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# Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"To suppose that, when a whole nation take part in making and examining laws, it will not be better regulated than when laws are made by one person only, is to suppose that the wisdom of the whole race is not equal to the wisdom of the smallest of its parts."

THOMAS HODGSKIN.

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Threepence

LABOUR AND LIBERTY

## A BENIGN BIG BROTHER?

ONE has only to read the first pages of the Labour Party's "policy pamphlet" on Personal Freedom\* to realise that there is no connection between contents and title. What is offered and proposed are a series of legal safeguards for the individual (or what is left of him), against abuses by the officers of government and the representatives of the State. In *Personal Freedom* the Labour Party is not putting forward principles of freedom and suggesting methods of their attainment; it is in fact seeking to adjust the individual to an acceptance of the State as the spear-head of freedom, by the trick of offering him means of disputing the legality of the actions of the Executive. To provide the individual with the legal machinery to defend himself against the abuses of power is not freedom; at most it is simply a means for keeping the authority of the Executive within certain specified limits. Authority, by definition, is the denial of individual freedom; to legislate for freedom is either a contradiction in terms or has meaning only when the word "freedom" has none!

★

THIS Labour Party pamphlet is the first of a series of policy statements following the Party's decision at its last Conference to use the three years before the next elections

\*Personal Freedom. Labour's Policy for the Individual and Society (Labour Party, 32 pp. 9d.).

for "serious re-thinking" of its aims and principles. Far from injecting new life into the Party's thinking, this first statement of policy is a kind of funeral oration over the dead body of "democratic socialism" (and sub-consciously the producers of this pamphlet thought likewise in designing a cover in which black predominates!).

"The Labour Party aims at a society resting upon the following basis: (1) Concentration of power—military, political and economic—should serve, and be seen to serve, the whole community, and not dominate it; (2) Privileges of the few must be transformed into rights, available to every citizen; (3) A fairer distribution of wealth and opportunity must be advanced by positive State action, with the assistance of a free trade union and co-operative movement; (4) Effective civil liberties and an independent judiciary must safeguard personal freedom against abuse of power, either by the State or by any organisation". . . .

We believe that the only political framework within which a free society can flourish is that of parliamentary democracy with full rights of opposition."

The Labour Party believes, to quote again, that "the State is made for man, not man for the State". Such unbelievable beliefs spring from the idea that though the authority of the State can "damage personal freedom" it can, nevertheless "be used to extend freedom in a very real sense". Whilst the Labour movement since its beginnings has "clearly not regarded State action as the only means of social pro-

gress" and that "self-help within groups independent of the State was an objective of early socialists [nevertheless] State action was necessary to provide conditions in which the groups of individuals could properly function . . . In various ways . . . the British people have extended their freedoms both by action within groups and directly through the State".

The example we are given of "necessary State action" is of "the Acts . . . passed, not only to make trade unions lawful, but to grant them certain legal rights necessary to their practical operation". On a later page, however, we are told that in the "quiet social revolution that has been taking place" since the birth of the Labour Party half a century ago: "the trade unions, after a long struggle, have won their place as the indispensable part of the nation" (What a miserable end after such a long struggle!).

We think the dishonest argument here is quite clear. On the one hand they argue that it was the passing of the Acts by the State which made it possible for the trade unions to operate; on the other where for party propaganda purposes they want to boost the achievements of the Labour movement, they stress the long struggle of the trade unions, and refer to the place they have won!

Governments have only two ways of dealing with powerful unofficial organisations in their midst. If they feel strong enough they suppress them legally and seek to contain and even absorb them into the State machine. Obviously the latter method is the best since the Government kills two birds with the one stone: it passes off as democratic and the unofficial organisation is tamed and controlled.\* To-day the Tory Government looks upon the Trade Union movement as a vital

part of the economic system. Not as a force which threatens, but on the contrary as a pillar of capitalism, which is what the Labour Party means when it refers to the trade unions as "an indispensable part of the nation".

The Labour Party's apologia for the State is understandable since their objective is to take over the reins of power and, by legislation, taxation, death-duties, the replacement of private- by public-control, carry out a programme of social and economic reform, aiming at "equality" and the "classless society". The State will be a kind of benign Big Brother, nodding his approval of "voluntary effort", encouraging the "citizen's sense of responsibility", recognising the rights of the individual to sue his representatives, and of his representatives who are dismissed from his service for suspected heresies, to demand to know of which heresies they are suspected of being guilty. But Big Brother will plan the economy ("we maintain that it is necessary for a Government consciously to plan the economic system"); Big Brother will abolish class-distinction in education and social welfare; and ultimately, Big Brother will decide that while all men are equal some are more equal than others.

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\*One cannot help referring to the Collectivisation Decree in Catalonia during the Spanish Revolution. This apparent legal recognition of the achievements of the social revolution far from assisting its "practical operation" hindered it to the point of ultimately destroying it, principally because step by step initiative and authority were transferred from the members of each collective to the government of Catalonia. And the government which laid claim to being the expression of the social revolution (a claim based on the fact that all the workers' organisations were "represented" in it), eventually succeeded in even freeing itself of its revolutionary representation! (See *Lessons of the Spanish Revolution*, Freedom Press, 6/-).

## Two Bus Boycotts

THE boycott of public transport in Montgomery, Alabama, by Negroes who refused to accept the segregation laws, has spread to other parts of the Southern States. A five-week boycott has been in operation in Tallahassee, capital of Florida, but came to an end last week when the city transport company announced a 60% loss in revenue which resulted in the sale of buses to other cities.

White civic leaders had tried to compromise on the issue of segregation by conceding that those who "came first" whether black or white would get the available seats, but that there should continue to be no side by side mixing of races. This was rejected by the Negroes, who have shown themselves in other parts of the States to be a well organised and disciplined people, determined to fight for their basic human rights.

The answer to the transport company's sale of buses, is to form a bus company of their own with no segregation laws, and allow those Whites who either through force or circumstances or because they do not support segregated transport, to travel in the buses on the basis of equality. This might shame some of the Whites into a new frame of mind.

### South Africa

Another Negro boycott of transport, this time in South Africa, has ended successfully in that the initial aim, the reduction of bus fares, has actually been achieved. But the price of this triumph was bloodshed and violence, methods which generally have been avoided by the more experienced and disciplined American Negroes.

Last year the South African white-owned bus company which carries the slaves from the Evaton location into the factories in the towns raised the fares. The result was that thousands of travellers boycotted the buses, but many obviously feel that their efforts were undermined by the blacklegs who continued to use the transport service. Last week the two factions fought it out in the streets in riots which lasted for three days. Policemen armed with sten guns learned a lesson which they would do well to bear in mind for the future, namely that the complete manpower of South African Whites armed to the teeth, would be no match against rioting mobs only equipped with clubs and the fury of a repressed people.

The bus company also learned its lesson, and consented to reduce fares to the old level.

