

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Liberty consists, not in having a just ruler, but in not having one at all."
 —CICERO.

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Threepence

TGWU'S MILITANT SECRETARY

UNBROTHERLY COUSINS

THE annual conference of the Transport & General Workers' Union, which took place at Torquay last week, provided the assembled delegates with an unusual thrill. They had a new general secretary to talk at them, and—this is what makes the change—he has the reputation of being a *militant*.

Frank Cousins is in fact the first leader that the vast organisation has had since 1939 who has been thus described, and there was some interest in seeing just how this alleged militancy was to demonstrate itself in the big performance.

We assume the delegates were not disappointed. The press reports tell us that they 'roared their approval' when he voiced their opposition to the suggestion of an 'impartial and authoritative' body to consider wages policy 'in an inflationary setting'. Mr. Cousins is not prepared to allow the living standards of his members to be fixed by a 'supra-national authority' with the powers to apportion the national cake.

Moderation

Mr. Cousins believes in collective bargaining directly with the employers, saying:

"We don't think we have submitted a wage claim in any direction that has not been justified by the circumstances in which we now find ourselves. We would claim that we have been moderation in the extreme. It is not generally understood how powerful some sections of your organisation are and how easily they could regard themselves as the only issue involved. It is to our great credit that we have not done so . . . we shall not act irresponsibly, but in the best interests of our membership and the general community. Establishing prosperity for our members is establishing prosperity for the community."

Having thus almost equated membership of the T & GWU with membership of the human race, it was not difficult for him the next day to persuade the delegates that it is

SCIENTISTS CONDEMN WAR

FOR reasons best known to themselves some of the world's top scientists have just had a four day discussion in secret in a remote Canadian village on the dangers of nuclear weapons. The scientists were invited by Bertrand Russell, and the result of their discussions is a plea for the suspension of nuclear tests and the abolition of war—or we must suffer the consequences.

It is doubtful if the conclusions of these men will move the governments of the world, but other scientists may well be influenced by their statement which in turn could stimulate the public into action.

The twenty scientists estimated that radiation from bomb tests over the last six years would mean 100,000 more people would suffer from leukemia (blood cancer) in the next 30 years—an increase of one per cent, over the 10 million cases normally to be expected in this period.

Among the signatories to the statement were: Professor Marcus Oliphant (Australia), Dr. G. Brock Chisholm (Canada), Professor C. F. Powell (Britain), Professor Alexander Topchiev (Russia), Dr. Paul Doty (U.S.), Dr. Lacassagne (France), and Professor S. Tomonaga (Japan).

necessary to control the immigration into Britain of coloured workers from the Commonwealth, because unrestricted entry meant a reduction of the Union's bargaining power.

Mr. Cousins spoke for the executive in support of a resolution asking the Government for 'strict and orderly' control of immigration. He insisted that the Union stood clearly and fundamentally opposed to any bar on labour 'on the basis of race, colour or religion' but still it could not afford to allow 'these people' unrestricted entry into Britain. The correct solution, he said, was for the Governments to improve the social and economic conditions from which they fled.

"We must help them to help themselves," he said. "This is not self-interest. I would say the same about an Irishman or Yorkshireman coming to London and threatening the conditions of London workers. The problem is the same. It has got to be controlled so that one group of workers is not used for the exploitation of another."

For & Against

Controlled by whom? The Government! Now isn't it interesting to note how Mr. Cousins is very much against a Government-sponsored body being established to control a national wages policy, to stabilise the national economy in time of inflation, but is very much in favour of Government authority being used to control the influx of a relatively small number of underprivileged workers from countries

which have been plundered to enrich Britain?

Mr. Cousins said that industries with poor pay and working conditions found it difficult to recruit British workers but instead managed to recruit foreign labour—men who naturally were susceptible to economic pressures.

He doesn't seem to realise that his own arguments about improving conditions back in the countries whence the immigrants come apply with even greater force to industries here with poor pay and conditions! Why are conditions and pay poor in this country, in industries where Mr. Cousins' Union has the workers organised?

Unused Power

Mr. Cousins boasts of the power of 'some sections' of his organisation, and also claims great credit for the moderation with which that strength has not been used. We think his members are entitled to ask why that strength hasn't been used when some of them have to work for low pay under poor conditions—so low and so poor that their changes of improvement are threatened by a few thousand coloured workers spread all over the country!

In the West Indies conditions are such that the workers are weak. In Britain the workers have been in a strong position for nearly twenty years. Mr. Cousins feels big and strong enough to talk tough to the Government about wages policy, but not strong enough to cope with employers in poor industries!

'It is not self-interest' says Mr. Cousins, but frankly we don't believe him. It is not merely self-interest for the union as a whole which guides the action of Mr. Cousins, it is self-interest for Mr. Cousins. The influx of depressed workers from the colonies means headaches for the union bosses—embarrassing situations with no kudos. On the other hand a 'supra-national' wages authority would tend to undermine the very important positions of the TU leaders. It would supplant them in the public eye, and by eliminating their function of collective bargaining (for an electronic brain would cut the national cake into exact proportions!) would render them redundant!

Automation is all very well at factory floor level, and redundancy through streamlining must be bravely accepted by the proles—but it is not for the upper ranks of the TU hierarchy.

If Mr. Cousins is militant (and at the moment he is leading 100,000 provincial busmen into a nationwide strike) it is because he has seen the red light of unrest among the rank and file. The 10,000 dockers who left the TGWU to join the 'blue union' have given him ideas and he realises that he has got to put up a show to keep the boys happy. (Just as Khrushchev is a smarter dictator than Stalin, so Cousins is smarter than Deakin.)

Rank and file trade unionists (specially if they have brown skins) should certainly think twice before addressing him as *Brother Cousins*.

Diplomatic Rituals

THE gentlemen of the diplomatic services are well trained in the art of political evasion. Two of the more important functions delegated to them are to smooth out the indiscretions which might be made by politicians, and to look out for situations which can be used in the interests of the governments they serve. The time and money wasted on this section of government is never disclosed, and it is only occasionally that their exploits are conveyed to us through the press. When the "heads of state" come together their exchanges, which generally amount to wining, dining and back slapping, are splashed across the headlines in an attempt to assure the peoples of the world that something is being done, in their interests, of course. But all the time behind the façade the diplomats are pursuing the policies of their governments which are rarely disclosed to the public until a Suez suddenly appears.

