of their adherents. But this is not so in the case of Italy and France. Moreover the French and Italian socialist and union speakers expressed only the minority currents of opinion

in the organizations they belong to. Philip, who has become a high state official, is no longer either a deputy leader of the SFIO party. And in the case of the Italian socialist party there were only minor figures.

Listening to the speeches—that of Jean Monnet, the "inventor" of the European economic communities, or that of Paul Henri Spaak, former director of the revolutionary Left of the Belgian Labour Party, who is now his country's virtually permanent Foreign Minister—one noticed a certain malaise. There was no faith, no confidence, no hope in a socialist Europe, the original idea of which was gradually watered down until it was transformed into a trend towards a common market and a vague hope, thanks to the participation of several representatives of parties claiming to represent "social progress", in the possibility of tinting these organizations a pale pink. If every possibility of seeing the old continent's nationalisms obliterated within a European organization were not rejected, at least one felt that the enterprise would be led by technocrats and financiers.

The fear of Russian expansion being dispelled thanks to the kind words of Stalin's heirs, which were immediately swallowed by the masters of Western opinion, and the American desire to encourage the European idea being shown now only in words and not in deeds, there are left only the velleities of a few supporters to construct a Europe without frontiers, whereas nationalist passions are regaining vigour and virulence, corresponding with the last spasms of decadence and doubtless precluding a final collapse.

Thus, when we see it close up and can gauge its mediocrity, the European Labour Congress renders still more absurd the campaign carried on for several months in France to start a movement on the lines of the British Labour Party and trade-union set-up. Indeed, in some Social Christian circles, socialist and trade union, the idea of "labourism" has been launched. In support of this attempt a weekly paper (*Demain*) has recently been published, with funds in all probability supplied by the European Coal and Steel Community. In several unions of the CGT Force Ouvrière supporters have put forward resolutions favouring a link between unions and working-class parties

and a break with the "Charter of Amiens". This charter, drawn up and adopted almost unanimously by the CGT unions in 1906, established the complete independence of French trade unionism and testified to the libertarian spirit of the unions.

There is no doubt that since the beginning of the century this charter has been betrayed, infringed, or ignored a thousand times. No doubt the text itself, half a century old as it is, could be criticized, even by libertarians, as not meeting the problems of a highly industrialized world. Beyond the attack on the charter, what is being aimed at is the autonomous spirit and methods of organization and action of the working class. Anarcho-syndicalism and revolutionary syndicalism, repeatedly buried and removed from the world of labour by the theoreticians and the activists of the working-class parties, have the tiresome habit of making a reappearance there—and when least expected. Indeed, although they have neither official platforms nor big-circulation papers at their disposal, their influence has become rooted in working-class circles. This was clearly seen again last year, when strikes unexpectedly broke out in the Atlantic coast shipyards and had the effect of shaking the entire wage mechanism both in the nationalised industries and the world of private enterprise.

The phenomenon reflected by the attitude of the "Labourites" is curious. On the one hand their arguments bear witness to an extraordinary scorn for those unions that repudiate or distrust parliamentary action. But on the other hand they attach such importance to these unions that they would not dream it possible to start a movement of opinion without their participation. Their reasoning is of great simplicity: "In England the Labour Party, whose operations have led to the building of the Welfare State, is based on the working together of the unions and political organizations. So it is necessary to set up a Labour Party, established on the same principle, in France." These valiant socialist "thinkers" forget a number of social situations, historical evolutions, and social structures that make their reasoning the height of fantasy. The first result of a Labourite penetration of the unions, already weak, divided, and not very pugnacious, would be to provoke the secession of every one of the free

ADJUSTMENT TO NEW C.P. LINE

THE British Communist Party seems to have smoothly fallen into line behind the new democracy in the Soviet Union. A communist speaker at Hyde Park yesterday (Sunday, 20th), even made the distinction between British and Soviet Communism. We heard, for the first time to this writer's knowledge since the anti-hanging Bill, that the British Communist Party was opposed to hanging, and the hope expressed that Party members in other countries would eventually see the light and persuade their Governments to abolish the death penalty. Reference was made to political prisoners who were now being treated 'psychologically' where it was obvious that imprisonment as an effective punishment had failed. There was a tacit admission that things were not perfect in Communist countries, but the speaker was satisfied that there were definite signs of a move towards the Communist society. The sweet reasonableness of the approach should not be underestimated. Many well meaning people in this country who have not followed the history of the Communist Party as closely as one would hope, are easily persuaded, particularly since the visit of the Soviet leaders, that the Soviet Union is 'doing its best to promote peace'. And well it might be, for the time being! Meanwhile, in the satellite countries the anti-Stalinist fervour has caught on rapidly. In Poland, the largest of the satellite countries the new anti-Stalin cult has sparked off a vociferous denunciation of Stalin and his policies. Communist intellectuals are publicly confess-

ing how they had twisted historical facts into the party line. Nine cabinet ministers have been sacked, and Stalinist, Vice Premier Jakob Berman, last week resigned from the premiership because of his 'mistakes'. It is reported that there is violent criticism in party circles of 'every phase of the communist effort'.

Confessions will be made, 'mistakes' eventually forgotten. The hatchet men of yesterday will become the advocates of to-day's democracy until such a time as totalitarianism is needed again to hold the people down. But it will be a long time before the effects of the cynical policies of Church and State will be eradicated from the minds of the idealistic youth, expressed in the following letter published in a Polish newspaper:

"When I was ten I was told that my beloved brother Lech was killed in the Warsaw uprising for a falsehood. When I was ten I ceased to believe in the hitherto sacred word Fatherland. When I was 15 I ceased to believe in God. God had proved to be an ally of the murderers of Lech. For long hours I knelt in a dark, empty church. The day finally came when the cross became to me only a piece of wood.

"A friend five years older than I gave me help. He was a Communist. These were my happiest years. I rushed from one meeting to another. I believed.

"Now I am 18. It has turned out that what my family said was true—about the cruelty of secret police investigations and about the dictatorship of Stalin. It has turned out that history was really forged. And I? I do not know how to change my soul for the fourth time without fear that it will become a rag."

organizations. That is why we are convinced that such a proposition would be rejected if it were put before a congress of the CGT Force Ouvrière, which is chiefly aimed at because it brings together, at the side of those with other tendencies, a certain number of hard-working socialists.

