

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"The urge to leadership is a psychopathic trait that seldom associates itself with judgment or wisdom."

—Dr. C. S. BLUEMEL
(in 'War, Politics and Insanity')

Out of the Chaos of Tyranny Comes the Order of the People

A FANTASTIC aspect of the situation is that although the general strike is in being and there is no centrally organised industry, the workers are nevertheless taking it upon themselves to keep essential services going for purposes which they themselves determine and support.

Workers' councils in industrial districts have undertaken the distribution of essential goods and food to the population in order to keep them

alive. The coal miners are making daily allocations of just sufficient coal to keep the power stations going and supply the hospitals in Budapest and other large towns. Railwaymen organise trains to go to approved destinations for approved purposes.

It is self-help in a setting of anarchy.

—LAJOS LEDERER in *The Observer*, 25/11/56.

SELF-HELP IN A SETTING OF ANARCHY

THREE times already the Hungarians have been written off as a defeated people; when Russian forces first opened fire, when they returned in overwhelming strength, and when they settled down to starve the Hungarians back to work and slavery. Three times the people of Hungary have found the way to counter the tyranny: first by armed resistance, then by the general strike, and now by organising their own

society the way they want it.

A fortnight ago reports from the stricken country were written in terms of 'the suicide of a people', as the Hungarians made plain their determination never to surrender. 'They would rather die than give in'. But now we see that they have no intention of doing either. The Hungarians have no melancholic Slavic death-wish. They want to live—but on their own terms. And they are finding the means to do so.

What are those means? They are anarchist means. Have no doubt about it, the methods by which the Hungarians are reconstructing their

country without the State—and in the face of brutal intervention—are the traditional and classical means which anarchists have always maintained to be the only way a liberty-loving people can build a free society: by forming their own functional organisations and taking the means of production and distribution into their own hands.

Moderate Initial Demands

We have been very chary, ever since the revolution started, of reading any social revolutionary significance into the Hungarians' actions. Their demands, as far as we have known them clearly, have always

been moderate from a social point of view. They have asked for workers' councils, but they have also asked for a government; they have demanded the withdrawal of the Russians, but also for a Communist, Nagy, as they prime minister; they have clearly been motivated by a wide variety of political ideas and by religion.

From a strict anarchist point of view there have been plenty of reasons to be disappointed in their demands—but none in the means by which they have set about achieving them.

Here lies the strength of the anar-

chist case. Whenever people take their destinies into their own hands—they turn to anarchist methods, whether destructive and negative or constructive and positive. There were, after all, no other methods available to the Hungarians. They could not go to the ballot box, for it was fixed by the Communist dictatorship, they could not even express or organise themselves openly. Before they could do any of this, they had to destroy the State.

And this they have done. There is no Hungarian state to-day. There is only Kadar, abandoned and scorned, and behind him the remnants of the secret police and the tanks of the Red Army—itsself to some extent demoralised and ripe for disaffection. The Hungarian state crumbled as soon as it was challenged by the determination, courage and power of the people. And in the face of their continued non-co-operation the state cannot begin to exist again. *Authority can flourish only when people accept it.*

The Right to Choose

Now we would be foolish to pretend that the Hungarians are all libertarians. Even those who are probably have no more than a groping, instinctive feeling for liberty without any conscious philosophy of freedom. The one positive thing that has united them, however, has been the desire for the necessary pre-requisite for all social liberties: *The right to choose.*

Now whether we agree with any of the Hungarians singly or in groupings, as libertarians ourselves we must join them in their struggle for that simple factor, for so long denied them first by fascism and then by communism. *How* they choose will be entirely up to them, and we shall probably disagree with most of them, but the physical factor of being free to choose—whether they are socialists, anarchists, conservatives, Catholics, even commun-

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Can History Repeat Itself?

RICHARD GREGG'S "The Power of Non-Violence" gives the following instance of united resistance (plus an Austrian defeat at Sadowa), overthrowing tyranny. There are elements in this which we anarchists—and even Richard Gregg!—cannot approve of. This of course, applies also to the present situation but the truth remains that tyrants only have the power that people give to them.

"The Emperor Franz Josef was trying to subordinate Hungary to the Austrian power, contrary to the terms of the old treaty of union of those two countries. The Hungarian moderates felt helpless, as they were too weak to fight. But Francis Deak, a Catholic landowner of Hungary, protested to them—'Your laws are violated, yet your mouths remain closed! Woe to the nation that raises no protest when its rights are outraged! It contributes to its own slavery by its silence. The nation which submits to injustice and oppression without protest is doomed.'

"Deak proceeded to organise a scheme for independent Hungarian education, agriculture and industry, a refusal to recognise the Austrian Government in any way, and a boycott against Austrian goods. He admonished the people not to be betrayed into acts of violence, nor to abandon the ground of legality. 'This is the safe ground,' he said, 'on which, unarmed ourselves, we can hold our own against armed force. If suffering must be necessary, suffer with dignity.' This advice was obeyed throughout Hungary.

