

10,000 People to be uprooted in Transvaal ANOTHER ENFORCED MIGRATION

MUCH indignation is expressed in this country at the results of Colonel Nasser's ambitions over Suez, and at the ungrateful people in Cyprus who have indicated in a forceful way that they resent being subject to military occupation.

These two countries remain in the headlines because British economic interests are threatened, and most British newspapers play their usual rôle of painting the 'enemy' black while representing the British Government as white and above all fair in its demands.

When the position is reversed however, that is to say when the British Government is in the position to force people to leave their homes which they have occupied for years, little publicity is given to the venture.

At the beginning of August this year we drew attention in FREEDOM to the enforced migration of fifty thousand people in Rhodesia from the valley between Kariba Gorge and Victoria Falls to make way for a vast lake to be built for the purpose of supplying electricity to the Central African Federation. These people had lived undisturbed in that part of Africa since the days of the Norman Conquest, and it can be safely said that they had some claim to the land which they cultivated. But in the interests of 'progress' the protests which filtered through from the heads of the tribes were effectively quelled, and we in this country who read the less popular newspapers (the others rarely carry such news at all) were told of the benefits attached to such a project although the land to which the Africans were being moved was not irrigated "and the women had to walk six miles to find water".

Now the South African Government is planning to uproot ten thousand people from their land in the Northern Transvaal.

The following report in the *Manchester Guardian* clearly indicates the economic reasons behind the move, and the indifference to the break up of tribes and

customs because as we know the South African Government does not regard any man without a white skin as human. But do not let us get indignant in this country over the fascist South African Government while we allow our own Government to carry out its migration schemes without a protest:—

"The tribe says it is greed that has dictated the Government's move, the greed of the Government and of the white farmers in the area for their prosperous valley. The Government has told the tribe that their land has not been farmed properly and that, as a result, there is soil erosion. . . .

"Many of the individual tribesmen have been earning £1,300 a year from the sale of their oranges and tangerines. Now they must leave their well-built huts and their orchards to make way for white farmers. The white farmers, they say, will install native labour in the huts to make big profits for them.

"Such is the setting that is likely to arouse more world-wide comment than the removals from Sophiatown in Johannesburg. The residents of Sophiatown were detribalised natives whom the Government wanted to put in a more convenient area, but this time a whole tribe is involved.

"The Mamathola tribe contends that it has in its possession a document from President Paul Kruger giving it the right to the Letsitele Valley in perpetuity. This was given because during the insurrection by Chief Sekhukuni against the Transvaal Republic the Mamathola remained at peace and greatly simplified the task of Kruger's Government in restoring order. . . .

"In a letter sent some time ago the tribe wrote: 'We want to assure the Secretary for Native Affairs that the only reason for our proposed removal is to be found in the fact that we are competing with neighbouring white farmers in the production and marketing of fruit and vegetables.'

"The tribe has been offered land in another area which the Government says is good land. The Mamathola, however, say that the land is poor and insect-infested."

DEMOCRACY WELCOMES THE S.S.

A FEW days ago former S.S. General Kurt Meyer addressed a rally of 10,000 ex-S.S. men held at Minden in West Germany. It must have been an exceptionally revolting assembly, even in this day and age, accustomed as we are to nauseating spectacles.

The rally was welcomed by the burgomaster, Dr. Mende, who is reported as having expressed the hope that all those who wished to join the German Army would be admitted by Christmas, and he "encouraged those who may have been troubled by guilty recollections of their past deeds with the thought that international law was not observed by either side during the war."

This extraordinary statement requires no comment except perhaps to say that it is so completely void of morality that only a fascist mentality would be capable of deriving any reassurance from it.

General Meyer during the course of his speech informed the audience that the story that the S.S. wiped out villages and annihilated men and women was a "falsification of history". He declared: "It is time that the defamation of the S.S. stopped. We were the true war sufferers." It is hardly necessary to mention that the organisation to which he referred was guilty of crimes without number, atrocious and unspeakable crimes against humanity;

ONCE upon a time there was a gipsy who sat drinking with his friends who were celebrating his release from prison. This gipsy sat morosely brooding in a corner as though he had no cause for rejoicing, and when his friends asked him what was on his mind he replied that it was the terrible thought of all those men back there at the prison who had utterly sacrificed their dignity as human beings. His friends, many of whom had served prison sentences themselves, indignantly denied that going to prison necessarily involved a sacrifice of human dignity—it was a simple misfortune that any gipsy might meet with. The brooding man replied, "It's not the prisoners I mean, it's the screws; the poor bastards are there for life, and voluntarily."

The present writer, having attended a five day summer school of the Howard League, feels somewhat like that gipsy. It is a great relief to be back again amongst ordinary people who do not spend their lives locking other people up, preaching at them, sentencing them, and trying to reform them. For among the attendance at this summer school, which numbered about one hundred, there were prison governors, discipline officers ("screws"), prison padres, prison visitors, prison psychiatrists, magistrates, court missionaries, probation officers and general do-gooders, with a sprinkling of university students studying criminology and a few genuine penal reformers. The summer school took place at Wye College in Kent and involved a hectic round of lectures and visits to prisons, borstals, and custodial institutions. What was lacking from it was discussion of the real business of penal reform; for although there was time after every lecture for questions and discussion, the lectures themselves were, on the whole, merely factual expositions of the mechanics of the penal system of this country. Generally they were occasions for mutual back-slapping, as it was agreed that everyone was doing a fine job of work. The absence of much real discussion was partly due to the nature of the gathering. Lady Ffluffingdon-Ffluffingdon who has sat on the Bench for 40 years (perhaps I exaggerate) may sit next to a bull-necked

screw and imagine that by so-doing she is being very "democratic" and a real penal reformer, but not much useful discussion is likely to result from their association.

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THE Howard League for Penal Reform has been partly instrumental in effecting great humanitarian changes in our prisons in the last quarter of a century. Other social, political and economic changes have also played their part in bringing about these humanizing changes within the prisons, but the Howard League must not be denied what is due to them. Towards the end of the last century the prison system of Britain had become perhaps the most brutal in the whole world under the terroristic methods of Ducane. A fundamental reform of it was proposed by the Gladstone Committee in 1895 and the new Prison Commission under Ruggles-Brise was entrusted with carrying through the programme of reform. A curious thing about our "democracy" is, how great a dictatorial power the permanent civil servants have over the departments which they control; nowhere is this more in evidence than in the various institutionalized forms of coercion—the armed services, police and prisons. Parliament may in theory be omnipotent, but in practice it lacks both the knowledge and the effective power to carry out the programmes it proposes. Ruggles-Brise did not agree with a great deal of the 1898 Gladstone Act, and so he simply did not introduce measures of which he was not

in favour. In 1910 he proudly announced that his prisons were concerned with meting out "Retribution, Deterrence and Reform—and in that order", in spite of the reformatory régime which he was supposed to implement by act of parliament. As late as 1921 the Labour Research Department set up a Prison System Enquiry Committee which revealed exactly how little notice the Prison Commissioners had taken of the 1895 Gladstone Committee. Penal reform in England, therefore, has had a great deal of leeway to make up.

