

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

'I don't believe there is any one solution to the social problem, but rather a thousand diverse and changing solutions, as social life, in time and space, is diverse and changing.'

-ERRICO MALATESTA.

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Three Pence

IN DEFENCE OF OIL

THE PRINCIPLE IS - LOOT!

THE most straight-forward reason for the present British behaviour in Cyprus was that supplied by Sir Anthony Eden a fortnight ago.

He told a Tory Party gathering in Norwich: 'Our country's industrial life and that of Western Europe depend to-day, and must depend for many years, on oil supplies from the Middle East. If ever our oil resources were imperilled, we should be compelled to defend them. The facilities we need in Cyprus are part of that defence.'

'No Cyprus—no certain facilities to protect our supply of oil. No oil—hunger and unemployment in Britain. It's as simple as that.'

It must be rather comfortable to be able to reduce the problems of half-a million people's self-respect and dignity to a cool and simple assessment like that. Only a thoroughly closed and conditioned mind, unimaginative and unfeeling, could seriously justify domination for such reasons.

But even on its own slight terms, Eden's justification hardly holds water. For, as we have argued in these columns before, a Cyprus held down by force is not going to provide a very secure base from which to defend Britain's interests in the event of war. And the disruptive effect of present events on the island is seriously weakening Britain's defensive arrangements in the Eastern Mediterranean anyway.

A Dead Loss

Not that anarchists concern themselves with that; but even from the Government's own point of view, its Cyprus policy is a dead loss. From our point of view it represents a cynical and immoral disregard for public opinion, both here and abroad; a brutal contempt for the feelings and desire for independence of a whole community; and an outdated reversion to a naked imperialism which demands the vigorous opposition of free-thinking people everywhere.

The fact that Sir Anthony Eden thinks that Britain's oil interests are so important that he is justified in behaving in a totalitarian fashion to defend them, does not seem to square up exactly with his Gov-

ernment's attitude on the Trinidad Oil Company deal.

A storm in the Parliamentary tea-cup blew up last week when it was announced that the Texas Oil Company—one of the American giants of the oil world—had made a takeover bid for control of Trinidad Oil. Patriots on both sides of the House of Commons rose up in anger at the horrible thought of beastly American dollars buying up lovely 'British' oil.

Advantages

Until the full situation was gently explained to them by Mr. Macmillan, Chancellor of the Exchequer, who pointed out the financial advantages accruing from the deal. It seems that Trinidad Oil is in need of capital for expansion, and Mr. Macmillan said that if the Government refused permission for the transaction we would be under a moral obligation to see that the necessary capital was forthcoming to extend the undertaking.

The provision of this capital from private sources, even if it could be obtained, would represent a considerable burden on the United Kingdom.

Our Conservative Government, therefore, which shows itself in Cyprus to be devoted to the cause of hanging on to British oil interests, after weighing all the many and complicated issues involved and following close consultation with the Government of Trinidad and being concerned purely and simply with the interests of the United Kingdom and Trinidad and subject to safeguards for the existing personnel—the Conservative Government, which was voted into office by the colonels of Cheltenham and the workers of Woodford to defend the Empah and all its economic wealth, agreed to the sale of the Trinidad Oil Company to American competitors.

Lovely Dollars

Why? Well first of all for the selling price—£63 million pounds in lovely dollars. Secondly because, although Britain has millions of pounds to spend holding down Cypriots, there's nothing in the kitty

to capitalise oil in Trinidad, so the Americans can come and do it.

Thirdly, because American takeover of Trinidad Oil will bring dollars into the Sterling area and fourthly because Britain will still be able to buy oil from the company in Sterling and probably cheaper as a result of modification of plant, which will cost her nothing.

There is of course nothing new about American investment in British industry. In this country General Motors have long been the owners of Vauxhall Motors, Standard Oil are the vast Esso petrol network and so on. In the Empire, too, there is already plenty of dollar investment—in Rhodesia particularly.

It Happened in Mexico

Trinidad produces only one-sixth of one per cent. of the 'free' world's oil—but the economy of the whole country is affected by it. Now it follows Mexico, where Britain's oil interests were swallowed up by America in the early 'cash-and-carry' days of the war, before either America or Russia were united with Britain with the defence of democracy. The oil produced in Trinidad is clearly not nearly so impor-

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*See Neither East Nor West, by Marie Louise Berneri.

PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT! WEEK 24

Table with financial data: Deficit on Freedom £480, Contributions received £489, SURPLUS £9, June 8 to June 14. Includes sub-totals for Wahroonga, Granite City, E.J.C, and Torino.

*Indicates regular contributors.

Two Views on Annihilation

UNFORTUNATELY the Sunday Express has a circulation of over five million, and most of its readers no doubt adopt as their own views, that which is proclaimed in its columns.

Last Sunday an article appeared in this Beaverbrook monstrosity, under the title 'Why not Crush this phoney Pharaoh', written by the Tory M.P. for Stafford and Stone, Hugh Fraser. In this masterpiece he outlined the methods which he thought should be used for bringing Nasser 'to heel', and maintained that this should be a 'moment of ruthless re-appraisal' of Britain's policy towards Egypt. His method is certainly ruthless—we quote:

'It is not Suez which controls Egypt. It is the Nile.'