Those exponents of neo-labourism who are of good faith—there are several—would do well, before criticizing the libertarians of the trade-union movement who are opposed to their proposition, to read what the English Labour M.P.s themselves have said about Labour's experience. Here, for their edification, is what R. H. S. Crossman admitted in "New Fabian Essays" (1952):

" . . . The impression was given that socialism was an affair for the Cabinet, acting through the existing Civil Service. The rest of the nation was to carry on as before, while benefits were bestowed from above upon some, and taken from others. Thus the first stage of socialism was executed primarily by anti-socialist managers and neutral Civil Servants." (p. 28).

That is what libertarians were already forecasting in 1900 (those very libertarians who are to-day called fossils and utopians): a new society that is not achieved by the working class itself cannot be a society for the working class.

S. PARANE.

Anarchism, Sex & Society

THE only new principle which emerged from the report of the Royal Commission on Marriage and Divorce, published in March of this year, is that the "de facto breakdown of a marriage is in itself a possible, and in some cases a desirable, ground for legal dissolution of that marriage, even though no recognised (legal) matrimonial offence has been committed". (FREEDOM, March 31st). Included in this report was the valuable contribution from individual members of The Law Society and The British Medical Association who appeared before the Commission and whose views are summarised thus:

'Both doctors and lawyers abandoned the idea, which is the basis of our present law, but is repugnant to anyone with wide experience of human frailty, that there can be absolute guilt or absolute innocence in matrimonial affairs.'

(Eirene White, *Observer*, Mar. 25th). While such views expressed by responsible individuals are valuable to anarchists in that they confirm our own views, it is unlikely that those who are in a position to make or remake the laws relating to divorce will risk offending the powerful groups anxious to maintain the status quo, by legally recognising that a marriage can be dissolved without either man or wife being regarded as the 'guilty' or 'innocent' party.

The entire commission took precautions against such a principle being adopted when they all agreed that the 'injured' individuals must have absolute discretion to choose between divorce and permanent judicial separation. Thus, it is suggested, power should be given to either partner to remain legally bound for life when, as has been pointed out, the choice may well be founded in malice.

The general attitude to marriage and divorce is based on the taboos surrounding the whole question of sex, and it is unrealistic to expect a rational approach to this matter from people nurtured in the belief in original sin. The belief that sexual activity outside the socially acceptable pattern is sinful permeates the thinking of the whole of society and few people escape from its influence in some way.

Reports from investigators into sexual behaviour however, indicate that there is a disparity between public morality and private practice. But before we can decide if there is a real change among

people generally in their attitude to sex, it is important to know whether this widening gap between public morality and private behaviour is indicative of a more rational attitude to the manifest variety of sexual behaviour, or is merely a temporary breakdown of accepted standards without any conscious positive intentions. Writing in the *Observer* (Sunday, March 25th), Marghanita Laski in the series Sex & Society conducted by that newspaper, concludes from statistics available, that there is an increase in pre-marital sexual relations which may be the result of a considered rejection of conventional morality.

Some of the figures quoted from Geoffrey Gorer's *Exploring English Character* and the Church of Scotland's Committee on Religious Instruction of Youth show, with certain limits, a positive approval of sexual relations outside marriage:

'Of Gorer's large sample of all ages, only 52 per cent. positively disapproved of pre-marital experience for men, 63 per cent. of such experience for women; many of these added that their own practice had not accorded with their present principles.'

'Still more significant are the percentages positively approving pre-marital relations. Gorer found a third of the men, and just under a quarter of the women, in favour. In the Church inquiry, 38 per cent. of young men saw nothing wrong in such relations if the couple were engaged, as did 11.7 per cent. of the young women; 16.8 per cent. of the men and 4.5 per cent. of the women saw nothing wrong even outside engagements.'

'Some of those who condoned irregular sexual relations,' said the Church report, 'were of the type described as church members or adherents.'

The writer adds that while some of these views might be consciously expressed because of a changing attitude, 'there are some converse pointers. An officer of a society for helping unmarried mothers (she writes), told me that many such girls were shocked at the idea of birth control; their self-respect demanded that they were taken by surprise.'

The startling and widely publicised reports from Kinsey on the American male and female, which stimulated some of our newspapers into screaming disbelief, certainly underlined the gap between the mythical concept of sex, love and marriage, and actual behaviour. But the point with which we are primarily concerned is whether the basis of sexual morality has changed. R.M.

(To be continued)

EXHIBITIONS

German Painting

GRANDMA MOSES, the American primitive painter, has had a tremendous success in America—there are scarves, handkerchiefs, Christmas cards, books, reproductions, everything so far except a fur hat with a tail hanging down behind. The really astonishing thing about Grandma Moses is her extraordinary industry and her age. Her painting is not very dissimilar from that kind of painting which most amateurs of a certain kind go in for—the kind that simply refuses to do otherwise than go for picture-making in as simple a way as possible. Children do this sort of thing instinctively. So does Grandma Moses. And the results are equally delightful and of as little artistic consequence except to those commercial gents of America who turn comparatively uninteresting characters such as Davy Crockett, Roy Rogers and Hopalong Cassidy, into millions of dollars. Grandma has proved to be an industrious and good modern primitive painter, and at the same time, a gold mine for her promoters. The really interesting aspect of Grandma Moses work is that at the far end of a very long life she has suddenly blossomed into paint; she commenced when she was seventy-five and has since produced an incredible stream of work. All very naive and clear, and in a certain detailed way, very informative of the kind of life that farming folk live in Grandma Moses' district. And, of course, the really important fact which emerges from all this is that it is never too late to start painting, and nearly everyone can get something of real personal value out of it.