Elementary human decency has gained some access to the prison system through the influence of the better treatment of children and young offenders. Back in the 19th century young children were removed from the prisons and the growing tendency has been to understand the simple fact that criminal acts by children are due to the neglect and mistreatment of children's fundamental needs by the adult world. We need not congratulate ourselves too much on the success of this movement of enlightenment, as the recent setting up of these quite extraordinary institutions known as Detention Centres demonstrates. More Detention Centres are in the course of construction. It has been pointed out *ad nauseam* that the most ferocious treatment of prisoners does little to cut down the crime rate, and so unless we are determined to bash them around and make life hell for them just for the fun of it (*i.e.* retribution) we might as well try and reform them so that they will not com-

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AFTER SUEZ

The Financial Crisis

IN spite of continued sabre-rattling by the French government over the Suez "seizure" (for reasons connected with its Algerian problems rather than its concern over the freedom of the canal!) it is clear that the "crisis" has fizzled out. The United Nations has offered a pigeon-hole where the Anglo-French case against Nasser can rest in peace, and in time, when the public will have forgotten that a Suez crisis ever existed, a formula will be found which will be satisfactory to all sides. In the meantime government leaders by referring the matter to the United Nations have found a face-saving formula, and they rely on short memories and new crises to distract public attention as they finish eating their words, their defiant posturings and their dire threats of the first weeks of the "crisis".

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AS we pointed out in these columns a fortnight ago the real crisis is world-wide inflation, and hardly a day passes without some government expressing its concern over this problem. Britain which so strongly resisted being drawn into a European industrial pool because it feared that any advantages that might result would be off-set by the loss of Commonwealth preference, is having second thoughts in view of the serious falling off of Commonwealth trade. Especially so since the six countries of the proposed European customs union (which account for a quarter of Britain's foreign trade) have increased their imports from \$11,000m. to \$19,000m. between 1950 and 1955 without Britain sharing in the increased volume of trade!

According to the *Observer* (Sept. 23):

The new thinking among the Conservative leaders is matched and perhaps inspired by a remarkable re-examination of

the European problems in business circles, and the Federation of British Industries is at present examining a report prepared by a panel of eminent business men which flatly recommends Britain's participation in a European free trade plan, with the proviso that the remains of Imperial Preference should be preserved.

The report will be submitted first to the overseas policy committee of the F.B.I. and on October 10 to its grand council, and officials at F.B.I. headquarters are themselves uncertain whether or not a free trade majority will be registered. If it is, it will represent a revolutionary change in the federation's international outlook.

One must not be too optimistic about Britain's "international" outlook. In spite of Sir Anthony's plea for internationalism over the Suez Canal it was obviously put forward for narrow nationalist ends (as were all the points of view expressed by the assembled nations at the London conferences). We must therefore expect a clash within the F.B.I. between those industrialists who see their business interests threatened by a free trade plan for Europe and those who, as the *Manchester Guardian* puts it, "are confident that they would gain much more from tariff reductions on the Continent than they would lose in the home market". The well-being of the people

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ANOTHER WARNING GOES UNHEEDED

This summer's atom bomb tests in Russia and the Pacific have created a dangerous situation in the Black Forest area, where intense radio-activity is reported.

Crops and pastures are affected and also the milk of cows that feed off the pastures. The radio-activity is particularly serious on high ground.

Experts of Freiburg university say that if the level of radio-activity is maintained, it will be dangerous to humans.

News Chronicle, 19/9/1956.

CRUEL PARENTS NOT MENTALLY NORMAL

A GREAT deal of public indignation is expressed when cases of cruelty to children by parents come to light. Comments are frequently heard to the effect that such parents should be shot or whipped, indicating that little understanding of the causes is felt or even sought.

We in no way condone cruelty to children (or to adults), but the pious community which is outraged by individual acts of cruelty often forgets that the terror caused by war has permanently damaged millions of children, but we see no signs of a mass objection to war!

A report on parents published last Friday, by two competent observers, based on the study of 32 men and 7 women sent to prison in 1954 for cruelty to their children offers interesting and wise conclusions on such parents.

Dr. T. C. N. Gibbens of Maudsley Hospital and Mrs. Anneliese Walker, an L.C.C. psychiatrist, found in their enquiry a great deal of physical and mental ill-health among the men prisoners and all the seven women prisoners were abnormal. Out of 39 prisoners only three were mentally normal.

Violent parents were found to be different from neglectful ones in two ways; the children were seldom badly clothed and fed, and the parents were 'less cooperative' than neglectful ones.

On punishment handed out to these parents the authors conclude that:

"Cruelty to children cannot be adequately dealt with by warnings and punishments, but calls for concentrated and skilled social work, directed often towards the whole family," and recommended that "It would be an advantage if all cases were remanded for investigation before a decision is made."

PAMPHLET REVIEW

EINSTEIN AND RESPONSIBILITY

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THE August number of *Contrecourant* contains a pamphlet by Hem Day, the well-known Belgian pacifist and editor of *Pesee et Action*, on the subject of "Einstein and his relative pacifism". His purpose is to show the men of the young generation, who do not happen to know, and those of the older who have forgotten the salient facts of the pacifist struggle between the wars, that Einstein had ceased to be an integral pacifist since the Summer of 1933. To substantiate his claim he reproduces a few documents, mainly letters exchanged between Einstein and members of the League of Conscientious Objectors.

In one of these letters, dated August 14th, 1933, and addressed to Alfred Nahon, Einstein wrote: "There is in Europe to-day a strong power which, through its will to resort to force, is a great danger to our civilization. For those States which are still sound there remains no other means to face this danger but to be militarily armed. For this reason a reasonable pacifist to-day must not aim at weakening the defence apparatus, but he must strive, on the contrary, to make such apparatus work together for common defence". On January 11th, 1935, *Le Barrage* reported these other words of Einstein. "In the United States, where citizens are still attached to some of their political rights, the refusal to do one's military service means weakening the resisting power of those parts of the civilized world which are still healthy". Finally, on January 18th, 1950, Raymond Cartier quoted in *Paris-Match* from a letter of Einstein to President Roosevelt in the Autumn of 1939: "I am convinced that a chain reaction of atomic fission is possible, and that an atomic bomb can therefore be realized. I also have information which allows me to state that the Nazis are working at it. America must get ahead of them, otherwise civilization will perish".