Of a less spectacular nature, but fantastic in its way, is a meeting which took place last week between representatives of the United States and Communist China at Geneva. This made the *sixty-eighth* meeting convened by Alexis Johnson of the U.S. and Wang Ping-nan. It is reported from Washington that:

They are expected to repeat woodenly the same set speeches that never get anywhere near meeting each other . . . Still (the report continues) it is the only official contact that exists between two of

the world's great powers. So long as this ritual is kept up there is a regular channel through which Washington or Peking could transmit any fundamental shift of policy which might occur.

So the situation is that while China and the U.S. publicly insult each other, these two stooges, who must either be developing quite a friendship or more likely getting to hate each other, go through the motions of discussion while their respective governments wait on events which might give their representatives something new to discuss.

The issue brewing up between China and the United States is one of possible trade and official diplomatic recognition (discussed some weeks ago in *FREEDOM*). Foster Dulles, whose authoritarian character would get him a seat in the Kremlin any time he chooses to change sides, is still noisily opposed to any lifting of the present ban on trade with China. But, the "climate in America is changing", and West Coast merchants are clamouring for some of the spoils likely to be enjoyed by British businessmen following the British Government's decision to lift the ban on non-strategic goods. Senator Warren Magnuson, who expresses their views has announced that "America is out of step with the rest of the world".

Senator Humphrey, mindful of the disarmament conference in London, has pointed out that if there is a treaty arising out of this conference (he is wise to say IF), it would be

ironical if Red China alone of the great powers was allowed to keep its forces intact because America refused to deal with her government. This is the kind of argument that is likely to persuade the power-seekers in the Senate.

We have already discussed in *FREEDOM* the arguments for and against an American change in policy. Of these the question of trade is among the strongest. Britain, never slow off the mark, has had a good start. Japan, as we suggested she would, has expressed her disapproval of Britain's tactics of lifting the ban on trade with China without informing other potential traders. Japan has been anxious to trade with China for years but up to date has not received official American approval.

So long as trade between countries exists political alliances of some sort must be formed. America, while opposing China, has no desire to be left out in the "spheres of influence" racket. These therefore, are some of the reasons why the climate in America is changing.

Perhaps Mao Tse-tung's recent disclosure that private capitalists exist, and are indeed encouraged, in China, will persuade the unimaginative Americans that China is really a civilised country after all, and we might even find soon Chiang Kai-shek will be thrown into the arms of his ex-comrade. Who better to help Mao in his butchery than the boss of Nationalist China?

Embarrassed MP's Reluctant But Unanimous

IT would appear that there are none so blind as those who have no intention of seeing an issue until it suits them. M.P.'s last week might almost never have realised that the phenomenon of inflation existed until the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech in the City, for it would be carping to suggest that they were inhibited on the subject before unanimously voting for the resolution giving themselves a £750 yearly increase in salary.

It is reported that the House looked thoroughly upset at the prospect of the increase, and possibly Mr. Gaitskell put his finger on it when he said that he believed he was expressing the opinion of the House, that they were very reluctant to discuss their own salaries, the claim was embarrassing for all of them. In spite of this he had no qualms whatever in supporting the resolution, for the resultant payment was not extravagant by comparison with other Parliaments abroad.

Mr. Butler who moved the resolution struck a much more ethical note. He asked members to dedicate themselves to the task of reducing inflation in order to maintain the value of the increases being voted! He just saved the day by adding that he wished this dedication to apply to the interests of those on pensions and fixed incomes, and "those in other spheres who depend so much on our ministrations". With a considerable effort of the imagination it is still almost impossible to visualise the heart-rending effect which this short session in Parliament must have caused for visitors to the House and M.P.'s alike.

Salaries for M.P.'s were originally introduced at £400 in 1911 and raised to £600 in 1957. In 1946 they were again raised—to £1,000. The latest increase is therefore the greatest yet, representing an uplift of 75 per cent. since the end of the war, with salaries nearly three times as great as just before the war. This is far more than the average increase gained by most workers in the same period. We can only suppose that M.P.'s are making allowances in advance for the inflation which they are unable to control. With that degree of confidence in themselves, even by their own standards they are not entitled to the confidence of anyone else. So far as anarchists are concerned they should long ago have given themselves the sack and saved us all the ghastly effects of their "ministrations".

In the process of awarding themselves additional remuneration the M.P.'s, with a fine sense of fairness which we have not always observed in them, also granted a bonus to their peers in the Upper House. They no doubt felt that an extra three guineas a day expenses allowance for the noble Lords was vitally necessary for such destitute members of society. As Mr. Butler pointed out, the two-Chamber system (of which for some reason so many people are so proud), depended upon those serving in the Lords having some sort of support. This conjures up some such phantasy as the Earl of Crêpe and Wotherspoon, too ashamed to go to the House for lack of sufficient funds to have his best jacket cleaned.

PEOPLE AND IDEAS

THE WHITE-COLLAR BEEHIVE

"It is, in fact, a pattern carried over from a bygone day, grown bigger and more clumsy through a curious momentum that has led us to repeat past practices long after they have ceased to be efficient or profitable to the community. Fifty or sixty years ago there were reasons for having people living and working in tightly constricted concentrated areas and for having management concentrated in a few big cities; but those reasons have been largely dissipated by the invention of telephones, radio, automotive transportation, and other devices of modern life. The urban pattern that grew up in response to nineteenth century reasons had drawbacks even then, but in its time it had compensating advantages. Now it has the drawbacks in intensified form and few of the compensations."

—TRACY AUGUR (Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists).