Since 1938 and the exhibition of banned pictures—Hitler's "degenerate art"—at the New Burlington Galleries, very little German painting has been seen in England, and when we realise, as we do at this present exhibition at the Tate Gallery—"100 years of German Painting 1850—1950"—that among these painters there are many whose works are outstanding in every way. Painters like Franz Marc, Klee, Kandinsky, Kirchner and Kokoschka all seem quite familiar, yet it is only when we see their original productions that we realise to what an extent our familiarity is based upon indifferent reproductions and news. These painters, and many others, have exerted considerable influence over European art in spite of the tendency which German art has had of remaining

somewhat aloof and isolated from the modern trends which have emanated in such heady profusion from Paris. German artistic development has tended to be local, but nevertheless of extreme vitality: Der Blaue Reiter Group at Munich and Die Brücke Group at Dresden have both been of enormous importance to modern art, and later, the Bauhaus at Weimar and Dessau marked the pinnacle of German artistic endeavour. There is a marked difference in outlook between many of these painters. Beckmann, for instance, has his own completely individual style, so too have Kokoschka, Klee, Schlemmer and Corinth. Among these paintings, nearly

all of which impressed me as being very fine works, none made such an immediate impression as the two large abstracts by Fritz Winter—these are so alive that my feeling was one of baffled amazement that colour could be made to produce so alive a reaction. In fact, the abstract paintings were about the best I've seen for a very long time.

This is an exhibition which should not be missed. It is, in my opinion, of much greater importance, historically speaking, than any recent exhibition of national art at the Tate Gallery.

The quality, lay-out, typography and colour printing of the catalogue, deserves a special mention of its own; produced in Germany it is so vastly superior to the usual indifferent catalogue that one is expected to buy, that on this occasion I felt pleased to pay 3/6d. for the pleasure of having it. R.S.

CINEMA

Decline and Fall of the Roman Film Empire

AFTER the war Italian films, having escaped from the stifling grip of the Fascist régime, made a sudden impact on the cinema. With such films as *Open City*, *Shoeshine*, *Bicycle Thieves*, and others of the *genre* that has come to be known as neo-realism, the Italians won for themselves a considerable reputation.

But to-day the Italian film industry is facing ruin. Its debts total some £20 million, and with the expiry of government subsidies on January 1 this year all sources of credit have dried up. When the twelve films now being made are finished all production will cease.

How has this come about? The industry's excuse is the government's delay in passing a new subsidy and quota law. Under the old law all Italian films received a subsidy of 10 per cent. of their box-office takings, and films of "artistic merit" received a further 8 per cent. And a quota system compelled the cinemas to show Italian films for 80 days of the year.

The new law under consideration by parliament proposes a flat subsidy of 14 per cent, and would extend the quota to 100 days in the year. But trouble has arisen over the text. Most of the political parties want to include a revision of the present censorship regulations, dating from 1923, but the Christian Democrats are opposed to this.

The government's delay, however, is not the only reason for the industry's

decline, nor is it the main reason. The early post-war Italian films, which were widely acclaimed and established the reputations of such directors as Vittorio de Sica and Roberto Rossellini, were made on a shoestring and shot in the streets and public places to avoid the cost of hiring a studio. But with success came grandiose ambitions. The Italians set out to beat Hollywood at its own game, and the super-colossal came to Cinecittà.

Hollywood, already faced with competition from television, decided to become even more super-colossal. Such costly technical refinements as colour photography, anamorphic lenses, and multiple sound-track recording were adopted.

The Italians, having committed themselves, have had to follow suit. Already they had adopted the star system, with fabulous salaries for such full-bosomed beauties as Gina Lollobrigida and Sofia Loren. They went in for publicity and phoney glamour on the American scale.

But bigger is not necessarily better, in Italy or Hollywood. The Italians produced one good musical, *Carosello Napoletano*, but the rest of their more lavish productions have not been worth crossing the street for. It is significant that the most recent Italian film to be acclaimed in London, *La Strada*, was a black-and-white film in the old neo-realist style.

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The Tradition of Workers' Control

Syndicalist Controversies

DESPITE the tendency towards anarchism and communism displayed by the later syndicalists, there were concealed differences of attitude which made relations between the anarchists and the syndicalists somewhat less than harmonious. The anarchists "captured" *The Syndicalist* in December, 1913 and joined the small group of British "Wobblies" in condemning moderates like Mann, Tillet, Lansbury and Larkin who were content to advocate amalgamation as a step towards industrial unionism. This policy, they argued, savoured of opportunism. Underlying this difference as regards means was, however, a difference, so far as the anarchists were concerned, as regards ends. Despite the adoption, largely under Bowman's guidance, of what were essentially French ideas of organisation, it was not altogether clear how they fitted in with the organisation of national industrial unions. Pataud and Pouget's book was written at a time when most of the French trade unions or syndicates were still local bodies and soon after the C.G.T. had received a new lease of life from its federation in 1902 with the Bourses du Travail. This fact, as well as their origin, explain Pataud and Pouget's emphasis on decentralisation. At the time when the main outlines of the French structure were being adopted by the British syndicalists, the C.G.T. itself was becoming much more reticent about the future society. Their reticence, which was associated with a greater emphasis on revolutionary direct action, was partly the result of a change in industrial organisation in France. There was a marked trend towards national organisation of trade unions and the Bourses declined in importance within the French movement. In these circumstances, it could be argued that their original theory was fast becoming obsolete. "They have not," said Cole, "thought out a new system of organisation capable of supplanting capitalism in such a way as to accept as its basis national trade unionism."²⁵

Anarchist Criticisms

British trade unionism had from the start of the syndicalist movement been predominantly national in character; hence its insistence on national industrial unions. Although the federal principle found

its place within Bowman's proposed structure—in linking up the unions and the trade councils and then both in the General Confederation of Labour—it found no place inside the industrial unions to which were assigned the tasks of production. The anarchists, who were *par excellence* the exponents of the principles of federalism and local autonomy, suspected that the industrial unions might become unwieldy, bureaucratic and, in the end, tyrannical organisations. Moreover, attempts to reconcile interests in the national level in a central confederative council involved obvious dangers. Although the functions of the central body were to be statistical and informative only, it might easily develop into what would be, on an industrial instead of a territorial basis, a state in all but name. The centralist tendencies evident in sections of *The Miners' Next Step* seemed to confirm anarchist suspicions, especially as one of its authors had previously advocated a plebiscitary form of trade union leadership.²⁶ The attitude of the anarchist syndicalists was expressed thus: "Syndicalists stand for the individual, and are therefore as much opposed to the Industrial State as to the Political State. Actually, we object to an Industrial State even more strenuously than we do to a Political State; for under the second there are at least some people who are free, but under the first there would not be one man or woman left free."²⁷ Following this line of thought, the anarchists laid primary emphasis on "the autonomous workshops controlled through a shop committee" rather than on industrial unions.