"When the Austrian tax collector came the people did not beat him or even shoot him—they merely declined to pay. The Austrian police then seized their goods, but no Hungarian auctioneer would sell them. When an Austrian auctioneer was brought, he found that he would have to bring bidders from Austria to buy the goods. The Government soon discovered that it was costing more to restrain the property than the tax was worth.

The Austrians attempted to billet their soldiers upon the Hungarians. The Hungarians did not actively resist the order, but the Austrian soldiers, after trying to live in houses where everyone despised them, protested strongly against it. The Austrian Government declared the boycott of Austrian goods illegal, but the Hungarians defied the decree. The jails were filled to overflowing. No representatives from Hungary would sit in the Imperial Parliament.

"The Austrians then tried conciliation. The prisoners were released and partial self-government given. But Hungary insisted upon its full claims. In reply, Emperor Franz Josef decreed compulsory military service. The Hungarians answered that they would refuse to obey it. Finally, on February 18, 1867, the Emperor capitulated and gave Hungary her constitution."

Durruti's Message for the Hungarians

IT is just twenty years this November since the death of Buenaventura Durruti, founder of the famous Durruti Column of workers' militia during the Spanish Revolution of 1936.

Durruti, even more than Nestor Makhno the Ukrainian peasant, was almost the perfect revolutionary. He understood profoundly the nature of a revolutionary struggle, how to organise it and what it was for. He had a concept of human dignity and of what is involved in a libertarian attitude which was in no way impaired by his ready acceptance of the grim realities of the moment. He was an idealist and a realist; he knew what to do to make his ideals real and in 1936 the situation in Spain gave him his opportunity to make his mark on history.

Yet at no time did he over-estimate the chances for the social revolution nor under-estimate the nature of the forces ranged against it. And among these he counted not merely Franco, and his allies, but Spain's legal, republican government and

the governments of the democracies.

Those students of revolution who expected to see the Americans intervene in Hungary would do well to ponder Durruti's words two months before his death. For 'fascism' read 'Stalinism', remember that 'rebellious forces' meant the fascists, and one has a message which bears relevance to the Hungarian situation today, when Durruti says:

"For us it is a question of crushing fascism once and for all. Yes, and in spite of the government.

"No government in the world fights fascism to the death. When the bourgeoisie sees power slipping from its grasp, it has recourse to fascism to maintain itself... Even now at this moment, there are men in this government who want to go easy with the rebels. You never can tell, you know, the present government might yet need these rebellious forces to crush the workers' movement..."

"We know what we want. To us it means nothing that there is a Soviet Union somewhere in the world, for the sake of whose peace and tranquility the workers of Germany and China were sacrificed to fascism by Stalin. We want the revolution here in Spain, right now,

not maybe after the next European war. We are giving Hitler and Mussolini far more worry to-day with our revolution than the whole Red Army of Russia. We are setting an example to the German and Italian working class how to deal with fascism.

"I do not expect any help for a libertarian revolution from any government in the world. Maybe the conflicting interests in the various imperialisms might have some influence on our struggle. That is quite possible. Franco is doing his best to drag Europe into the conflict. He will not hesitate to pitch Germany against us. But we expect no help, not even from our own government in the last analysis."

★

The Spanish workers' struggle went on for three years, during which time they demonstrated to the world not only how fascism could be resisted, but what a free society could be like. The Hungarian workers are doing the same thing. If they fail it will be for the same reason: the workers of the rest of the world did not know what to do to help.

Middle East Line-Up

Looking Before They Leap

IT may be taken as a general rule that in international politics all situations are fluid—but of course some are more fluid than others. Very often the use of the term only means (where two or more states are concerned), that one state or group of states is waiting to see what will happen next—who will align themselves with whom, and which is the best way to jump.

Just such a situation now exists in the Middle East, but there are more complications than usual. The small states which comprise this area are faced with problems and crises much more serious and far-reaching than ever before in their comparatively short national histories.

As a consequence of the difficult and involved state of affairs with which they are presented, the Middle East nations decided to meet

together a few days ago—secretly in Lebanon on the outskirts of Beirut. Amongst those present were the leaders of Saudi Arabia (King Saud), Iraq (King Feisal), Jordan (King Hussein), Syria (President Shukri el Kuwatly), Lebanon (President Camille Chamoun), Egypt (Nasser's Ambassador to Lebanon—a relative nonentity, but with a good deal of influence nevertheless).

This group of impressive and relatively important men found that they were unable to agree upon anything very much, and so they agreed to differ. This cannot be regarded as surprising for it is much too early yet for them to judge which is the best way to jump. One thing which all have in common however, is that all will eventually jump in the direction which appears likely to pay the highest dividend, both in economic

terms and in terms of possible spheres of influence and power.

East or West?