TOO little and too late, is likely to be the verdict on the latest attempt to relieve congestion in Central London submitted last Tuesday to the London County Council by its Town Planning Committee. The plan proposes to limit the size and number of office buildings in Central London and to encourage more residential buildings—flats, hostels and hotels. Faced with the prospect of the whole of inner London becoming like the actual square mile of the City itself, densely populated in the daytime and empty at night, and with the fantastic and growing congestion of traffic and public transport, the LCC is realising the force of the criticisms which have been voiced for some time in town-planning circles, of the "zoning" provisions of its Development Plan. For while the Council has been busy reducing factory employment in the County of London to reduce congestion, more and more clerical workers have been streaming into town to staff the offices which when all offices at present sanctioned have been built, will have increased by twenty-five per cent. since 1948 (while car registrations in the London Transport area have grown from 416,000 in 1948 to 790,000 in 1955).

No-one who goes around London with his eyes open will be surprised at the figures revealed by a survey of the office population. It was found that in the City itself 338,000 people work but only 5,000 live, while in the 7½ square miles

in the rest of the central area another million work, but only 213,000 live. The number of people living in the central area is still dwindling while more and more people live further away from their work and make longer daily journeys to and fro. Meanwhile in Greater London, outside the centre, population goes up and employment down.

The working population of central London in 1948 was 1,129,000. By 1956 another 94,000 people were coming into the capital each day to work in new buildings. Offices now being built will provide jobs for 64,000 people, and those for which planning consent has already been given will have space for 116,000 more. Because compensation would have to be paid, the Council has decided that planning permission, having been granted, will not be withdrawn. Its new proposal for restricting further office growth is by reducing the "plot ratio" the permissible density on any given site, and by manipulating the permitted plot ratio to encourage "mixed development"—hotels, flats, student hostels and so on, which is not at present profitable for developers of central sites. The Council hopes that this will encourage the transfer of routine clerical work

to office blocks in the suburbs. An LCC spokesman pointed out that this was only one approach to the problem of London's overgrowth. New road schemes, staggered hours, controlled car parking, more parking sites, longer trains, and the decentralisation of markets could all help. "These efforts need to be sustained and increased. But so long as the number of people having to get to and from their work in the centre of London every day continues to grow, there will be no end to the problem. We look like going on fighting a losing battle unless employment in the centre is limited."

And of course, seen against the whole background of metropolitan overgrowth, the LCC's new proposals will have a pathetically limited effect. As little effect in fact as the New Towns in the London hinterland. Professor Myles Wright calculated two years ago that while little over thirty thousand people had been decentralised to New Towns, three hundred thousand new houses had been built in the outer suburbs.

THE apologists for the idea of the giant city, point to the economic and social advantages which it is alleged to

provide are rapidly ousted because of the greater return in rent that offices will provide—see the way that in the past year restaurants (Frascati's, and the Holborn Restaurant), cinemas (Marble Arch Pavilion—and it is now rumoured that the Curzon Cinema is to go to make room for offices), and theatres (Gaiety, and at present under dispute, the St. James's Theatre) have gone. The case of the St. James's Theatre, which gave rise to Miss Vivien Leigh's protest in the House of Lords last week, is an interesting example of the speculator at work. Mr. Felix Aylmer in a letter to *The Times* (13/7/57) wrote:

"Confusion seems to gather over the rights and wrongs of the LCC decision about the St. James's Theatre. Lord Mancroft's final dictum in yesterday's debate was that 'An order to revoke permission should only be made in extreme cases. It caused a real injustice to a citizen who had obtained permission and then had it taken away.' What are the facts? The initial permission was granted, not to the owner of the site, who at the time contemplated no sale, but to an enterprising estate agent who judged—rightly, as it now proves—that armed with this he could promote a deal.

"The LCC in granting permission were influenced by a phrase in the Act making them liable to an order for compulsory purchase of the property if it could be shown that it was incapable of 'beneficial use' in its existing state. This, they believed, rendered them liable to a claim for compensation if it could be shown

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Anarchism and Religion—3

Stirner's Rejections of Morality

(Continued from previous issue)

IT was Max Stirner's opinion that the more generally noted beliefs of Christianity (like the redemption of the world through Christ born of a virgin, and the existence of a personal Deity) were of less importance than *tacit* beliefs like the sacredness of a moral code and the virtue of giving oneself for an ideal. The adherents of pre-Christian religions held things in reverence; the most significant part of the Christian faith was a contempt for things, combined with a reverence for ideals, spiritual values, or (to use Stirner's term) *thoughts*.

From this point of view the majority of atheists, rationalists, humanists and whatnot differ from Christians only in the less significant matters.

"Observe the behaviour of a 'normal man' who has rejected Christianity. If you ask him whether he has ever doubted that copulation between brother and sister is incest . . . a moral shudder will come over him. And why does he shudder? Because he believes in those moral commandments . . . Much as he rages against the pious Christians, he has remained a thorough Christian himself: a moral Christian."

Earlier in the same book Stirner wrote of people who regard "holy" as a meaningless and unnecessary word, but who have not succeeded in purging the Holy out of their systems. "Atheists scoff at the higher being, the All High, the *être suprême*, and trample one 'proof of His existence' after another into the dust, without noticing that they themselves, because they need a higher being, destroy the old one only to make room for the new. Is not Man a higher being than any individual man? And must not the truths, rights and ideas which result from the concept Man be regarded as revelations of this concept and—held sacred?"

"If I am *despised or upbraided* as an egoist, even in only one respect, there is still the thought of something which I should serve more than myself, something outside myself which should be more important to me than anything, something *holy*."

Humanists, materialists, rationalists, reject Christ and God in favour of Man, History and Truth; but in their general attitude they remain Christians.

Now there are two alternatives to the Christian attitude. One is to hold things sacred like the ancients: to devote one's life, say, to acquiring wealth, or to revere one's tribe, or the tombs of one's ancestors, not as concepts but as objects. And the other (which Stirner advocates) is to hold nothing sacred, to say "I am the master of the world of things and I am the master of the world of thoughts." Stirner's doctrine is a doctrine of complete and utter selfishness, with reverence for nothing and no kind of moral code.

But one must distinguish between complete and utter selfishness and what Christians think of when they hear the word selfishness. "Selfishness in the Christian sense means something like this: I look at anything only to see what use it is to me as a sensual man. But is sensuality the whole of me? Am I in my own senses when I am given up to sensuality? . . . I am only my own when I am master of myself, instead of being mastered by sensuality or by anything else (God, Man, Authority, Law, State, Church or what-have-you); my selfishness pursues whatever is of use to me." And among the ordinary natural human feelings, which in my selfishness I seek to gratify, are love, pity, gratitude and the desire for a quiet life.