A further aspect of this conflict between anarchists and syndicalists becomes clear when it is appreciated that the syndicalists accepted implicitly the large scale organisation of industry. In this their Marxist orientation is evident. They wished to adapt syndicalist theories to industrial organisation rather than industrial organisation to syndicalist theories, and indeed the whole tenor of their propaganda was that the workers must reorganise so that they could achieve the powerful unity which, it was alleged, the capitalists were achieving. Among the anarchists, however, there was a latent and, in the case of Kropotkin, an open hostility towards large scale industry.²⁸

They recognized that freedom could not easily be achieved in modern industrialised society with its marked emphasis on the interdependence of all groups. They felt that the more complex became society, the larger the scale of organisation, the narrower became the chances of the individual finding the freedom with which to develop himself as he saw fit.

The Amalgamation Movement

The conflicts within the syndicalist movement as the first world war approached weakened the effectiveness of its propaganda. By the end of 1913 the I.S.E.L. had shifted its base to the Industrial Democracy League which was active in South Wales and which concentrated on the reform of trade union structure rather than on revolutionary action. The I.W.W., critical of this passive rôle, formed its own British Administration and published a short-lived paper, *The Industrial Worker*, 1913-14. British syndicalists, however, could not be persuaded of the necessity of building up new industrial unions from scratch on the I.W.W. model. During the war attempts were made to place the British Administration on a firmer basis but it never succeeded in becoming an influential force. As far as the anarchists were concerned, the outbreak of war split them into two sections, an important minority led by Kropotkin urging that a victory of the Central Powers must be avoided at all costs. *The Voice of Labour* continued publication until 1916 but exerted little influence on Syndicalist thought and action. With its demise the anarchist conception of syndicalism disappeared for a time to re-emerge later in the form of anarcho-syndicalism. The main body of syndicalists continued to press the idea of amalgamation and to this end set up the Amalgamated Committees' Federation which had as its object: "To prepare the workers for their economic emancipation by their taking possession of the means of production and distribution through an economic organisation outside the control of any parliamentary party or religious sect."

The Workers' Committee Movement

Meanwhile an independent movement, largely composed of new men and influenced by the

REACTION TO MOSCOW'S ARMY CUTS

Continued
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the most sceptical commentators do not doubt that the proposed demobilisation will take place, but these peace-loving people of the West do not unanimously welcome the move! Speaking in Frankfurt last week, the military expert of the Free Democratic Party, Dr. Mende, said that "the reduction of the Red Army was a major threat to the free world". His reason was that he considered the move was designed to assist a Soviet economic offensive "which is still going to amaze us". Since Western Germany has its gaze directed to the development of Asia as an outlet for its industrial production (Herr Krupp's "State" tour of Asian countries recently was to this end and, incidentally, was viewed with some alarm in London), one can understand in what sense Dr. Mende views the reduction in the Red Army as a "major threat" to what he calls the "free world".

So far as the French politicians are concerned the "threat" is of a somewhat different nature. According to the *Manchester Guardian's* Paris correspondent (May 16), the announcement has aroused both "hope and anxiety" in France:

hope because they suggest that the Soviet Government would not be disinclined to see France play to some extent the part to which she aspires in reducing tension between East and West, and anxiety because the French representatives may find themselves in a situation in which to say "no" would expose them to a dangerous propaganda attack from the French Communist party. The banner headlines in *Humanité* announcing this new specific gesture by Moscow indicate well enough the use to which it will be put.

It must be remembered that foreign policy has in recent years been much more of an election issue in France than in Britain, and that French Governments have to consider much more anxiously than British how to secure a majority for their foreign policy and how to strengthen their position in the country by their foreign policy. The Soviet Government is of course perfectly aware of this and is trying to address the French people over the heads of the French Government.

IN Washington, Mr. Dulles is described by the *New York Times* as having taken a "skeptical and broadly negative view". He said that the United States welcomed the Soviet announcement "if this proves to be evidence of an intent to forego the use of force in international relations", but went on to say that "by releasing uniformed soldiers and airmen into industry and agriculture the Soviet Union actually might increase its warmaking power". In his opinion the Soviet move was prompted not by a "love of peace" but by "solid and compelling economic reasons", a view similar to the one he put to Congress last year in a secret report (since made public). Other administration leaders placed different interpretations on the Soviet manpower cut but, writes the *New York Times* Washington correspondent "there was no rejoicing here".

"With the \$34,900 million defense appropriations request and the \$4,900 million foreign-aid request still before Congress, the Administration was being careful not to encourage the economy advocates on Capitol Hill by assigning too much importance to the Moscow announcement."

The Minister of Defence said the Soviet move appeared to be "a step in the right direction", but "he was quick to add", that "it alone will probably not appreciably alter Soviet military power" nor would it justify

"any appreciable cut in our present military strength nor in our present programs for co-operation with our allies in the defense of the free world."

The Secretary of the Air Force also thought that the announcement "did not warrant a change in the \$16,500 million air force request for the next fiscal year".

Mr. Dulles may be right that "solid and compelling economic reasons" have forced Russia to reduce her armed forces, but it would seem that the same arguments can be applied to the United States for not wishing to reduce her military commitments at the present time. The crisis in the American car industry is clearly causing many headaches. At one period "lay-offs and temporary shut-downs" affected 300,000 workers in an industry that normally employs nearly 900,000 workers. 150,000 workers have actually been paid-off "without a time set for their return". And it should be borne in mind that this applies to workers directly employed in the car factories in Detroit. But according to the *News Chronicle's* Washington correspondent:

With the car industry employing one in seven of all wage earners, producing one-fifth of all goods and services, absorbing 20 per cent of all steel, 75 per cent of all plate glass, 68 per cent of all upholstery, there are fears that the slump could spread.

As to how the problem can be solved, well, there is Michigan's Democratic governor, Mennen Williams, who has gone to see President Eisenhower to get him to declare Detroit a "Federal emergency area" qualifying for more defence contracts!