Were it not for the Nile Egypt would starve to-morrow.

Yet who controls the constant-flowing Nile? Who controls this great stream which is Egypt's life-blood?

NOT NASSER. Nor any of Nasser's allies. The head waters of the White Nile are our great Equatorial lakes in East Africa. The Nile is controlled by Britain.

This is our hold on Egypt.'

Perhaps we may be forgiven if we thrust the point home—he says: 'Were it not for the Nile Egypt would starve to-morrow... The Nile is controlled by Britain... This is our hold on Egypt.' The threat could hardly be put more plainly.

He adds: 'I do not suggest... that we should set about diverting the waters of the Nile without notice.' But this does not soften the threat, for he knows quite well that if Britain were to indulge in this sort of fantastic blackmail, she would have to carry it through if necessary, just as she carried through the so obviously mistaken Cyprus policy.

One would like to think that even democratic Britain, despite the bombing of Kenya and the armed repression of Malaya and Cyprus (which are current colonialist measures), would draw the line at starving a whole people into submission—especially when the people themselves have no say as to what should be done.

We hold no brief for Nasser, and there is no doubt that he is playing the political game of East v. West, but even by Tory standards of a hundred years ago, this is not sufficiently good reason for imposing famine and death-by-starvation, upon the total population of Egypt.

FIELD-MARSHAL MONTGOMERY

has also permitted himself a major indiscretion just recently. As deputy commander of N.A.T.O. he has a nice, steady job looking after military matters all over the place. He held a press conference in British Columbia (right next door to Russia), and made the following statement in respect of the action which should be taken against an aggressor:

'We should give them the works from the word go with atom bombs, hydrogen bombs, with the biggest thing we've got and with everything we've got. I wouldn't mind the consequences, but would drop a bomb on anyone committing an aggression. Drop the biggest bomb you can on them. Finish them.'

He added: 'My political superiors probably would not agree.'

It would seem that Britain's great hero-of-the-Western desert, teetotaler, puritan and amateur politician, has decided that if anyone attacks us, he will immediately turn it into a complete holocaust if he gets the chance. He will see to it that most, if not all of the principal cities in Europe and Russia shall be annihilated, with their populations, and quite possibly he may cause the extermination of the human race.

We can only hope that his political superiors do not agree. But the extraordinary thing about Montgomery's remarks is that he should be permitted to make them without being called to order, or better still being given the sack. As an important official in an international, military organisation, one might have supposed that whatever his own views were he would be made to keep them to himself, and either give the official political view or say nothing at all.

By saying what he has said, he has left us all in some doubt as to whether it may not be that he has the power to issue catastrophic orders of the kind which he would like to, in the event of being attacked; or alternatively, that his views are unofficially (if not officially) shared by his political superiors.

The Political World's Reaction to The De-Stalinisation of Russia

TO assume that Khrushchev would not have given prior consideration to the possible effect of his 'revelations' is surely to underestimate the political acumen and experience of the men in the Kremlin.

Indeed, it would be safer to assume that the Report was a carefully calculated step in Soviet internal and foreign politics from which it hopes to derive benefit. No politician 'comes clean' because of a troubled conscience. He does so either because he is with his back to the wall and doesn't know of any other way of wriggling out, or because he feels confident that what he apparently concedes with one hand he will more than take back with the other. There is no evidence, to our minds, that Mr. K. and his friends were in a tight spot politically speaking. But we think it is clear that the Russian rulers have become aware of the fact that the 'ideological' political curtain that has been woven around them, principally by American propaganda and dollars, has effectively halted their expansion in certain areas of the world. And this is an important consideration if it is true that war has been ruled-out (since it has ceased to be a means... and now spells the End for every nation!) as an effective weapon in the struggle for world domination.

Considering the vast sums of money, the personnel, the propaganda from Russia and satellites radiated to every corner of the world, and the internal grievances in the countries in which the Communist Parties operate, their attack has been a signal failure. Discounting Britain and America where their fiasco has been complete, the fact remains that in their two numerical strongholds, France and Italy, the Communists are to-day as far from the seat of power as they were eleven years ago when Stalin was all that he no longer is, and Russia was democracy's gallant ally!

In Italy in particular it seems to us that the strength of the Communist Party is more a reaction against the stranglehold, of the Right and the Catholics, on the life (the very livelihood of the masses) of the country and the spinelessness of the Socialist Party and the opportunism of its leaders, than a fanatical allegiance to the workers' fatherland.