Needless to say the crux of all their problems rests with the big powers, the inevitable line-up of East against West. Although there are other factors, notably Israel and Egypt, the overriding consideration is West or East, and the problem itself revolves around oil.

It might be helpful in attempting to study the overall situation in the Middle East, to have a brief outline of the current political position which each state has found it expedient to adopt.

Saudi Arabia with a population of seven millions and dominated by the King is strongly anti-communist. This is not surprising in view of the fact that 90% of the country's revenue comes from the Arabian-Ameri-

can Oil Company, which is of course owned by the U.S. Although King Saud is pro-Nasser, he feels that things have gone too far because his oil revenue is now threatened. He is strongly anti-Israel but by now probably has a grudging respect for and fear of Israel's military strength. Overall interest: oil profits and the U.S.

Iraq, population five and a quarter millions, is a member of the West's Baghdad Pact, but although anti-Communist (and somewhat anti-Syrian), has recently developed nationalistic and anti-British tendencies. Premier Nuri es-Said is something of a "semi-benevolent dictator" with strong views on Iraq independence. Would no doubt side with the West having just called upon the U.S. for arms.

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PEOPLE AND IDEAS

MEMOIRS OF RUDOLF ROCKER

THE LONDON YEARS by Rudolf Rocker. (Robert Anscombe & Co., 25s.)

THIS book and its author are a testimony to the truly international character of anarchism. Rudolf Rocker is a German. His great and unique contribution to the development of anarchist ideas was amongst the Jewish immigrant workers in the East End of London.

The present volume is a translation by Mr. Joseph Leftwich, from the Yiddish edition of Rocker's autobiography, of those chapters which describe his life between 1893 when Rocker was a political exile in Paris, and 1918 when after four years in prison camps in England he was deported to Germany in an exchange of prisoners-of-war, only to be pushed over the frontier into Holland because he had been deprived of his German citizenship.

North London. These experiences of internment illustrate very clearly Rocker's characteristics. Desperately concerned about the fate of his family and his colleagues on the newspaper Arbeiter Freund (his wife, Milly Witcop was arrested and imprisoned without trial, his elder son was interned, his younger son was eight years old at the time; the paper was closed by the police and its editor, publisher and compositor, Shapiro, Linder and Lenoble were imprisoned), he nevertheless continued his patient educational work amongst his fellow-prisoners. His lectures on "The Six great characters of world literature" were first given in the crowded prison ship Royal Edward. In these years of internment he was not a wild rebel but an implacable defender of the rights of his fellow-prisoners, fostering solidarity between them, educating them, making use of the miserable situation in which they found themselves, to open their eyes to the world of literature and the currents of social thought.

It was these qualities which had led him earlier almost by accident as it seemed, to become the spokesman and educator of a generation of Jewish work-

ers in the sweatshops of the tailoring trade in Whitechapel. Not long ago an old man said to me, "Everything that I am I owe to Rocker", and reading the earlier pages of this book, one can see how this non-Jewish German won the confidence and affection of the poor and exploited Jewish workers fleeing from the closed world of the ghettos of Tsarist Russia, Poland and Rumania with their periodic pogroms and economic servitude.

Up to the first world war by far the largest anarchist groups in this country were those of the Jewish immigrants, and their newspaper Der Arbeiter Freund, and their magazine Germalin circulated not only in America where many of the immigrants moved on, and where the present Yiddish anarchist paper, the Freie Arbeiter Stimme had been started, but also in the countries of eastern Europe, where there was a well-organised system of literature-smuggling, and even in Constantinople, Jerusalem and Cairo. Rocker in his book (and Joseph Leftwich in his long and interesting introduction), delves back into the earliest history of Jewish socialism, recalling figures like Aaron Lieberman and Morris

Wintchevsky who are completely unknown to most of us.

IN his foreword, Herbert Read writes, "History is of two kinds—a record of events that take place publicly, that make headlines in the newspapers and get embodied in official records—we might call this overground history. Taking place at the same time, preparing for these public events, anticipating them, is another kind of history that does not get into the newspapers, that is not embodied in official records, an invisible underground history."

It is this underground history which Rocker gives us. We watch the development of the Jewish labour movement, in the face of the hostility of the established English Jewish community which did all it could to get the Worker's Friend suppressed, even to bribing the compositor, and in the face of the suspicion of the English trade union movement which rightly saw the growth of a depressed class of unorganised and sweated workers as a threat to general working-class conditions. The culmination of the efforts of Rocker and his colleagues came in 1912 when the movement was strong enough to destroy the sweating system and to make common cause with the English workers. A strike had broken out amongst the West End tailors.