As the South African Negro becomes more educated in the methods of struggle, like his counterpart in the Southern States, he will become more disciplined in his approach not only to the apathetic sections of his own people but in his fight against the white suppressors.

But the South African Black has been sat on for so long that his violence is easily understood; the brutality of the Government administration with its total disregard for human rights is not conducive to cultivating good manners, law-abiding citizens. And although the South African Negro has appeared in the past to be suppressed to the point of passivity, there are signs that the pressure is becoming too high and the result may well be sporadic blowouts culminating finally in a fateful burst.

## The Lords at Work

BY the time FREEDOM appears in print this week, the House of Lords will have debated the anti-hanging bill steered through the House of Commons by Mr. Sidney Silverman. In getting the bill through the Commons unscathed Silverman has shown himself no mean tactician, and all the various attempts to whittle the bill down and retain the rope for some circumstance of murder have been resisted.

So far so good. Now this week the noble peers of the realm have had their say, and readers in Britain will be in possession of information about the debate and the vote which we have not, at the time of writing.

The House of Lords is a strange institution in these modern times. It is in fact larger than the Commons—over 800 peers are entitled to sit in the House, against 630 M.P.'s in the Commons—but not one of them is voted in by the population. The peerage is hereditary. All a chap has to do is to choose the right father to have automatically the privilege to take part in the governing of Great Britain and all the territories under its control. No qualification other than title is necessary, although probably there are provisions for restraining any peer who has actually been certified insane from taking his seat.

Between intelligence and certifiable insanity, however, there is a very wide gulf, and the backwoodsmen who occasionally grace the Chamber with their presence provide examples covering almost the entire range. It has been said

that there is one peer so stupid that even his fellow-peers notice it—but we can't vouch for the truth of that.

### A Special Occasion?

On the whole, though, the backwoodsmen stay in their rural retreats, hitting the train for Town only on special occasions. We shall see if they regard the threat to the gallows as of sufficient importance to drag themselves away from the huntin' and fishin' (shootin' doesn't start till the glorious twelfth), in order to prevent those dam' long-haired intellectual chaps interfering with one of the pillars of British society.

The House of Lords, not unexpectedly, is heavily weighted on the Conservative side, and this is giving many of its more astute supporters a slight headache. Of later years the Labour Party's one-time opposition to the Lords has, like so many of its 'socialist' concepts, tended to disappear.

While Labour was in power a fair number of its more venerable and incompetent members were 'sent upstairs' to grace the Upper House and the Labour Party realised that, as long as they had a majority in the Commons, the Lords did not present a real threat to the Government's power to legislate. They went so far as to reduce the time by which the Lords could hold up a Bill passed in the Commons from two years to one year, but after that it was found to be useful to have a second Chamber. The fact that such an archaic institution is in complete contradiction

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## 'Ability to Inflict Devastation Improving'

THE United States Secretary of Defence stated last week, that it was not the objective of the United States to over-arm or cause alarm to any country, but, he said:

"America's primary deterrent power rested on the Strategic Air Command, with its large numbers of long-range and medium-range bombers based both in the United States and overseas. Every one of the planes, he said, was capable of delivering atomic weapons of great destructive force on any possible enemy.

"Our capability of inflicting this devastation is not static. It is improving and will continue to improve".

He indicated that America's ability to deliver atomic weapons with supersonic missiles would soon be realised. The new weapons would include an inter-continental missile as well as one of intermediate range which could be launched from ships and allied bases 'to practically any point in the earth's surface'.

This statement presumably has two purposes; to frighten the enemy and to reassure the people that America is more than capable of defending herself and destroying any possible contestant.

It was therefore unfortunate that the testimony of the Chief of Army & Research Development, General James Gavin, was released to the press on the same day in spite of a frantic attempt by the Atomic Energy Commission and the Defence Department to halt release. The contents are not as reassuring as the statement from the Secretary of Defence was supposed to be, and millions of people whose countries may not even be at war will not be very happy to learn that their lives may depend on which way the wind is blowing. The following report was published in the *Manchester Guardian* under the title 'U.S. Ability to Inflict Devastation Improving':—

As released the testimony had this question put to the General by Senator Duff (Republican, Pennsylvania):

"If we got into a nuclear war and our strategic air force made an assault in force against Russia with nuclear weapons so that the weapons exploded in a way where the prevailing winds would carry them south-east over Russia, what would be the effect in the way of death?"

General Gavin replied:

"Current planning estimates run on the order of several hundred million deaths. That would be either way depending on which way the wind blew. If the wind blew to the south-east they would be mostly in the U.S.S.R., although they would extend into the Japanese and perhaps down into the Philippine area. If the wind blew the other way they would extend well back into Western Europe."

When General Gavin's testimony was published an Army spokesman expressed "shocked surprise" at this publicity. General Melloi, Chief of Army Information, said that the Army would have protested had it known in advance. The *New York Times* points out this morning that General Gavin's testimony gains added significance because it was no more guess on his part but was based on "current planning estimates". It adds that this phrase means that in considering the implications of any large-scale war into which the United States might be drawn, the strategists had taken into account that a large nuclear attack would kill hundreds of millions, most of them apparently non-combatant.

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## PEOPLE AND IDEAS

## Proudhon: The Man Without a System

"I like your system very much," an English tourist said to Proudhon. "But I have no system," Proudhon answered with annoyance, and he was right.

—ALEXANDER HERZEN: "Memoirs."  
"Let us seek together, if you wish, the laws of society, the manner in which these laws are realised, the process by which we shall succeed in discovering them; but, for God's sake, after having demolished all the a priori dogmatism, do not let us in our turn dream of indoctrinating the people..."  
—P.-J. PROUDHON:  
"Letter to Marx", 1846.

IF someone were to ask who were the big philosophers of anarchism, we would rattle off a chronological list of names of which the first four would be Godwin, Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin. Ten years ago the only biography available in English of any of these thinkers was Mr. E. H. Carr's long and detailed, if hardly sympathetic, *Michael Bakunin* (Macmillan, 1937). Then in 1946 appeared George Woodcock's *William Godwin, A Biographical Study* (Porcupine Press), which was a harbinger of the revival of interest in Godwin, since four or five books about him have since been published. This was followed in 1950 by *The Anarchist Prince: A Biographical Study of Peter Kropotkin* by George Woodcock and Ivan Avacumovic (Boardman & Co.), a book which is valuable not only for its exposition of Kropotkin's life and ideas, but also for the picture it gives of the Russia of his day and of the history of anarchism in general. Now, in his latest book,\* George Woodcock has given us a biography of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865), the first man to adopt the name 'anarchy' for the form of society he envisaged, and to call himself an anarchist.

What do we ask of this kind of biography? Firstly, a chronicle of the personal life and character of the subject, the public events of his day and his attitude to them; secondly, an extended account of his ideas, their origin and development, their influence and their present significance; and finally a certain sympathy in the biographer towards his subject, but not an idolatry which ignores defects and limitations. It is because Prof. Carr's book on Bakunin fulfils only the first of these requirements, that it must be considered a failure as a biography, and it is because these books of George Woodcock's go a long way towards satisfying them all, that they can be regarded as successful and

\*PIERRE-JOSEPH PROUDHON by George Woodcock (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 28s.)