In France the first reactions of the Party to the Khrushchev revelations were apparently a reluctance to swallow it hook line and sinker. In Britain the way had been prepared

for many weeks past, if one is to judge by the correspondence columns of the Daily Worker, for the 'new line' and obviously a weak party cannot afford to cut itself off from its life-line. But Togliatti in Italy not only adds his damnation of Stalin, but criticises also the present leadership for having allowed Stalin to be the man of Iron who had, apparently, feet of clay. Is Togliatti another Tito? Not, we think, unless Moscow assigns such a rôle to him. For surely, on the evidence Togliatti has shown himself to be a good Party man, twisting and turning in unison with Moscow: he has only denounced Stalin when denunciation has become Moscow's new line. And one can only assume that his denunciation of those 'comrades who to-day take the lead in denouncing him [Stalin] 'for co-responsibility' is one face-saving measure. For Togliatti, more than any of the European Communists was aware of the real nature of the Russian system under Stalin, as well as being responsible for seeing that Stalin's policies were carried out in Spain in 1936-39, for instance, at the expense of the social revolution as well as by the cold-blooded murder

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POLITICAL JUDASES

WHEN politicians start talking about moral concepts look out for the catch. Mr. Dulles' statement on the relationship of the U.S.A. to other countries sounds strange after his war-like utterances of a few months ago. Addressing students from Iowa State College last Saturday, he said that the principle of neutrality 'which pretends that a nation can best gain safety for itself by being indifferent to the fate of others' had 'become an obsolete conception and except under very exceptional circumstances it is an immoral and shortsighted conception'.

The 'exceptional circumstances' no doubt being indifference to countries that have little to offer the United States in terms of powerful political backing. And underneath the fine talk of indifference to the fates of others are the real reasons for Mr. Dulles' desire to extend aid. We find that the United States and the Soviet Union are strenuous competitors for the allegiance of the less economically powerful countries; the United States has no intentions of allowing the Soviet Union to be the highest bidder. Mr. Dulles gives his reason and expands his policy for buying support in the following report in the Observer (10/6/56).

'The United States thought it prudent to help Yugoslavia, 'so long as it remains determined to maintain genuine independence.'

The Soviet rulers were engaged in a gigantic effort to build up their military establishment and extend the area of their dominance. They maintained a military establishment approximately comparable to that of the U.S. and spared no cost in striving to excel it.

They gave military aid to China and satellite allies measured in billions of dollars, and wooed free nations by offers of credit. Credits totalling about £178,500,000 had been concluded, and several hundred more million had been offered. About £178,500,000 was devoted a year to foreign propaganda. About 20 per cent. of Russia's gross national product was spent for purposes hostile to the U.S. America was spending about 10 per cent. of its gross national product in 'peace insurance.'

The new Communist tactics of extending credits to other countries made it more than ever imperative that the U.S. should continue, and perhaps enlarge, the economic phase of its mutual security programme. It would be ironical if they dropped out of that field just when the Soviet Union was moving into it.'

The Legacy of Nestor Makhno

"During these strikes, a black flag waved over the camps. This flag was the symbol of the anarchist peasant partisans of Nestor Makhno who had won a legendary glory fighting in the Southern Ukraine against the Austro-German occupants and the Cossack chief Skoropadsky until the end of 1918, against the nationalist government of Simeon Petliura until February 1919, against the White troops of General Denikin until the autumn of 1919 and those of General Wrangel until the autumn of 1920, and against the Red Army until the summer of 1921".

—PAUL BARTON: "Strikes in the Russian Camps" (Dissent, New York, Spring 1956).

THESE two sentences from an account of the strikes in Camp 5 at Norilsk and Camp 13 at Taichet, which followed those at Karaganda and Vorkuta, and which preceded the recent easing of conditions in the Soviet concentration camps, are testimony to a remarkable fact. That after nearly forty years of falsification, indoctrination, and the re-writing of history, after Makhno had been described as a bandit, a brigand and a pogromist in a hundred Soviet best-sellers from Makarenko's *Road to Life* to Alexey Tolstoy's *Road to Calvary*, after all this, Makhno still has his legacy in the hearts of his fellow-countrymen. And from time to time scraps of evidence seep through to show that it is kept alive, not only in the camps and not only amongst the old. You may remember the incident last year when a 17-year-old Russian boy Valery Lysikov turned up in the American zone of Berlin. (He was hawked around like a performing animal by the American authorities, and later decided to go home). He had been at a school of about six hundred pupils where "he had belonged to a group of about fifty 'anarchists' who were anti-Communist" (*Manchester Guardian*, 25/3/55). These young 'anarchists' were "inspired by a Ukrainian leader, who, Valery Lysikov knew, had fought both against the Tsarist armies as well as the Bolsheviks during the revolution" (*New*

York Times 25/3/55). This could refer to no-one but Makhno. The epic of the Makhnovists was described in Peter Archinov's *History of the Makhnovist Movement*, published by Russian anarchist exiles in Berlin in 1923. This book was translated into German, French, Spanish, Italian and Yiddish, but never into English. (The only account of any length in English was a chapter in Max Nomad's *Apostles of Revolution*. This makes especially welcome the new FREEDOM PRESS publication of the final part of Volin's *La Revolution Inconnue*, consisting of his history of the Kronstadt revolt in 1921, the last armed uprising against the Bolsheviks, and, in greater detail, that of the struggle of the Ukrainian peasants, led by Makhno, from 1918 to 1921.*