Compared with the United States, British industry as a whole is short of labour, or at least so the government believes on the basis of its publicised theories that increased production will result in increased exports and increased prosperity. At the time of writing we have no government statement on the Moscow announcement, but one wonders whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer's "pipe-dream" described to the Foreign Press Association, a couple of days after the disturbing news from Moscow, is a pointer to the government's future intentions. The Chancellor was describing what would happen if Britain were to cut her annual "defence" costs of over £1,500 million by £700 million. "Of course these calculations about a spare £700 millions are a pipe-dream. We know we can't have it; we are not going to behave in an irresponsible way". And he then proceeded with these "illuminating and tantalising" speculations:

"If we got only half of that £700 millions shifted into exports it would completely transform our foreign balance. And if we got the other half shifted into fixed investment, there would be a good deal less critical comment about our low investment percentage."

That was on the 16th May. Two days later the Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the War Office announ-

"I will call him Anand. Fifteen years ago he was a left-wing politician, a former member of the Congress Working Committee... he was at that time pretty well committed to the Marxian dialectic. When I went back this year I found Anand again. Like so many others today, he was doing village work. The days of excitement and violent action were over. Politics itself was put aside. Why? He made a chopping gesture with his hand. The day when the first atom bomb fell on Japan he had said to himself: 'This is the political approach and it offers no solution.'"

—FRANCIS WATSON (in a broadcast).

★
THE Indian National Congress, beginning as a liberal discussion group, transformed by Gandhi into a mass movement for ending British rule, and to-day the overwhelmingly dominant party in the central parliament and in almost all the provincial assemblies, has many advantages over its political rivals—its history, the way in which it drew together conflicting elements in the struggle for national independence, its evocation of the Mahatma, and the prestige of Jawaharlal Nehru.

But in the years after independence the divisions in the ranks of Congress became more apparent, as did bureaucracy, corruption and stagnation in the administration. In 1950 the then president of the Congress party, J. B. Kripalani, a prominent disciple of Gandhi,

*(Author of the article Social Implications of the Bhoodan Movement reprinted in FREEDOM 31/12/55 from Sarodaya, Oct. 1955).

ced in the House of Commons that no more "Grade 3" men would be called-up as from that day. And one will not be surprised if the government announces in the not distant future that it has decided to dispense with conscription.

★
THE abolition of conscription in Britain will no more convince us that the government has changed its "fundamental policies" than the retention of conscription in Switzerland convinces us that the country is war-minded. What we are convinced of however, is that the ends to which all governments aspire are power and privilege. Therefore even if one believes (which we do not), that the means are justified by the ends, one cannot even then justify the means since the ends of government are socially bad.

One cannot cure or reform governments; but one can cure oneself of the belief in man's need of government for the smooth and harmonious ordering of society. Government thrives on (and therefore encourages) chaos and strife, just as the Church has a vested interest in sinners; though the one professes to stand for "law and order" and the other for "brotherly love"!

THE INDIAN SOCIALIST

resigned in protest and started the Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party (KMPP), with a left-wing Gandhian programme of decentralisation. But the KMPP drew in not merely Gandhians distressed by the gap between Congress principles and performance, but also a crowd of disgruntled Congress politicians who lacked influence in the party machine or had not succeeded in getting a place in the State governments.

In the general elections of 1951-2, the Congress won 362 seats in the central parliament. The Communist Party won 27 and became the second largest party in parliament although in the country as a whole it was negligible. The Socialist Party (which itself had split from Congress in the middle thirties) got twice as many votes as the Communists but half as many seats. The KMPP had the third largest vote. In September 1952, the Socialist Party and the KMPP united to form the Praja Socialist Party and since then many of the discontented Congressmen have returned to the Congress "in exchange for or in anticipation of ministerial posts", as G. N. S. Raghavan puts it.

In March, 1953, Nehru wrote to Jayaprakash Narayan, who for twenty years had been the general secretary of the Socialist Party, inviting the Socialists to join the government. Jayaprakash wrote back to say that "The proposal that you made to me was a bold and unusual one because the Congress Party stood in no need of a coalition, but... if it means only that a few of us are to be added to your Cabinet and some of the State Cabinets to strengthen the Government and your hands in carrying out your present policies, the attempt would not be worth making". He submitted a draft programme which (according to Mr. Raghavan in an article in *Socialist Commentary*), included "constitutional amendment to remove obstacles in the way of social change; redrawing the administrative map of India on the basis of linguistic, economic and administrative considerations; redistribution of land and abolition of landlordism; and nationalisation of banks and insurance companies. Nehru demurred and the talks broke down".

★
WITHIN two years Nehru has become willing to take the steps recommended by Jayaprakash Narayan, and on his return from his visit to China at the end of 1954, he (in Mr. Raghavan's words),

"set about radicalising Congress policy at a breath-taking pace. He got the party as well as Parliament to adopt the objective of a 'socialistic pattern of society'. He introduced a constitution amending bill, designed to facilitate land reform. Nationalisation of insurance is now being considered by the Nehru Government, while a states Reorganisation Commission has already proposed a new administrative map of India. Nehru has thus committed the Congress, in effect, to the very socialist programme from which he had previously shied away".

But while Nehru has been catching up with him, Jayaprakash has moved on, and out of party politics altogether. In 1953 he joined the Bhoodan (or 'Land for the Landless') Movement, which

Vinoba Bhave had begun in 1951 by walking through India's villages demanding as a gift a sixth of the land for distribution to landless peasants (see FREEDOM, 15/12/51, 5/2/55, and 9/7/55). When Jayaprakash appeared at the Sarvodaya conference in 1953 he declared:

"If we are true socialists we should also proclaim our faith in village autonomy. While some people make fun of my appearance at this conference, my participation in it and my admiration for Vinobaji, there are others who say, 'so you have come round at last!' But the time has come for all of us to think truthfully, deeply and courageously. Any true socialist who strives day and night for realising his aims, will find himself in the same position that I find myself in to-day. Let us, forgetting our self-importance and the prestige of the party, get down to work..."

Since then the speeches that Jayaprakash has made up and down the country (see, for instance *A Village Exhortation*, FREEDOM 16/7/55), show the extent to which he has moved towards what, without 'claiming' or labelling him, we may quite fairly call anarchism:

"The experience of the Communist countries shows that if the immediate steps that are taken are not consistent with the ultimate goal, we may arrive at places that are vastly different from the ultimate destination. Placing before them the great ideal of a stateless society, the Communists set out to do everything through the power of the State. The result was that the State went on acquiring greater and greater powers and in place of the State withering away, there emerged the total State."