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## New Books . . .

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon  
George Woodcock 28/-  
Reprints (Everyman) . . .  
Middlemarch George Eliot 6/-  
Ghosts: An Enemy of the People,  
and The Warriors at Helgeland  
Henrik Ibsen 6/-  
Plays R. B. Sheridan 6/-  
Remainders . . .  
Introduction to the Russian Novel  
Janko Lavrin 3/6  
In the Mesh Jean-Paul Sartre 3/6  
Second-Hand . . .  
Leviathan Thomas Hobbes 2/6  
The Spanish War  
Ernest Hemingway (1st edition) 3/6  
In Tyranny—Four Centuries of  
Struggle Against Tyranny in  
Germany 5/-  
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(slightly damaged) 7/6  
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Autobiography of a Working  
Man Alexander Somerville 6/-  
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authoritative. In the case of Proudhon it is important that this should be so, for since his writings are so voluminous (his *Oeuvres Complètes* fill 26 volumes and his correspondence another 14), and since only two or three of these have ever been translated into English, most of us are likely to read this biography as a substitute for reading Proudhon himself, as well as for an assessment of his life and ideas.

PROUDHON is usually dismissed, such has been the success of the Marxist trick of labelling a man and then destroying the label, as a 'Utopian', a reformist, an archaic figure, the mouthpiece of the peasant and the small artisan fighting a rearguard action against industrial society. That his fundamental outlook was that of the peasant, Proudhon would certainly not deny. He recalled with affection the years of his childhood, herding his parent's cattle, barefoot in the valleys of the Jura:

"In my father's house, we breakfasted on maize porridge; at mid-day we ate potatoes; in the evening bacon soup, and that every day of the week. And despite the economists who praise the English diet, we, with that vegetarian feeding, were fat and strong. Do you know why? Because we breathed the air of our fields and lived from the produce of our own cultivation."

Since the peasantry in our day as in his form the greater part of the world's population, and since it has been neglected by socialists of all kinds, there is no need to apologise for Proudhon's sympathy for the peasant, which as David Mitrany writes in his *Marx Against the Peasant*, "was something unique in the history of socialism, but it is an exception which strikingly proves the rule".

Again it is true that Proudhon was intensely proud of his status as a skilled craftsman—he was a printer by trade. 'I still remember with pride,' he wrote, 'the great day when my composing stick

became for me the symbol and instrument of my freedom'. But this did not make him a 'petit-bourgeois individualist' as the Marxists love to call him, for he wrote, foreshadowing syndicalism in defining his concept of 'Mutualism':

"Mutuality, reciprocity exists, when all the workers in an industry, instead of working for an entrepreneur who pays them and keeps their products, work for one another and thus collaborate in the making of a common product whose profits they share among themselves. Extend the principle of reciprocity as uniting the work of every group, to the Workers' Societies as units, and you have created a form of civilisation which from all points of view—political, economic and aesthetic—is radically different from all earlier civilisations".

That Proudhon was a 'Utopian' is, as Martin Buber shows in his *Paths in Utopia*, very far from the truth. 'No man,' Buber writes, 'has questioned more honestly and more pungently than Proudhon the social reality of his time and sought its secret', and certainly no man has rejected more of the political illusions that plagued his day and ours. Proudhon really believed in an open society. He rejected the dialectical method in both its Hegelian and its Marxian form. He rejected the notion of historical inevitability: 'Man no longer wishes to be mechanised. He strives towards defatalisation! Proudhon shared what he called 'the universal antipathy to all Utopias whose essence is political organisation and a social credo'. He denied the existence of Absolutes, even in his favourite concept, that of Justice, which, in the book which George Woodcock regards as 'one of the noblest works of social thought of the nineteenth century', *De la Justice dans La Revolution et dans l'Eglise*, (1858), he insists is immanent and not transcendent. Woodcock explains this in these terms:

"On the transcendental theory of Justice, which presupposes absolute and permanent formulae unrelated to the de-

velopment of the human consciousness or the discoveries of human experience, is based the idea of 'Divine Right, with Authority for its watchword'. Hence proceed all the systems of state administration, of moral regulation, or restriction on ideas, and of the general disciplining of humanity. From the theory of immanence, on the other hand, it follows that, 'Justice being the product of conscience each man is in the last resort the judge of good and evil . . . If I myself do not pronounce that such a thing is just, it is in vain that prince and priest affirm its justice to me and order me to do it; it remains unjust and immoral and the power that claims to compel me is tyrannical . . . Such is Human Right, with Liberty for its watchword; hence arises a whole system of co-ordinations, of reciprocal guarantees, of mutual services, which is the inverse of the system of authority."

"It is towards a realisation of this conception that we should always tend. It is true that we cannot attain it completely; a wholly just society would be perfect, and Proudhon recoils with near horror from the thought . . . The progress of Justice, both theoretical and practical, is a state from which it is not given to us to emerge and see the end. We know how to discern good from evil; we shall never know the destination of Right, because we shall never cease to create new relationships between ourselves. We are born perfectible; we shall never be perfect. Perfection, immobility, would be death."

This is the moral basis of Proudhon's mutualism (*mutualité* or reciprocity); its economic foundation is in his ideas on property in relation to work, which he outlines in the course of his first important book (*What is Property?* (1840)—the work in which he first describes himself as an anarchist. Here he gives us a labour theory of value, based like that of Marx on Ricardo, but preceding Marx. It is in his notion of surplus value that Proudhon offers a much more acceptable theory than that of Marx. George Woodcock summarises it thus:

## The Tradition of Workers' Control — 12

## From Control to Consultation

## "Joint Control": A Compromise

BETWEEN them the syndicalist and guild socialist movements achieved the popularisation of the idea of workers' control. From being, in Sidney Webb's phrase, 'an anarchist deviation', it had become by 1920, if not a respectable idea, at least a demand to be reckoned with. It was no longer possible for parlour socialists to draw up blue prints of pink futures without making special reference to the position of the workers in the control and administration of industry.

In the period 1884-1914 the bulk of the members of the Labour and Socialist movements had conceived the Collectivist State in terms of municipal ownership of local industries and State ownership, on the Post Office model, of national industries. Under the impact of syndicalist and guild criticisms of bureaucratic State socialism, this conception went into the melting pot: the Collectivist State had to be re-fashioned. In keeping with the mentality of 'moderates' of every age and clime, the moderate socialists of the First World War generation did not, however, seek to re-think their general position in the light of syndicalist criticisms: instead they sought a reconciliation between 'the new socialism' and the old fashioned collectivism. The syndicalists and guildmen had demanded workers' control; the Fabian collectivists had advocated State control: the solution 'therefore' was joint control—the sharing of control between the workers' unions and the State. The syndicalists, as might be expected, rejected this compromise 'solution'. The guild socialists, however, were more circumspect: they rejected the notion of joint management by producers and consumers but were prepared to countenance joint control by the unions with the State, provided that the workers were accorded the right to appoint at least 50% of the members of any management body that might be set up. Joint control, in this form, was seen as a possible step towards workers' control—the establishment of a fully self-governing build for every industry.