As readers of the earlier part of his text (*Nineteen-Seventeen: the Russian Revolution Betrayed*, Freedom Press, 1954) will know, Volin (which was the pen-name of Vsevolod Mikhailovich Eichenbaum), was especially well-qualified to write an account of the events of the Russian Revolution. He participated in both the 1905 revolution and that of 1917. He was a member of Makhno's staff from the spring of 1919 until his arrest by the Bolsheviks early in the following year. Volin is not 'impartial'—what historian worth reading ever was? He writes from an anarchist standpoint, and seeks to show, as his translator says, "with a wealth of concrete detail, that at all times the people acted on their own initiative, and that the political parties did little more than take advantage of the people's credulosity and inexperience to promote their own interests, after the decisive action had been taken". But he is a critical

***THE UNKNOWN REVOLUTION, by Voline, translated by Holly Cantine, (Freedom Press, 270 pp. 12s. 6d.). The American edition is published by the Libertarian Book Club, New York.**

and analytical chronicler, he wants to know why the popular revolution was defeated and why the Bolsheviks succeeded.

VOLIN'S account of the Kronstadt rebellion does not differ from that given in the well-known pamphlets of Berkman, Goldman, and Ciliga¹, but he is able to go into greater detail with more documentation, and until the publication of I. Mett's *Russia's Third Revolution*, this will be the most complete history in English. Like Maximov, who declared that the Kronstadt Revolt was better described as "Lenin's revolt against the Kronstadt sailors",² Volin remarks that: "There was no 'revolt' at Kronstadt in the true sense of the word. There was a spontaneous and peaceful movement, absolutely legitimate and natural in the given circumstances, which rapidly embraced the whole city, the garrison and the fleet. Frightened for their power, their positions and their privileges, the Bolsheviks forced events and obliged Kronstadt to accept an armed struggle."

He shows how the sailors and workers of Kronstadt had made their revolution before the Bolsheviks appeared on the scene. Seizing the city and naval base in February 1917, setting up their local soviets, opposing the Kerensky government in July, defeating the Kornilov putsch in August, and all the while setting about "a complex of peaceful and creative measures, which pointed towards a fundamental transformation of the very basis of social life". He describes how the men of Kronstadt, on the advent of the Bolsheviks, saw the local autonomy, freedom of expression and the spontaneous popular revolution dwindling away, until the rising of the Petrograd workers in February 1921, crushed by Trotsky's 'iron hand', led to the famous Resolution of the General Meeting of the Baltic Fleet of March 1st, and the ultimatum of the Bolsheviks, followed by Trotsky's threat: "If you persist you will be shot like partridges", and the ultimate butchery and nightly executions. Emma Goldman mentioned in her

autobiography the scene at the meeting of the Petrograd Soviet on March 4th when a delegate of the striking arsenal workers denounced the Bolsheviks a few days before the massacre began:

"The old worker remained standing, his voice rising above the tumult. 'Barely three years ago Lenin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, and all of you,' he shouted, 'were denounced as traitors and German spies. We, the workers and sailors, had come to your rescue and saved you from the Kerensky Government. It is we who placed you in power. Have you forgotten that? Now you threaten us with the sword. Remember you are playing with

freedom. You are repeating the blunders and the crimes of the Kerensky Government. Beware that a similar fate does not overtake you!'"³

Years later a similar fate did overtake them. Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Dybenko and Tuchachevsky, the butchers of Kronstadt, were overtaken by the terror they themselves had started. When some future Khrushchev discovers that they were guiltless of the charges laid against them in the nineteen-thirties, it will be well to remember their real guilt as grave-diggers of the revolution.

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CINEMA

A LONG TIME DYING

"TEN DAYS TO DIE"
"A SHORT VISION"—Cameo-Poly

THESE two films in one programme provide an excellent balance of programme and to the discerning, one provides an ironic commentary on the other.

One is a film of the end of Hitler in the Berlin bunker, the other is a short cartoon showing the end of life on earth and ultimately of the earth through the explosion of a super-bomb.

It has been said that Hitler in his promise to make Germany great or perish was the only statesman to keep his war aim. But this shabby Götterdämmerung is but a whisper against the bang of the Foldes cartoon.

One gets rather tired of the apologia of the good Germans that they were anti-Nazi all the time. One wonders how the Nazi state maintained itself. In such a situation everybody is involved. Particularly nauseating are the military explanations of honourable actions. The worst crime of Hitler (apart from losing the war), was, in the eyes of the military, to flood the Berlin Underground and drown women, children and wounded. Might not the plea of military necessity have passed as an excuse for this crime as it has excused the A-bomb? Provided of course, that it was accompanied by victory.

The message of the Hitler film is explicit in the words of the dying Captain: "Never say 'Yes' always". The implicit message of the film is never lose a war, and don't have unbalanced meglomaniacs

as leaders. Stick to sound leaders like Churchill, Roosevelt—and Stalin!

The message of "A Short Vision" is the same as Wolfgang Borchert's "Say 'No'."

Technically, "Ten Days To Die" is impeccable. Directed by Pabst it has that art which conceals art.

The scene in the Underground where the informer has the tables turned on him by the crowd, first denying that they had heard anti-Nazi statements and then imputing anti-Nazi statements to the informer is one of the few testifying to the solidarity of humanity.