"It is for this reason that the Bhoodan or Sarvodaya movement insists that if our ultimate aim is to do without the

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ROMAN FILM EMPIRE

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The increase in costs has meant that the home market could no longer cover production costs, and the Italian film industry is faced with that well-worn imperative of the commercial world: export or die. It rather looks as if it is going to die.

It is a familiar story. More and more production regardless of whether anybody wants what is being produced. The advertising boys will create a "demand" for it. And when the home market is saturated then it becomes a case of "export or die".

Sooner or later the whole crazy structure comes toppling down. And who takes the rap? The workers whose lives and happiness are bound up with the industry in question. The captains of industry are all right. If they are making money from an enterprise they are only too pleased to continue with it. But when they start to lose money they prefer to close down, sack the workers, and devote their dubious talents to some other line of business.

So it goes on. And so it will continue to go on until people, seeing the folly of commercialism, decide to get rid of the profit idea and get down to the business of producing to satisfy their needs. E.P.

Syndicalist Controversies

Continued
from p. 2

S.L.P., had sprung up on Clydeside and spread rapidly to Sheffield and other industrial centres. The Clyde Workers' committee was composed of people who accepted the full revolutionary implications of industrial unionism and their connection with the mainstream of syndicalism cannot be doubted. The Workers' Committees were a rank and file movement drawing support from those who were critical of the official trade union leadership which had given its support to the war effort. After a conference of these committees a national organisation was set up and in 1917 it joined forces with the amalgamation movement. The fusion of forces was not, however, altogether satisfactory and at the last Rank and File Conference held in October, 1917, there was serious disagreement between those who wished to form an industrial union and those who wished to concentrate their energies on the workers' committee movement. J. T. Murphy, the chief spokesman of the latter group, evolved a plan for a rank and file organisation to be built upon industrial lines.²⁹ The workshops were to be the basic units of the new organisation, with shop stewards represented on Works Committees and, indirectly, through them, on National Industrial Committees. From these national committees a National Administrative Council would be formed as a counterpart of the T.U.C. The plan closely resembled the existing trade union structure except that it was put on an industrial and not on a craft and territorial bases. Murphy contended that the pro-

posed organisation was not an alternative to the existing structure and that the committees were not intended to usurp the functions of the executives of the trade unions. The exact relationship between the two movements was not, however, clearly defined and the official leaders naturally suspected the worst.

Encroaching Control

The chief interest of the Workers' Committee Movement from our point of view, however, lies in its production of the policy of "encroaching control" through the application of the "collective contract". Two of the members associated with the movement—W. Gallacher of the Clyde Workers' Committee and John Paton of the A.S.E.—published in 1917 a memorandum entitled *Towards Industrial Democracy*. The Works Committees, it was suggested, once they had gained experience and authority, should "undertake in one large contract, or in two or three contracts at the most, the entire business of production throughout the establishment". In this way, the functions of management would gradually pass to the committees. The workers, it was argued, already ultimately pay all the expenses of management without enjoying any of its privileges. By instituting democratic workshops, the number of functionaries could be greatly reduced and many of the species in "the army of managers, foremen, bullies, speeders-up and spies who throng our industry to-day" entirely eliminated. Once the

committees had obtained a foothold in management, they could use their position, by raising the terms of the contract so as to get the full exchange value of their products, to deliver the knock-out blow to capitalism.

The collective contract was thus conceived mainly as a tactical device to obtain control of industry on syndicalist lines. But it does also illustrate the real significance and the strong appeal of syndicalism. The syndicalists said, in effect, that the revolution must begin in the workshop. Their message to the workers was much the same as Goethe's to the emigrant in search of liberty: "Here, or nowhere, is your America!" Here, in the workshop, in the factory and in the mine, they said, we must accomplish the revolution or it will be accomplished nowhere. So long as we are a subject class industrially, so long will we remain a subject class politically. The real revolution must be made not in Parliament or at the barricades but in the places where we earn our daily bread. The organisations that we build up to carry on the daily struggle must be the foundations of the new order and we must be its architects. The law and morality that we have evolved in our long struggle with capitalism must be the law and morality of the future workers' commonwealth. All other proposals are but snares and delusions.

(To be continued) G.N.O.

²⁵ The Genesis of Syndicalism in France—Appendix to *Self-Government in Industry*, 1917.
²⁶ W. F. Hay, *Industrial Syndicalist*, Nov. 1910.
²⁷ *The Syndicalist*, Feb. 1914.
²⁸ See: *Fields, Factories & Workshops and Freedom*, Oct. 1909 and March, 1912.
²⁹ See his: *The Workers' Committee*, 1918.

LECTURE NOTES

The Quest for Workers' Control

THE fourth lecture on the series on workers' control was given to the London Anarchist Group by Carlo Doglio on the system of joint consultative councils in the Olivetti factory.

It was first necessary to sketch in the political background of the situation in Italy; essentially there had been little change and the structure remained monolithic. After the 1914-18 war the idea operating in working-class circles was the theory of workers' councils or soviets on Communist lines. This theory was promoted by Gronchi who in Turin, worked with the anarcho-syndicalists Garino and Ferrero.

After Fascism, in 1942-44, there was a tendency to return to the idea of workers' councils. Other parties, including the Communists attempted to promote this idea. The moving spirit was the 'Action Party' a libertarian-socialist organization (which collapsed in 1947), which worked through the CLN (The National Committee of Liberation). The anarchists were represented in the General Workers' Union. The partisan movement had anarchists in its groups who were not interested in the 'nationalistic' fight of the partisans but in their idealistic aims which have gradually disappeared since latterly they were financed by capitalists. Eventually the political kaleidoscope of power revealed the Catholic parties in office with the result that many of the Communists turned Catholic again. At this time two kinds of workers' committees were in operation: the internal commissions and the *consiglio di gestione*.

