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Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Patriotism is the refuge of scoundrels."
—SAMUEL JOHNSON.

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Threepence

COMMENTS ON A GALLUP SURVEY

WHITHER THE CHURCHES?

IN a series of three articles, the *News Chronicle* last week published, and attempted an analysis of, the findings of a specially commissioned Gallup Poll on the religious beliefs and practices of the British People. If the years of painstaking work that went into the preparation of the Kinsey Report on Sex did not prevent a number of "experts" from attacking the Reports for not being a true cross-section of the behaviour pattern of the American people, how much more applicable would be such criticism to this Gallup Poll which was commissioned only three months ago, consisted of only 2,250 interviews and was limited to questions which required simply "Yes", "No" or "Don't know" replies! However it is interesting that such a superficial enquiry can nevertheless be claimed as "the most extensive of its kind undertaken in the world". But perhaps religion is not the taboo subject that is sex; we can all carry out our Gallup surveys on religion simply by looking around us, and occasionally peeping into the "ever open door" (incidentally no longer ever open; even the clergy appear to have a 48-hour week these days). Whereas, it is much more difficult to direct a Galluping eye into the boudoirs, the bed-sitters and the bedrooms of the land. And to judge simply by one's own experience, or by the uninhibited youthful public skirmishings in our open spaces or at "closing time" would be most unscientific.

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EVEN if we assume that the Gallup poll on religious beliefs is represented only of the 2,250 people interviewed the replies reveal apathy, the fatalistic approach to life, the lack of a thought-out philosophy of life among those to whom the questions were put, which is consistent with their political and social attitudes in general.

Let us quote some figures. 78% of the over-20's interviewed believe that "there is a God". Only 62% of the under 20's shared this belief. (In the figures that follow, the views of the under 20's will be given in brackets immediately after those for the over 21's). 71% (60%) believed that "Christ was the Son of God", and only 34% (24%) that there is a

devil. There is less optimism about a life after death 54% (43%) and only 11% (8%) believe that "to be a Christian you must accept every word of the New Testament" and 11% (10%) that you must go to Church. 41% (43%) hold the view that "politics has more influence than religion" 30% (17%) expressed the opposite view, and 17% (16%) thought that the influence was evenly balanced, while the remaining 12% (23%) belonged to the army of the "don't knows". A greater percentage 48% (47%) believed that "the world needs economic security more than it needs religion" while the opposite view was expressed by 36% (26%). As to religion answering the problems of to-day, 46% (32%) thought it could, while 27% (38%) thought it could not because it was "old-fashioned".

That only 14% of all denominations go to Church may well be a reflection on the need for a reorganisation of the Church, as suggested by the writer in the *News Chronicle* series. He lists the required changes under three heads (1) that the Church of England is at present an upper- and middle-class concern and needs to make itself "acceptable to the ordinary men and women" (2) the need to adopt a "more liberal and less puritan attitude towards such matters as divorce and Sunday entertainment" (3) the Churches "are called upon to revise their interpretation of the Bible and represent the basic Christian beliefs in a form credible to people to-day".

Having said this he poses the following possible objections

It may be held that changes along these lines will destroy the whole fabric of Christianity; that the Church must necessarily be hierarchical; that it is impossible to adopt a liberal attitude towards "sin", or that the Bible is the "word of God" and it is not open to man to reinterpret it.

And from the point of view of religion and the Church these are, to our minds, important objections. Is the problem simply one of filling the Churches or of making belief in God a living reality? Is the problem facing the Archbishop of Canterbury no less down-to-earth than that of empty cinemas currently facing Mr. Rank and shareholders? Is the one no less of an Organisation than the other, both selling a com-

modity providing a livelihood for some and dividends for others? It is possible that the Church can change its line just as Mr. Rank has already switched some of his organisation's capital to the production of T.V. sets. Whether the results will be commensurate is quite another matter. In the God business the only shares worth holding are those marked FAITH; anything else will with the passing of time depreciate in value as well as demand!

The strength of the Catholic Church and certain religious sects, compared with the Free churches in this country, has been that until recently, at any rate, they have succeeded in isolating or immunising their flock from the virus of knowledge. They have, besides, managed to combine a worldliness in matters material and political for a hierarchy on the one hand, with, on the other, an abject submissiveness, an acceptance of material pauperism and intellectual blindness for the masses in return for the promise of eternal happiness and leisure in a tinsel and marzipan hereafter. But even the Catholic Church is fighting a losing battle, and the Pope-scientist, knowingly or unknowingly (pardon the heresy!) is its worse enemy.

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Keeping Their Mouths Shut

College Youth in U.S.

A REPORT by sixteen professors on the state of the college youth of America has been published in a weekly review, *The Nation*. The general conclusions are disquieting, and if correct, foretell nothing good for the future of America, or for that matter the Western half of civilisation.

According to the professors the average undergraduate has become more conservative than his father twenty years before, he lacks any kind of enthusiasm and distrusts extremism in all forms. He treats the university solely as a place where he can train himself for a job which will provide financial security for his remaining years.

Not allowing for exaggeration and generalisation this means that the group which in ten or twenty years will be running America, will have little real education or originality, and worse still no desire for fundamental change or anything which suggests unorthodoxy.

Even if the report is only partially true and there is only a tendency in the direction described, this could affect a great deal of what happens in the world a few years from now in view of the ever-growing ascendancy of American power and influence. Examples of students' attitudes certainly conjure up depressing prospects: they have no urge to

read such subjects as philosophy, politics, economics or international affairs, or for that matter Marxist or Catholic literature. One student is quoted as expressing his thanks to Senator McCarthy for having taught his generation to keep its mouth shut. An undergraduate from Washington University summed up the position as follows: "What we all lack who are under 30 is some guiding passion, some moral vision. We profess to disbelieve everything partially because at heart we do not yet believe in ourselves."