Now it must be remembered that on the occasion of their Congress in Lyons in August 1931, Einstein had sent to the War Resisters International a letter in which he expressed his solidarity in the following terms: "The idea of resistance

to war is spreading among the nations. You must propagate this idea fearlessly, even defiantly. You must induce the people to take the task of disarmament in their own hands, and to declare that they will not in any way participate to, or take the least interest in, war and its preparation. An appeal must be addressed to workers everywhere to refuse to become the instruments of powers hostile to life". So Einstein changed his opinions, and had his reasons to do so: the bitterness of exile, the persecution of his Jewish brothers, and the awareness to important differences between the first and the looming second world war. But that is not the grievance of the integral pacifists against him. Gerard Leretour expressed it forcibly and directly, writing: "Men have believed in you, and because they believed in you they have died; others have sacrificed their health and youth and will sacrifice it again. They do not reproach you for your change of opinion, but for being, you the giver of advice, free and honoured, while they, the followers of advice, are imprisoned and defamed". And Marguerite Glangetas commented sadly (*Patrie Humaine*, 15/1/33) "The struggle for peace is hard enough as it is without the 'great men' coming to demolish what we are so painstakingly building".



HEM DAY understands that "man likes to look at himself in the portrait of a god", and that "the love of idols appears to be a favourite sin with some of our comrades". Those who suffered because of their pacifism, and owed it to Einstein's influence or to the prestige his name conferred to their cause must blame themselves in part for both overestimating and overyielding to but a secondary influence and letting themselves be influenced by the wrong person. But Einstein is guilty of the archist sin of laying down for others moral obligations and specific tasks to fulfil. In his letter to the War Resisters assembled at Lyons he does not say simply, objectively and impersonally: "If one wants to achieve certain results, one must follow a certain course of action", but he says passionately and directly: "You must propagate... You must induce... etc." This sin, of course, is not peculiar to Einstein; it transpires in many an appeal or manifesto signed by anarchists and pacifists.

In order to give out an unconditional "must" or to use the imperative mood, one must have either power or authority. If one has power and intends to use it if one's will is disregarded, one is un-

mistakably an archist. Einstein had no power, but his authority as a physicist and a theoretician was unrivalled. Since the same man professed to be a devotee of peace, many assumed that his authority as a pacifist was equally great. There lies their mistake. A Hem Day or a Lecoin who never wavered in their pacifism, not even under repeated persecution, can speak with authority about dedication to the cause of peace. Others, like Bertrand Russell, who spoke for peace at one time and for war another, have not such authority because they put the interests of their own side before peace as most men, including the wickedest, do.

The Einstein of 1931 spoke with an authority which, had he known his heart, he would have known he was usurping. To know one's heart, to know what one really wants, and with what intensity one wants it, not only at a given moment, but in the context of one's past and one's future, may seem an impossible task; but it is difficult to see on what other basis a decent moral life can be founded, when all the religious and philosophical supports which served it in the past have been dishonoured, discredited and ridiculed. Einstein's responsibility towards his heart is a matter on which he alone could pass judgment, and on which he must have passed judgment since he believed in God, and in a God whom he could not admit "to be playing dice with the world". But his ethical responsibility towards his fellow pacifists is a matter upon which a Hem Day or a Leretour have a perfect right to judge.

Asked by the writer Niccolò Tucci whether scientists ought not to feel themselves responsible for the scourges that science unleashes on the world, Einstein replied: "If you think so, then you must hold Newton responsible for the atomic bomb, since he discovered the law of gravitation. And the philologists who perfect languages are responsible for Hitler's speeches. If scientists must limit their researches for fear of the use which can be made of their discoveries, then it is better for men to cease living in society". These words make a poor and not very logical arguments, but they were seemingly spoken with vivacity and promptness, so that we may guess

through them the true answer of his heart. For him the universe was pre-eminently a knowable whole, and he realized that his intelligence was a keen instrument specially fitted for grasping its intelligible aspect. In his grasping of intelligibility he saw purpose, his destiny, his reason of being. By natural extension he thought that the same purpose and the same destiny applied to the human race itself, as evidenced by the knowledge it had accumulated and the tools it had evolved through centuries of endeavour.

The question now is: was he mistaken; and could he help it, if he was? I leave the answer to the reader. He may call it a metaphysical and a nonsensical question. It is, nevertheless, the type of question which a conscious person he is bound to ask himself time and time again. If he does not answer it explicitly, he answers it implicitly through his actions and choices, through his sympathies and antipathies. His dismissing it as nonsensical simply shows his reluctance to answer it explicitly, presumably to spare himself the uncomfortable feeling we all experience when brought to face the tacit and uncritical assumptions which underlie our thoughts.

Thus an inclination to deny Einstein's inner and existential responsibility may be, I conceive, but a reflection from the assumption that the progress of science is irresistible. Its chief argument would be that the part played by Einstein in the process which led to the making of the atom bomb, had he devoted himself to other pursuits, would have been played by other scientists, with hardly different results. At a deeper level, and on a broader layer, the assumption is that the individual is utterly powerless, or that those ideals, for which he faints he would live, are moribund or dead or never were. On this assumption, Einstein was caught like the rest of us by the current of a ruinous stream, and he saved what he could save, he lost what he could not.



AMONG the assumptions or standpoints which may, on the other hand, prompt the assertion that Einstein

made the wrong choice, and that he is to be held responsible for its wrongness, the most worth reflecting upon seem to me the following: (1) that each man should aim at a balanced exercise of his faculties and functions, even if that should mean mediocrity of achievement in all fields when excellence could be attained in some; (2) that a fully dedicated man, whatever the object of his dedication, is a dangerous and unhealthy presence in the body politic; (3) that there is a moral obligation for all men, irrespective of their particular leanings and potentialities, to adhere to an order of values where the refusal to accept war and to participate in it in any way whatever comes categorically before the intellectual urge to explore the universe and grasp its most general and most pervasive laws.

This last standpoint is clearly that of Hem Day; but maybe he lies himself condemned if he were to be judged according to the other two. It is a fairly general feeling among sensitive people to-day, that there is no really valid standard of judgment concerning human choices, and that therefore one is nearly as good as another. Such at least is the feeling which most generally finds expression. But I suspect that a deeper and equally general feeling is, quite oppositely, that standards whose validity is recognized are quite numerous, though, alas, contradictory. It is a most difficult task to keep oneself all of one piece in a world that is falling to pieces, and where a man of one piece is looked upon as a prehistoric survival. Einstein was very much a man of our age. His first concern was physics and the mathematical intelligibility of physics, but he felt that peace also was his concern. He did not keep loyal to both in the same way, and that is his tragedy; there lies the pathos of his desertion in 1933, so poignantly rendered by Hem Day's quotation: "Un sommet qui s'éteint fait la nuit sur les plaines" (A mountain peak from which all light departs plunges the plain into darkness).

But what responsibility do we mean when talking about Einstein? Responsibility to whom? Not more than to those people who think that every man should have mankind in his thoughts in all his important decisions and pronouncements. It is to Einstein's credit that he felt this responsibility throughout his life, while so many other scientists, big and small, seem to be utterly irresponsible.

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Wincott Case

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Defence. He wrote a pamphlet about the mutiny and toured the country raising funds for the dismissed men and their dependants.

In addition to the work of the I.L.D. he acted as an organiser for the National Unemployed Workers' Movement and was well known in England and Scotland.

Then in 1934 he was assigned to a post in the Leningrad Seamen's Institute. Probably in connection with the Communist Party's world-wide drive amongst seamen at that time. From that time until recently no one in England heard from him again. But this caused no concern as it was presumed he had settled down completely in his new life.