"Those tailors of the West End were an international crowd, Englishmen, Germans, French, Italians, Czechs, and a few Jews. It was a completely different kind of work from the mass-produced sub-divisional sweatshop tailoring of the East End Jewish workers. It soon became clear that strike-breaking work was being done in small East End tailoring workshops. There were so many of them that it was impossible to know them all and to control them. The Jewish trades unions had never been able to accumulate enough funds to call a general strike. Their members didn't earn enough to pay contributions large enough for strike pay. There was a big mass of unorganised workers, some of whom were strike-breaking. We felt we must do something to remove the stigma of strike-breaking from the Jewish workers."

They called a meeting of the Jewish workers in the Assembly Hall in the Mile End Road. Over eight thousand attended and another three thousand stood outside. The strike was on, and it grew from a sympathy strike with the West End tailors into a demand for the ending of the whole sweating system, for a normal working day, with higher wages, for the closing of unhygienic workshops and for a union shop in the remainder. It became a battle of endurance between the workers and the employers, and in the end the workers won. As Rocker writes:

"That was the death-blow to the sweatshop system. The English workers looked at the Jewish workers with quite different eyes after this victory. It was important to us materially, but it was much more important morally." During the tailoring strike the London dockers were also on strike. Joint meetings had been held and when the dock strike dragged on after the victory of the tailoring workers, and the dockers' families were suffering real want, Jewish families offered to take in the dockers' children. They came "in a terribly undernourished state, barefoot, in rags", and over three hundred of them were clothed, fed and housed by Jewish families, themselves very poor, in Stepney and Whitechapel. This was the real triumph of Rocker and his associates.

In twenty years of Yiddish propaganda and education they had welded the friendliness and unorganised Jewish immigrants into a proud and culturally active community, able to play their part despite a hostile environment and to take their own place with their fellow-workers in England.

ROCKER'S book is rich in curious incidental details of the events of the period. His account of the Houndsditch Affair and 'Peter the Painter' is, I suppose, the most reliable we are likely to get. He describes the lives and activities of the other foreign groups in London in the eighteen-nineties and gives an account of the International Socialist Congress of 1896 and the struggle between the anarchists and the social-democrats.

Many of the great figures of anarchism are met in these pages, Louise Michel, Errico Malatesta, Kropotkin, Gustav Landauer, Max Nettlau and Francisco Ferrer. (In the chapter on 'Our English Movement', one must point out a few errors in the description of the early history of 'FREEDOM'. Reading this book as anarchists we cannot help feeling pride in the noble and many-sided characters who were our predecessors.

But what impresses the reader most of all is the immense energy and liveliness that went into the creation of the Jewish anarchist movement. As Rocker says "Only faint traces have been left in England of that movement which once, for decades, carried on such a useful and productive work, and achieved so much". The men who were taught and inspired by Rocker's activities are all old now. Their sons and daughters moved into a different world from the East End of fifty years ago, with different social aims and political ambitions. What about their grandchildren?

C.W.

Independence and All That

WELL, it finally happened—for two-and-a-half long, tedious years I was a 'wage-slave', a mere number, a cog in a huge, impersonal machine. But I finally did it—after deciding to change my 'social relationship to the means of production' I became a capitalist.

No longer the dreary, morning buses, the pushing, shoving crowd, no longer the fear of the clock, the foreman, the boss, his mistress, the efficiency engineer; and that bewildering brown packet on Friday, which by its bulk would determine the sort of week one was going to

spend. At any rate this was what my phantasies led me to believe as I lay in the comfort and warmth of my bed, picturing the frantic scramble of the workers rushing to beat the clock—but not me. Pulling the blankets around me I spent the next two hours dreaming a dream or two.

My word! Why doesn't everyone do the same? 'Direct action' is what we want; why not eliminate the proletariat and all its problems by making them all capitalists? Why this logical conclusion has not been reached by more people in the revolutionary movement is a perpetual mystery.

After some preparation, indecision and downright stupidity, I entered the well-established economy of Britain—with twelve beaten ashtrays in copper. No one was impressed, here was a world devoid of sentiment, governed only by the iron law of production at lowest possible price. Nobody had ever heard of "Value, Price and Profit". Salesmanship helps, and so does money—having neither I'll say no more about them.

Rudely awakened by the laws of economics, and the people governed by them, and having discovered that even common ancestry doesn't help much I took all my previous ideas and made them into a little 'Reichstag fire', squared my shoulders, found an old tie, polished my shoes, and plunged headlong into battle. I felt that I was the first anarchist about to destroy capitalism from the inside. This was indeed direct action and nothing was going to stop me. So while the British and French were bombing Port Said and the Israelis were invading Egypt, while Khrushchev was threatening the West with rockets and Hungary was being massacred, I was busy flogging ashtrays. It occurred to me that if there was any justice, the first bomb should drop right on top of me.

For three weeks I prospered, with no time clock and no foreman. There was so much to be done. Trips down the river, the cinemas, a bit of this, that and the other, a lecture, an ashtray, museums, friends, a book or two, and such beautiful parks in London.