Again, we must distinguish between ordinary natural love and pity, which are just vulgar

emotions, and the love and pity *commanded* by Christians (in exhortations like for instance "Love one another"), to practise which is a moral virtue like the practice of humility and chastity.

Stirner's literary style often lapses into a kind of dialogue between himself and a personified collection of orthodox ideas. "Children," says the orthodox at one point "should early be made to practise piety, good behaviour and clean habits; a person of good breeding is one into whom 'good maxims' have been instilled and impressed, preached in and thrashed in, poured in through a funnel". Quite right, says Stirner, from your point of view. If children are not made to be moral "they will have no sympathy at all for the nonsense you've been raving about, and drivelling about, since human memory began; the law of

inheritance, which states that your children must inherit from you all the stupidity you inherited from your father, will be abolished."

A fundamental axiom or assumption of Christianity is that all men are wicked at heart. So Christians (self-confessed and new-style) imagine that society is held together and kept going by a collection of good maxims and moral precepts, more or less continuously enforced by piety, persuasion, punishment and public opinion; they dare not let themselves, or anyone they can influence, behave according to their selfish natures. But if people were to think always of themselves, then in Stirner's opinion, human nature being what it is, the world would be a kinder, safer and sweeter place than it is with interfering do-gooders at every street corner.

Some More Anarchist Religions

I DO not mean to suggest that the four attitudes described above are the only possible anarchist attitudes to religion, or even to Christianity. The peasants' revolt in England, thoroughly anarchistic in its stated aims, had a slogan "When Adam dived and Eve span, Who was then the gentleman?", which came from a kind of folk-theology, based on the scraps of Christian legend which fell to the laity from the medieval church. William Blake, who had quite anarchistic beliefs according to a LAG lecture on him, was a mystic given to studying the book of Job and seeing visions.

One knows, of course, that the Unitarians do not call themselves Christians, but because of the general organisation of their church (and structure of their churches), one might tend to lump it together with the Adventist and Congregationalist and other "Free" churches. However, an article called "Religion Without Morals" in *University Librarian* (April 1957), which attacked the Humanism of Margaret Knight in precisely the way that Stirner attacked Humanism, was written by one stated on the "contributors" page to be a Unitarian minister.

The *Tao Teh Ching* is a work sometimes quoted in *FREEDOM*. When Frazer wrote *The Golden Bough* the Taoist church was dead, its temples in ruins, its Pope and a few priests living by the sale of lucky charms; but since then the *Tao* has been published in English and some Europeans, including some anarchists, have been inspired by the word of Lao-tzu as Tolstoy was inspired by the word of Jesus.

I cannot imagine anyone making anarchism out of Shintoism, but I can imagine an anarchist philosophy developing out of the rejection of Shintoism, much as (I understand) it has developed on occasion from the rejection of Judaism. I am also informed that it has developed from Judaism itself.

Buddhism is not a religion in the sense of having a personal deity, but it is like a religion in that it has a Founder whose word is infallible, a number of sects who interpret the infallible word differently, and (in some of the sects at least) a priesthood. One of the more recent sects, Zen, involves a kind of self-mastery that could quite well develop into anarchism. And some Europeans have read a kind of anarchism in the writings of Gautama himself.

What I have said of Buddhism as religion

also applies, of course, to Marxism, one of whose sects, Marxist-Leninism, is the established religion of the Soviet Union. And there have recently been reports from Siberian prison camps of a group of young men calling themselves the True Leninists, who, taking Lenin's *State and Revolution* as their holy book, advocate a revolution now, against the Socialist State and every other State, and workers' control in a stateless, classless, moneyless society.

Organic Functionalism is also like a religion in some respects, notably, for instance, that only those converted to it are competent to examine it. And it is quite unequivocal in its anarchism. The teachings of Jesus, Gautama, Karl Marx, Lao-tzu, can be interpreted in various ways, including (perhaps with some stretching) an anarchist way; the social teachings of Wilhelm Reich cannot easily be interpreted in anything but an anarchist way.

And is there any real difference between these various anarchist attitudes? Of course there is.

True, the difference between Tolstoy and Kropotkin when he wrote *Ethics* is largely one of words; both approve of the saying of Jesus, both disapprove of the modern church, and their main difference is about which of these is to be called "Christianity". Similarly, the difference between Bakunin, who advocated the liberty of Man, and Stirner, who said the liberty of Man was just another Christian bogey and what really counted was the ondom of me, is largely about the meaning of terms like "liberty" and "Man". But the difference between Tolstoy and the aged Kropotkin on one side, and Bakunin and Stirner on the other, is a tremendous difference of attitude to life. Both parties think much of the worthiness of ordinary people, but apart from this they seem almost to arrive at identical conclusions from opposite premises. Bakunin and Stirner oppose the domination of man by man because to them the individual is all-important; Kropotkin and Tolstoy oppose the domination of man by man because they want humanity as a whole to submit to Higher Authority, in a personal God or an absolute ethical code.

However, there is no point in splitting up. The anarchists, whatever they call themselves and however they arrive at their anarchism, are a small group trying to get to the same place, by the same road, through more or less hostile country. They may as well stick together. D.R.

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A Letter from a Young Man

I DIDN'T notice in the only issue of FREEDOM I have ever seen a "Letters to the Editor" column. There was a letter from the Editor—addressed to me. I always answer letters, but as I've hogged so many lines of FREEDOM I will not be too expansive.

First a detail. The next war will be an H-Bomb war, over in a few hours. The "flame of human existence" will be threatened alright. No good to raise "morale" or to struggle against the war effort. For in a few hours all the resources of the community will be des-

troys. My remark "in time of total war, conscientious objection is useless" was not intended as a contribution to the debate on the relative merits of shrub planting versus bombing hospitals. It is a simple statement of fact. There won't be time for it.

The specialised agencies of the United Nations, U.N.E.S.C.O., S.U.N.F.E.D., W.H.O. are organisations set up to tackle these problems. Does FREEDOM want to get rid of them? How can we tackle world problems, demanding International co-operation, and the use of all the world's resources, without power and without effective government?