Then about two years ago a report was received that he was in a Russian Labour Camp. This was followed by others deriving from persons released as a result of the recent softening of the cold war. By now about 10 people, at different times and places, and without any contact with one another have stated that an Englishman, a former sailor, named Wincott, who had worked in Leningrad as a prisoner in an Arctic camp. Estimates of his time in jail vary, but most put it at since 1939. The only charge known is "agitation against the Soviet Union". But neither Wincott's parents, friends, nor the British Government, have been notified about either the trial, the charges, or his sentence.

Here are details of some of the references to the matter. Letters: *Manchester Guardian* 19/9/55, 29/10/55. Reports: *Manchester Guardian* 12/10/55, *People*, Sept. 1955. *Socialist Leader* 29/10/55, 5/11/55. *Sunday Express* 26/6/55. *Daily Herald* 14/7/55.

The Communist Party has done nothing to help Wincott despite his party membership. A letter to the *Daily Worker* remains unanswered. A question in the correspondence columns of the *Manchester Guardian* brought forth no response.

WHEN one of our royal personages went to Sweden earlier in the year visiting journalists regaled us with stories of the Swedes' free and easy sex lives and assured us that the institution of marriage was on its last legs in that happy country. If present-day practice in Sweden is indeed what we have been led to believe, this may perhaps explain why Ingmar Bergman has set his latest film in the "good old days", when the horse was still a match for the motorcar and the Swedes still thought it desirable to get married.

Smiles of a Summer Night, which opens the fall season at the Academy Cinema, tells the story of Fredrik Egerman (Gunnar Björnstrand), a successful small-town lawyer. He lives with his second wife, Anne (Ulla Jacobsson), and his son Henrik (Björn Bjelvenstam) in a modest but comfortable house. His wife is eighteen years old, and although the marriage has lasted for two years she is still a virgin. So is Henrik, who is also eighteen; but Petra, the maid (Harriet Andersson), who is trying (successfully) to arouse the son's lust, is not. Henrik is a theology student, and his studies have made him a somewhat gloomy and guilt-ridden young man: he responds to Petra's hip-swinging by reading her great chunks of Martin Luther. This, I am happy to say, has no effect on her whatsoever.

But we must return to Fredrik and his problem. His former mistress, the famous actress Desirée Armfeldt (Eva Dahlbeck), has arrived at the local theatre with a touring company, and the lawyer decides to call upon her. As an old friend and a woman of the world, she may, he feels, be able to advise him about his unconsummated marriage. He accompanies her home, where the renewal of old acquaintance is interrupted by the arrival of Desirée's present lover, Count Malcolm (Jarl Kulle), a military man. The count is one of these jealous lovers ("I don't mind if my wife is unfaithful to me; but if anyone touches my mistress I become a tiger"), and he is none too pleased to find Fredrik arrayed in a nightshirt and dressing-gown. Nor is he entirely convinced by the explanation that the lawyer fell into

a puddle and is merely waiting for his clothes to dry. The count requires the dressing-gown, and Fredrik has to walk home in the nightshirt.

But the meeting has not been without some effect on Desirée. A mistress of intrigue, she persuades her mother to invite the Egermans and the Malcolms to a weekend party.

Madame Armfeldt (Naima Wifstrand) is one of those seemingly indestructible old women with the wisdom of a serpent. Her country mansion and estate were given to her in return for an undertaking not to write her memoirs. At the formal dinner that inaugurates the weekend she presides like some latter-day Nemesis. The atmosphere is electric, the polite conversation charged like thunder clouds. Even the wine carries a threat: it is a special vintage, for to each bottle has been added one drop of milk from a young mother, and its potency is such that the invitation to drink it is accompanied by a grave warning. But drink it they do. The countess (Margit Carlquist) wagers her husband that she can seduce Fredrik in fifteen minutes. But it is all a little too much for Henrik, and the dinner ends awkwardly when he makes a scene.

Summer nights in Sweden, I am told, are very short; but it is remarkable how much can happen in the course of one. While Petra is having a roll in the hay with one of the grooms strange things are happening at the house. At one time its regular guests had included a king, one of his ministers, and the minister's beautiful wife. The king was rather fond of the minister's wife, but marriage being what it was in those days, a certain discretion was felt to be necessary. So the minister and his wife slept in one bedroom and the king in the one next door. During the night, when all were asleep, an ingenious mechanism arranged for the dividing wall to open and the bed containing the minister's wife to be propelled into the king's bedroom. This remarkable device is happily still in working order, and lawyer Egerman's young wife finds herself transported into the adjoining bedroom, which is occupied by Henrik.

Meanwhile the countess has apparently won her bet, and with time to spare. But the count is still jealous, though he has now, like so many, changed his position: "I don't mind if my mistress is unfaithful; but if anyone touches my wife I become a tiger." So the unfortunate lawyer finds himself playing Russian roulette with the count.

However, this is a comedy, as I hope you will have divined, and all ends more or less well.

Ingmar Bergman, who wrote *Frenzy*, both wrote and directed this film, and it is an excellent piece of work. Wit is rare enough on the screen, but here we have it in good measure. The acting is so uniformly good that it would be invidious to single out any one actor for particular praise. Only one thing could be said against this gay comedy: it will make lesser films seem even more insipid by comparison.

The Academy programme also includes *Pantomimes*, an unusual short film in Eastman Color that allows Marcel Marceau, a talented French mime, to display something of his genius for this neglected medium.



Mime is also to the fore in the programme at the Ritz, which should please admirers of Gene Kelly. Here he appears in two films, *Invitation to the Dance* and *The Magic Lamp*, though the total effect is of one film with three dances. The first of these, *Circus*, is traditional, not to say old-fashioned, and tells the story of a clown's hopeless love for an equestrienne. The second, *Ring around the Rosy*, I liked the best. It is a modern version of the nursery rhyme, reminiscent of *La Ronde*, and is worth seeing for the parody of a crooner alone. In the last we have Gene Kelly in a gob's uniform as a modern Sinbad the Sailor dancing his way through an Arabian Nights cartoon from the able hand of Fred Quimby. The music is an edited and jazzed-up version of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*. Somewhat surprisingly, it is as pleasing artistically as it is brilliant technically. E.P.

CINEMA

MIDNIGHT FUN

THE FINANCIAL CRISIS

Continued from p. 1

as a whole is only of secondary consideration.

INFLATION, over which the International Monetary Fund now meeting in Washington, has expressed so much concern, is fundamentally a crisis of the money system not of production. Man lives by producing what he needs and not on the printed paper issued by the banks. The abolition of money does not mean the end of humanity, since the raw materials, the services and the labour skill still exist to maintain life. Yet unemployment and starvation occur when there is a crisis in the financial system!