Under Fascism the workers were in one union as in the English T.U.C. After Fascism the parties were in favour of one union but in 1946 this union collapsed owing to internal dissension. The Catholics created their own union and the Social Democrats created theirs in 1947. After the Nenni and Saragat split in 1949 another union was formed. The C.I.S.N.A.L. was formed by Fascists in the South recruiting its members largely from the Civil Service.

All workers in an industrial concern vote for thirteen members of the internal commission yearly. Different political lists (sponsored by the unions) are put forward. It is impossible at Olivetti to vote for a Fascist since this is vetoed by Mr. Olivetti, neither is this possible at Fiat since it is found that other parties will fulfil the same function without the political bad odour.

The internal commission represents workers and clerks in discussions with the management. Collective contracts are negotiated but salary clauses are not enforceable. The commission deals with questions of piece rates, job transfers

and alterations of rates for job. The internal commission also works in political fields such as passing resolutions on the international situation.

The *consiglio di gestione* were started on a political basis. They are elected as are the internal commissions but since in the factories they desired to know technical and market data and were Communist dominated it was thought they were being used for commercial espionage and so they were dissolved.

The only *consiglio di gestione* remaining was in Olivetti's, which is not surprising since Mr. Olivetti is an individualist and he decided that his workers' councils should take this form. Ultimately it was found in Olivetti's that it was difficult even through the council to find out what the workers' grievances were. It was thought by some that Mr. Olivetti, by the Machiavellian tactic of taking the lead in forming the councils, had forestalled criticism. However, a newspaper was founded to ventilate criticisms and the speaker was appointed editor, since he, as an anarchist was above party politics.

The paper collapsed after three years because Communists in the council and the technical directors protested. Very few of the workers in the factory objected to the closing of the paper (two thousand of the seven thousand workers were Communists). Mr. Olivetti on the other hand wished the paper could have continued.

In Italian law if a factory has more than fifty workers it must have an internal commission. The constitution of the conciliation councils stipulates that the voting is for a general committee of one hundred. The divisions are of about seven thousand, all grouped by occupation. The voting proportion for the consultant body is seventy workers and thirty clerical workers. This organisation had the potentiality of becoming a House of Commons. However, it only meets once a year and is dissolved. The workers preferring to make direct representations on the job.

Most workers at Olivetti are ex-agriculturists or smallholders which leads to a certain independence of character and a reluctance to use workers' council machinery for negotiation.

The *consiglio* must elect five workers and two clerks. Mr. Olivetti has to nominate seven. The managers elect their representative who generally votes with Olivetti's nominees. So the workers can be outvoted eight to seven.

Mr. Olivetti's only direct interventions are on matters of social and welfare organisations. Actually Mr. Olivetti only owns 10 per cent. of the Olivetti Concern. 90 per cent. is owned by other members of his family.

In 1954 the first signs of syndicalism began to manifest themselves at Olivetti. The *Comunita* movement was created by Mr. Olivetti.

Mr. Olivetti was a member of the Nenni party and a Christian Socialist, but the Italian political landscape is full of life and soon Mr. Olivetti made his own party.

The ideas of *Movimento Comunita* were gathered from Emmanuel Mounier (the founder of personalism); Simone Weil; Lewis Mumford and the school of regional planning of Patrick Geddes which reaches back in inspiration to Kropotkin. The whole is permeated with a strong Christian feeling since Mr. Olivetti has a non-conformist background (which is quite rare in Italy however much the tradition in England), his father was a Quaker.

The approach of *Movimento Comunita* is technocratic. It is against the centralization of political and economic power. It believes in a state based on decentralisation; it believes in a small unit of say, eighty thousand people. It is, curiously enough, against private property. A foundation is envisaged from the Olivetti holdings which will allocate one-third of income to the workers, one third to cultural projects and one-third to the local authorities. Mr. Olivetti has advanced these ideas through his rôle of publisher of books, magazines and studies.

Comunita is now going out for political power. Members of *Comunita* in factory council have forced reduction of the working week from forty-nine to forty-seven hours at Olivetti's.

Mr. Olivetti, the dominating personality, is an anachronistic figure resembling in some respects Robert Owen. It would seem that with *Comunita* going in for political power the question whether Olivetti's was a benevolent paternalism or an even more pernicious Fordism would be resolved.

The discussion that followed was as ever, disjointed, ranging from a comparison with Cadbury's to an examination of the employment situation in Italy. It was brought out by the speaker that time and motion study was not welcomed at Olivetti's and a commission of two workers and two staff had been set up to investigate it. Mr. Olivetti was against piece work but unfortunately he had to compete with other factories who did use it.

That architecture was a special feature in the Olivetti factory and was touched on also in a reply to a question.

The meeting ended with the knowledge that the search for workers' control was not ended. J.R.

The Indian Socialist Continued on p. 3

state, we must here and now create the conditions in which the people will rely more and more on themselves and less and less on the State. No one can tell whether the State will ever completely disappear, but if we accept the ideals of a non-violent democracy, we must begin to work for it.

"It need hardly be added that a people who want to do without the State or who wish to lean on it as little as possible would be a self-regulated people—self-disciplined, just and mutually cooperative. In passing let me add that only when the people of the world become so, and governments have withered away or have become vastly deflated, will there be peace in the world. War is not likely to be abolished by governments. Only the people who have freed themselves from their governments can do it".

AFTER Jayaprakash's withdrawal the principal spokesman of the Praja Socialist Party has been Asoka Mehta who has been advocating a 'discriminating co-operation' with Congress. 'To depoliticise certain activities is the beginning of democratic planning', he says. 'Is it possible for men to co-operate in some spheres and dispute in others? Can just one party start functioning on this basis and hope to make the idea effective? I believe it is possible'. Another Socialist Party Leader, Dr. Rammanohar Lohia was bitterly critical of the 'collaborationist' tendencies of his colleagues towards Congress since Nehru's attempts to push the conservative and rigidly Hindu elements leftwards. At the end of 1954 Acharya Kripalani resigned from the chairmanship of the P.S.P. to heal the breach, but last July Dr. Lohia was suspended from the party and began to organise a rival socialist party declaring the 'equal irrelevance of Congress and Communism'.