Between 1914 and 1926 the majority of nationalisation proposals put forward by constituent organs of the Labour movement were based on the notion of joint control in one form or another. Even the Webbs, those high priests of Collectivism, pronounced in its favour. In 1920, largely under the inspiration of the Webbs, the Socialisation Commission of the reconstituted Second International published a report advocating the establishment of semi-independent public boards on which the workers were to be given tripartite representation along with the representatives of management and the consumers. Labour Party conferences began to pass resolutions in favour of nationalisation 'with due arrangements for the

participation in management, both central and local, of the employees of all grades—without specifying what the 'due arrangements' were to be. Several of the larger unions, notably those in the postal, engineering, railway and mining industries were syndicalist and guild socialist doctrines had found widest support, published revised plans or model bills for the nationalisation of their own industries.

## The Miners and the Sankey Commission

The most famous of all the new plans of this period was the one the Miners' Federation put before the Sankey Commission in 1919. Aided by G. D. H. Cole, the miners succeeded in making this Royal Commission a forum for the discussion of industrial democracy. Human freedom, argued Cole in his evidence,

"implies, not the absence of discipline or restraint, but the imposition of the necessary discipline or restraint either by the individual himself, or by some group of which he forms, and feels himself to form, a part. If then a man must receive orders, he must, if he is to be free, feel that these orders come from himself, or from some group of which he feels himself to be a part, or from some person whose right to give orders is recognised and sustained by himself and by such a group. This means that free industrial organisation must be built on the co-operation, and not merely on the acquiescence of the ordinary man, from the individual and the pit up to the larger units." Such co-operation could not be achieved by State management for "a State Department is not a group of which the ordinary man feels himself to be a part".<sup>63</sup>

In administrative terms, the miners' plan proposed State ownership of the industry and the setting up of a Mining Council composed of 10 members appointed by the Government and 10 members appointed by the Miners' Federation, with the Minister of Mines as President. In addition, there were to be divisional and pit councils, similarly constituted, and an independent advisory Consumers' Council to represent the interests of the consumers.

The weakness of this attempt at a compromise solution became clear, however, when the plan was subjected to detailed scrutiny. In the event of a clash of policy between the State and the union, whose will should prevail? If the union's, why joint control in the first place? If the State's, then the union would be in the awkward position of being a party to a policy of which it disapproved.<sup>64</sup>

In the event, the Government rejected the miners' plan and along with it the majority report in favour of State ownership. The Commission had served the purpose of staving off temporarily the threatened coal strike and the Government could afford to bide its time for a showdown with the miners. By the time the next commission on the mining industry was set up—the Samuel Commission of 1925-6—the miners' union had

"He argues that labour alone is the basis of value, but that this nevertheless does not give the labourer a right to property, since his labour does not create the material out of which the product is made. 'The right to products is exclusive; the right to means is common'. But means, as Proudhon points out, does not consist only of the raw materials provided by nature. It includes also the vast heritage of installations built by men in the past, the accumulated techniques and traditions of civilisation, and more important, the element of co-operation in labour which makes each man's work so much more effective than if he acted in solitude. This is the real 'surplus value' of which the capitalist appropriates an unduly disproportionate share."

"Marx's theory of surplus value is restricted to the particular relation of employer and employee. With its implicit connection with the 19th century 'Iron Law of Wages', according to which workers are kept down to the mere necessities of living and procreation and all the rest of the product of their labour is taken by the capitalist, it has become outdated in modern society, for it is impossible to claim that the American worker is merely receiving enough to keep him alive—unless one stretches the point to include automobiles among the requisites of a subsistence existence. But in this culture where a relatively high standard of comfort is widely spread and where, far from the middle class becoming proletarianised, the proletariat has climbed towards the lower ranks of the middle class, Proudhon's theory retains its validity. As he contended, all of us, workers and capitalists, producers and parasites, are everlastingly in debt to the past and to society. We live as we do by reason of centuries of common work; the labourer could not do the tasks which create 'surplus value' unless he had the tools and the co-operation provided by social effort, and it is thus in fact the social and not the personal element in work which the exploiter appropriates. He does not steal from a man the results of that man's personal labour; instead he takes for himself the extra productive power conferred on us by collective work."

"Proudhon, advancing from the conception of the social basis of all labour, declares that, though men may indeed be unequal in capacity, in rights they

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been weakened by a series of protracted and bitter strikes and lock-outs. They abandoned the demand for a half-share in control at all levels and, instead, were prepared to accept minority representation.

## Managerial Socialism

The new miners' plan of 1926, which had the backing of the Labour Party and the T.U.C., was overshadowed by the "General Strike" of that year. But to the historian of industrial democracy it is of special significance. For it prefigured the development of a new nationalisation policy by the Labour movement. Bureaucratic nationalisation through State Departments on the model of the Post Office had been discarded and the compromise of 'joint control' substituted. The time had now come for the abandonment of the joint control policy and with it any attempt to meet the demands of the industrial democrats. The new socialism was to be managerial socialism and its administrative form was to be the Public Corporation.

The full implications of Labour's new nationalisation policy did not become clear until the 1930's. It was not obvious at first that the Public Corporation as an administrative form could not be combined with, if not joint control, at least some element of workers' representation on the governing boards. When Morrison, the leading protagonist of the Public Corporation in Labour circles, put forward his bill for the re-organisation of London Transport in 1929, he consequently touched off a prolonged debate in the Labour movement over the question of workers' representation. This debate, as it was pursued at Labour Party Conferences and Trades Union Congresses revealed how hazy were most of the participants' ideas of industrial democracy. No distinction was made between workers' control, joint control, and workers' representation; and it was never clearly stated who should appoint the workers' 'representatives' and to whom they were to be responsible. The appointment of a few Trade Union nominees to governing boards was frequently dubbed as tantamount to syndicalism—despite the fact that Sidney Webb had advocated it as long ago as 1891. With no organised syndicalist or guild movement to rebut such travesties, it is not surprising that the debate ended in confusion—each side claiming the victory. In retrospect, however, it is clear that the laurels went to Morrison and the advocates of managerial socialism.

## The T.U.C. and the Control of Industry

In 1932, as its contribution to the debate, the T.U.C. published a report on the Control of Industry. This neglected report is perhaps the most important single document for the comprehension of modern Labour policy on this subject. The crux of socialisation, argued its authors, lies in the

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## LABOUR & LIBERTY

Continued from p. 1

It is right that special ability and industry, including thrift, inventiveness and excellence in the arts should be specially rewarded; but such recognition should be on merit alone and should not be allowed to lead to a new privileged class.