The professors put the blame on a number of things; fifteen years of uninterrupted economic boom and prosperity, the Cold War and the hydrogen bomb which breed insularity, and the comforting reassurance of father-figure Eisenhower.

Perhaps if they looked closer to home for the answer, the professors would see what is only too obvious. Since environment is the factor which has most effect upon outlook, and the process of education is the greatest environmental factor for undergraduates, then most of the responsibility rests with parents, teachers and professors. This must surely add up to an indictment of the American way of middle-class thought and educational methods, which so certainly produces conformity and "minds as quiet as mice."

The Communist Conference

THE Communist Party held its special Easter conference last week, which, according to information we received from an expelled member applying for readmission on the basis that now is the time for the restless rank and file to get rid of the corrupt leadership, was called because of the disruption in the party over recent events in Eastern Europe. The hope that the leadership could be pulled into line by the dissident members was proved vain by the voting, which gave the orthodox supporters of the Kremlin policies a decisive victory on every issue.

This is not surprising in view of the grip which the leadership is able to keep on this most democratic of parties (to quote members) and that it was able to restrict discussion to only twelve out of 574 amendments to a majority report of a commission which has been enquiring into what is known as "inner party democracy." The minority report which disagreed with the majority's view that all was well, was safely defeated. To our knowledge, it has not been made freely available throughout the Party at all.

The measure of the ferment going on in the Party can be gauged by the fact that there was a total of 2,246 amendments put forward in all to the three official resolutions with which the Congress was mainly concerned. These were on the commission report already referred to, a political resolution prepared by the executive, and a resolution concerning "The British Road to Socialism"—the latest edition of the general party programme.

The Function of the Farceical

Some newspaper reports gave the impression that much of the discussion bordered on the farceical; a view which derives from a misunderstanding

of Communist tactics generally, and in particular why this congress devoted a lot of time to solemn detailed discussion on the nature of government and economic control when the Communists take over the reins of government in this country.

It is a well known technique used by Communists (and other political parties) to emphasise the trivial in an attempt to cover up weaknesses or to get support on some obscure policy, the importance of which is not too apparent to the rank and file.*

The host of amendments and the resolutions hopefully presented by the branches for discussion gave the conference a terrific amount to get through. Instead of making any honest attempt to deal with it the Executive managed to get round it by the simple expedient of not allowing the more controversial issues to be discussed at all.

Issues Not Discussed

For instance, Hungary was not discussed, and on the last day details were published of 57 general resolutions submitted by branches which the delegates were asked to remit to the National Executive, mainly on the grounds that the subjects had already been covered by other documents. The fact, however, was that many of them had not even been touched on.

*In the *God that Failed* Arthur Koestler gives an example of this in connection with the German Communists during the period of the 1932 elections. The party slogans at the time were not as one might have supposed or the "German unemployment or the threats of the Brownshirts, but the defence of the Chinese proletariat against the aggression of the Japanese". The political reasons for this have been discussed often in FREEDOM.

There was, for example, Edinburgh Central's suggestion that the party should officially deplore the abductions and deportation of "Imre Nagy, George Lukacs, Mme. Rajk, and others." Streatham wished to call the attention of the Soviet Communist party to the reports about the persecution of Jews in Russia. Hastings and St. Leonards suggested the condemnation of the editorial policy of the *Daily Worker* in suppressing and distorting unpleasant facts, and St. Albans wanted to put an end to "the sectarian presentation of news and the suppression of inconvenient facts" by the same paper. St. Albans were also worried about "... the uncritical support given by the Executive Committee to Soviet policy"; this was held to have discredited and isolated the party.

However, the Executive was by no means able to stifle completely all criticism. For example Professor Hyman Levy strongly challenged the chairman, Harry Pollitt, to explain his silence about "gangsterism" in the Soviet Union. Did the leaders of the British party know about Stalin's crimes? "How often," asked Professor Levy, "has Harry Pollitt been told about this? How often has he told people to keep their mouths shut?"

Professor Levy said that he had visited the Soviet Union himself and had seen and heard things that had shocked him to his foundations. The question at issue, he cried, was how much about the events in Russia did the leaders of the British Communist party know? "Because," Professor Levy continued, "if they knew and kept quiet then they were misleading the workers."

The next day Andrew Rothstein "answered" the Professor's attack by accusing him of the three heinous

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The Mayflower

THE voyage of the *Mayflower* in 1620, from Plymouth Hoe to Plymouth Rock, carrying 100 (or 102) passengers across the Atlantic is something of which most of us have heard, and about which all of us now know a great deal more. For the departure of the *Mayflower II* last week, also bound for America, has produced a lot of information of which we were not previously aware. It seems that not only must history exist, but it must be seen to exist.

The current voyage will probably take just over a month, and the course to be steered will approximate that of the original *Mayflower*. Everything has been done to ensure that the present ship shall be as close a replica of the 1620 model as possible, and much loving care has gone towards achieving this end. The timbers were cut from the right oak trees and the sails were stitched (presumably with a bare bodkin) by hand.

However it must be pointed out that the objects of the voyage are not the same. For one thing the price of real

estate has risen so much in the last 337 years that the setting up of a modern colony in Massachusetts would be uneconomical. And then of course there is the McCarran Act. Nowadays such careful screening of those on board is necessary that some of the olde-world romance of the event would be irretrievably lost.

We understand in fact that the revenues from a film and book of the voyage, and the *Mayflower's* exhibition at ports of call are intended to provide scholarships for strengthening Anglo-American relations and furthering travel between the two countries.

These aims will no doubt be achieved in some measure, but we feel that for a really worthwhile trip with the same aims, a fleet of galleons with red sails and a good supply of loving cups should cross the Arctic Ocean bound for Arkhangelsk (Archangel).

