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Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Power is of its nature evil, whoever wields it. It is not stability, but a lust, and therefore insatiable; therefore unhappy in itself and doomed to make others unhappy."
—JAKOB BURCKHARDT.

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Threepence

The Present is always with us—BUT WILL THERE BE A TOMORROW?

H-BOMB TESTS GO ON

YEAR after year for more than a decade, plans have been put forward and subsequently rejected, for some kind of international control of atomic-weapon development. In the first place the suggestion, for abolition of atomic weapons, came from Russia—who did not possess an A-bomb at that time—this was turned down by America—who of course did. Since then at various times, during the course of which Russian development has largely caught up, ideas have been put forward for mutual agreements between East and West either to discontinue the manufacture of atomic weapons or control production or any other scheme which has come into the head of an important politician wishing to enhance his reputation for peaceful enterprise.

Needless to say nothing has ever come of any proposals, for the other side has always had some compelling reason for suspecting the motives and honesty of intent of the side

which was putting the idea forward. (And not without good reason).

Meanwhile, as all of us know, there have been great advances (if this is the right word) in the atomic weapons field; indeed the scientists have almost certainly succeeded in developing a sufficiently powerful bomb to blow the human race off the face of the earth in the time it takes to say abolition. One might think that this state of affairs would make all those concerned only too anxious to get together and, at the very least, agree to some plan for the avoidance of this possibility. However, the politicians do not seem to mind, and one must assume that they work on the principle: "If we go, they go too." This may satisfy them, but it brings us no comfort whatsoever.

Currently there has been talk of limitation. The question of abandoning production of atomic weapons is no longer under discussion, but for many months now there

have been world-wide complaints that atom bomb tests are a danger to mankind in themselves. A considerable weight of evidence is forthcoming as to the effects of atomic radiation, and in particular its long-term effects upon human beings. So far the men in control have found the arguments no more convincing in this matter than on previous occasions. Indeed we have two opinions of some importance, voiced within 24 hours of each other less than a fortnight ago:

Khrushchev has said that for Russia to suspend nuclear tests unilaterally would be taken as "a sign of weakness on the part of the Soviet Union".

Macmillan has said that "to abandon our tests would be to put ourselves in a position of inferiority even for the purpose of negotiations."

It follows only too obviously that if both these gentlemen (if that is the right word) were so keen to abandon atomic test explosions they would have got together long ago; if it were merely a question of over-

coming unilateral problems, as both have implied, they could simply act in unison (*sic*) and abandon tests at one and the same time. Patently this is not their object but only their subject—it sounds very fine (though unconvincing), to talk of enterprises directed for the good of mankind, "and if only the other man's motives were as good as one's own..." etc. The evidence points unerringly to the proposition that neither East nor West has any real desire to alter the present anxious atomic weapon situation.

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Since writing the foregoing we have suddenly been faced with the news from Bermuda of guided missiles and nuclear tests. (Monday, 25 March). We read—with no surprise whatsoever—"In a communiqué, President Eisenhower and Mr. Macmillan announce that Britain and the United States must (*must?*) continue nuclear tests. The tests to be carried out in a manner preventing radiation from rising to more than a small fraction of the levels that might be hazardous."

After the Strikes—What?

THE shipyard workers' strike has been as solid as was expected. Silence reigns over all the great yards along Britain's waterfronts where the huge wealth of the shipping companies is first created, as all the 200,000 workers in the industry refuse to lift a finger until their wage claim is met.

In the engineering industries, no less than one million workers ceased work last week-end in selected areas, to back up their claim for an equal increase—10 per cent.

The Press has tried hard to show that the men have no stomach for the fight—that they are being led into it against their will through misguided loyalty to the leaders. Just the opposite arguments are produced when there is an unofficial strike—that the men should be governed by their leaders!

A few wives have been produced, who think the men are 'silly'. As if working class wives are not affected by their husbands' wages being pegged while prices rise!

But in fact it is clear that among the rank and file there is every bit as much militancy as among the leaders—if not more. In Southampton, for example, the moorers have gone against union instructions in refusing to release or tie up the great Cunard "Queens"—Mary and Elizabeth.

Government Intervenes

The "Queen Mary" had been in for repair and had not been released before the strike began. A storm broke when the Admiralty sent naval tugs (manned by civilians!) to get the Cunarder out, and for two days the whole port was paralyzed as the dockers struck in protest against this Government intervention.

The union leaders hurriedly got the men back to work as soon as they could, and when, a week later, the "Queen Elizabeth" arrived from America, union officials actually organised a gang of riggers who normally work on smaller Cunarders to break the strike of those who regularly tie up the Queens! And did it with half the number of men!