★

HAVING declared that Labour's three tasks are: "To transform the capitalist order into a socialist community" (it should be pointed out that this point is nowhere enlarged in the pamphlet so that the term "socialist community" remains vague though it sounds good!); "defend the advances we have already made; carry out our responsibilities within the existing system"—we are then told:

"Rights mean duties. No one who benefits from the Welfare State, from full employment or from better education can contract out of the social obligations which must support these reforms."

If we are right in interpreting the reference to "social obligations" to mean that we must be behing the government—that is respond to its calls for more production, more sacrifices to provide defence against those enemies who would wish to destroy our Welfare State, our way of life, etc.—then the statement is a dangerous one as well as being sheer hypocrisy.

It is sheer hypocrisy because here we have these self-styled socialists implying that social services, a job and a decent education, are *privileges* for which we should show ourselves grateful to the munificent government that bestows them on us (paying for them out of their own pockets!).

It is dangerous because by using these arguments it means that in countries such as Russia, where the State controls everything, the citizen should therefore have even greater social obligations to the government and the system. At the other extreme, in the jungle of "free enterprise", the worker, whose piece of bread and the roof over his head, depend on his earning a wage, has a very great social obligation to his employer! It means too that however close one may approximate to the "equalitarian society" economically and to "equality before the law", the social structure of government and State remains, if anything, strengthened, since it will control those private or monopolistic enterprises which to-day wield too much power for the liking of the Labour Party.

The producer, the employee, until he has direct control of his work; the consumer, until he determines what he needs (and this includes education, health services and other social services no less than the food he actually consumes); until that control begins at the local level there can be no ethical argument to support this Labour Party idea of "duties", of "social obligations" or of condemnation of those who "contract out" whilst at the same time making use of the "benefits" of the Welfare State. "Rights means duties" is an authoritarian concept. Indeed, in the society of *real* Personal Freedom, the word "rights" would have no meaning for there would be no class nor political hierarchy with the power to impose its wishes on the individual or to grant him "rights" (generally in exchange for new duties!).

★

THE Welfare State, State education for everyone without class distinction, State control of production, are all roads which may lead to greater equality but inevitably lead to more State control: never to individual freedom. However, to seek to destroy them by armed revolution without at the

same time having something to put in their place is to condemn society to death by starvation and disease. The organisation of production, distribution and the social and health services is vital to life, and cannot be suspended even for one moment. Why then, we may be asked, do we criticise the socialists, the reformists and the gradualists who are, so they say, carrying on a "quiet revolution" through parliament, the trade unions and other organisations? The answer, as we see it, is that the Machine they seek to modify or to perfect is basically authoritarian, and just as you cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, so it is impossible ever to build the free society by an organisation which is authoritarian.

★

IF socialists and anarchists not only desire the free society but are also prepared to work for its attainment there are certain steps to be taken which, to our minds, cannot be by-passed even by the most impatient among us. The first is to influence and inspire our fellow-beings with a spirit of freedom (no mean task when one considers that, in fact, the whole Labour movement is vitiated with authoritarian ideas). Until the idea of freedom is felt strongly enough by a large minority it will be impossible to put into effect the second step which must consist in creating our own organisations of self-help, our own local health services, our own schools, our own producers and consumers co-operatives. That is, instead of, as the Labour Party proposes, strengthening the State by ever-extending its functions, we must withdraw initiative from the State by assuming it ourselves as responsible individuals and as members of communities with common needs and common problems.

We do not suggest that as a result of such steps the State will "with away"; on the contrary it will probably use every means, foul or fair, to retain its power; what is certain, however, is that if and when the clash comes, it will not be because of a purely negative "discontent", which in the past has always resulted in a change of masters, but will truly represent a *struggle between two diametrically opposed ways of life*: the one based on freedom and voluntary co-operation the other on authority, privilege and class distinctions.

But without individual effort, the willingness to accept the consequences of one's ideas wherever they lead, there can be no change. There is nothing inevitable about history. To coin the Labour Party's aphorism quoted earlier: Man makes history and not History Man! It is not enough to possess the idea, the seed of freedom. One must also sow it to reap the harvest!

## PROUDHON

Continued from p. 2

must be equal, since it is not their own merits but the inherited traditions, techniques and means of production embodied in society which make it possible for them to develop their capacities. It follows that each man, in working according to his capacity, is only establishing the same right as his neighbour, however spectacular may be his contribution."

In the same book Proudhon rejects communism as a system which creates only a spurious equality and does not in fact abolish property. The prophetic ring of his criticism of authoritarian communism is repeated in the description he gives of it in a late work, *The Political Capacity of the Working Classes*, (1864):

"A compact democracy having the appearance of being founded on the dictatorship of the masses, but in which the masses have no more power than is necessary to ensure a general serfdom in accordance with the following precepts and principles borrowed from the old absolutism; indivisibility of public power, all-consuming centralisation, systematic destruction of all individual, corporative and regional thought (regarded as disruptive), inquisitorial police."

★

It is centralism above all that he hates. The prime cause, he declares, of all the disorders that visit society, of the oppression of the citizens and the decay of nations, 'lies in the single and hierarchical centralism of authority...'. Thus he stands opposed to all the great revolutionary nationalists of his day, Kossuth, Garibaldi, Mazzini. Opposing Mazzini's arguments for the unification of Italy, he writes:

"Every original characteristic in the various districts of a country is lost by the centralisation of its public life—for that is the proper name for this so-called 'unity'. What is the unity of the nation in reality? It is the merging of the separate folk-groups in which men live, and which differ from one another, into the abstract idea of a nation, in which no-one breathes, and no-one is acquainted with another."

In opposition to the Italian nationalists he puts forward a vision of a 'confederation of free cities' in which men would be able to live more fully and happily than in the unity of 'empires of forty million men':

"In a little state, there is nothing for the bourgeoisie to profit from... Civilisation progresses, and services are rendered to the world, in inverse proportion to the immensity of empires... Any agglomeration of men, comprised within a clearly circumscribed territory and able to live an independent life in that spot, is meant for autonomy. The principle of federation, corollary to that of

the separation of powers, is opposed to the disastrous principles of the agglomeration of peoples and of administrative centralisation."

Nor was Proudhon's refutation of nationalism for export only. During the Crimean War he wrote to a friend, 'If it were necessary that France should be beaten and humiliated so that liberty should be saved, would you hesitate? Personally I know no such scruples'.

Proudhon belonged to no party or faction. He was, like Herzen, a guerrilla fighter who did not trust the political revolutionaries, noting in his diary in 1845 that 'The social revolution is seriously compromised if it comes through a political revolution'. He wrote passionately in a letter to Herzen in 1855:

"While you are preoccupied with governments above all, I for my part see the governed. Before attacking despotism among princes, is it not more often necessary that we should begin by combating it among the soldiers of freedom? Do you know anything that more resembles a tyrant than a popular tribune? And has not the intolerance of the martyrs more than once appeared to you just as odious as the rage of the persecutors? Is it not true that despotism is only so difficult to overcome because it rests on the intimate feelings of its antagonists—I should say its competitors—to such an extent that the sincerely liberal writer, the true friend of the Revolution, very often does not know on which side he should direct his blows, on the coalition

of the oppressors or on the bad morality of the oppressed?"