In any case we wish the good ship *Mayflower II* a safe and happy voyage.

SCIENCE COMMENTS

Letter from Hongkong
COMMUNITY THRO' IDEAS

5th April, 1957.

I would gladly tell something more about myself.

I was sixteen years old when I first touched with the anarchical books, and four years long, I educated myself. Since I have read the most wonderful book: The Memoirs of a Revolutionist, I want to be an anarchist. It seems that it is a miracle, how can one convert his way suddenly and abandon all his past? Yes, I do it with my great efforts, and I strive to enter this threshold, as Turgenyev said in one of his great prose-poems: Now, I find that somebody has put down a heavy curtain behind the doorway, and I go into the threshold.

The family, the political condition make me confused, I cannot get rid of them. The books which I read drew a beautiful picture before me, they were talking about self-sacrifice, justice and martyrdom; they portrayed the coming revolution, the paradise of earth, the free society, in which, man is a really free man.

These spectacles are so beautiful and attractive, they induce me to go to the further imagination. Many a time, I believe that the free, new society would appear with the raising sun, it is so near and so soon. But, all these are cruelly destroyed by the realities. The sights are changed, only a picture of the miserable people is widely spread before me. My hopes are dead.

The Chinese anarchists now face a great crisis, they cannot do their work in their country. Communism and nationalism are the two great opponents of them. I do not know where is our road. Hong Kong is a deserted island, lack of books and newspapers. I know nothing about the movement of the international anarchists in the present times, and I hope that you can tell me something about this.

Coming to the end of this letter, I give my heartfelt benediction to you, and all who work with you.

DEAR COMRADES,

I do not know whether I have the qualification to use such an intimate and beautiful word and to put it on the beginning of the letter.

Yesterday, I received a book-parcel from my friend who lived in San Francisco, in which I found six brilliant pamphlets and two copies of FREEDOM. These pamphlets were all published by Freedom Press. I cannot describe to you how excited when I was touching with these noble spirits. It can only be compared with that moment when I was reading Vanzetti's touchful autobiography: The Story of a Proletarian Life. Dear comrades, when I know that our Cause yet exists in the world, and you, a group of self-sacrificing men, to struggle forwards to this coming earth-paradise, my tears are running down.

Before I go on this letter, I think that I should mention one or two things. Last month, my friend M.B.T. (who sent me the books), told me that he had sent a letter to you, named my Hong King address, and proposed to subscribe FREEDOM one year for me; he also talked about me, and assured that you would give me a letter. But down to the present time, I have received nothing, even the weekly paper. I am quite disappointed about it. Was his letter lost on the midway from San Francisco to London? It would be so.

My friend is not an anarchist, but he has the tendency towards it. He helps me in searching of books in America, and had sent me quite a lot of books about Anarchism; such as Emma Goldman's Anarchism and other Essays and as well as Mr. George Woodcock's excellent biography of Peter Kropotkin.

I plunge myself into these books days and nights, they are so eloquent and nearly burn my heart into ashes. If my English writing allows me to write farther on (for my English is so poor!)

muff the thing or even perhaps have second thoughts, the complete operation can be controlled by an electronic device and initiated by merely pressing a button long before the target area is reached.

A DECISION DEVASTATING in its possible consequences is forced on parents by the government's persuasive campaign in favour of the new poliomyelitis vaccine, except possibly those whose particular brand of alchemy leads them to reject all types of vaccination. The rejection of a number of batches of vaccine as unsuitable is symptomatic of the extreme care that is being taken to ensure that there is no repetition of the American tragedy. But the use of a less virulent strain may well have correspondingly reduced the value of the vaccine as a prophylactic. Last year's results were at least equivocal.

It is perhaps more serious that so little publicity has been given to two possible risks. The use of monkey kidney tissue in the manufacture of the vaccine could conceivably induce in the inoculated person a reaction to foreign protein, with possible risk of kidney damage. The traces of antibiotics present might occasionally sensitize the recipient, so that large doses given later in the treatment of some infection might produce a dangerous reaction.

With these considerations in mind the wise parent might justifiably adopt a policy of wait and see.

BIOS.

Neurotic Guided Missiles?

ARE AMERICAN GUIDED MISSILES getting neurotic? The experts have been doing some very hard thinking about two which have disappeared within the last three months after failing to obey orders to destroy themselves. One is still missing in the Brazilian jungle; the other was recently found in New Mexico by a cowboy with the prosaic name Bill Smith. Did a technician put a wire in the wrong place or get his valves mixed up? Or are the problems set to these flying electronic brains producing conflicts that can lead to a mental breakdown? The only pleasant thing about all this is that it suggests a new spare time occupation for cowboys now that rustlers and red Indians are not so prevalent.

THE LEGISLATION OF ABORTION and the official advocacy of birth control, in China, recently reported in FREEDOM, will surprise only those who do not believe that moral values are largely determined by economic considerations. This change of policy does not reflect an increasing concern for the freedom of the individual, but is a neo-Malthusian reaction to the difficulty of growing enough food for a population increasing at the rate of fifteen millions a year. Should we welcome the change on its own merits or disparage it because it is being done for the wrong reasons?

Nearer home the attitude of the French government to birth control is responsible for much inconvenience and misery. But although the evil influence of the Roman Catholic church is usually blamed for this,

it is due much more to the fact that the French population is not increasing by two and a half per cent. per annum.

IT DOES NOT ALWAYS PAY TO grow more food. Much of the ten per cent. of crops lost in this country through diseases due to fungi, bacteria, and viruses could be avoided by the use of more resistant seed varieties or a course of treatment during growth. But it costs too much. The farmer in a capitalist country will only use the crop treatment, or buy the resistant seed variety when the cash value of the increased yield is greater than the cost of the treatment, or of the usually more expensive disease-resistant seeds. The substances the farmer needs are expensive, in spite of, or should I say because of the high profits made by the chemical combines who so often have a monopoly in these invaluable products. In this respect one can only speculate about krillium, a chemical we heard so much about some time ago, with its amazing ability to improve the fertility of the soil. Why is it no longer news? Why is it so little used? Why does it cost so much?