All that money has produced is privilege by which the means of production and the sources of raw materials have been concentrated in a few hands and organised for the benefit of a privileged minority. It is no argument to say that the standard of living has been raised all round or that there is a greater distribution of wealth to-day than at any time in history. The real question which needs answering is whether one can honestly say that production to-day is based on the needs of mankind. If so, how explain the economic and power blocs into which the world is divided? And how does one explain the cartels and restrictive practises on both sides of industry? How explain the insistence on developing say the car industry in a world in which demand has virtually reached saturation point while agricultural production for which there is a "market" of a thousand million hungry stomachs is declining?

And, one last question: how is it that we are heading for a world economic crisis at a time when the world has never been so productive and science has provided the "know-how" for an ever greater expansion of production?

Anarchism and the Bourgeoisie

IT is a long-standing sneer by the Marxists, particularly of the Bolshevik variety, that anarchism is a bourgeois ideology. Lenin is usually credited with originating that particular piece of misrepresentation and it has been slavishly echoed by his followers down the years.

The reason for it is not only that our opponents are always prepared to use any lie with which to attack us (remember Karl Marx's dishonest attacks upon Bakunin as a Polish spy!) but that socialists in general do think of centralisation as progressive and the anarchist assertion of the importance of the individual as akin to the individualism of private enterprise capitalism.

What Marxists will consistently avoid doing is to recognise that anarchism reconciles the interests of society and the individual in a way in which neither capitalism nor socialism are capable.

Bourgeois individualism gives the individual the 'right' to exploit his fellow men, to use or misuse his own property and to operate policies and practises opposed to the public good. On the other hand socialism as far as we have seen it practised gives the State the power to exploit all men, use or misuse all property and operate policies and practises opposed to both the public and the private good.

Anarchism presents the alternative to both these unsatisfactory systems in the socialisation of the means of life without centralised control of the lives of the people. The anarchist aim of workers' control of the means of production and distribution is the answer to both boss control for private profit or State control for State power. An argument can hardly be maintained that there is anything in common between individualist bourgeois capitalism in which employers buy or rent premises, buy or rent machinery and then buy or rent workers to produce goods which the employers claim as their own, and a situation in which the premises and plant are not owned by anyone but are controlled by the workers freely co-operating to produce what they and the rest of society need.

This situation precludes the necessity for em-

I WONDER if you heard a programme on the radio last week which was a 'snapshot album of sounds' from an evening's boating expedition in Shetland? A BBC man with a miniature tape-recorder went out one night (in Orkney and Shetland it stays light till midnight in the summer), with Tommy Thomson, who when he isn't going to school in Scalloway is in business as a lobster-fisherman, and his friend Magnus Sinclair. They collected lobsters, discussed sharks they had seen, landed on an uninhabited island to look for bits of cork and driftwood, found the nests of rare sea birds, and met an old sailor who told them strange stories. The recorded sounds and conversations were beautifully edited and linked together with Shetland music played on the fiddle.

The soft sing-song voices brought back a variety of recollections, as I had spent several years in Orkney and Shetland. One voice that was not heard was that of the man rowing the boat, who was the headmaster of Scalloway School, and at the end of the programme the narrator, Laurence Graham remarked that Tommy had said to the headmaster casually, "Bring her in by yon rocks, John", and the headmaster, said Mr. Graham, "didn't bat an eyelid". This anecdote ended the simple story of a night's fishing, and Mr. Graham evidently found it remarkable and thought that his listeners would. No doubt to Tommy Thomson and his headmaster it was the most natural thing in the world, but that anyone should find it surprising indicates how deeply rooted in society is the confusion between the ever-shifting, ever-changing authority of function, and the fixed authority of hierarchy and status.

ONE of the most frequently met objections to the ideas of anarchism is the one which declares that, after all, we must have leaders, that there must always be some-one to give the orders, every ship has its captain, and so on. Yes, of course, every ship has its captain, even the rowing-boat LK 349 has Tommy Thomson giving the orders, but what is the nature of this kind of functional authority? Bakunin described it with great precision:

"I receive and I give—such is human life. Each directs and is directed in his turn. Therefore there is no fixed and constant authority but a continual exchange of mutual, temporary, and above all, voluntary authority and subordination."

This is the authority which is internal, the functional discipline of the tasks or aims which we have set ourselves, or

employers and bureaucrats in that the function which they perform—management—is shared among the workers, who practise a group responsibility for their joint endeavours. Anarchists, unlike both the bourgeoisie and the Marxists of to-day, do not believe that the workers are incapable of running their places of work. We would agree that they are incapable of 'running the country'—but then so is everybody else!

For so far, in every country, whichever group has claimed the power to run that country has been able to do so only in the interests of a certain section of the population. And the longer a group remains in power, the smaller becomes the section in whose interests they govern the rest—until in extreme examples we find an executive governing purely and simply in its own interests. Such a situation usually precipitates a revolution, unless the executive has taken pains (as in Russia) to build up security forces of such power as to intimidate the population and frustrate all effective means of popular expression.

In Britain the bourgeoisie and the working class represent the two great divisions in society and by and large the Tories claim the allegiance of the former and the Labour Party that of the latter. But the division between the two classes is so blurred that there is a considerable number of people who cannot permanently ally themselves with one class or the other—who express themselves at election time as 'floating voters'. In one election they will vote Labour because the Tories haven't satisfied them; next time they return the Conservative ticket because Labour has let them down. And these are the people who effectively win elections and choose who shall be our political bosses for the next electoral period!

What, however, they are really choosing is which section of the bourgeoisie shall govern us, or, in whose interests we shall be governed. Because we are always governed in the interests of the bourgeoisie of one kind or another. The Tories govern us in the interests of the landlords

PEOPLE AND IDEAS NIGHT FISHING

which we voluntarily associate with others to achieve, not that which is external, the imposed discipline which seeks to use us to fulfil ends which are not our own, purposes which we must serve, tasks to which we must be led. The difference between functional leadership and the kind of leadership which politicians, industrialists, archbishops and the Duke of Edinburgh talk about was shown very clearly in the reports of the Peckham Experiment:

"Accustomed as is this age to artificial leadership, it is difficult for it to realize the truth that leaders require no training or appointing, but emerge spontaneously when conditions require them. Studying their members in the free-for-all of the Peckham Centre, the observing scientists saw over and over again how one member instinctively became, and was instinctively but not officially recognised as, leader to meet the needs of some particular moment. . . . Because they were not consciously appointed, neither (when they had fulfilled their purpose) were they consciously overthrown. Nor was any particular gratitude shown by members to a leader, either at the time of his services or after for services rendered. They followed his guidance just as long as his guidance was helpful and what they wanted. They melted away from him without regrets when some widening of experience beckoned them on to some fresh adventure, which would in turn throw up its spontaneous leader, or when their self-confidence was such that any form of continued leadership would have been a restraint to them. A society, therefore, if left to itself in suitable circumstances to express itself spontaneously, works out its own salvation and achieves a harmony of action which superimposed leadership."¹

SHETLAND is an archipelago of about a hundred islands, of which about twenty are inhabited. The last night I spent there, ten or eleven years ago, was on one of the normally uninhabited ones. We had come there in a drifter from Scalloway to demolish a deserted anti-aircraft camp. When we had gone ashore and as the drifter turned southward, the skipper yelled back at us, "I'll see you in the morning, boys. Don't keep me waiting!" We looked at one another, standing there on the mossy disused stone jetty, for, understanding that we would be picked up, with the dismantled huts that night, we had brought no blankets. Then we laughed; at least we had brought plenty of food; and we wandered up to the desolate gun-site. The concrete gun emplacements were cracked and the sides of the trenches

¹John Comerford: *Health the Unknown* (1947).

leading to them had fallen in. There were three rusty Nissen huts and a little wooden building where presumably the officer or sergeant had lived in splendid isolation. This we were to leave as it had been bought by whoever owned the island. We pulled the flimsy corrugated iron sheets off the Nissen huts, wondering whose idea it had been to salvage them, unbolted the wooden purlins, and, with a cold chisel, knocked the heads from the bolts of the steel ribs of the huts, which had been distorted out of shape by the high winds or *gindagoosters* as they were called up there. We carried all this junk down to the jetty in the long twilight.