"Do you believe, for example, that the Russian autocracy, is merely a product of brute force and dynamic intrigues? Has it not hidden bases, secret roots, in the hearts of the Russian people? Oh, my dear Herzen, most frank of men, have you never been scandalised and desolated by the hypocrisy and machiavellianism of those whom European democracy, whether rightly or wrongly, endures or avows as leaders? No division before the enemy, you will say to me. But, dear Herzen, which is more to be dreaded for liberty—schism or treason?"

I hope that in these quotations which are largely drawn from George Woodcock's biography I have given you some idea of the boldness and integrity of Proudhon's thinking. I have said nothing about his absurdities and paradoxes, his family life, his rôle in the revolution of 1848, his People's Bank, nor his imprisonments and exile, because I am sure that other reviewers will seize them to enliven the tedium of an exposition of his ideas. But is there not enough of relevance for our own world in these aphorisms and reflections to have made his biography worth writing? Proudhon was a man who had the strength and courage, as Buber says, 'to steep himself in contradiction and bear the strain of it', and at the same time to have the humility to admit that 'the system of humanity, whatever it be, will only be known when humanity is at its end...'

C.W.

## Making Friends

THERE may be no truth in the persistent rumours that amongst the compulsory reading for high-ups in the Foreign Ministries of Russia, Great Britain and America, is that best-seller of yesterday: "How to Make Friends and Influence People". It is only too evident however that a policy such as is implied by the title, is in force in the Middle East.

Unfortunately it is also evident, as in the case of Cyprus, that the British Foreign Office has thought it necessary to enlarge the scope of the title to include: "How to Make Enemies and Influence People by Force". The same tactic has of course already been applied in Malaya and Kenya by successive Governments, whether Conservative or Labour, and was administered equally as effectively to Palestine.

America, since the war, has favoured the subtler approach referred to in the first paragraph, and with her mighty weapon, the dollar, has conquered many lands with varying degrees of success. The last occasion upon which she had recourse to forceful methods (apart from the World Wars), was in 1898, when she wrested the Philippines, Cuba and Puerto Rico from Spain; the latter remains an American possession, with the sort of Colonial position in relation to America, as that of Jamaica or Trinidad in relation to Britain.

The U.S.S.R. has invariably employed a compound of pressure from within and without in order to gain influence with a proposed victim. In general her *modus operandi* may be regarded as highly successful, and far less costly than the more orthodox procedures. With her "ideological" methods Russia has infiltrated (and almost completely absorbed), the countries of Eastern Europe.

She has accomplished as much as Britain, and far more than America, without anything approaching the capital outlay required by either of these countries. She has: Made Friends and Enemies, and Influenced People with or without Force—and has seldom been called upon to expend large amounts of roubles.

But times change, and the conflict of interests in the Middle East has brought about the necessity for all three Great Powers to use such measures for gaining influence as may be at hand.

So far these have come under two main headings: 1. Supply of armaments, (presumably on the doubtful principle that they would not be used against the supplier; 2. Supply of money or promises of money, to be utilised for the general good of the population concerned (on the principle of making friends and prospective customers).

Some of the methods adopted in recent years have been discussed in past issues of FREEDOM, and attempts have been made to analyse the real reasons behind the apparent demonstrations of generosity from one nation to another. It is always safe to say that the ultimate motives are economic, though very often it appears to be a matter of "balance of power", or the "safety of the people".

What in fact is meant by these catch phrases? They really amount to the same thing: *protection of national interests within the area*. Safety of the people simply means, safety of the oil or copper, the rubber or manganese. It is materials, not populations which are important to the governments of the world—economic difficulties must be overcome, and social problems are seldom the concern of statesmen and politicians.

## PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT!

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## From Control to Consultation

Continued from p. 2

transfer to the community of *control*, not as is commonly thought of *ownership*. In the past control was automatically vested in the owners of property but this control has been successively limited by government regulation. Moreover, the increase in the scale of industrial organisation has led to the divorce of ownership from control, while at the same time ownership has come to mean not so much the ownership of tangible property as the right to receive an income in the shape of profits and interest. With the introduction of dividend limitation, this general tendency is carried a stage further until the logical conclusion is reached when the private ownership of capital seems almost meaningless, apart from the right to an annual income. In such circumstances, it is merely a matter of convenience whether socialisation takes the form of compensating the owners by the issue of Government Stock or by the issue of Public Corporation Stock. In either case, the former owners *as such* have no part in the control and management of the concern.

It can hardly have been more clearly stated that the difference between 'socialisation' à la Public Corporation and 'advanced capitalism' is practically indiscernible! But this was not all. The authors proceeded to subject the 'vague dogma' of workers' control to critical scrutiny. Needless to say, the upshot of their examination was that the workers had no right to control industry: all they

could reasonably claim was to 'participate' in control. The workers, through their unions, had the right to influence those who did control and this could be achieved by joint consultative machinery; but they should not challenge managerial prerogatives. The determination of policy on technical, administrative, commercial and financial matters was outside the competence of the workers.

"The task of business administration in this technical and commercial sense is a matter nowadays of expert training and experience. It is as much the manager's 'craft' to be able to organise the factors of production as it is the worker's 'craft' to use a lathe or a pick. It would therefore seem that efficient results can only be obtained if the final responsibility for these technical questions is left to those whose training and experience fits them for the job."<sup>63</sup>

### Statutory Representation

It was not to be expected that even the bulk of Labour moderates in 1932 would swallow whole this piece of blatant advocacy of managerialism. Morrison's antagonists refused to yield: they insisted that in any future act of nationalisation the workers should, as a statutory right, have a number of representatives on the governing boards of the Public Corporation. The managerialists gracefully accepted the point. In 1935 the Labour Party and the T.U.C. jointly agreed on the principle of statutory representation: the workers were to have an unspecified number of 'representatives' on the proposed boards, 'representatives'

appointed by the Minister and paid by the corporation, 'representatives' who would cease to be members of their unions, 'representatives' who would be responsible not to the workers but to the Government!

Ten years later, on the eve of the election of the 1945 Labour Government, the T.U.C. reiterated its arguments on the position of management *vis-à-vis* the workers, stating even more clearly the case against any form of the concessions that could be made to industrial democracy.<sup>66</sup>

In the summer of 1945 the Labour Party and the National Union of Mineworkers held joint discussions out of which emerged a detailed plan on which the Labour Government later based its Coal Industry Nationalisation Bill. In the course of these discussions, the N.U.M. agreed that the principle of statutory representation should be dropped and that no explicit provision should be made to include on the boards of nationalised industries representatives of the workers in those industries. Thus, on the eve of realising their fifty years old demand for nationalisation, the miners—or rather, the miners' leaders—abandoned the last vestige of the syndicalist dream of 'the mine for the miners'.