This was the way to beat the bogey. You cannot have freedom without responsibility, and it's damned irresponsible of one to allow oneself to spend the best hours of the day in some stuffy factory, shifting machines or cleaning drains. Let's leave the dirty work for the free society. I wasn't going to drop dead from thrombosis at 40, nor was I interested in cultivating an ulcer. So I combined business with pleasure, a little of one and a lot of the other.

Came the end of the month and a slight feeling of uneasiness. I was confronted with a problem which might have baffled Einstein. Business difficulties were dropping upon me like tons of bricks. Receipt books, invoice pads, order books, a bank account, registration of name, statements, copy books, income tax, purchase tax. Conscience about the rent, gas bills, electricity. Finally the tax inspector arrived. Quite a sporting type really, he displayed a keen and intelligent interest in everything. Absolutely everything! By the time he had offered suggestions and advice, and added that the authorities were always in touch with an independent producer like myself, he had proved to me that there was just no fun in being a capitalist.

It is customary in business practice to allow 30 days to pay accounts; everyone does it... except me. When finally at the end of the month all was added, subtracted, divided and cooked, I found that I now had considerably less income than when I was a 'wage slave'. There are two things in this world which have to be satisfied: landlords and stomachs. Neither the laws of economic production or 'logical positivism' can lessen the incessant demands of these two.

AMBLING past the "Crown and Whistle" I observe the wage slaves I used to know; there they are swallowing pint after pint of best brew, whilst I the capitalist must count the pennies to see if I have enough for half a pint of bitter and the fare home. Now the glory of former times appears in full Technicolor, if not VistaVision. What if the foreman does speak to one in four letter words only, and the boss's mistress can get you the sack? What's wrong with getting up early in the morning—most of the world does that? Why be different? Plenty of time to destroy capitalism. Better men have failed to do it. Take your place in the queue—money on Friday and no responsibility—what more do you want?

But the other side of me thought differently. Direct action, that's what the world needs—direct action and ashtrays. Why give up? There comes a time in a man's life when he's got to stand on his own two feet. You're being beaten by the government and red tape. Are you a man or a 'prole'? Where's that personal example? A revolutionary without courage is like tea without milk. And while my brain was indulging in civil war, what was I doing? Making ashtrays. Now if a number of comrades got together we would either flood the world with ashtrays or have the first Anarchist Producers' Co-Op in Britain. Then Capitalism had better watch out.

S.F.

Pamphlet Review

The Secret Police

THE SECRET POLICE AND YOU. Available from Freedom Bookshop, price 9d.

THIS pamphlet is published by the Campaign for the Limitation of Secret Police Powers (not, for the limitation of the secret police, not the elimination) which is supported by a number of eminent liberally-minded persons. It sets out to show how people employed in government service, or in private industry engaged on government work, may be dismissed for "security" reasons without a fair hearing.

Since March 1956, when the White Paper giving some of the recommendations (the publication of the rest would "not be in the public interest") of the Privy Councillors Conference on Security, it has been publicly admitted that persons may be dismissed for "living with a wife or a husband who is a Communist or a Communist sympathiser". The report goes further than that—"there is a duty on departments to inform themselves of serious failings such

as drunkenness, addiction to drugs, homosexuality, or any loose living... a serious character defect may appropriately be the determining factor in a decision to dismiss a particular individual". In addition to sacking him the government is under no obligation to give reasons to the individual for so doing.

The pamphlet is righteously, and rightly, indignant at this extension of the State's power; or perhaps it would be more accurate to say, the State's public acknowledgment of it. It is now official policy to encourage informers, to enforce conformity on the private life of government employees, and to punish without even that pretence known as "due process of law".

Whatever one may think of the adequacy of its recommendations—that rules governing employment on security work should be approved by Parliament, that a dismissed person should be allowed legal defence, etc., etc.—the Campaign is doing good work in making this side of the government's activities better known. M.G.W.

The Minister of Transport, Harold Watkinson recently gave a talk to students of the Imperial College of Science. Amongst other things he said: "I do not build roads for private motoring. I build roads for commercial traffic. The motorist will get no sympathy from me."

There are two major inaccuracies about this statement. In the first place, the use of the first person singular is out of place, for Mr. Watkinson has never built a road himself, and he probably never will. In the second place, the degree of road-building of any sort has been so paltry in relation to traffic needs that it is out of place for the Minister to talk as though roads were being built for anything special.

The Prime Minister, Sir Anthony Eden on his arrival in Kingston, Jamaica at the start of a three week holiday, made the most sensible (and incidentally the shortest) statement he has made for some time. He said: "I am planning to rest and rest and rest."

We do not take the repetitive nature of this statement to be indicative of any underlying doubts which may have been held by his audience (on this occasion), but we hope that the reiterated assertion may work in a suggestive manner upon many of his colleagues.

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Self-Help in a Setting of Anarchy

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ists and fascists—and to express their opinions freely, this is the one demand which all those who seek the end of man's domination over man must support.