That night we sat round the stove in the wooden hut. It was roaring and red-hot, stuffed with broken timber from the ends of the Nissen huts, and over it we fried bacon and baked beans.

"Christ, you can eat," said Bill Yates, "You're worse than Hungry Mitchell."

"Who was he?" somebody asked.

"He used to work on the trawlers at Fleetwood, where I come from," Yates replied. "They'd go out for five days at a time, but Hungry Mitchell would eat up all the grub in the first couple of days, and they'd have to come back to port before they were due. Well, word got around and after a while none of the lads would work with him, and none of the skippers would take him on. So he said, if I can't eat my fill, I'm giving up work, and work he never did, from that day on."

"How did he live then?" I asked.

"Well they had some allotment down behind the sea wall, and if anyone was too busy or too lazy to dig theirs, they'd pay old Mitchell to keep them going, and to scare the kids off the strawberries. Ate them himself, I shouldn't wonder. He lived on his own in a little shed down there, and when the boats came in, he'd put on his sea-boots and his blue jersey and lean on the wall by the pub near the harbour. It's a thirsty day, he would say to the men from the trawlers, and they'd ask him in for a drink, being flush, and he'd sit there all the evening drinking up their money. Ask anyone from our town. They'll tell you. He never did a day's work in his life."

"Does he still go on like that?"

"He's dead," answered Yates, solemnly. "It was a few years before the war, when one night the sea came over the top and the fields were flooded. Mitchell was sleeping in his hut and never knew anything about it. The water rose up and up and old Hungry Mitchell, who nobody would go to sea with, was drowned at sea in his bed."

and the private owners of capital, and the Labourites govern us in the interests of the controllers of public capital—the bureaucracy, the managerial class. No-one is ever going to govern in the interests of the working class since government can only be maintained through the various means of exploitation; the interest of the workers is to get rid of exploitation, hence to get rid of government. And no government so far has shown itself willing to do that!

In Russia—for so many Marxists the demonstration of their theories—the industrial revolution that has been forced through so fiercely and at such cost by Stalin and his ilk has created a modern proletariat. (Strictly this should have preceded a social revolution, but in 1917 the Russian masses decided they couldn't wait for the historical process to turn them into a proletariat!) But it has also created a bourgeoisie.

Prior to 1917 Russia's semi-feudal society consisted almost entirely of the aristocracy and the peasantry. By various means (like Stalin's liquidation of the Kulaks, which had virtually the same effect as the Land Enclosure Acts in Britain in the 1830's—the dispossession of the peasants), the peasantry was deprived of its independence and hence its strength, and was herded either into factories or into State-run collective farms. In both places they were wage-slaves, the employees of the State.

The masses had eliminated the power of the aristocrats in 1917, only to allow them to be replaced by the bureaucrats who now rule the industrial and agricultural proletariat with a rod of iron.

Russia has therefore never had much of a *petit* bourgeoisie. What it now has, however, is a *grand* bourgeoisie—created by the Bolsheviks. It is an ironical answer to their old criticism of the anarchists, whose ideas coincided so closely to the groping aspirations of the Russian masses in 1917 and would, if put into effect, have created in Russia neither a proletariat (a horrible word for a horrible condition) nor a bourgeoisie, but a free society with production and distribution socialised by workers' control.

P.S.

HE was pleased with the impressive end of his tale. "It reminds me," I said, "of Isabelle Eberhardt, who was drowned in the Sahara Desert . . ." And so the short night passed, telling stories on an empty island. Early in the morning the drifter came and collected us and our load of old iron. We got a lift from Scalloway to Lerwick and took the steamer to Kirkwall, and I never saw Shetland again, nor heard again until last week the curious intonation of the Shetland voice, except that I once heard the poet Hugh MacDiarmid imitate it in Brunswick Square, Glasgow.

Nor did I ever learn any more of Hungry Mitchell. When I met someone else from Fleetwood, I told him the story. "I can't say I've ever heard of him," he commented, "I suppose you'd say he was an anarchist." "No," I said, quoting some pundit, "He was an 'inwardly unfree rebel'." By which I meant, not so much that poor Hungry Mitchell was a slave to his stomach, but that he had failed to recognise, in the elementary fact that the food must be made to last out the voyage, the functional discipline that going to sea imposes. On the other hand, perhaps they should have taken more food.

C.W.

The Case of LEN WINCOTT

DEAR FRIEND,

I am writing to ask your help in fighting one of the most tragic and vicious cases of political victimisation of which I have ever heard. It has just been discovered that Len Wincott, leader of the Invergordon Naval Mutiny, the biggest mutiny in the history of the British Navy, is in a Russian Labour Camp and has been there on a framed-up charge for 16 years. Wincott, an active Communist who went to Russia on Communist Party instructions was sentenced for "agitation against the Soviet Union".

The Invergordon Mutiny of 1931 was caused by government cuts which reduced a seaman's pay by 25%. On hearing of the cuts the sailors met and decided to refuse to put to sea until they were reduced. After the mutiny had lasted several days the government made concessions and the fleet resumed work.

But despite its promise of no victimisation the Admiralty discharged the sailors' leaders a few weeks later. Len Wincott had drafted the sailors' manifesto to the Admiralty. After his discharge he joined the International Labour Defence and travelled the country raising support for the victimised seamen. He worked also in the National Unemployed Workers' Movement. Eventually he joined the Communist Party.

On their instructions he went in 1934 to take up work in the Seamen's Institute in Leningrad. Then some years later, probably in 1939 he was caught up in the hysteria that followed the Moscow trials and was sentenced to a long term of imprisonment.

WINCOTT IS STILL IN JAIL. According to one report in the dreaded Vorkuta camp in Siberia. He is now almost 50 years of age and without help from outside cannot expect to last much longer.

Yours fraternally,
H. KENDALL.

The Facts of the Case

Len Wincott was born in 1907. He volunteered for boy service in the Navy around 1920, and served on various ships including *Thunderer* and *Norfolk*.