The accuracy of your claim that I am not a convinced pacifist and anti-militarist, must depend on definitions. If a pacifist is one who believes that in no circumstances at all is it possible to justify the taking of human life, then I am not a pacifist. I can imagine circumstances when police action on an international scale, involving some loss of life, might prevent greater evils.

But H-Bombs and all the paraphernalia of modern warfare I utterly reject. Expediency has caught up with morality, and there can be no circumstances to justify nuclear bombing. This is recognised by the charter of the United Nations. The provision that enforcement action can only be taken by unanimous decision of all the permanent "great" power members, absolutely rules out the possibility of world war. To respect this basic provision of the Charter is not to suppose any government infallible but rather to regard the lot as fallible, but to recognise that since they cannot go to war without exterminating the human race, they must not go to war at all.

If men and women are to live together there must be some rules. And some way of enforcing them. Varying interests and inclinations reflect themselves in the formation of parties. Decisions must be taken if anything effective is to be done. And the world is in such a hell of a mess, that something must be done. War, the plague-ridden misery and ignorance in which millions are forced to live, these are the barriers to triumphant life that must be swept away. And will be swept away!

Real life is beauty and creating, knowing and feeling, writing, painting and music, loving and living. Building the kind of world in which the good life is possible is a collective task. The builders must have tools. You would take them away.

From one "happy bright-eyed extrovert" to another,
Joy and Peace.
Salisbury. EDWARD RASEY.

Reply to Edward Rasey

EDWARD RASEY, the Young Man of *News Chronicle* fame to whom we addressed our Open Letter in these columns (FREEDOM June 29), in his reply, which we gladly publish elsewhere in this number writes:

Now in a few hundred years' time we may be able to do without governments and the rest. I don't know. But for the present, like Henry David Thoreau ("Civil Disobedience") "I ask for, not at once no government, but at once a better government."

Being political "realists" Edward Rasey and his generation dismiss from their minds that which may—or may not (he says "I don't know")—be possible in a "few hundred years' time". All they are interested in doing is to manipulate the party political machine, and if possible rock the boat of State. But to question the form, the structure of social organisation is tantamount to doubting an absolute truth. They who, as Edward Rasey did in his original statement, declare "I am an atheist", have taken a stand against deep-rooted tradition, and are propounding a point of view which may survive for a very long time to come. How long, depends a great deal on the extent to which the propagandists of the God-idea continue to dominate the field. We are sure Rasey is with us on this point. But why is he so short-sighted about governments to which the very same arguments are applicable?

Of course government is a form of social organisation and a method for the management of society, just as God and the Church are a *raison d'être* for the Universe and the spiritual authority and government for many millions of our fellow beings. But they have only assumed the guise of absolutes when those in authority have succeeded in either physically suppressing free expression or successfully encouraging public apathy in what we would call "the field of ideas". In spite of a bad dose of spiritual *Angst* among the intellectuals, "God" and the Church, in this country, at least, are having a rough passage. Neither desperate attempts to streamline their Grundyish figures nor the exploitation of the physical insecurity of this H-bomb age have stemmed the tide of apathy to, or rejection of the mumbo-jumbo of "God" and his earthly ghosts. But so far as government is concerned it is another story. The saviour of government, as neither Khrushchev nor Franco has yet realised, is the Opposition! There is only one God (in spite of that, apparently he is jealous!) but there are at least two possible governments in Britain and America and dozens in France. And so long as the government can be changed there are those who bask in the illusion of change for the better. Edward Rasey, who, lucky boy, is only eighteen was, politically speaking, born under the Tory star, when Labour Parliamentarians were "struggling" not only for better wages to afford to send their children to the "better", fee-paying schools, but also paving the path to power by appointing themselves spokesmen of popular demands and discontent. That French song *Tout est permis quant on rêve* (everything is possible when one dreams) is applicable to politicians in Opposition. Governments are right when they accuse the Opposition of irresponsibility! You cannot afford, when you are the Government, to do the things you advocate when in Opposition! Even the Tories defended civil liberties when they were out of power, just as the protesting Labour oppositionists of 1957 were tapping telephones when they occupied the

armchairs of Downing Street and Whitehall.

EDWARD RASEY seeks to mollify us by saying that all he is doing is to implement the exhortations of the author of *Walden*. What did Thoreau in fact mean by "better" government? Apart from what our correspondent quotes at us, Thoreau also wrote that

that Government is best which governs not at all; and when men are prepared for it that will be the kind of Government which they will have.

That is: no Government! and far from Thoreau's remarks about "better" government being the peg on which to hang the threadbare coat of parliamentary reformism, we would draw Edward Rasey's attention to that passage in "Civil Disobedience" in which he reminds us that

All voting is a sort of gaming . . . a playing with right and wrong . . . Even voting for the right is doing nothing for it.

Why, Edward? Firstly because whatever he may have written about "better" government, Thoreau obviously had no faith or hope in government ("that government is best which governs not at all", surely removes the ground from under the feet of government, which can only exist for the purpose of governing?). Secondly, and we quote from Mr. Rasey's source, Thoreau asks:

Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience then? . . .

So here we have a double assault on government. When Thoreau referred to "better" government he did not mean the comparative *literally*, as Edward Rasey has interpreted it, but in the sense that we must progressively withdraw Power from government to the point where it will be starved of support. The Labour Party's social and economic programme in fact renders the government and State *indispensable* to the "welfare" of the community! To the Tories' "freedom" to starve, the Labourites oppose a womb-to-the-tomb security (a fictitious security in that it is at the mercy of trade slumps and financial crises, and assumes that full employment and expanding world markets are part and parcel of the post-war order of things, which there is no reason to suppose they are). But such security as they offer is bought by the strengthening of the machinery of government and of the bureaucracy. The Conservatives are as right in their opposition to the Labour programme as is Labour in its criticism of the Tories. What Edward Rasey and his young friends have not yet seen is that in spite of that, they are both wrong. Tories and Labourites! It would be a pity that realisation should come through disillusionment.