The most telling shot is that when one realizes that Hitler is indeed dead when the 'yes-men' in the bunker light up previously forbidden cigarettes on hearing confirmation.

Oskar Werner as Captain Richard Wuest is the only actor who is allowed to be himself, but his rôle is more wooden than his part in "Decision Before Dawn" which was a more genuine examination of the dilemma of the anti-Nazi.

"A Short Vision" is more concentrated in its impact and more simple in its message which is that life is too good to be destroyed and that we may yet invent a bomb which will do just this. This is conveyed by a series of animated figures and a panoramic background accompanied by a vivid score composed by Matyas Sieber. Unfortunately, it could inspire one to A.R.P. or anti-Communism and pure horror, which is the impact of this film, is a two-edged weapon.

Nevertheless it administers a short, sharp shock which in conjunction with the slow impact of the "Ten Days to Die" gives the affirmation of the virtue of disobedience. J.R.

The Tradition of Workers' Control — 8

Guild Socialism Re-stated

AMONG Guildsmen Cole's co-sovereignty views prevailed over Hobson's civic-sovereignty theory but the latter's criticisms led Cole to revise his conception of the consumer and consequently of the State. At the same time the influence of the early Soviet form of organisation was manifested in a further development of guild theories. In the final and most complete picture of the Guild Commonwealth which is to be found in Cole's *Guild Socialism Re-States*, 1920, there is a more rigorous attempt to apply the functional principle to all forms of social and industrial organisation and also a marked tendency towards decentralisation. In Hobson's original formulation of the guild system national rather than local units had been chosen because he felt that local guilds "would be altogether ineffectual and inappropriate to modern requirements".⁴⁷ This was, in effect, as Penty argued, to acquiesce in the large-scale organisation, and critics had not been wanting who urged that the National Guilds would inevitably develop into highly bureaucratic bodies such as the State Departments were alleged to be. By 1920 most guildsmen were prepared to admit these criticisms and, while retaining National Guilds, to agree that centralising tendencies must be opposed and that guild organisation must be highly decentralised.

Functional Democracy

The working out of the functional principle led to a rejection of the current theory of democratic representation and of the political institutions which were based on it. The present theory of political representation, it was argued, assumes that one man can represent a number of other men as men; but this assumption is unjustified. Each individual is a "universal" with several interests and many facets to his personality. To further their various interests, each of which is more or less limited and specific, men unite in a number of associations, such as the church, the trade unions and the co-operative societies, whose "function" is to promote those interests. A general and inclusive association such as the State claims to be cannot possibly possess a function in this sense since it is supposed to represent in an unlimited and unspecific way all men's interests, however different or divergent they may be. It is, therefore, not a "true association". Because no particular interest or set of interests exhausts the personality of a man, "no man can represent another man and no man's will can be treated as a substitute for, or representative of, the wills of others".⁴⁸ What it is possible to represent, con-

cluded Cole, are not men but "certain purposes common to groups of individuals."⁴⁹ In other words, all true representation is functional in character and the democratic representative principle is not "one man, one vote", but "one man as many votes as interests, but only one vote in relation to each interest."⁵⁰ True representative democracy, therefore, is not to be found in a single omniscient representative assembly such as Parliament but in a system of co-ordinated functional representative bodies. Hence, the moral to be drawn is that "the omniscient State with its omniscient Parliament . . . must be destroyed or painlessly extinguished . . . (for) whatever the structure of the new society may be the Guildsman is sure that it will have no place for the survival of the *factotum* State of to-day."⁵¹

The Withering Away of the State

Those interested in the details of Cole's blueprint of the Guild Commonwealth should read *Guild Socialism Re-States*. Briefly, Cole provided for four distinct forms of functional organisation: producers' guilds, consumers' councils and co-operatives, civic services, and citizens' organisations. In order that these might work as parts of a single system, there was to be a communal as distinct from a functional organisation and working of guild society. "Communes" would need to be established at three levels—local, regional and national. The National Commune would not, however, be an extension of the present political State, nor would the local communes be extensions of the existing local authorities since these are non-functional in character and the Commune is essentially a body on which functional organisations are represented for the purposes of co-ordination. "The co-ordinating body which is required cannot be, in any real sense, historically continuous with the present State, and it must not reproduce in any important respect the structure of the present State".⁵² Echoing Engels' famous prophecy, Cole opined that the present political machine, losing its economic and civic functions to new bodies, would "wither away".

Cole's vision of the Guild Commonwealth was criticised by the advocates of the civic-sovereignty theory who maintained that he had destroyed the State only to create a new State representative of all the major interests of society. Others, such as Carpenter, argued that the Commune would have the substance if not the form of sovereignty to which Cole was in theory so much opposed. Whatever the force of these criticisms, it is, however, clear that Cole's intention was to delineate

a society in which the communal power which existed would be widely dispersed. Moreover, the powers that he assigned to the communes would originate from the functional units that composed them, and the exercise of these powers, when it was necessary, would not have been felt as a purely external force in the way that Parliament's powers over subordinate groups are now felt. Cole's Guild Commonwealth was, in fact, much nearer to the federalist society envisaged by the anarchists than it was to the Fabian Collectivist State. Certainly, in response to the growing anti-statism in the movement, the objects of the National Guilds League were altered at its 1920 conference from: "The abolition of the Wage-System, and the establishment of Self-Government in Industry through a system of National Guilds working in conjunction with the State" to " . . . working in conjunction with other democratic functional organisations in the Community."