Perhaps one day one of our more imaginative leaders will realise that the same approach might logically be applied to men. The antibiotics, drugs, and hormones used in medicine become increasingly expensive. Should not the cost of treatment be balanced against the probable future productive capacity of the patient? Before the health service something like this did happen, although illogically the cost was related to previous rather than future earning ability. If the conservatives succeed in their efforts to break up the health service, they will not doubt bear this in mind.

TO DROP A SMALL ATOM BOMB from a low-flying aircraft and escape destruction oneself is quite a problem. We might well feel that this could remain an unsolved problem, but the experts have stepped in and given us both the solution and the means to achieve it. These bombs cannot be just dropped, they must be lobbed, a motion more suited to basket ball. In more technical language the plane goes into an upward loop, releases the bomb as it approaches the vertical, carries through the loop, follows it by a half roll, and is half way back to base before the explosion occurs. Just in case the pilot might get nervous and

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CHRISTIAN HYPOCRISY

CATHOLICS who have been harbouring doubts about the rightness of war will, after this weekend, be straightened out in their thinking by the Archbishop of Westminster, who states that our Divine Lord had no word of disapproval for the professional Roman soldier whom he treated with great kindness. In other words under the usual guise of defence the 'just' war principle is fed to the flock.

There can be little argument against a man defending himself when he is attacked, but when this principle applies to nations it is the excuse for continued rearmament and the launching of aggressive war in the name of defence.

The truth is that organised religion has never come out totally against war unless its own interests have been threatened. In spite of

the mumbo-jumbo about Jesus the Church dignitaries manage to slip in a blessing for the guns and the generals.

When the Pope, in an Easter message, speaks of the error in thinking which has made slaves of men's intellects, 'reaching a stage of precociousness, impudence and universality' which is causing concern for the fate of the world, he fails to see that the Church has reached the highest point of impudence when she preaches peace and supports war.

Science is the bogeyman which is the source of terror, and a new resurrection of Jesus is necessary in individuals before we will return to a state of grace, said His Holiness.

When the Pope and Bishops make an open condemnation of all wars and violence with no reservations

like 'just wars', then we will regard their pious statements with less cynicism. As it is we regret that their hypocrisy revolts us.

Free Holidays for Militants

I have been talking to a Paris police inspector whose job is to deal with the problem of the small colony of anarchists of various nationalities living in the city. His department becomes very active on the eve of State visits to the capital. He tells me that only some 27 anarchists are considered possibly dangerous and they are deported to Corsica for the duration of each State visit.

Among the 27 are six Bulgarians. These six now look forward to their enforced stays in Corsica so much that they no longer wait for the police to call for them but report themselves to the police four or five days before a State visit is scheduled.

Evening Standard 12/4/57.

AMERICA BY COMPARISON by Emma Goldman

(Continued from last week)

It is conceded that America stands foremost in material development. But in culture, in all that fills the longing of the human heart and spirit for beauty, for art and idealism, America lags behind Europe. There is still almost no understanding in the United States of social ideals and their exponents, no conception of the forces that irrevocably divide the classes, no contact with the vital issues of social life. Robust, exuberant, overflowing with physical energy, America considers cultural values as so much waste. It has no patience with the social pioneer. It treats him with scorn, contempt and bitter opposition. And as America can do nothing by halves, it outdoes Europe in crude suppression, draconic laws and savage persecution of everything which has its being outside of the purely material pursuits of the average man.

Examples are legion, but a few will suffice. In Europe Anarchism, Syndicalism and other revolutionary social philosophies are accepted by tens of thousands of people and recognized as potent social factors in the struggle of the classes. The exponents of new theories and ideas have their legitimate being, their press, their meetings, the right of propaganda. I do not mean, of course, that those ideas are approved of by the governments. No, fortunately not: their advocates are fought and persecuted. Yet they have a certain political status generally recognized. It is left to the cruelty of American immaturity to enact "Criminal Anarchy" and anti-Syndicalist laws, carrying with them punishment as high as twenty years' imprisonment. The mad Red raids during and since the war, the deportation of hundreds of radicals, the judicial murder of Sacco and Vanzetti for opinions' sake, the continuing incarceration of Mooney and Billings in spite of proven innocence, the impend-

ing slaughter of eight young negroes condemned to death by race hatred, and all the other innumerable horrors in the United States are the direct result of the spirit of savagery and intolerance so often characteristic of adolescence, individual as national.

Reaction is rampant everywhere in the world to-day, and every country has its quantum of fascism. But nothing can compare with the stupidity and cruelty of American fascism, with its Ku Klux Klan and its barbarous attitude and treatment of those who dare have their own independent thought or being. There is Fascism in Europe, but it is repudiated and fought by the progressive elements of every country. America alone has given fascism social standing and recognition.

Take Prohibition, for instance. Is there any other country where prohibition has created such evils, such corruption and has assumed such ridiculous aspects? Yet, instead of recognizing the measure as a vile farce, America goes on increasing its army of special agents and detectives to cope with the ever-growing host of bootleggers made by Prohibition. Can any intelligent person claim that America with Prohibition is "better" than Europe without it? Europe's sane attitude toward temperance makes drinking a means of good fellowship rather than of drunkenness. But America can do nothing by halves. That is its vice as well as its virtue. Because the very elements of adolescence, intolerance and impatience, which have so far made for the destructive side of American life, can and will, if imbued with some spiritual urge, make for new human forms of expression, for new cultural values.