THERE was a time when tuberculosis or a major surgical operation were almost invariably fatal; just as, in fact, we are living through a period where cancer and death are synonymous. But if to-day we do not automatically die once tuberculosis is diagnosed or a major operation is inevitable (just as in ten or twenty years' time we shall not consider cancer a "killer" disease), it is because whilst one section of the medical community is doing what it can to promote health and relieve suffering within the limits of existing knowledge another section is concentrating on extending that knowledge into the realms of the unknown.

So with social problems, but with this difference. That whereas society pullulates with reformists, with those who are ready, as we have so often said before, to round off the rough edges of our social and economic system, there are too few prepared to undertake the less glamorous and long-term task of informing and educating the public to an awareness that the parliamentary system, with or without opposition, far from being the last word in social emancipation is the badge of human slavery. Yet progress whether in pure science or in the art of living (which is what our young friend Rasey calls "beauty and creating, knowing and feeling, writing, painting and music, loving and living") depends on an active, questioning, inquisitive minority which rejects the fetters of State and Party, of security and respectability.

For the capitalist, the crisis of our time is inflation; for the industrialist it is productivity and markets; for governments it is scientists and technologists. But for the generations to come the real crisis will be of the intellectual and militant poverty of the present generation. Faced with economic security and social status they could not produce a squeak compared with the blood and thunder of their nineteenth century counterparts who lacked all that to-day they materially possess! The future is in the hands of the Edward Raseys however much the present is dominated by an archaic generation of Tories and a *nouveau riche* Labour hierarchy. The future happiness of mankind depends on the extent to which our young people of to-day can ignore the dead hand of a past turned sour with age and respectability. And we shall feel optimistic when their sights are directed beyond the United Nations, governments, UNESCO, SUNFED and WHO and other symbols and ciphers, to the man in the street, stupid, gullible and simple perhaps, politically insignificant perhaps, but the subject and object of all human problems.

Edward Rasey, because he believes in government and authority, says that the anarchists would take away "the tools" with which man could build the world in which "the good life is possible". But the contrary is the case. We want man to handle the tools for his happiness. And this he can only do once he has ceased to be himself a tool in the hands of government and has become aware of his uniqueness, his identity as an individual.

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CINEMA ESCAPISM

WHEN I went to see the new film at the Academy it was with a certain reluctance. I had heard good reports of it; but could I really stomach yet another film about the war? However, as the story unfolded my misgivings disappeared. The war itself is unimportant. This is the story of an escape, and all that matters is that the prisoner should succeed in his attempt.
A Man Escaped (*Un condamné à mort s'est échappé*) is about a Frenchman, Lieutenant Fontaine (François Leterrier), who is caught by the Gestapo and imprisoned. Almost as soon as he has recovered from the routine beating-up he begins to think about escape. It appears to be quite impossible. But there is a way.

The door of his cell is made of wood. With the help of an iron spoon, whose handle he grinds into a sharp edge on the stone floor, Fontaine painstakingly cuts through the tenons of the door panels, carefully sweeping up each sliver of wood and disposing of it.

To scale the walls he will need ropes and hooks. The hooks he makes from a lamp frame. The ropes are made with wire from the bed and strips of blankets and other cloth plaited together.

All this takes time. As day succeeds day the preparations slowly advance—painfully slowly. It seems that his plans must be discovered, or he will be moved to another cell, or some other catastrophe will overtake him before he is ready.

At length he can delay no longer. The Gestapo have finished their investigation, and he is formally sentenced to death. Any day now he may be taken out and shot.

At this crucial moment he has to share his cell with a new arrival, Jost (Charles Leclainche), a French boy who has been in the service of the Germans and deserted. Can Fontaine trust this mixed-up kid, or will he be betrayed by him? There is not much time to find out.

But escape he does, and a nerve-racking business it is. As he and Jost drop from the outside wall to freedom I found it difficult to repress a gasp of relief.

Incredible though it may seem, this is a true story. As one who has never escaped from anything more formidable than a boarding-school I can only marvel at it.

The director, Robert Bresson, builds up the tension remorselessly. The realism is that of *The Wages of Fear* and *Rififi*, and the effect is as if one were watching a documentary rather than a dramatic work.

There is no glamour in it. There is not a single woman in it. But it is never dull for a moment, and I have seldom found a film so completely absorbing as this one. E.P.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

LECTURE-DISCUSSIONS

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

JULY 21—David Pude on
Problems of the Anarchist Movement:
PROLETARIAN ANARCHISM AND
PETTY BOURGEOIS INTELLEC-
TUALISM

JULY 28—M. J. Panikkar on
NATIONALISM AND THE NEW
SOCIETY

Questions, Discussion and Admission
all free.

OPEN AIR MEETINGS

Weather Permitting
HYDE PARK
Sundays at 3.30 p.m.

GLASGOW

OPEN AIR MEETINGS
Maxwell Street
Every Sunday at 7.30 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 THOMSON speaks

Every Friday and Saturday:
SOCIAL EVENINGS

Anarchist Summer School 1957

'BLUEPRINTS FOR SANITY'

AS we have already announced, the 1957 Anarchist Summer School will be held at the Malatesta Club, London, on the August Bank Holiday weekend—Saturday, Sunday and Monday, 3rd, 4th and 5th August inclusive.

PROGRAMME

Saturday, Aug. 3
2.30 p.m. Morris Simon on
HEALTH IN A SANE SOCIETY
5.30 p.m. High Tea
8 p.m. Social

Sunday, Aug. 4
11 a.m. Geoffrey Ostergaard on
BEYOND THE WAGE SYSTEM
1.30 p.m. Lunch
3.30 p.m. Hyde Park Meeting
7.30 p.m. Bob Green on
THE CONTRIBUTION OF
THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Monday, Aug. 5
11 a.m. Summing Up
1.30 Lunch.

FEES:
LECTURES: 1s. per lecture at the door; 2s. 6d. for the series of four booked in advance.
MEALS: 2s. 9d. each. Must be booked in advance. This applies also to London comrades needing meals but no accommodation.

Latest Date for Booking:
MONDAY, 30th JULY

Visitors to London usually require bed and breakfast for the Saturday and Sunday nights and all London comrades with accommodation available are requested to furnish details to the organiser as soon as possible.