Guild Socialist Prospects

Cole's re-statement of Guild Socialism marked the furthest development of guild theories. At the time of its publication the guildsmen appeared to have succeeded in displacing the old-fashioned Fabians as the acknowledged leaders of socialist thought in this country. Several of the most prominent Fabians of the pre-war days had been either converted to the new philosophy or forced to compromise with it. The only serious opposition on the intellectual plane came not from the right-wing socialists but from the small and vociferous band of Marxists. Had the National Guilds League been seeking merely to replace the Fabian Society as the centre of socialist policy-making, its prospects in 1920 would have seemed very bright, for it embraced a large number of the best publicists and the most prominent socialist intellectuals of the day. However, the very nature of Guild Socialist doctrines set the League a more difficult task than had faced the Fabians. The principal object of the latter had been to permeate with "socialist" ideas the people who "really mattered"—the legislators, the local councillors, the administrators, and the trade union officials and Labour leaders—those who, on the Fabian plan, would be chiefly responsible for the introduction and administration of the Collectivist State. The objects of the League, on the other hand, could not be achieved thereby. Guild Socialism could be effective only if it won the allegiance of the mass of the trade union world—the people who alone could make industrial democracy a reality. In this connection the movement had made substantial progress during the war

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Whose 'Interests'?

TWO reports which appeared in the Press during the last fortnight reminded us of the remarks put forward in the course of a lively controversy last year on the subject of taxation by a valued contributor to our columns who, as a staunch advocate of the "conscious egoist angle", chided us for our naiveté in hoping that human beings could be expected to think and act in a way which might conflict with their "interests". Had we taken up his point we might have found that there was not, in fact, any disagreement between us, if only we had, in the first place agreed on a common definition of what we meant by "interests". Let the Press reports illustrate our point.

AT the annual conference of the Tobacco Workers' Union held at Hove recently, an "emergency resolution" was passed "urging" the Government to take "immediate steps" to reduce atmospheric pollution by diesel, petrol, and industrial smoke fumes, in the campaign to combat lung cancer.

The arguments on which this "emergency resolution" were passed were put forward by a Mr. Smith of Nottingham (in which Players Please) who said that the tobacco trade had been singled out as providing the cause of lung cancer, but statistics had not proved that cigarette smoking was the cause. The Government should put more into cancer research to find out the real cause.

Mr. Smith said it had been shown that the incidence of lung cancer was highest in industrial areas. Industry was increasing, there were more petrol and diesel fumes and air pollution, and the fall-out from H-bomb tests had a cancerous effect on bone marrow. Investigation should be made before "dieselisation" on the railways was increased.

A LETTER was published recently in the correspondence columns of the *Manchester Guardian* on the subject of the proposed Bill to make illegal the sale or movement of live rabbits in this country. The writer of the letter, Mr. McNulty, argues that "if this bill becomes law it will be a further step in the campaign to exterminate the wild rabbit population". And he questions whether total extermination, should it be possible, is to the economic advantage of the country as a whole. In his opinion myxomatosis has been treated primarily as an agricultural matter. On the other hand in December 1953, the organisation his federation represented (namely that of "the British Felt Hat Manufacturers") together with the National Federation of Meat Traders' Associations presented to the Board of Trade details of "the commercial value to the country of wild rabbits in the form of meat, skins, fur and fur-felt hats amounting to an annual average figure of £15½ millions".

The writer goes on to point out that no definite figure could be provided for the saving in the harvest yield as a result of the extermination of the rabbit population but quotes various figures from the original one of £50 millions to the "modified" one of between £10 and £15 millions which he hastens to point out have not been "ascertained with any degree of accuracy". He concludes with this solemn warning to all concerned:

In the two and a half years since our figures were presented, a world shortage of rabbit skins through the effect of myxomatosis has increased their value considerably.

Before the Government commits itself further to the policy of extermination we think that the interests of our industries and the value of our contribution to the

national economy, especially in export markets, should be compared again with the latest figures claimed for the saving to agriculture.

Now if we examine the arguments as presented by the Tobacco Union and the Federation of Manufacturers we are convinced that though they are ostensibly expressing views in the public interest they are in fact seeking to defend narrow, sectional interests! The tobacco workers' resolution is concerned with reducing the incidence of lung cancer. So concerned are they with the problem that it was specially discussed as an "emergency" resolution. But in fact all they have done is to seek to remove the spotlight from tobacco as a powerful factor in lung cancer by pointing an accusing finger at diesel fumes, among others, and adopting an ostrich-like attitude to the effects of tobacco simply because their livelihood is in the tobacco industry. Does their interest really lie in an industry that is producing a commodity which is responsible for the death of thousands of their fellow beings each year?