I did not have to go to Europe to realize this character of American life and its possibilities for constructive. I knew it better perhaps than most hundred per cent. Americans. For thirty-five years I kept proclaiming the bad and the good through the length and

breadth of my erstwhile country. But mine was a voice in the wilderness.

Facts are, however, more convincing than theories. The post-war political corruption, the increase in crime, the denial of almost all civil liberties and finally the collapse of the much-boasted American prosperity have become too glaringly obvious to ignore. The few protesting voices but faintly audible in the not very distant past have now grown in number and volume. They are socially conscious voices coming from every stratum in the United States. Ominous voices presaging the funeral dirge of the old order of things.

The youth of America will no longer be kept tied by the apron strings of their elders. The women of the United States are daily growing more aware of the contribution they can and should make to the world's work. The American intelligentsia, so long confirmed in the academic straight-jacket, is emerging to a deeper understanding of the true meaning and purpose of education and culture.

More important still is the awakening of a goodly part of the masses to the social abyss which separates the classes, and which no amount of palliatives can bridge. All these factors, seeking expression in the struggle of militant labour, in educational and cultural efforts, in literature, the drama and the theatre, are to me refreshing and encouraging signs. They are the signs of changing spiritual values that must always precede fundamental social changes.

Governments come and governments go, iniquitous societies are born and die an ignominious death: reactionary institutions rise and fall, but the Spirit of Life, of growth, of innovation and ideals goes on forever. I have always pinned my faith to that spirit which is slowly coming into its own in America.

Whither the Churches?

Continued from p. 1

Neither the burning of heretics nor the Index have prevented the march of knowledge. With an impatient sigh "God" has instructed his earthly representative to issue ukases on scientific matters (no less a messianic role than that taken on by Stalin who, after all, confused "scientific socialism"—whatever that may mean—with appointing himself the scientific arbiter, the super-scientist of all Russia!)

And just as, in the case of Stalin, the truth will out, so with the pronouncements by the Pope over the past two or three years. The blind faith will be replaced by a growing doubt—for there is no reason to suppose that what has happened in the Protestant countries and Stalinist Russia will not take place in the Catholic empire.

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THE first of the *News Chronicle* series referred to is given a misleading title: **PAGAN BRITAIN? NONSENSE.** It is based on the fact that the Gallup poll reveals that only 6% (5%) of the respondents declared "there is no God", and 16% of the over 20's (but, significantly, 33% of the under 20's) stated that they "didn't know what to think" whereas 78% (62%) said "there is a God". But in the third and last article of the series this affirmation is further broken down into those who believe in a "personal God" 41% and those, 37%, who "believe in God as a life force or spirit". We submit, without being able to define what kind of God this latter one is supposed to be, that these 37% of our fellow beings are on the spiritual slippery slope and that not even the introduction of rock and roll in the Churches will halt the march of scientific search into our origins or its ability to eventually breach the Maginot line of religion by the creation of life in the laboratory. Such knowledge seems within Man's grasp in our lifetime. If and when this can be achieved what then? The only defence against *facts* is *faith*. The Churches to survive, far from watering their wine must convert it into real blood; The doubting Thomas's of the scientific age will no longer be content with the symbols; they will demand the realities.

Whatever the *News Chronicle* and the *Manchester Guardian* (in its *Uncommitted* editorial of April 20) may say, the Church, however attractively it may dress itself up, will only succeed in reviving the God idea and boosting attendances if it succeeds, in this scientific age, in putting life and blood into the de-hydrated symbols of religions. It cannot be said that Man has been impatient; he has waited nearly 2,000 years for just one palpable proof of God's presence. We are sure he would be satisfied with even less than a glimpse of the "Master": say just a peep at the eternal joys of the life hereafter! Somehow we suspect that we shall be kept waiting beyond even the endurance, and credulity, of the most devout among us!

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AS much as we are delighted by the *News Chronicle's* admission that "the trend of opinion is away from the concept of God as a personal God", so are we depressed by the deeper implications of the percentages we have quoted from this Gallup poll. Let us enlarge on this. The Christian religion besides being a faith is also a philosophy—a way-of-life. It is symptomatic of our times that whereas 78% of the respondents in this poll believe there

is a God, only 14% attended their Churches and 48% believe that "the world needs economic security more than it needs religion". The conclusions to be drawn from these statistics are:

(1) that in spite of believing in "God", whether as the creator of all things, the supreme power, or even "as a life force or spirit", more than 50% of all believers consider material things of greater significance than "God";

(2) that only one out of six believers have the energy, or are willing to give up the time to attend their churches;

(3) that half of those who believe in "God" are either so indifferent to life itself or have given so little thought to any fundamental problems of life, that they can behave without consideration for the results of their actions.

The point we are trying to make is that the same superficiality, the same unwillingness to do more than pay lip service to the things one believes in in the political and social sphere is apparent even where religion is concerned. We say "even" because for those who believe, religion is beyond the realm of reason, beyond the relative. How then can we assume that the "trend" away from the "personal God" is the result of thought, the triumph of knowledge over obscurantism and not apathy, defeatism or simply an attempt to rationalize a situation in which other, material, palpable activities, seem more worthwhile?

It is only a relative consolation to learn from the Poll that in spite of the fact that "the value of religion to the individual himself is apparent" there is, nevertheless

little evidence that man's relationship with his fellow men is primarily determined by his religion.

When asked to give a good reason why we should be honest and truthful and kind, only one in nine answered, "Because my religion tells me."

Even our anarcho Stirnerites can hardly derive comfort from the awareness among "the majority" that "social behaviour is derived from a realisation that we are mutually dependent, one with another: it is enlightened self-interest to behave decently"—if they are to judge by the results! To our minds "enlightened self interest" is just a little too slick, a little too callous and practical to be human.