The official union leadership is very concerned to keep the strike well under their control. Indeed, they must do so in order to be able to send the men back to work as soon as the inevitable compromise is reached.

So far the strike pressure has pushed the employers quite a long way from their original intransigent stand of complete refusal to discuss an increase. First, as we mentioned last week, they shifted from their opposition to arbitration. As soon as the strike began they decided they had better arbitrate. As last week passed, however, with the unions still refusing to go to arbitration, the employers softened still further, and this week began with the announcement that they had offered a wage increase of 5 per cent.—half the union's claim. This the unions refused, although they said they were prepared to settle for seven-and-a-half. Both sides have now agreed to a court of inquiry being set up by the Government.

Conditions of Settlement

Now this is all very satisfactory from the ordinary trade union point of view. The employers are on the run: some increase is in the bag. Trade union prestige will stand higher among the workers than for a long time if they go back to work fairly quickly with a victory won.

15,000 F.P. Books Go Up in Smoke

MANY readers, mostly abroad, will be receiving this and last week's FREEDOM in the same wrapper. At the time of writing we are not even sure whether any readers will get their copies of this issue on time. It all depends whether the printing machines are in working order. For, behind the uncertainty, is a stark reality. Last Thursday week our printing works in Whitechapel were swept by fire, destroying quantities of paper, books and pamphlets as well as damaging machines and equipment. Fortunately the alarm was given early and fire damage was limited to one floor of the building. The basement however was flooded and the first floor, where all the type is kept, suffered smoke damage.

It is on Thursday nights that FREEDOM is dispatched. The comrades dealing with this had already folded and wrapped half the issue, and at about 7.45 p.m. went out for a meal. When they returned at 8.30 p.m. firemen were in charge of the dispatching room, shadowy figures working in the light of oil lamps, putting the finishing touches with their hoses to the smouldering shambles, while the Salvage Corps were unceremoniously shovelling Malatesta, Read, Kropotkin, Comfort, Sansom, Bakunin and FREEDOM into a mighty heap, little realising perhaps what a pyre of ideas they were making from otherwise charred and water-sodden printed paper! Perhaps not altogether if one is to judge from the occasional remarks "this looks jolly interesting stuff", as they paused in their remorseless shovelling of ideas onto the dump, to turn the pages of a charred copy of "The March to Death", or read a few sentences from "The Workers' Next Step", or a headline from a sad, water-heavy copy of FREEDOM.

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OUR comrades and friends will want to know what is the position.

At the moment we cannot give an exact picture of the damage. Fortunately FREEDOM PRESS stocks were stored at Red Lion Street as well as at the Express Printers, so that we are not back to that night in May, 1941, when fire-bombs reduced bookshop and press to ashes, and we had to start all over again.

copies had already been sent to the Bookshop in the late afternoon of Thursday, and about a thousand copies were still stacked on the machine in the basement. But the rest, plus all the stamped addressed wrappers for subscribers were in the dispatch room and provided fuel for the fire. However, by Friday night a new set of wrappers had been run-off and stamped, and all the available papers dispatched by Saturday afternoon.

No stocks of FREEDOM PRESS titles escaped unscathed except for a parcel of 1,500 copies of Comfort's *Delinquency*, and, so far as we can judge, 1,000 copies of Kropotkin's *Revolutionary Government*. But stocks destroyed or irretrievably damaged include the following:

- 700 copies Selections Political Justice.
- 800 copies Ill Health, Poverty and the State.
- 200 copies Wilhelmshaven Revolt.
- 1150 copies The Wage System.

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PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT! WEEK 12

Deficit on Freedom	£240
Contributions received	£222
DEFICIT	£18

March 15 to March 21

Menlo Park: O.R. 14/-; Huddersfield: A.L. 10/-; London: G.O. 12/-; London: Anon. 6d.; London: J.S.* 3/-; Sheffield: G.P.* 5/-; London: J.A.N. 2/6; Belfast: H.C. 1/-; Fal-mouth: R.W. 3/-; Bletchley: R.S. 5/5; West New York: V. de M. 7/-; Castle Douglas: M.A. 10/-.

Total	4 12 5
Previously acknowledged	217 17 2
1957 TOTAL TO DATE	£222 9 7

GIFT OF BOOKS: Preston: W.D. Le M.