The problem for the Socialist Party is not so much the disunity of its leaders, nor even, as Mr. Guy Wint suggests in his interesting new Penguin book *Spotlight on Asia*, their mismanagement of electoral strategy, nor as he declares in *The Twentieth Century* (Jan. 1956), their lack of a strong trade union foundation. Their dilemma is that Nehru has stolen their thunder by his new economic policy of 'socialisation', nationalisation of the Bank of India and so on. If Congress is committed to orthodox socialism, the only rôle of the orthodox political socialists is in helping Nehru to prod his conservative party machine into closing the gap between programme and practice. Mr. Wint in his article concludes that:

"The paradox is that their retired leader, Jai Prakash Narain, though no less ineffective as an organiser than those who at present control the party, has the type of personality which appeals to the length and breadth of India . . . If he could be found a lieutenant to organise the party and to carry out the less reputable work of a party boss, the Indian Socialist Party might still be a power in the politics of the future".

But there are no signs that Jayaprakash intends to return to 'realistic' politics. Only a month or two ago he declared that "The days of political agitation are over for me", and the development in his attitude over the last few years is not unique.

Of course the village movement, whether in the form of the officially sponsored Community Development Projects, the Gandhian 'Constructive Programme', or Bhoodan, is in itself as Jayaprakash and Vinoba say, "an intensely and deeply political movement. But it is not the politics of the parties, elections, parliaments and governments; but politics of the people". The point of view of Asoka Mehta is also changing. He has written a pamphlet, *Socialism and Peasantry*, in which he writes about the kind of industrialisation that would meet the real needs of Asia's

(except perhaps some union funds, and it's got plenty). But if they succeed, they would be getting the coal the community needs, saving the Coal Board its present losses, keeping themselves with a good living, finding dignity and responsibility in their work and setting an example to the rest of the industry as to the way the mines should be run.

It is of course these last two factors which would influence both the NUM and the NCB against the solution. Neither organisation could bear to see workers' control working. They would both rather see the pits closed and the miners starve. But haven't the miners of South Wales any say in this matter?

peasant populations, as opposed to the dogmas of Marxism, and considers sympathetically the nature of peasant civilisation. His criticism is often reminiscent of Dr. David Mitrany's *Marx Against the Peasant*, and in many ways his economic ideas about the village recall those of Gandhian thinkers, and one wonders why it has taken him such a long time to put off Marxist blinkers. Asoka Mehta however, has still failed to realise the distinction between society and the state, and he writes in one place, "To give freedom and assistance to the undulating expanse, the commanding heights must be with the State. On that point, every Asian should be a Leninist," and elsewhere he writes, "The rule should be: what is not nationalised will be nurtured with State aid".

ALL the same, Asoka Mehta's pamphlet is intensely interesting, and we cannot help thinking that sooner or later he will travel the same road as Jayaprakash, when we read his conclusion that Asian socialism must "not only be peasant conscious, decentralised, democratic and pacifist but also informed with ethical awareness". When this pamphlet appeared, a leading article in the *Manchester Guardian* (presumably by Mr. Guy Wint!), remarked that:

"It is curious that speculation of this kind should be more common in India among the Socialists, whose practical record is so disappointing, than in Congress. Perhaps the main function of the Indian Socialists is to do the country's thinking rather than to provide a practical alternative to Congress".

But perhaps it is also their function to find their way out of politics and to start building a real socialism. C.W.

(A later article will discuss the differing Indian attitudes to industrialisation).

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

LECTURE-DISCUSSIONS
Every Sunday at 7.30 at

THE MALATESTA CLUB,
32 Percy Street,
Tottenham Court Road, W.1.

MAY 27—Mani Obahiagbon on
TOWARDS THE DEFINITION
OF FREEDOM

JUNE 3—To be announced

JUNE 10—To be announced

JUNE 17—Alfred Reynolds on
THE BRIDGE: A WAY TO
ANARCHISM?

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

At 200 BUCHANAN STREET,
GLASGOW
OUTDOOR meetings at Maxwell Street,
every Sunday, commencing April 1st at
7.30 p.m.

LIBERTARIAN FORUM

813 BROADWAY,
(Bet. 11 & 12 Sts.)
NEW YORK CITY
Round-Table Youth Discussions
Friday Evenings at 8.30

June 1—To Be Announced.

June 8—Civil Liberties and the Supreme Court.

June 15—The Middle Eastern Situation.

June 22—The Relationship of the Family to Society.

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Must this Village Die? Continued from p. 1

Union Failure

We pointed out at this time the failure by the NUM to defend its members in the face of that disaster. No action was taken by the miners' organisation at all and we said: ' . . . the NUM is so far gone in its alliance with the Coal Board that it caved in without a struggle, to watch 193 of its members thrown on the dole and to give the NCB the green light that it is safe to go ahead and attack the other four collieries any time it likes'.

Now, only eight months later, we are proved correct. East and Sheer are two of the four pits in the area where labour troubles have cut output. They have quite clearly all been deserted by the NUM. Brynhenllys was probably chosen as the first since it was the smallest. Having seen no fight put up for 193 men the Coal Board then felt confident in tackling the 1065 at East and Sheer.

What is the anarchist solution for this situation? It is the same this year as last—give these mines to the miners.

Workers' Control

The only way out of the continual battle between management and men is to allow the men to manage the pits themselves. Let them elect their own managers and foremen if they feel the need for them. Alternatively (and better from our point of view), elect a pit committee in each pit to administer it directly under the control of the men themselves.

The pits are already fitted up for production. Removal or dismantling of the equipment will mean a depreciation in its value and consequently further loss to the Coal Board. Therefore let the men take over and use the equipment to the fullest advantage.

Running Capital? Suppose the NUM dip into its overflowing coffers to subsidise these members in their hour of need? If the NUM were a real working-class organisation it would be continually looking for opportunities for furthering its members' interest in the control of the industry.

Compensation? The NCB will have to pay this anyway, even if it closes the pits down. So let it go on paying after the men are in control.

Accounts and business management? The pitmen can engage the services of an accountant, or perhaps a local business-man or someone experienced in that side of the venture if they feel unable to cope with it themselves.

Distribution of coal? The coal is already being distributed through, presumably, satisfactory channels. Let the miners carry on with these unless they find something better.

An Example to Others

With the causes of friction removed with the NCB management, we are convinced that the miners of East and Sheer would make a go of running these pits. If they fail—nothing is lost that isn't lost already

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