★

THE place of the devil who, as we have seen, has ceased to be a serious challenger to "God" in the minds of British Christians [only 34% (24%) believe he exists], has been taken by the H-bomb. Indeed, if we interpret Mr. Gallup correctly our fellows are more awed by the might of the megatons than they are by the Almighty. To the question:

Some scientists say that such tests are a very serious threat to our health and to the health of future generations. Do you think their fears are or are not well founded?"

54% said they thought they were well founded and only 21% that they were not. And when asked:

Do you approve or disapprove of Britain's decision to carry out the H-bomb tests?

44% disapproved, and 41% approved, which shows a much more healthy respect for the H-bomb than for "God" (who existed in the minds of 78%, of whom more than a half, however, were prepared to sacrifice him to Mammon, and four out of five did not even take the trouble to go in his House to worship him). Only 41% of voters were so politically obsessed or so stupid that they aligned themselves with the government, but with the 15% who "don't know" whether they would like to risk getting bone-cancer or not, those who oppose the government's decision to carry out the H-bomb tests are in fact a minority of the population, according to the Gallup Poll.

★

TO our minds the health of a people is their will to live. That half the people of this country

There is, it seems, a good deal of evidence, both from sociology and individual psychiatry, for the view that modern government may select a particular and a maladjusted section of the community when it recruits its members.

—ALEX COMFORT: "Authority & Delinquency in the Modern State".

IF John Foster Dulles were an insurance clerk, Dwight D. Eisenhower a poultry farmer, and Anthony Eden a car salesman in Great Portland Street, the fact that they have all been laid low on the operating table during the past year would evoke our sympathy, but it would not provoke reflections on the social implications of their illnesses. We would not be wondering whether there was any connection between President Eisenhower's intestinal disorders and the vacillations of American policy, between the sinister state of Mr. Dulles' stomach and his dyspeptic political utterances, or between the obstruction in Sir Anthony's bile duct and the Suez adventure. As it is, such reflections are forced upon us by the immeasurably greater repercussions of their ailments compared with those of private people. And even the most docile of citizens might question the wisdom of a social order which puts so much at the mercy of a perforated peptic ulcer in the Pentagon, a grumbling appendix in the Kremlin, or a Prime Minister's bile.

But more alarming than the physical condition of political leaders are the moral defects indispensable to their occupation. Alex Comfort, in his book on delinquency in politics, has shown how "there is, in centralised societies, a tendency for the personnel of these occupations to be drawn increasingly from those whose main preoccupation is a desire for authority, for powers of control and of direction over others". Quite apart from the manifest psychopathies of one kind or another who find outlets for tolerated delinquency in political and military activity and law-enforcement, there is the disturbing division between private qualities and public policy. As Comfort says:

"It is characteristic of political psychopathy to-day that grossly delinquent public policies may co-exist with good private adjustment. The suggestion that those who order public frauds, massacres or deportations must necessarily be criminal or sadistic in their private relationships has no support in theory or in observation. Where actions are recognisably psychopathic, the normality of their perpetrators in other fields is not more relevant than the superficial adjustment which criminals frequently display outside their particular behaviour disorder. It seems clear that the intense strain and the other incidentals of modern political office have an observable effect in evoking delinquent conduct in persons who would probably not otherwise exhibit it".

★

ONE of the frequently voiced objections to anarchist ideas, is the declaration that anarchists assume human perfectibility. But this is really the assumption behind the political ideologies of leadership, and the anarchist position is more correctly stated in William Morris's dictum that no man is good enough to be another man's master. There are plenty of 'paranoid psychotics' and 'ethically aberrant personalities' about. They are, like Sir Anthony's

should opt to die—or even worse, condemn to death the whole human race—in pursuance of a political policy* is more than we can explain . . . except to say that there is one question the Gallupers in their haste do not appear to have asked about God or the Bomb, which is: *How much thought have you given to the pros and cons of the God story and to the facts, as stated by eminent scientists in a number of countries, of the potentialities of the H-bomb?* A silly question? Just think about it for a moment longer and you will see there's sense in it!

*And it is noteworthy that 59% of Conservatives, and 51% of Liberals approved of the Government's proposals whereas only 31% of Labour supporters sanctioned the tests. One can well imagine that had the Labour Party been in power party loyalty would come before life, and the nation would be saved by the Conservatives.

PEOPLE AND IDEAS BODY POLITIC

bile, a personal and family misfortune, they only become socially dangerous to the extent to which they have power and authority over others.

"Most of us," said C. P. Snow, in a broadcast last week, "tend to make lurid pictures of power and those who hold power, but," he declared, "the holders of power are in fact much like you and me." And he described them in these terms:

"They are considerably more competent than the rest of us and rather less speculative. They do not question much the value of what they are doing and they are totally loyal to whatever society they happen to be working for. That is, the English and American managers are absolutely solid for the western way of life; the Russian managers seem to be just as solid for their own. Yet, if they meet and discuss their daily jobs, they have a great deal of fellow feeling, they know the others are pretty sensible chaps doing pretty sensible things."

Why then, do we mistrust these competent and pretty sensible chaps? The reason, he said, is because they possess power, "and we all feel deep in our hearts that it is dangerous for anyone, it doesn't matter who he is, to have any power at all. Anyone who doubts it has only to ask himself what he would be like if he had the power. Some would feel jolly at the thought and sincerely believe that they would be nothing but splendid and benevolent. They are the ones who ought to be kept away from it at all costs. Yet, someone has to keep society going. In the long run, someone has to have some power: and, of all the people who have ever possessed it, the managers of modern society are probably as well-intentioned as any."