15,000 F.P. Books go up in Smoke

Continued from p. 1

- 600? copies The State—Its Historic Role.
- 1000 copies Anarchy by Malatesta.
- 400 copies The March to Death.
- 500 copies Philosophy of Anarchism.
- 800 copies Poetry & Anarchism.
- 2700 copies Railways & Society.
- 400 copies Homes orhovels.
- 400? copies Anarchy or Chaos.
- 100 copies The Basis of Communal Living.
- 2000 copies What is Anarchism.
- 900 copies Barbarism & Sexual Freedom.
- 500 copies Existentialism, Marxism & Anarchism.
- 500 dust jackets Marxism, Freedom & the State (sheets safe).
- 750 copies Organised Vengeance Called Justice.
- 1000 copies Youth for Freedom.
- 2000 copies Syndicalism — The Workers' Next Step.

This is an interim report of FREEDOM PRESS's losses. We know, for instance, that all the covers for the earlier volumes of FREEDOM Selections were destroyed, and we can well imagine that other losses will be discovered as and when we come to need certain titles and then find that they are not there! But even an interim report, involving 19 titles and 15,000 books and pamphlets is quite serious enough to be getting on with. To make good the losses would involve us in resetting some 800 pages of type at a cost of at least £350 (\$1,000). The paper, printing and binding costs would be more than double that amount, and it would be obviously unrealistic to think in these terms. On the other hand it would be a serious loss to anarchist thought and to our literature in the English language if all these titles were to disappear from our lists. It is therefore our intention in the coming weeks to carefully consider which of these titles shall be rescued from the ashes, and in this task the opinions and suggestions of our comrades and friends here and in America will be much appreciated.

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THE financial loss to FREEDOM PRESS will not begin to be felt, apart from current work which, such as Ostergaard's booklet and the last issue of FREEDOM will have to be made good right away, until we run out of stocks held at the bookshop and are unable to draw on those which were stored at the printers. As we have pointed out at various times, our ability to print new pamphlets depends on the income we derive from the sale of existing pamphlets. Our chances of doing so in a year or 18 months' time are the poorer by the income-we-won't-receive from the sale of 15,000 pamphlets-we-haven't got! If the book publishing side of our activities—as distinct from that of issuing FREEDOM each week—is not to suffer for some years to come we need the financial assistance of all those readers who share with us the view that our ideas cannot make their way in the world without the backing of a rich and varied body of literature. FREEDOM's purpose is essentially one of introducing people to our ideas, but it is only through our literature that we can hope for deeper understanding and acceptance of their validity.

£500 (\$1,500) is a lot of money for the FREEDOM PRESS; it is not a great burden if shared by all of us

DOCTORS' DILEMMA

THE increasing extent of governmental authoritarianism during this century has been a matter of concern for progressive and humane people because in most countries it has been accompanied by open violence and police sadism. (Leninist Russia, Fascist Italy and Portugal, Nazi Germany, Spain, etc., before the war, and Central Europe and McCarthyist USA since). But this very overlay of violence has served to divert attention from the underlying process—the supersession of individual responsibility by centralizing government power. In brief, by an increased power of the State. With characteristic hypocrisy or characteristic humanitarianism (whichever way one likes to view the complex British way of doing things), the same process has gone on here without the violence and sadism, but with popular support instead, under the guise of the developing Welfare State. The sapping of individual initiative and the reduction of life to a uniform dull pattern remains the outcome of this process.

The doctors' struggle against successive governments may be seen as a revolt against this process by a professional group accustomed to act on their own responsibility and intolerant of bureaucratic interference. It is unlikely that the doctors themselves see the problem in this light, any more than liberals horrified by imprisonment without trial, etc., understand the problem of Communism-Fascism, for it has only been the anarchists who have consistently concerned themselves with the question of the inevitable struggle between the individual and authority. Broadly speaking however, and ignoring details, one can say that if the doctors defeat the government again as they did in the preliminary Danckwerts skirmish of four years ago, they will have dealt a blow against enveloping authoritarianism.

The Doctors' Case

As in most industrial struggles the initial cause is a demand for increased pay. For general practitioners, the introduction of a National Health Service, involved the loss of a major asset, the right to sell their practices, and with it the freedom of movement which such assets provide. They also viewed (as it turns out) with justifiable apprehension the prospect of placing their future income in the hands of the government. The Attlee government allayed the first of these fears by agreeing to pay a compensation sum on retirement based on an agreed value for a practice as it was in 1948. They allayed the second by pledging the government as employer to pay the doctors according to the recommendation of the Spens Committees. This pledge has been a source of embarrassment to successive governments ever since, and it lies at the root of the present dispute. It also has far wider implications for the employed population at large.

who wish to see anarchist ideas progress in the present world jungle. Yet it is all we need to make good some of the losses and to add new works to the literature of Anarchism. FREEDOM must not suffer in the process; the deficit must therefore be met each week as before. But we are asking you to make a special effort this year. Let us show that anarchists can meet every challenge; that the destructive fire of last Thursday week has also fired our enthusiasm and imagination to greater and more effective activity in the cause of the liberation of the human mind!