The felt hat manufacturers seek to defend their sectional interests by bandying the magic words "national economy" and "export markets" which they feel will win them more sympathy than if they asked us to accept that the saving of so many thousand tons of grain was less valuable than the production of so many thousand felt hats (and Davy Crockett horrors).

THE conscious egoists we know, and they neither smoke nor wear felt hats (though in premyxomatosis days they probably ate rabbit disguised as chicken), will, when presented with these two cases, find no difficulty in providing an explanation (in a way they are like the fervent Christians who credit God with everything that is good and Man for all that is bad, for they attribute all that they approve of to conscious egoism what they disapprove of is misguided egoism!)

But surely "conscious egoism", in the progressive sense can be no more than an intellectual concept, for its attainment depends on a world of conscious egoists (a hell-on-earth defying human imagination), the existence of which, in its turn would nullify the force and purpose of such a philosophy of life.

Perhaps our "egoist" friends will put us right, and interpret the two cases to which we have referred.

The Tradition of Workers' Control - 8

years, especially among the shop stewards and the workshop committees. In this field, the petering out of the syndicalist movement had been a gain to guild socialism, since a number of the former syndicalists, notably John Paton, transferred their loyalties to the new movement. In addition, guild socialism could claim a substantial following among the official leaders of several of the larger trade unions, especially those in the coal mining and railway industries and in the postal services. Nevertheless, for a movement which staked so much on the conversion of the trade unions, it was a sign of weakness that the membership of the League, like that of the Fabian Society, was concentrated so much in London: in the trade union world, the centre of gravity lay in the North, not in the Metropolis.

Conflicts With the Movement

This weakness began to manifest itself after the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. The same factors which had undermined the syndicalist movement served to undermine the guild socialist movement. The attention of the militant trade unionists—chiefly the shop stewards—began to be diverted from the economic to the political plane. The struggle against the extension of conscription and for a negotiated peace occupied more and more attention. When the conclusion of the war resolved these issues, a deeper and more significant one came to the fore. The influence of the Bolshevik Revolution was not to be confined to the utopian drawing office but was to extend to the realm of revolutionary tactics. The question was now raised: Could the reconstruction of society on guild lines proceed without the prior seizure of political power by the proletariat? To a number of the more influential guildsmen the experience of Russia demanded a negative answer.

The De-Stalinisation of Russia

Continued from p. 1

of hundreds of anti-Stalinist revolutionary militants by the Russian organised Spanish Cheka*

In the circumstances we cannot believe that an ageing Togliatti has either the strength, the independence of mind, or a conscience (with which he could understand the problems of more than two million starving workers and their families, as human problems and not as political clay to mould and twist for his own political ambitions), to suddenly raise anchor and steam under his own power. For Tito the struggle was leadership of a nation, whereas for Togliatti it is only a matter of leadership of a political party numerically strong, it is true, but not holding the reins of government. To defy Moscow would split the Party and what is more, he would have to reckon with Signor Nenni (the former pro-Stalinist Socialist who is now denouncing Stalin and the present leaders as loudly as Togliatti, but with the advantage of being able to supply his own halo in the form of an article he wrote in 1938, at the time of the Russian trials, in which he denounced the "deathly effect" of the "bureaucratisation" of the régime†. No, we have no hopes that the Communist Party in Italy or in any other country will have a change of heart. But there is quite obviously a change of tactics, and a change dictated from Moscow. As we see it Khrushchev has issued the directives for Popular-Front tactics; Russia is not the Pole Star, but just another star in the firmament; that the Russian citizen is no longer to be the Man from Mars but just an ordinary human being like you and me; who drinks Vodka instead of beer not because he is stronger than the miserable British worker but because it's colder out there! That fundamentally we are all the same, we have similar problems, we all make mistakes, comrades, but we believe that if only we try to understand each other we can achieve peace and prosperity for everybody, etc. . . .

And though Mr. K. in a moment of pique declared that he preferred the Conservatives to the Labour Party

*See Hugo Dewar *Assassins at Large* (London 1951) and *Yo fui Ministro de Stalin* (I was Stalin's Minister) (Mexico, 1953), by an ex-buddy of Togliatti, Jesus Hernandez, ex-Communist, a leader of the Spanish C.P. at the time of the Franco rising, and Minister in the Negrin government.

†To anybody but a politician the publication of such an article would be an added condemnation of his post-war pro-Stalinism rather than an exculpation to be exploited!

we have no doubt that Mr. Gollan (when he returns from Moscow minus his ulcers (Stalinism perhaps?), and with the new directives firmly grafted in its place, the new Secretary General of the Party will woo the L.P. (the Bevanites)‡ rather than the Tories!

But the Communist *new-look* is only a mask covering the *real look* of Stalinism, of Trotskyism, of Leninism . . . and of Khrushchev-Bulganin-etceterism!

WE may be excused for devoting the major part of our comments to the Communist satraps, since the mask of the democracies has worn so thin that it is no longer necessary to read their utterances between the lines. They stand exposed by their hypocrisy and slogan-mongering arrogance. From the utterances of the present Republican American Secretary of State, Mr. Dulles, who declared last week in comment on the K. speech that

"there is only one cure for the evils of the imposed Soviet dictatorship—that is government which derives its powers from the consent of the governed . . ." to the statement by a former, and likely future Democrat Secretary of State, Mr. Dean Acheson, that

"It was not Stalin's revolutionary fervour that made him dangerous but imperialistic ambition . . . In this respect the new leaders seem to me no different."