★

IN other words, despite your misgivings leave it to the sensible chaps. What other answer could one give in a Sunday night talk on the Home Service? Someone has to keep society going, and it might as well be *them*. Things have got too big, too complicated, too centralised for it to be *us*, and we might as well sit back among the mistrustful but resigned subjects of their benevolent activities. Returning to Comfort's less comforting analysis:

"We have to recognise that the psychopathic government is an outgrowth today of the centralised and increasingly psychopathic public. It is also the most important vested interest in the continuance of centralisation. If individual conduct is to be regulated primarily by laws and institutions the centralised order is overwhelmingly superior to less unified patterns. The failure of the state to

wither away is implicit in its assumptions. The organisational aspect of its work becomes continually more deeply confused with the repressive and the regulative. The growth of an asocial public, dependent on central direction for the standards it lacks, ensures that the time will never be ripe for any return of function to the public at large."

How can we set about this return of social functions to society? Alex Comfort in his book set out a five-part programme which can be condensed thus: (1) Measures to increase public awareness of the state of society and of the results of research into human social psychology. (2) Fundamental experiments in communal living and control of resources. (3) Specific pressure, towards controlled break-up of large city aggregates, increased workers' control in industry, with decentralisation of large units. (4) Concentrated propaganda to introduce sociality into the place where character-formation takes place, the family and the school. (5) Individual psychiatry . . . The task of adjustment is not the recreation of centralised morals and of acquiescence, but the building of a morale based on negative resistance to bad institutions and positive determination to experiment in social living so that they can be superseded."

If this sounds out of key and out of scale with the problem it is supposed to grapple with—the centralised political super-state, it is simply because we are accustomed to thinking in political terms about social issues. And if it sounds remote from the actual questions of capitalism, communism, mass societies, the threat of nuclear warfare, imperialism and so on, they are no more remote than the political solutions proffered by political oppositions. We recently quoted a remark of Dwight Macdonald's about the failure of political action to improve any of the really important things in people's lives, "the actual relationships on the job, the way they spend their leisure, and child-rearing and sex and art. It is mass living that vitiates all these to-day and the State that holds together the *status quo*". It is the *alternatives* to state organisation which we have to explore, to develop, and to strengthen. Because of our failure to do so, the political principle—competition, leadership, authority, has become the dominant mode of organisation in human society. Its defects and its dangers are most manifest when its strength is greatest. "The bad legacy of 1940", wrote V. S. Pritchett last week, "is the lingering belief that to be a citizen you had to clock in like a saint". Perhaps in the years to come the highest attribute of citizenship will be the responsibility of disobedience.

C.W.

Morality Through Expediency

THE African continent contains a wealth of possibilities and is looked at enviously by the large competing nations.

The Soviet Union is in a stronger position in relation to Africa than the United States because the Africans see her as a large influential country not practising racial superiority. This has a strong attraction for people who have been regarded by the white man all their lives as inferior, and might weigh the balance in favour of Russia in any future struggle.

However, steps are being taken by the United States to work out a policy which will combat this state of affairs. We are slightly nauseated by the tenor of Vice-President Nixon's report made after a recent visit to Africa, on this issue.

He warns that ideas and principles are becoming increasingly important in Africa. Russia has been quicker to make capital out of these tendencies than the United States, and incidents of racial discrimination in America are 'magnified' by the Communists who:

show themselves as the champion of Africa's natural aspirations for independence, equality and economic progress.

The first step towards the battle for African allegiance is to eliminate racial discrimination in the United States, and an American assistance

programme to include development of the entire Nile Valley.

We are in favour of assistance for the under-developed countries, but the motives behind this 'humanitarian' approach leave a sour taste in our mouths. It is a typical immoral political act which lies behind Russia's attitude no less than the United States. In fact it is the prime motivation of all Governments who switch their policies from one of contempt and exploitation to assistance on an apparent basis of equality. Britain has been forced to adopt the tactics in some of her colonies, and we do not suppose that the people of these countries receiving 'assistance' are taken in.

We cannot hope however, that the African leaders of the future will be all that different from their ex-masters. We see definite signs that the urge to power is just as strong in a black man as it is in a white one.

The masochistic desire of the passive majority to be browbeaten by leaders is something which we can only hope they will grow out of with maturity.

Our experience tells us that maturity seems a difficult state to attain. But if anarchists have managed it in spite of our environment, why not everyone else?

Communist Conference

Continued from p. 1

crimes of opportunism, sectarianism and revisionism, and harked back to the Russian party between 1907 and 1910 for a parallel example of intellectual back-biting.

The only attempt at answering Hyman Levy's questions came from William Lauchlan of the National Executive, who maintained 'we told what we knew. If we did not know it was because our eyes were on the sweeping advance of fascism.'

The Executive Tells Them

Lauchlan cleared up a lot of loose ends. Professor Levy had asked why Hungary was not being discussed by Congress. Lauchlan said that it was because the Executive had stated its position already; therefore the matter was not for discussion.

Mr. Lauchlan rejected just as firmly suggestions that the views expressed by minorities on "leading committees of the party" should be revealed to party members. He said that the arrangement would make controversy perpetual and could not be allowed.

We must admit to an inability to follow this particular example of the dialectic (or is 'doublethink' the right word?) But it does give an inkling of the methods of working in the Party.

Presumably a Communist conference is in reality a gathering of comrades in order for them to be told what to do by the Executive.

How Revolutionary?

The present-day revolutionary content of the Communist Party was well illustrated during the discussion on the Party Programme ('The British Road to Socialism').

Yet it was on these four amendments that the greatest time was spent. This was the hypothetical part of the Conference, dealing with the unlikely probability of the Communists coming to power in Britain.

SELECTIONS

from FREEDOM VOLUMES

1-5

- Vol. 1, 1951, Mankind is One
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do nothing to antagonise the good social-democrats and petit bourgeoisie whom presumably they intend finally to liquidate.

One of the four amendments ran counter to the Communists' present (tentative) arrangements for paying compensation to dispossessed landowners in the form of life annuities.