All enquiries and information, please to:

JOAN SCULTHORPE,
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Propaganda in the Doldrums

WHERE are the Propagandists?

P.S. comments on the phenomenon recurrent in the anarchist movement of phases in which there seems to be a strange dearth of people anxious to engage actively in the propaganda of various sorts which makes the movement a dynamic thing. Back in the 1890's Kropotkin commented on this strange feature of the anarchist movement in Britain, as he records in his *Memoirs*. Yet the paper which Kropotkin founded, after a chequered career remains one of the most intelligent and lively anarchist journals in the world to-day.

What else exists besides FREEDOM and the other literature as a tangible evidence of the existence of the anarchist movement? As P.S. points out, the main effect of anarchism is not easily quantifiable; unlike a purely political doctrine, anarchism has practical implications in all aspects of the daily lives of those influenced by it. We have therefore little knowledge of how influential anarchism is at any time. We may study certain indices—the readership of FREEDOM, the number of people prepared to sell literature on the streets (an activity which is apparently out of fashion now), the attendance at anarchist meetings who are seriously concerned with the subject, the number of people anxious to speak from anarchist platforms and contribute to anarchist journals, the number of people who reject various forms of government coercion such as conscription. All these are crude indices of the influence of anarchism at any time, but they do not tell us much. There is the quality to be considered: we all know the bums who are layabout anarchists until they somehow secure a cosy niche where conformism pays. It is better to have a paper like FREEDOM which is a struggle to publish than to bring out the dreary pseudo-bolshevik stuff which fills some journals which claim to be libertarian.

Years ago I attended a street corner meeting in Glasgow with an attendance of nearly a thousand and some of the most brilliant speakers which the anarchist movement has ever produced. I do not think that they hold meetings in Glasgow to-day,* nor have I the slightest

[*G's article was written before the announcement is last week's FREEDOM that some comrades in Glasgow had taken the initiative of starting up outdoor meetings at Maxwell Road again. Their first meeting, they report, was "instrumental in rallying a few young anarchists".—EDITORS.]

PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT! WEEK 28

Deficit on Freedom £560
Contributions received £389
DEFICIT £171

July 5 to July 11

Hford: C.S. 5/6; London: Anon* 1/10;
Oxford: Anon.* 5/-; Bicester: R.S.M. 1/-;
London: J.S.* 3/-; London: S.B.* 2/6;
Blackpool: R.B.B. 10/-.

Total ... 1 8 10
Previously acknowledged ... 387 14 0

1957 TOTAL TO DATE ... £389 2 10

Fire Fund

Nice: A.C. 6/-; McKeesport: J.R. £1/10/0;
Blackpool: R.B.B. 10/-; Chicago: R.C. £7;
Per Osmar: San Francisco: A. £1/15/0; San
Francisco: F. £1/15/0; El Monte: [Outing,
June 2], £35; Losgatos: The Friends
£26/12/0; Castroville: A.B. £1/15/0; Wil-
liams: M.L. £1/15/0.

Total ... 77 9 0
Previously acknowledged ... 247 17 3

TOTAL TO DATE ... £325 6 3

*Indicates regular contributor.

GIFTS OF BOOKS: Torrington: S.W.;
Whiteway: L.G.W.; London: L.W.

EMBARRASSED MP's

Continued from p. 1

To some it may not be absolutely clear how a non-elected body of non-representative men may exist for the purposes of Government in a democratic country; to these uninitiated it will be even less clear why they should receive expenses for hotel charges, meals and miscellaneous travelling costs. And what are we to suspect when we discover that the relationship between their lordships and the income-tax man is to be quite different from our own. "There will be no question of production of bills or other evidence, which I think would be very undignified", said Mr. Butler. But what is to become of the dignity of the common man with his petty cash voucher and receipt in payment of 2/3d. for a bottle of ink?

idea of the degree of consciousness of anarchism among the Clydeside workers to-day. It is inevitable that those of us who are most concerned with the anarchist movement will always be in deep ignorance of just what effects our propaganda is having. Moving in limited circles we know that we have made 'converts', but sometimes meeting such a self-declared 'convert' the result is not always gratifying and one wonders whether it would not have been better to hold one's tongue more often. But when all's said, we are not a sort of Billy Graham crusade intent on snatching brands from the burning. We are concerned with propagating a system of ideas which competes with the authoritarian ideas which are being propagated by others. Our satisfaction is not in counting noses among the 'saved', although it is essential to all of us to have the intellectual and social companionship of comrades and to experience tangible evidence of our propaganda.

And where are the young comrades? Many young comrades pass through the movement threatening to blow up various buildings in Whitehall as they pass. For them the Social Revolution is just round the corner, held back by the handful of armed reactionaries and their henchmen—but also by cowardly old fogies like myself who will not assist here and now in erecting a Barricade at Marble Arch. It is not my purpose to make fun of the young revolutionist: I respect him. It will help if I describe his prototype.

He is about 17; he is worried about military conscription (or he used to be); he is trying to lose his virginity; he is quarrelling with his parents; he used to have strong Labour/Communist/Christian principles; he has thrown up a dull, steady job; he has read too much too quickly and is bloody intolerant; he is transfused by a vision of the Free Society. Such a young man (it takes young women differently) is capable of great energy and is a valuable comrade in spite of his intolerance. What is less easy to admit is that he comes to the anarchist movement because he is weak, weak in his limited experience and realization of the huge authoritarian forces ranged against his urge to express

himself as an individual. The anarchist movement gives him strength. He learns how to hold the bluff of conscription in contempt; he loses his virginity very thoroughly; he gets a liberal education in many sorts of jobs; he no longer fears his parents' authority; he sloughs off the remains of Socialist or Christian priggishness; he learns a good deal about the nature of the society in which he lives and to distinguish reality from myth in the revolutionary movement, and he learns more tolerance. The anarchist movement is a wonderful university for the young. It teaches far more than can be acquired by three years studentship at an academic seat of learning.