The Hungarians have been denied the freedom of choice, so they have acted to win it for themselves. And, as we have said, they have done so in the classic social revolutionary manner. First they set out to destroy the tyranny of the particular state which oppressed them—now by the very pressure of circumstances they are going much further than they had ever dreamed when they started. They are laying the foundation of a free society.

In setting up their workers' councils—without waiting state permission—in acting in a responsible manner towards the maintenance of social services—without being told what to do—in taking decisions for themselves and implementing them themselves—without centralised control—the Hungarians are acting like anarchists whether they know it or not.

Anarchism the Human Reality

And here, as we have said, lies the strength of anarchism: it springs from the very roots of human society. Anarchism is not the idealistic dream of intellectuals its enemies would have you believe. On the contrary it is precisely our opponents who live in dream worlds—an ideal society ordered by supermen on high, inevitable progress according to the unrolling of historical forces, a supernatural God ordaining the destiny of the entire universe—these are the theories. Anarchism is the human reality, the assertion of humanity against the mythologists.

Every tyranny has its mythology. And people are bemused with ideas which are impressive because they are backed by power. Yet every time people take affairs into their own hands, every time they determine to make their own reality, they act not in accord with a mythology but with the facts of anarchy. They practise 'self-help in a setting of anarchy'.

Now in every revolution the people have done this to a background of chaos and destruction. If it can be done in the appalling conditions of Hungary to-day, as it was done in Russia in '17 and Spain in '36, how much more efficiently and smoothly could it be done in more tranquil circumstances?

Let all those superior beings who sneer at the workers ponder this. Let those who think the workers are hopeless and incapable of running society, feckless, irresponsible and destructive, turn over in their minds what has been the workers' answer whenever they have taken a turn at running society. And compare it with the records of governments.

The attitude of the people in these conditions has been stated for all time by the Spanish anarchist Durruti:

"We have always lived in slums and holes in the wall. We will know how to accommodate ourselves for a time. For, you must not forget, we can also build. It is we who built these palaces and cities, here in Spain and in America and everywhere. We, the workers, can build others to take their place. And better ones. We are not in the least afraid of ruins. We are going to inherit the earth. There is not the slightest doubt about that. The bourgeoisie might blast and ruin its own world before it leaves the stage of history. We carry a new world, here, in our hearts. That world is growing this minute."

IN a recent issue of FREEDOM we explained that Sam Watson the Durham mine union leader's sensing of a mood of deep-seated gloom among the Siberian miners was more than justified. FREEDOM explained that the "labour corrective camps" were still being maintained. They have certainly not been dismantled anywhere. They still stand as part of the apparatus of power, of the most brutal coercion over human beings. They are part of the Soviet system. Gollan here and his Bolshevik brothers there cannot conceive of any kind of social order without force. Places of detention for their enemies or for their slaves must always be in readiness. This panders to their conceit, to their most quaint conceit, that they are great organisers. They still believe that they understand how to make useful application of slave labour.

Once again wholesale deportations of the common people are taking place in Europe. In fact, the return to their homelands in the Peoples' Democracies is very far from complete. It is unlikely that it can ever be completed. To this day, as Gomulka asserts, there is still a million Poles inside Russia who have not been repatriated. Poland could make good use of this million workers to put its house in order after the destruction wrought to her national economy by the bolsheviks during the past ten years.

Despite the general strike, trains of boxcars with loads of young people rounded up by the Red Army are rum-

bling from Hungary through the Zahony Gap directly on to Soviet territory. Once there they must inevitably be swallowed up in the vast immensity of the heartland of Soviet Asia. Once through into Russia, then, the deportees vanish. Should Russia clamp down on the occupation of Hungary, anything up to two million men may ultimately be transferred for life. Their graves will lie on the Obo, the Lena, the Anadyr, the Yenisei, and on the Amur. (The harnessing of the last named river is a new project to be handled jointly by the Russians and the Chinese (Pravda, 317/13980). The Chinese have been displaying too much interest in the scientific exploration of the enormous basin of the River Amur). While the Chinese may be in a position to thrown into this important scheme four or five million labourers if need be, this is beyond the capacity of the Russians. Wasteful and grossly inefficient in all that they undertake, the Bolsheviks are for ever scraping the bottom of the barrel in their quest for new sources of labour power.

Bolshevism Degrades Humanity

Sunk in their profound study of Marxism-Leninism, the "communists" of London have read none of the many extant accounts at first hand of the appalling

degradation of deportation under Soviet conditions. Deportation overland means being cooped up in darkness in one of these wagons of 1914 construction so beloved of the general staffs of the Continent. They are marked for the transport of eight horses or so many men. Into such wagons the Soviet slave raiders pack their victims until there is standing room only.

No sanitary arrangements can be provided.

This always amused the megalomaniac Jugashvili, alias Stalin. It also amused his underlings. In the last few weeks it has been revealed in the Warsaw press that political prisoners used often to be left for as long as three weeks in their cells without a lavatory bucket!