In case it might be said that Mr. Acheson is a supporter of revolution and anti-imperialist, therefore a potential comrade, let us enlarge on his thoughts by quoting from the *Manchester Guardian* report which summarises his further reflections in these terms:

They might have turned towards political manoeuvring and economic penetration and less to military pressure. But

‡The *New Statesman* obviously needs wooing (and Mr. Kinsley Martin has been asked to write for a Russian publication), for if one can understand where that journal stands from its article on *Holy Leninism* in last week's issue, it has progressed from crypto-through fence-sitting to a curious combination of Trotsky and Rosa Luxembourg. Poor Rosa Luxembourg!

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With the thought of offering the guild idea as their contribution to the building of a Communist society after the transference of power from the ruling to the working class had taken place, they began to regard themselves as Communists first and Guildsmen second. When the C.P.G.B. was founded in 1920, they—including Ellen Wilkinson, Hobson, R. P. Dutt, Page Arnot and William Mellor—hastened to join the new organisation. However, an important section within the League, mainly the more religious-minded, including Penty, Tawney, Reckitt and Bechhofer, strenuously resisted the Communist arguments. In April, 1920, *The Guildsman* reported a crisis within the League: the Communists who believed that a sharp break with the existing order was imminent and that guild ideas could be applied only after the revolution; the constitutionalists who rejected the idea of a catastrophic and violent upheaval and saw guild socialism as primarily a method of industrial organisation; and, finally, the small centre party, led by G. D. H. & Margaret Cole, who, while sympathetic towards the Bolsheviks, were not prepared to subordinate guild socialism to any political party.⁵³ The differences within the League found expression at its annual conferences and finally came to a head in January, 1921, when six of the right-wing members of the executive resigned protesting that the organisation had "gone Bolshevik".

Social Credit

A further factor which helped to undermine the movement was the espousal by *The New Age* of the Douglas Social Credit schemes. Orage had always remained somewhat aloof from the activities of the League itself and, as the war progressed, he became increasingly unsympathetic towards the syndicalist element in guild doctrines. From the

experience of the Bolshevik Revolution, he and his immediate circle concluded that the workers were not capable of managing the larger industries themselves, at least until they had undergone a long process of technical education. When, therefore, in 1919 he added to his long list of "editorial discoveries" the name of Major C. H. Douglas who claimed to have found that, not property but money and the manipulation of money was the root of the social evil, Orage was ready to champion the new cause with all his accustomed verve. Although Social Credit theories were at first given a guild flavour, they were in certain respects fundamentally opposed to guild doctrines. The general thesis put forward by Douglas was that industrial democracy could never be achieved so long as "finance" remained untouched and that the important point was not workers' control of industry or even the common ownership of the means of production but the control of credit power by the consumer. It was too much to expect that the majority of guildsmen would accept this new interpretation of "economic democracy". The 1920 conference of the League turned down the Social Credit proposals by a large majority, further resignations and secessions took place on this score, and, henceforward, Douglas and Orage pursued their new course apart from the movement.

"The great and growing productive power" not revolution, is what troubles Mr. Acheson. And later in his statement he refers to:

"By being of any use," he said, "I mean being effective instruments in aiding those who wish to resist giving the Soviet leaders their way. This includes resisting the use of threat of force. But it is not limited to this. It includes also resisting the will of the Soviet leaders to require others to increase their production of goods in the Communist way and as part of the Communist system."

His conclusions were that a balance of military power should be kept which would act as a deterrent against a risky military adventure and

to open as wide as possible the opportunity for nations to develop their own economic system without having to accept the system which to-day the Soviet leaders told them was inevitable.

Apart from acknowledging Mr. Acheson's perception in writing-off Stalin as a revolutionary, we would point out that by so doing, and in emphasising the "imperialistic" ambitions of the Russian régime, he is destroying the very foundations on which the anti-Russian propaganda of the West is based!

It is time it was recognised that the "tensions" in the world to-day are not between rival, but between similar, ideologies, aspiring to world domination, in which the "common man" is but a pawn and a victim. They are never conducive to human progress which, to-day more than ever in man's history (since we possess the "know-how" of virtually unlimited production) depends on the supplanting of existing concepts of economics, government and life based on privilege and elites, by those based on equality, responsibility and happiness.

47 *National Guilds*, p. 276.

48 Cole; *Social Theory*, p. 103.

49 *Ibid.* p. 106.

50 *Ibid.* p. 115.

51 *Guild Socialism Restated*, p. 32.

52 *Op. cit.* p. 121.

53 Cole's attitude inspired M. B. Reckitt's triolet:

Mr. G. D. H. Cole
Is a bit of a puzzle,
A curious rôle
That of G. D. H. Cole,
With a Bolshevik soul
In a Fabian muddle;
Mr. G. D. H. Cole
Is a bit of a puzzle.

(To be continued)

G.N.O.