G.N.O.

(To be continued)

<sup>63</sup> Coal Industry Commission, *Evidence*, Cmd. 359/1919, Vol. 1, pp. 548ff.

<sup>64</sup> For a 'syndicalist' critique of joint control on these lines see *A Plan for the Democratic Control of the Mining Industry*, 1919, published by the South Wales Socialist Society.

<sup>65</sup> T.U.C. Report, 1932, p. 217.

<sup>66</sup> Report on Post-War Reconstruction, T.U.C. Report, 1944, p. 411.



# Inter-Union Rivalry in N.Y. Strike

## PARALLELS WITH BRITISH DOCK STRIKE

THE sort of struggle which has been taking place in the docks of Britain between the Transport & General Workers' Union and the Stevedores' and Dockers' Union, has a counterpart in the Subway of New York—and with similar results for the workers.

For when unions begin to squabble among themselves the workers find themselves used to provide the power for the two contending sets of officials while their real economic grievances get pushed into the background.

In New York, the motormen on the Subway have until recently been members of the Transport Workers' Union. But last November a number of them broke away to form the Motormen's Benevolent Association, choosing as their president a motorman who has been working in the Subway since 1934, Theodore Loos.

He resigned from the TWU in protest against its acceptance of a 1954 report on working conditions, and during this year the MBA has been exerting what pressure it can to get the Transit Authority to recognise its right to negotiate. To this end Loos is doing his best to dissociate the 2000 motormen now in his MBA from the 1100 who remain in the TWU.

And just as in Liverpool, the Transport and General Workers' Union allied itself with the Port Authorities to try and break the Blue Union, so in New York the Transport Workers' Union joined forces with the Transit Authority to crush the new association, which, like all such new groupings, promised to be more militant, and has in fact already involved its members in a strike.

Our New York correspondent writes:

Against the MBA's potential of spontaneous direct action there has appeared in the Transit Authority and in the Transit Workers' Union an increasing affinity for each other and a mutual alarm at the success of MBA members in adding to their numbers, and it is hard to say which group treated the strikers with greater fury. TA and TWU had been getting along very nicely doing what is called bargaining across the table. A letter from the TWU to all employees of the TA stated, "We in TWA believe that motormen are still grossly underpaid—as are all transit workers... the problems of the motormen are being solved by TWU in the TWU way." Then with pride they said that across the table an increase of 28 cents an hour had been won for motormen in the last two years. Based on a 40 hour week this amounts to a weekly increase of 11 dollars, for to-day's prices a negligible figure. Frustration with union bureaucracy was the primary cause of the strike, expressed as a demand that the MBA be recognized by the TA as a bargaining agent. It was difficult to be unsympathetic with the MBA before the strike, yet it should have been obvious all along that a switch from a big to a little brotherhood entailed the risk of a similar brotherly treatment. And so it turned out. Direct strike action

over a specified issue was followed by a back to work appeal by Loos at the very moment when complete victory looked possible. Loos drained the strength from a revolutionary act. The inevitable consequence (in a democracy) was the filing of an injunction restraining further striking, the exacting of a promise from the MBU leadership that in return for them being granted time to cook up a defence they would guarantee no strike until the legal action was heard, and an immediate crackdown by the employers as the men drifted unwillingly back.

This is how events appeared to the public. For a few days before the strike small blue leaflets appeared pasted on the windows and walls of the trains and subway stations, most of them quickly defaced. It was stated that if a strike did occur on Wednesday, June 20th, the date decided on, responsibility would rest with individuals in the TA and not with the MBA who had sought recognition for themselves every way short of striking. The methods they had used (in a curious phrase to win the public eye) were "the democratic way, the American way", as if to strike were not an eminently American activity.

### Train Blacklegs?

Next two incompatible statements appear. One that the TA did not believe that a strike would be called. Two that "supervisory personnel" (i.e. office workers) would be trained to stand in for the motormen. Who should do the training? Why, the motormen of course—who could do the job better? On Wednesday, June 13th, the strike was set for the following Wednesday. On the 14th the supervisory personnel were put into uniform and lessons began.

Soon a group of four motormen had refused to take their trains out with the

pupils on board, then another four. The TA officials, who either were inept or more likely wanted to provoke a strike ahead of the day it was organized for, refused to let the trains out under any other conditions.

Within an hour the mutual refusal had become a strike involving the BMT lines from Brooklyn with smaller segments of the IND and IRT systems. Three hours later a million New Yorkers were standing in the streets wondering how to get home. Many found alternative means to get home, leaving by 7 p.m. a core of frustrated dependent people vaguely directing their anger at passing buses and taxis. Thousands walking across the Brooklyn Bridge must have been astonished to find themselves involuntary witnesses of the most splendid sight in the city, the red tongue of the East River lapping out to the grey Atlantic at sunset. A power switch was pulled at the Church Avenue station bringing three IND trains to a halt in the accumulating heat. Fainting passengers were given oxygen. Herds of automobiles on the avenues had engine hoods propped up as engines boiled in first gear with an average speed of three miles an hour. It was the hottest day of the year. Vendors ran out of fruit juice.

### Loos Sells Out

Meanwhile at a meeting in Queens Loos was opposing the shouted wishes of 400 MBA members to continue the strike. In fact he was dealing it a death blow for without his persuasive opposition neither the "loyal" TWU motormen, nor the 1600 undecided and still working MBA motormen, nor the "protection" offered by Kennedy the police chief, nor the public resentment Mike Quill, TWU Chief, was trying to fan with statements

about the scum, the mob and the underworld, would have stayed the tide.

400 strikers were suspended and then 're-employed', meaning a loss of earned benefits and subjection to a probationary period of five years during which they are subject to instant dismissal for breaking rules. Rubbing in the salt of this victory the TA determined to force the motormen to train their own scabs, a deliberate attempt to stamp out any remaining spirit, and true to form the MBA said they would have to. The motormen, or at least some of them, then turned to passive resistance, allowing the office workers on board but refusing to give them any instruction. "They can just drive their own way," they said. So far there have been no crashes.

On Monday the 18th, at the court hearing, the undertaking on behalf of his clients was given by the MBU's lawyer that the originally scheduled strike for Wednesday the 20th would not take place, pending the result of the hearing that was then set for the 28th. On that day the TA flourished legal fanfares and obtained an order "restraining" the workers from striking. Anyone now doing so will presumably land in jail for contempt of court.



The parallel between the behaviour of the leaders of the New York motormen and British dockers is striking. The last year's great London dock strike was for recognition of the small 'blue' union, whose leaders all announced their resignations while the strike was on!

In Britain, however, legality has operated in favour of the small union. This only tells us that the law may operate differently in London or New York, but that union leaders are the same in both countries.

## LORDS AT WORK Continued from p. 1

to socialist thought was no longer considered any kind of argument.