Calculated Beastliness

This calculated beastliness is designed to break men and to transform them into animals just fit to use the simplest of tools, spades and shovels. On some kinds of work it is conceivable that they are cheaper than machines. Men and mules can go where excavators and jeeps are useless. And slaves are expendable.

Life in the camps has been described again and again. One of the best accounts is by a French victim, Jean Rounault. His book *My Friend Vassia* has been ably translated by Vera Traill.

If the remnants of the English Communist Party were to brace themselves into reading this mild book so friendly to the Russian working man the gain would be wholly theirs. By its light they could re-read to greater advantage everything that was revealed at the Twentieth Congress of the Bolshevik Party. For those not utterly corrupted it would be made plain that both slavery and wage slavery are part and parcel of the "communist system" which holds Russia in its grip.

Wage slavery is essential for the large industrial centres. In these the workers carrying on their usual functions as producers must be induced to feel some sense of freedom, have promotion incentives, family life, cinemas, various amenities common to any such communities. Deprived of the right to strike and set under constant pressure to conform, the illusion must be fostered in their minds that they are the freest people in the world; that the whole of mankind regards them as the greatest nation in the world.

Slavery pure and primitively simple is, however, needed for such admittedly spectacular achievements as the White Sea Canal, the Moscow riverine port, and now the new plans for linking the waters of the Lower Amur with the Gulf of Tartary. This canal will be about 16 kilometres in length. Sea-going vessels from Japan will be able to use it. It is also proposed to turn the ocean port of Vladivostok (meaning "Ruler of the East") into a riverine port from its landward side, so linking it directly with the River Amur. For close on three thousand kilometres Father Amur flows within the present boundaries of the U.S.S.R. It drains a land area of more than one-and-a-half million square kilometres. In this gigantic basin there is to be found in quantity tin, lead, gold, iron ore, graphite, building stone, and so on. In addition the virgin soil is capable of growing all grains, as well as potatoes, vegetables, and cash crops.

Stands of untouched timber in this region have never been even approximately estimated.

To unearth this vast treasure, to exploit it towards the wielding of more power is the dream. The dream is shared by the Chinese and they are in a hurry. The Sino-Communist State claims half the river to mid-stream. China's population exceeds Russia's by four hundred million. Siberia is a very empty land. In power politics it is a very tempting land.

... Kadar is the Laval of Hungary. He must be eliminated. His work must be undone. I.P.

The Opium of the People

THE way religion acts as an opiate is by frustrating and stifling the spirit of enquiry, by sapping every man's confidence in his own thought, and by cautioning, even forbidding, him not to act on any prompting of his mind or heart which the depositories of religious authority do not sanction. Its theoretical weapon is dogma, that is, statements of reputed truth which, even if understandable, mutually contradictory or contradicted by logic or experience, are held to be unquestionable, unchangeable and unassailable, on the ground that they are statements allegedly of divine origin, and nobody but God has competence of truth. To very few people it has as yet occurred that science is acting in a similar way; that science is in fact the new opium of the people.

In an article I recently read in *Science News*, 32 ("The existence of theoretical entities" by Bernard Mayo) the following sentences occur: "Do electrons exist? Are atomic particles real? ... The questions are so misleading that the proper way of dealing with them is to refuse to answer them ... It is grossly misleading to describe the function of theoretical concepts in scientific reasoning in the same terms as the function of common-sense concepts in practical reasoning ... Any attempt to assimilate science and common-sense must necessarily involve misdescribing the function of theory in science". These sentences are justified in their context, but are typical of those whom we may not inaptly call the "Science Clergy" towards their corresponding layman. If they would speak plainly, this is roughly what they would say: "Do not make statements about things no properly qualified person ever taught you, about things you are not in a position to understand. Refrain from asking questions which, if you were not so ignorant, you would realize do not make sense. Leave science to those who have received a scientific training; science is not your affair". The layman is determined and conditioned by science more and more intricately and rigidly each year that goes by; and yet he is expected to take it lying down, and not to question what science is about, what it does with his life, or why it changes the world around and inside him with no direct concern for his wishes and needs.

In spite of hydrogen bombs and other deadly weapons, road accidents, air pollution, thought and habits control, etc., the ordinary man still looks at the scientist, as in religious countries at his priest, as a superior and benevolent being. Little does he know that the scientist, the same as the priest, refuses to answer his most cogent and important questions because he cannot answer, and dares not ask, them himself. The scientist is awed by this new inscrutable divinity. Science, as the layman himself. But for few exceptions, scientists confine themselves to their own limited speciality, and they put themselves in the position of the layman for anything beyond it. So that there operates in science the same blind faith which was put in the laws of the market in the heydays of capitalism, with evils and disasters which already bear comparison with the worst that capitalism inflicted upon mankind. Consequently, as it happened with capitalism, a movement will start to bring science

under control, with the aim, among others, that science itself may survive. Along with it the feeling will arise and spread, that the motive force behind science is not a thirst for knowledge, but lust for more and more power over nature and men, while it is apparent that the limits beyond which the exercise of scientific power becomes unethical have already been overstepped in many directions. A law of constant and insatiable accumulation of knowledge and power seems to preside to the development of science as the law of accumulation of wealth presided to the development of capitalism, a law equally exploitive, tyrannical and ruthless.