He was equally scornful about another amendment which suggested the substitutions of 'Workers' Councils' and 'Councils of Action' for Parliament. Campbell said that any announcement to the effect that the Communists did not intend to try and secure a parliamentary majority would encourage sectarianism and isolationism.

Why Not Join Up with the Tories?

It doesn't seem to occur to Campbell that for a Party of 27,000 members in a population of 50 million to talk of pushing masses of people into the wrong side in the class struggle is more than somewhat ludicrous.

Similarly can they appeal to the patriotism of Tory voters. It was party secretary John Gollan himself who said: 'Some have remarked that we are not a British party and we are subservient to the Soviet Union.'

And even British Imperialists need have no fear for the Empire. A long and involved discussion was very useful in using up a lot of time in dealing with an obscure difference between ways of saying the same thing.

The congress was apparently divided about whether it ought to say that a Communist Government would 'propose to all countries of the Commonwealth and former Empire voluntary participation in a

close fraternal association . . . ' or whether a Communist Government should 'promote close voluntary fraternal relations for economic, political, and cultural co-operation of mutual benefit . . . '

The choice between these two forms of words were held to be of great importance to the party, which eventually adopted the second by 298 votes to 210.

The Suez rebels of the Tory back benches could surely be persuaded that the Communist Party would be a better defender of the British Empire than either Mr. Butler or Mr. Macmillan.

Following Mr. Khrushchev's remark during his visit here last year, that he would rather be Conservative than Labour, cannot the Commies form a United Front with the Tories? The British road to Socialism could then be safely trod by all middle-class people and small business men.

Bankrupt of Principle

The utter bankruptcy of the Communists on any issue of principle, of any conception of internationalism, of any genuine humanity, is clearly shown in their attitude to the Hydrogen Bomb.

' . . . Further tests,' said the resolution, 'can only be the source of danger to our children, and the Socialist

world can set a tremendous example to mankind.'

The C.P., however, are not interested in moral leadership or tremendous examples. When one sees Andrew Rothstein attacking Hyman Levy for 'opportunism' one wonders just what the word means in the Communist mind.

They will not ask the Soviet Government to abolish H-Bomb tests; they will not ask the British Government to abolish conscription. Indeed, they promise to re-introduce it should it have passed away before they come to power!

No wonder their membership has fallen from 33,960 to 27,000 in the past year. The British worker is not a particularly class-conscious or politically advanced specimen of the world's proletariat.

This year's conference of British Communists has presented us with a spectacle at once ridiculous and disgusting. It is an exposure of a squalid little caucus of cynical authoritarians whistling in the dark to pretend that all is well with their diseased and degraded organisation.

Let us hope we are now witnessing the last chapter in this revolting story.

'Fighting Talk'

THE desperate fight against Fascism in South Africa is described in a magazine called Fighting Talk (A monthly journal for Democrats) published in Johannesburg (P.O. Box 1355).

"Fighting Talk has never pulled its punches. At a time when so many critics of the Government have found their courage waning in the face of determined intimidation and threats, we have held to what we believe."

In an article on Wage Inequalities, the following figures and comments are given: "Non-European wages as a percentage of European wages:"

Table with columns: Year, African, Asian, Coloured. Rows: 1937/8, 1940/1, 1945/6, 1952/3

In an article on the Treason Trial events we read:

"December 5th, 1956. The newspapers scream 'High Treason'. Dawn swoop and country-wide arrests. It is the talk in the bus, in the train, at the street-corner. At school, it is a day of waiting; waiting for an unknown footfall . . ."

[Later, on the way to the trial]. "The world is lovely though seen through mesh. There are crowds, huge crowds, outside the Drill Hall and their warmth beats on you like strong sunlight after rain—planting life. And you know, as you never knew before, that you could never be lost; that if you fell another would take your place; that the struggle

(Average amount of wages paid to European, African, Asian and Coloured workers in all industries—Census of Industrial Establishments Reports 1935/36 onwards).

In comparison with the White worker, the Coloured worker seems now to be just where he was fifteen years ago, and the African worker rapidly reaching the same stage.

There are some interesting comments on the South African Congress movement.

"It is wrong to classify the defiance campaign as a traditional passive resistance movement, or to identify the Congress movement in this country with the philosophy evolved, in very different conditions and from a very different cultural background, in India . . ."

400 Africans Arrested

JOHANNESBURG, APRIL 13. About 400 Africans were arrested today in a police raid at Sophiatown, an African township on the outskirts of Johannesburg.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

LECTURE-DISCUSSIONS Every Sunday at 7.30 at THE MALATESTA CLUB, 32 Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road, W.1.

SERIES OF FOUR MEETINGS ORGANISED BY THE INTERNATIONAL ANARCHIST CENTRE Sundays at 7.30

APRIL 28—Philip Sansom on ANARCHISM—A SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY MAY 5—Arthur Uth on HISTORY OF ANARCHISM MAY 12—Alan Albon on LIVING IN COMMUNITY MAY 19—ANARCHIST BRAINS TRUST

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP MEETINGS

MAY 26—Sid Parker on IN DEFENCE OF PHILOSOPHY JUNE 2—John Smith on WHY I AM AN ANARCHIST JUNE 9—Max Patrick on IS THERE A RULING CLASS? JUNE 16—John Bishop on Subject to be announced JUNE 23—Donald Room on ANARCHISM AND RELIGION Questions, Discussion and Admission all free.

OPEN AIR MEETINGS Weather Permitting HYDE PARK Sundays at 3.30 p.m.

★ Malatesta Club ★

SWARAJ HOUSE, 32 PERCY STREET, TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD, LONDON, W.1. (Tel.: MUSEUM 7277).

ACTIVITIES Every Sunday at 7.30 p.m. London Anarchist Group Meetings (see Announcements Column)

Every Wednesday at 8 p.m. BONAR THOMPSON Speaks. Every Friday and Saturday: SOCIAL EVENINGS

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