FREEDOM PRESS GROUP.

P.S.—The fund is now open. Unless we receive better suggestions for its title we shall call it the FREEDOM PRESS FIRE FUND And please don't forget the Deficit Fund!

The Spens recommendations were briefly that doctors should be paid an income which was one fifth higher than their calculated income for 1939, and that it should be reviewed from time to time with regard to changes in the cost of living and changes in the incomes of other professions.

A temporary scale was agreed in time to bring over 90% of doctors into the health scheme by July 1948, but the government agreed that the exact interpretation of the Spens recommendation should proceed as soon as possible. In fact, the Labour government with Bevan as Health Minister stalled for nearly 4 years and finally were forced by the threat of mass resignation from the NHS to submit the matter to arbitration. The result was the 1952 judgment of Mr. Justice Danckwerts, which fixed doctors' remuneration, and awarded the increase retrospectively to 1948. The judgment accepted the doctors' claim that this was not a wage increase but simply a belated carrying out of the promise of 1948 to replace a temporary scale by a reasoned interpretation of Spens which could serve as a basis for future remuneration.

At the beginning of 1956 the doctors claimed that they had exercised restraint in not until then asking for the change in the cost of living since 1952 (which was conservatively estimated as a 24% increase) to be reflected in their pay, but insisting that they could not go on waiting for ever. The government employed stalling manoeuvres until January 1957 and then turned the claim down flat.

Government and Spens

Acceptance by the government of the Spens recommendations as the basis for doctors' pay was as we have seen the final assurance whereby the doctors were willing to enter the

health scheme. In a letter dated May 22, 1950, to the British Medical Association, the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Health affirmed: "The Minister agrees that the Spens Report remains the basis of the remuneration of general practitioners until such time as after the usual consultations some other basis is substituted." The Ministry's own handbook published in 1955 reiterates this assurance and the question of changes in the cost of living. "The central pool is now calculated on the basis of the estimated net remuneration appropriate for general practitioners in 1939 (as recommended by the Spens Committee of 1946) together with a betterment factor taking account of the changes in the value of money since that time" (Our italics).

The government failed to give a stated legal case for their refusal to meet the doctors' claim although the Minister had agreed to do this after receiving the detailed legal arguments of the BMA advisors. This suggests (together with the Danckwerts judgment of four years ago) that their legal case is unsound.

The trend in governmental attitude is reflected in the *Times*. Originally highly critical of the government's evasions, and supporting the doctors' case this newspaper seems to have realized recently the implications of the Spens formula. Surely the main point about their 1946 recommendation is that *if it is just for doctors' pay to increase in line with the cost of living it is just for all workers' pay to be increased similarly?* In fact the Spens recommendation, if applied generally, constitutes a criticism of the whole method of economy.

The *Times* has its own way of indicating this belated realization of the philosophical implications of Spens, in a first leader on March 22, it declares:

Squalor & Frustration on Clydeside

ANYONE who has ever known the Clydeside must feel something of the squalor and gloom depicted by Duncan B. Forrester writing in the *Manchester Guardian* (20/3/57) on his experiences as an unskilled labourer in a Clyde shipyard.

At this time when workers are being exhorted in the press to subjugate their individual needs to the needs of the country, it is important that a true picture of industrial life is laid before the public in the hope that it will help to change conditions where they are bad. Mr. Forrester sets out to do this, and gives a coherent (and sometimes touching) glimpse of what goes on behind the scenes specifically in the Clyde yards. The shipbuilding industry is booming and:

Profits are quite substantial and rates of pay, when bonus and overtime are reckoned in, are quite comparable with those in many other industries. Yet among the workmen there is a deep frustration and a quite irrational feeling of insecurity and lack of confidence in the future of the industry—the root causes of much of the trouble in the shipyards to-day. Relations between management and men are fairly consistently bad and the working conditions and lack of amenities in the average shipyard would be considered antediluvian in almost any other industry.

Wages for the unskilled labourer are certainly not high by normal industrial standards in spite of the boom. A 44-hr. five day week brings in £7, 2, 6., but 12½ hours of regular overtime makes the wage packet up to £10 or over. Skilled men earn more than this; a craftsman can earn up to £18 if he works overtime.