The Invergordon Mutiny began on September 15th, 1931. The Home Fleet, in all 12,000 men, stopped work and came out on strike against cuts in their pay. They were particularly outraged because the Navy had been promised that its pay would not be altered until 1932. In fact there was a reduction of 1/- a day for all below the rank of Petty Officer. Thus a Chief Petty Officer dropped from 15/- to 14/-. A rating from 4/- to 3/-. a 25% cut. The average sailor was dealt a terrible blow. Homes were faced with ruin and families likely to be put on the streets.

Outraged by this injustice the sailors stopped work. A Committee comprising delegates from every ship was set up to handle affairs. Len Wincott, then aboard the *Norfolk*, was responsible for drafting the sailors' manifesto which went to the Admiralty and following which big concessions were made. With the Admiralty's promise of concessions in their pockets and a no victimisation guarantee to hand the sailors steered the ships back to port in Southern England. But a few weeks later the Admiralty dismissed 24 alleged ringleaders, amongst them Wincott. Wincott who joined the Navy as a convinced Tory and who had previously played no part in politics was attracted to the International Labour

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The Dilemma of the Reformist

Continued from p. 1

mit future crimes. Adults are in fact grown-up children, and the more enlightened methods of dealing with children have filtered through to the prison system.

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THE dilemma of the Howard League is this. Having witnessed a great humanizing of the prisons, they have rather talked themselves out of a job; for, in the limited view of most of their members that is about all one can hope to do. This accounts for the summer school which was largely devoted to everyone telling everyone else what a fine job of work they were doing. The fact that they are a league for penal reform is rather forgotten. George Benson, an ex-C.O. prisoner of the 1914 war, raised a very awkward point from the floor. He pointed out the fact that although prison had become a much more comfortable place to live in, no one had the slightest idea whether a sentence of imprisonment or Borstal was of the slightest use in reforming the criminal. This statement was met with some horror. The bulk of the people there showed plainly that they were just not interested. Miller, a cheery extracter who is governor of Dover Corrective Training Prison, replied that he much preferred the emotional approach to the prisoner than the scientific approach implied by Benson's statement.

I went over Miller's prison at Dover and must confess that if ever I have to be locked up for a couple of years or more, I would not mind so much being in that dump as in many others. It would be much like being back at my old school—with no compulsory chapel. Miller is a pleasant enough fellow of his type, with a great deal more sense of humour than his deputies or his screws. It need hardly be stated however that the reformatory intention implied by "corrective training" is a mere joke.

I suggested to the gathering, as politely as possible, that the real object of the enlightened penal reformer should be the abolition of the penal system. Prisons are a social evil and our object should be to get rid of them. I admit that the purpose of this contribution was more to see their reactions than to touch their hearts. It was rather like suggesting to a gathering of churchmen that we should seek to abolish the church. No honest-to-God screw actually said "Then what the bleedin' hell's to become of the likes of me?" but they seemed to see it that way. They prefer to approach the whole problem of crime in society—emotionally. They resent the social scientists poking around in their domain. Reform, yes, if it means cleaner cells and "happier" prisoners (one screw described Maidstone Prison under John Vidler as "a happy place"), but mess around with the innate structure of the whole system—no.

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THE pendulum has swung away from sheer brutality in prisons and towards a greater humanity. I sincerely welcome the change for what it is worth. I foresee, however, a possible backwards swing, and I am even conscious of the fact that meddling social scientists like myself might be partly instrumental in precipitating the return. We can show that the improved conditions in prison have not been accompanied by the slightest evidence whatsoever that prison is having a reformatory effect on prisoners. Everybody is completely in the dark as to the social effects of prison treatment. It may be therefore, that the Prison Commissioners will be challenged to show results. It may be levelled against them that they have been too soft with prisoners—where reform has failed should we not try hotting up the deterrent aspects of punishment? So the pendulum may swing back towards the Ducane régime, and cheerful King Logs like Miller may be deposed from their little kingdoms and replaced by grim

King Storks. Already we see the signs of reaction accompanying the general evidence of humanitarian improvement. The Criminal Justice Act of 1948 which brought in so many reforms, also opened the door to sheer reaction in providing for Detention Centres. These Centres were to be a sop to the flogging magistrates who like to sentence boys to be thrashed; we still read of their regretful complaints that corporal punishment was abolished by the '48 Act. The Detention Centres however are sheerly punitive in conception, nor can one imagine how a boy could possibly be benefitted by three months of inhuman treatment. Having visited the one at Goudhurst and heard the views of the governor and some of the staff there it is obvious that the régime is designed not so much to be physically punitive as to induce a psychological breakdown in the boy so that in the end he honours the force that is cruel to him. It is on similar lines that a reaction in penal policy may occur throughout the whole system, and the masters of doublethink may proclaim such reaction as 'progress' and 'reform'.

All this is highly instructive of the weakness of the reformist approach. The reformist may certainly achieve valuable changes in the worst of institutions, and no true humanist will deary such changes themselves. But the reformist is blocked and limited by its acceptance of the institution itself. Institutions such as serfdom and slavery may be endlessly ameliorated by the efforts of reformists, but it has generally taken the action of revolutionists to abolish them. So with the penal system which has its roots in the fundamental power relations of society, reformers can never do more than keep it in some accord with contemporary standards of decency in its day-to-day running. It is left to the revolutionists to study and attack the evil itself. G.

THE REDUNDANCY CRISIS

Why Ask the Government?

ALTHOUGH the plight of the motor car workers faced with redundancy has gained a tremendous amount of publicity, it should not be thought for one moment that they are the only workers so affected. In other industries the problem of shrinking markets is being met by the employers by standing off their workers.

In the textile industry this has been going on for a long time, and quite logically has begun to affect the textile machinery makers as well.

Because of this, 1,500 workers at the Platts Barton textile machinery factory near Manchester have been informed by the firm's owners, T.M.M. Ltd., that the factory is going to close down at the end of the year and production will be transferred to the three remaining factories in the group.

The Platts workers have staged a demonstration against this decision. They called a token strike (100% effective) and held a march right through the centre of Manchester and they are demanding 'if T.M.M. Ltd. cannot or will not keep the factory open the Government should take it over and in conjunction with the unions ensure its continued operation and the employment of the workers.'

Now, anarchists are often labelled idealists, but can hardly ever have put forward anything as unrealistic as this demand by the textile machinery workers. The Government is operating a deliberate policy of 'credit squeeze' which is having just the desired effect—curtailing capital expenditure.

This means that textile firms have less money to spend on new machinery and that is bound to affect employment in firms making and installing such machinery. Coupled with the falling sales of British textiles throughout the world

(one in part to factors like Japanese competition and Indian industrialisation) this spells trouble for textile workers in all branches—except perhaps in the field of synthetic fibres—the nylons, terylenes, etc.

What in fact could the Government do about it? The only way in which Britain's textile industry can win back lost markets or gain new ones is by undercutting its competitors—which is always at the expense of the workers. Even if work is found for the machinery makers in installing automated plant it means 'redundancy' for the workers in the existing plants. The only known ways in which a nationally planned economy can cope with over-production is by the diversion of workers to social projects (precluded by the nation's economic crisis) or by war—and surely the Platts workers don't advocate that.