### The Tories Worried

Now in fact, it is the Tories who are most worried about the Lords. They realise that it is overweighted on the Tory side and that this can lead it into disrepute and re-awaken Labour opposition. And especially might this happen if the peers throw out the anti-hanging Bill, because this has now become a test-piece for the rank-and-file of the Commons against Government.

Readers will remember that before the first debate in the Commons the Prime Minister Sir Anthony Eden said that the Government 'would act on the decision of the House'. Since the House has been allowed, for once, a free vote on Sidney Silverman's private Bill, this was taken by most members to mean that if the division was won by the abolitionists, the Government would take up the Bill and implement the Commons' decision.

After the vote, however, Sir Anthony about-faced and said that the Government could not be expected to sponsor a Bill against which it had voted—even though the Commons had shown their decision in a truly democratic way. 'How democratic do you think we are?' Sir Anthony might have asked.

In spite of Government sharp practice (or perhaps because of it, for many waverers might have found sympathy for

the abolitionists in order to show disapproval of Eden's action), the Bill is now clear of all Committee stages in the Commons.

### A Possible Danger

If the Lords are so short-sighted, then, as to turn the Bill down, they may well be aiming another blow at the sovereignty of the Commons—still smarting on this issue from Anthony's autocratic double-cross. It could cause a resurgence of anti-House of Lords feeling among the Labour Party that it could make abolition of the Upper House a part of future Party policy.

And since there are already quite a few Tories who would not be sorry to see Labour back in power at the next election if the trade recession continues, they would hate to see anything happen now that might give them the impetus to

interfere with the Lords when next in office. We doubt, however, if they have much to fear.

Anyway, as we have said, by the time this appears in print, readers will know whether the Lords have stuck to their gallows (there are probably quite a few who would like to see hanging brought back for poaching!) or whether they have been persuaded that it is in their eventual interest not to fly in the face of the Commons. We doubt if many of them will be persuaded by reasonable argument of the wrongness of hanging, for we may be sure that good Christian arguments will be forthcoming from the Bishops and sound legal reasoning from the Judges (watch Lord Goddard in particular, to show that hanging is a good thing. But if their survival is at stake, perhaps most of them will remain dumb in both senses of the word.

After all, even if they vote against the Bill they can hold it up only until next Spring. P.S.

## THE LORDS AT HOME

RECENTLY published was the 3rd Annual Report of the Historic Buildings Council for England, which covers 1955. (H.M. Stationery Office, 1/3d.)

This report reveals the dire poverty now prevalent among our ermine-clad and bejewelled aristocracy, a disturbing state of affairs.

The report tells us that only a small proportion of the "stately homes" open to visitors "produce any significant profit for the owners". Regrettably, "most houses attract less than 10,000 visitors each year and the receipts may not even

meet the additional expenditure on guides, advertisement and cleaning which is necessitated by the opening of the house."

Woefully, the Council informs us that 476 applications for grants were received last year, compared with 342 in 1954.

(Further evidence of our gradual decline. No doubt, if we had access to the statistics covering unemployed powdered flunkies, we should be further dismayed.)

To alleviate the suffering, grants were offered in 139 cases, compared with 91, and 303 applications were refused, compared with 192. (These unfortunates can, of course, apply to the National Assistance Board.)

The total value of grants offered and accepted in 1955 was £370,756, compared with £254,304 in 1954. (Hardly sufficient, in view of the swiftly-rising cost of living.)

Turning, for consolation, to the Annual Report of the Historic Buildings Council for Wales, I found only the same sorry tale. A crystal-ball is unnecessary to foresee, in the near future, our pawnshops overloaded with golden coronets, ermine robes, footmen's livery and silken breeches, tiaras, coats-of-arms, jewelled lorgnettes and flunkey's wigs.

I am quite sure that, apart from a few misguided individuals, who believe in the abolition of hereditary distinctions and privileges, all readers will join me in my sorrow.

The decline of the Stately Homes of England is a matter of grave concern to the millions of poor (or homeless) who revere our British Way of Life, which supports, Our Glorious British Empire, and Sir, Her Gracious Majesty the Queen.   
 Dave Shipper.   
 Cardiff.

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## Reduction in the Number of Murders

IN spite of the dire prophecies made by those who think the abolition of the rope would lead to wholesale murder (ignoring the evidence of 32 other countries already), and notwithstanding the outbreak of gang-warfare in London, the incidence of murder in England during the period of maximum publicity for abolition, the progress of Silverman's Bill through Parliament and the actual granting of reprieves by the Home Secretary, has fallen.

We can imagine with what headlines an increase in murder would have been greeted by the hanging press. As it was, tucked away in obscure corners, several papers last week published the following modest report:

There were 68 murders in England and Wales in the months January to May inclusive, compared with 79 in 1955, it was announced in the Commons yesterday. Scotland had six, compared with five in 1955.

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## Summer School

To be held at the Malatesta Club, London, August Bank Holiday week-end (August 4-6).

This year's theme: **IS HISTORY ON OUR SIDE?**

### PROGRAMME

The following programme of events is still subject to confirmation, but little change is expected. Times are approximate.

**Saturday, August 4.**  
2.00 p.m. Informal gathering.  
2.30 p.m. Lecture: F. A. RIDLEY  
5.30 p.m. High tea  
Social evening  
8.00 p.m. Lunetas presents:  
*The Tuppenny Ha'penny Opera*

**Sunday, August 5.**  
11.00 a.m. Lecture:  
ALEX COMFORT  
1.30 p.m. Lunch  
3.00 Open-air meeting in Hyde Park  
7.30 p.m. Lecture:  
JACK ROBINSON

**Monday, August 6.**  
11.00 a.m. Lecture:  
PHILIP SANSOM  
1.30 p.m. Lunch

**COSTS**  
LECTURES: Admission 1s. per lecture, four for 2s. 6d.  
MEALS: Must be ordered in advance. 2s. 6d. per meal.  
Refreshments available at club prices on Saturday and Sunday evenings.  
ACCOMMODATION: Free, unless hotels have to be used. *Must be booked in advance.*  
All enquiries to Joan Sculthorpe, c/o Freedom Press.

## 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.  
JULY 15—S. E. Parker on  
*REFLECTIONS ON GODWIN'S 'POLITICAL JUSTICE'*  
JULY 22—To be announced  
JULY 29—Donald Room on  
*ANARCHISM IN THE ENGLISH PROVINCES*  
**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 7.30 p.m.

### DEBATE

**DAGENHAM BRANCH YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE**  
A Debate:  
Anarchism versus State Socialism  
MONTY JOHNSON: *Editor "Challenge"*  
DONALD ROOM:  
*Member, London Anarchist Group.*  
Friday, July 20, 1956, at 7.30 p.m.  
Valence House, Dagenham.

**LIBERTARIAN FORUM**  
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(Bet. 11 & 12 Sts.)  
NEW YORK CITY  
Round-Table Youth Discussions  
Friday Evenings at 8.30

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