Overtime working is the "rule rather than the exception" throughout Clydeside since the war. It is not surprising that the pace of work is invariably slower during overtime,

partly, writes Forrester, because the men are simply physically tired. Apart from fatigue, it seems to us that there is little incentive for men to work at a wage rate of £7, 2, 6. for a five day week (how far will this go in a household where there is a wife and family to keep?) Can one blame workers then for slacking on their overtime stints, particularly when one also considers the conditions under which Clydeside ship workers have to spend most of their waking lives? Of these conditions Mr. Forrester says:

One comes to feel that the management regards one simply as a unit of labour and has no interest in one beyond getting the job done and guarding against costly lawsuits and fines. The boat in the fitting-out basin on which I worked had no lavatory accommodation on board for three hundred or so workers. As a result, huge fetid pools of urine gathered against the bulkheads and in the bilges, and these had normally to be baled out by hand. The yard had no canteen, and provided no facilities whatsoever for washing, so that it was normally necessary to eat with hands covered with greasy filth. No protective clothing was issued to the many men who had to work out of cover in all weathers. My mates and I spent on an average one-third of our "working" hours doing nothing—waiting for a crane to be free or a lorry to arrive, simply waiting for a job, or waiting for the weather to improve . . .

We spent most of our idle hours in an old funnel on the dockside. Roofed, and with a brazier installed, it made a very comfortable hide-out—or "howf" in the Clydeside jargon—in which we passed many hours talking and gossiping and holding quizzes, or simply sitting silent and vacant-minded, staring at the fire like cats and smoking one Woodbine after another as the rain pelted down outside. I never knew before that I could sit for such long periods doing nothing, awake, yet without a single thought in my head! We went home bored rather than physically tired, and

"Responsible statesmanship in 1946 ought to have precluded the Attlee Government from promising to honour the fatally ambiguous and unrealistic recommendations of the Spens report. Responsible statesmanship among the doctors' leaders ought equally to have precluded them from demanding a pledge which, on their particular interpretation, was manifestly untenable, since it amounted to demanding a guarantee that family doctors' incomes before tax shall be maintained at a level of purchasing power nearly a fifth higher than before the war, insulated against the monetary depreciation that afflicts the incomes of other citizens."

The government, despite their pledge that Spens remains the basis, etc., until after the usual consultations some other basis is substituted, proceeded to try and dodge Spens and also gain time by appointing a Royal Commission. They limited its terms of reference in such a way that it cannot form the basis of a fruitful examination of the problem of the relationship of the medical profession to the State as employer.

Finally the government (remembering Danckwerts) refused to go to arbitration at the very same moment as the Prime Minister was saying two weeks ago at Leicester in regard to the shipbuilding dispute, "Surely this is a time when we should accept some form of arbitration rather than to have recourse to self destructive struggles . . . the umpire is better than the duel". Anarchists might say that this was textbook government behaviour.

General Implications

The writer has tried to lay less emphasis on the question of whether doctors are justified in their wage claim, than on the dishonest behaviour of the government. The greatest stress should be laid upon the essential justice of the Spens recommendations, and other work-

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one of the squad was for ever complaining that he could not sleep because he was not physically weary when he went to bed! Idleness to this extent hardly makes one feel one is a vital worker in a crucial industry.

Mr. Forrester found that his mates were perpetually restless, and were always wishing that they had served their apprenticeship at some trade. Not only is the unskilled labourer at the bottom of the wage scale, but in shipbuilding and the craft industries generally "there is an absolute and impenetrable barrier between craftsmen and unskilled labourers". These unskilled men changed their jobs often always hoping to find a better place but knowing in their hearts that the new job would be just the same. Isn't it sad that in spite of the 20th century technical progress so many unhappy men have to spend the greater part of their lives in this way. Mr. Forrester's conclusions give the lie to the claim that workers get what they deserve and are only interested in the money which can be made out of work:

Their greatest needs were self-respect and hope, but an industry which refuses to realise that the firm is as much a social as a productive organism and that effective production depends largely on good industrial relations can offer them neither.

Management retains considerably greater freedom in "hiring and firing" than is usual elsewhere, feels no responsibility to organise work so as to provide regular employment for a stable labour force, and disdains to provide amenities for workers who are likely to stay long with the firm. Yet under the present boom conditions in the industry it would, I believe, be quite possible for most yards to organise work in such a way that steady employment could be provided for most of the employees.

*A Job in the Shipyard, Duncan B. Forrester, 20/3/57.