These arguments apply most to a Conservative government but would also apply to a Labour government. The Tories, however, do not support the idea of the State taking over industry anyway. So what is the use in asking them?

It is a sad predicament in which the workers faced with redundancy find themselves. But what on earth do they expect? They have never challenged the right of bosses of some kind or another to control them and the industries in which they work. They have been content to remain hired hands as long as it paid off, as they thought. But now they are getting paid off in a different sense, they don't like it.

They should realise that when they are hired they can be fired. The only alternative is to come into control of their industry themselves; and they won't achieve that by asking a Conservative Government to do something for them.

Soviet Workers Last and Least

EVERYWHERE—there in the "socialist Fatherland" and here under free capitalism—Communists have a basic contempt for the ordinary working man. They hold in contempt the same common man whom they propose to set free from exploitation and oppression by imposing a still greater oppression. Where they lack this contempt for the worker when they join the Party they are soon taught it by their thoroughly cynical comrades with a longer membership record—*part-stash* as the debased jargon of the Bolsheviks has it.

Not the workers first, but the Party comes first always. For the Party represents power.

Power in the modern world means the possession of all the most up-to-date techniques. In a vast land mass like Russia this also implies the development of railroads. One of the focal points in the Russian rail network is at Perm. It links the centre of the country with the industrial parts of the Urals, with Siberia, and with the Far East.

Plans First, Workers Last

In recent years the Soviet has been building up huge marshalling yards at Perm-II station. Every kind of know-how that the States and England have been able to provide has been incorporated into this enormous goods junction. Attached there is likewise a new repair works to deal with electric trains. There is nothing like it throughout the whole of Siberia or even in the Urals. All very nice for those who like trains and like playing with them.

It is a different thing for the railwaymen. Both the Ministry of Rail Transport and the management of the Sverdlovsk railway on the spot have completely forgotten that there exist such human beings as railroad workers. Since they don't count this is to be readily understood. After all: enormous outlay over a number of years on the creation of this engineer's wonder nothing whatever has been done to house the workers or to provide any kind of plain amenities for their off-duty hours.

A certain amount of house building has been undertaken; but this is altogether a slow business. Illustrative of this anxiety for the worker's welfare is the following statement released in Pravda 248/13911. We quote: "In March 1952 a site was allotted in the nearby town of Molotov on which to erect a tenement house with 105 flatlets. The total estimated cost of the building was eight and a half million roubles. In the first year of construction 500,000

roubles were spent; in the second year 900,000; while in the present year of 1956 one million roubles were expended. At this rate of progress it will be at least another four years before a single tenement can be let into his flat."

Workshops to handle the servicing of electric-powered engines have been established in Molotov. They employ close on a thousand workers and technicians. Not a finger has been lifted by authority, by the powers that be, to provide even one house for all this highly skilled personnel.

Again, when it transferred the Railroad Engineering College from Sverdlovsk to Molotov the Ministry of Rail Transport forgot to foresee the need for providing hostels for the students and living quarters for the teaching staff. Such is the forgetfulness of bureaucracy.

No Baths

But surely you can get a hot bath when you come off duty? Well, for the whole of this important rail junction there is just one bath. It was built forty years ago and has 32 slipper baths. It is true that a beginning was made with the building of a new bath. But that was three years ago and from year to year it just doesn't seem possible to get it finished.

Powerless Soviet Trade Unions

What about the trade unions? Haven't they stepped in? Twice the local union officials have been able to get the signatures of the management's representatives to clauses in the collective agreement in which the promise was solemnly made that a suitable bath house would be provided. Twice the whole arrangement has fallen through. Workers don't count under socialism.

If at Cowley in the comparatively small Pressed Steel plant there is a small though well equipped hospital, surely this pride of the Soviet railway engineers must have one as well? Not at all. For quite a number of years negotiations have been going on for the building of a railway hospital in this Perm goods junction. Nothing whatsoever has been done in the matter. The junction has no hospital of its own.

There are the facts and they have been supplied by S. Solomonov, a driver on the footplate; A. Levina who works as check-weighwoman on the spot; V. Mikhailov who is full-time secretary of the Party committee in the marshalling yards; and T. Schneider who is head of the wagon maintenance section. I.P.

COMIC STRIP

The Nina Story

THIS year promises to be a good one for incidents in which authority manages to make itself look ridiculous. On the grand scale we have Anthony trying to make his mark in history by fumbling his way through the Suez 'crisis'. On the smaller scale we have the fantastic episode of Commander Crabbe fishing about under the hull of the Russian cruiser in Portsmouth harbour, and the bust-up at the dinner party given by the Labour Party for Khrushchev and Bulganin.

Latest in this line of comic acts comes the story of Nina, the burly Russian discus thrower whose muscular exterior beats a heart all of a flutter for some tatty hats. This story really is a gem. The script writers for the Goon Show must be kicking themselves for not having thought that one up.

For everybody involved has acted like idiots. Nina Ponamareva herself, it is

alleged, stole five hats from C. & A. Modes in Oxford Street, totalling in value 32s. 11d. The smart store detectives hastened to protect their employers from this heavy loss, pounced upon Nina and hustled her into an office, where it took them an hour and a half to discover that she didn't know any English and that they didn't know any Russian.

Having got on like a house on fire they proceeded to charge her with stealing the hats and the Press proceeded to headline that fact. 'Russian Woman Athlete Charged With Stealing Hats', they whispered (for they soon found out who she was) and told us she was due in Court next morning.

The Russian State, however, sprang to her defence. Not in Court, but by refusing to let her go to Court. We all know how much concern the Russian authorities have for the liberty of the individual, and so it was truly in character when the Russian Embassy took Nina under its wing and began to talk about 'dirty provocation'.

When the athletics meeting at which Nina was to perform was cancelled (cost: £25,000) and all her team-mates flew away home—closely watched by hawk-eyed policemen to make sure the errant discus-thrower wasn't amongst them.

Now we hear that the Bolshoi Ballet company may not pay its expected visit to London (to get tickets for which enthusiasts queued for three days) unless the charges are dropped and Nina is allowed to leave the sanctuary of the Embassy and go home. If the Bolshoi don't come, Covent Garden will lose £40,000.

The next step may well bring us to the brink of war—unless there is some 'agonising re-appraisal'.

The Russians don't understand that in Britain the Foreign Office has no control over the judiciary. The Foreign Office don't understand the Russian attitude or how to deal with it. Nina didn't understand how to purchase five hats in an English store. The store detectives and the police are too dumb to understand anything.

None of them know how to get out of this ludicrous situation without losing face. The Press is now laughing at them—forgetting that if there had been no publicity in the first place the whole stupid business would never have blown up to its present proportions.

It's not those cheap hats that have turned out so expensive. It's the puffed-up, self-opinionated pride of the authorities and the busy-bodies that cost us so dear—all the time.

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OCT. 14—Alec Craig on
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