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THE man in the street is asked, and given no choice but, to accept the results and pronouncements of science like the products of a religious revelation, on a basis of authority and not of understanding. The scientist himself, more often than not, can say no more about his particular science than an ordinary workman about the machine which he operates: namely, that it works, and that he knows how to make it work. The man in the street knows that to master a science requires special training, and that this training is not as indiscriminately and unconditionally given as the democratic illusion wishes him to suppose. He suspects, and quite rightly, that there are some general principles and assumptions which permit science to develop the way it does, and it is these principles and assumptions he wishes to know something about. If a thing works, that is not a sufficient reason why it should be accepted. Instruments of torture, brain-washing, and gas chambers, are all things that work. So the man in the street asks that the pronouncements and results of science should make common sense, and serve some clear and human purpose.

Bureaucratic scientists may smile superiorly at these pretensions and half demands; but the truth is that scientists of genius asked themselves the same kind of questions, and that in their attempt to answer them they made those discoveries which led science to shape our civilization and allowed the host of present-day scientists to earn their living comfortably and enjoy social prestige. The truth is that the man of genius remains an individual, and thinks as an individual, as a centre of questioning and initiative, a maker of purposes and a finder of fulfilment. As science is increasingly organized in a way which frustrates and destroys individual initiative, the scope it offers to genius becomes less and less. Scientific discoveries are still made, in an increasing number and at a faster pace, not because of genius, but because the scientific method can be applied indefinitely without any exceptional degree of intelligence, as a matter of perseverance and routine. Scientists are not masters of the scientific method, but the method has become their master. Discoveries are turned out and developed simply because the method makes them possible. That is what is meant when science is proclaimed to be ethically neutral. The scientist declines ethical responsibility because he serves an impersonal and ethically neutral force. Like all impersonal, collective forces, science obeys the law of acceleration contingent upon inertia

set into motion, and its mass increases in proportion to its velocity.

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TO drop the abstruse metaphor, science is imperialistic. It tends to grow bigger and bigger, and to bring under its dominion, not only more and more physical resources, but more and more men, more and more human activities. It is an idle and dangerous hope to let science have its own way on the assumption that it is neither good nor bad in itself, and that it will one day be turned exclusively to good as it is to a great extent turned to evil to-day. What is bad about science is precisely that it is ethically neutral, that the more scientists there are the more activities will be released from moral responsibility, and that the more science there will be, and the more society will be conditioned by it, the more desperate will be the effort of those who strive for ethically better men and an ethically better world. Ethical indifference, indifference to oppression and injustice of which we are not the immediate victims, that is the chief symptom revealing addiction to a social opiate.

GIOVANNI BALDELLI

U.S. Negro Bus Boycott Continues

THE Southern State of Alabama clings viciously to its segregation policies, and in spite of the Supreme Court ruling ordering the end of segregation two years ago, Alabama is one state in which "there is not a single mixed classroom".

Alabama enforces segregation on public transport, and it is not surprising that in this state the humiliated negro puts up a strong fight against discrimination. In Montgomery, no negro has ridden on the city buses since the beginning of last December, and last week the Supreme Court of the United States had indirectly upheld their boycott of the city bus system by extending its general ban on segregation to buses that run only inside a state's border. The Supreme Court ruling however, has made little impression on the president of the Alabama Public Service Commission, who has announced that he will maintain segregation everywhere in the state, and that any effort to defy it will cause violence and bloodshed.

The Montgomery Bus Company has suffered financially from the 60% loss of negro passengers who normally use the buses, and the negro population is in a strong position because it has been able to organise car pools in such an effective way that it has been unnecessary for them to use the buses. Many people have walked to work for a year now, and the car pools have successfully supported 50,000 Negroes in their boycott.

The state court however, in an effort to bring them to their knees has issued an injunction as long ago as last May prohibiting the car pools. A federal District Judge had approved the injunction, and last week the city of Montgomery had

acquired a further temporary injunction from a circuit court judge. It is doubtful whether such efforts can stop the organised transport by the Negroes.

So far the Negro population have behaved in a remarkably restrained manner under the leadership of the Rev. Martin Luther King, and the whites have had little excuse for violence. The aim of the whites is of course to put a stop to the Negroes' car pool, force them into the buses and start trouble if they should attempt to enforce the Supreme Court ruling by not sitting in the back seats usually reserved for Negroes.

People so well organised, and with such powers of restraint are unlikely to fall for this trick. Good luck to these determined Negroes.

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