But our young comrade, having gained what he lacked, strength, does not necessarily continue to speak at Marble Arch, or to sell papers, or to argue at public meetings, or to address envelopes, or to put the anarchist case to just everyone he meets. I do not consider him a dead loss even though we seldom see him again, nor do I think he is in the same category as the layabout bums who permanently attach themselves to anarchist meetings, clubs, etc., because they don't know what else to do with their wretched selves. What our young comrade does later, in life is his affair, but whether he chooses to or not he will inevitably spread the influence of the anarchist ideas which had so powerful an effect on him in early manhood.

I have heard it said that the heady wine of Stirner should not be dispensed too liberally to young propagandists, for once they realize the egoistic motives which drive them on to the platform and its equivalents, they will soon turn to more 'selfish' activities. I do not think that this is so, or that anyone is a better propagandist for lack of insight into his own motives. Devotees of Bakunin, Tolstoy or Kropotkin (if we may thus distinguish anarchist trends) retire from the fray equally readily. Those with an individualist approach are often charac-

terised by a fondness for the sound of their own voices and a disputatious temperament which makes them lifelong propagandists.

I do not think that we need ever be depressed by the fact that the *Catholic Herald* or *Daily Worker* has no lack of mugs to sell it on the streets (except as a sight of human misery). The hangers-on of the anarchist movement (who spend most of their time sitting around and complaining how awful the anarchists are), would be a poor advertisement for FREEDOM were they to sell it on the streets. I do not pretend to understand why it is that the source of devoted comrades who used to sell literature on the streets has mysteriously dried up. Glib explanations like "full employment", "Welfare State", "Skiffle and Teddy Cults" are probably quite inaccurate. This is a most opportune time for making anarchist propaganda—and yet in some ways it seemed to be easier and more successful in the midst of a total war, when emergency regulations hampered us, when printing was difficult, money scarce and comrades scattered by imprisonment and other exigencies of the war. Is it only in times of actual vicissitude that libertarians come to life?

I have noticed in recent years that controversy in FREEDOM has died down. Excellent theoretical articles, such as those of Ostergaard, pass without having provoked a ripple of reaction, although they contain many controversial points. Strangely enough the *University Libertarian*, a most sober journal compared with FREEDOM, produces a great deal more controversy in the various student papers. Is the readership of FREEDOM too awed by the authority of its writers to respond? I have seen the same phenomenon when too powerful a speaker has impressed his audience too thoroughly. Like P.S. I regret the death of young comrades who are only too ready to tell the Editors they are talking through their hats. G.

300 Years of Post Office Intercepts

THE tercentenary of the Postmaster General's office happened right in the middle of the recent fuss about telephone tapping—a not inappropriate time. For any patriotic liberal who supposes that the Post Office was created in order to make it easier for citizens to communicate with each other, is gravely in error.

The purpose of the act creating the Postmaster General was in fact to nationalize the existing postal services, and make illegal the setting up of new ones, in order that state officials might spy out "the many dangerous and wicked designs which have been and are daily contrived against the peace and welfare of this Commonwealth, the intelligence of which cannot well be communicated except by letter of escript."

After the Lord Protector's death, the restored monarchy and successive governments allowed the Postmaster Act to remain on the statute book in order to

prevent wicked and dangerous designs against the Kingdom; and in order to discourage private (illegal) letter-carrying, they vastly improved the service. The most notable improvement was the introduction of the penny post, an institution which has done a great deal of good to commercial and private communication; but the reason for this measure was that the State was losing its monopoly. Over half the letters written at the time were being carried privately, or in the word of Roland Hill, the Postmaster "smuggled".

So there is nothing new about letter-opening, and telephone tapping is only a logical extension of this activity. The correct reply to those who grumble about it, implying that the Post Office is there primarily to provide a service, should be "What do you think the government it? A philanthropic club?" D.R.

Letter

TOLSTOYAN ANARCHIST

DEAR FRIEND,

The increasing emphasis amongst certain pacifists upon what they consider to be the need for political action does not, I am sure, meet with the approval of others. I would be interested in hearing from pacifists who hold a Tolstoyan or anarchist position in regard to power, and who believe that the fundamental changes in human relationships needed to create peace must be primarily personal in character. Object: to discuss the possibility of forming a free association of friends sharing this attitude.

Yours sincerely,

12 Park Drive, S. E. PARKER.
London, N.W.11.

The White-collar Beehive Continued from p. 2

that a change of user would produce more beneficial use (only financial profit being beneficial to the community). This view they now recognize to have been mistaken.

BUT the speculation in office buildings could not take place without an insatiable demand for office space in London in spite of the high rents. It is this demand which baffles the rational enquirer. The crucial time was at the end of the war. In 1944 the National Council of Social Service published an important report *Dispersal*, sub-titled "an inquiry into the advantages and feasibility of the permanent settlement out of London and other great cities of offices and clerical and administrative staffs". Their report ended with the words:

"This matter of dispersal must be faced some time. Consider the alternatives. Either that huge populations should go on living in congestion, or that a great deal more of the countryside near London and other vast cities should be built over, until such time as growing discomfort and strain compel the action which everyone knows must come. The alternative to these 'solutions by default' is planned movement. There will never be a better time than now, when men's minds are prepared for changes, and when many thousands must change their homes, since the world has moved under them."

But neither these conclusions, nor those of the Barlow Report (Royal Commission on the Distribution of the In-

dustrial Population) seemed to influence the government in its policy over its own vast offices which were rapidly brought back from their wartime evacuation, followed by the big corporations and business houses, while the smaller fry rapidly followed suit. The London office, for manufacturers, is a matter of prestige rather than necessity. ("We only took the place in Mayfair for the sake of the address on our letter-paper", a company-director told me). The expense-account offices, like the expense-account cars, are part of the business-man's image of himself (fostered by American talk of 'executives' and magazines like *Fortune*); the battery of telephones, ("Order another automatic private exchange"), the venetian blinds, behind which you expect to see a backdrop of the New York skyline; are all part of a romantic mystique which has no relation at all to economic, let alone social needs.

And might not the post-war history of the mining industry have been different if the offices of the National Coal Board were in the Rhondda or South Yorkshire instead of in S.W.1?

IT is not only the centralising tendencies of government departments and public corporations, the mystique of the managerial class, and the irrational pull of the metropolis which fill the white-collar beehives, but also the amazing increase in the number of clerical jobs. The last Census, in 1951 showed that over two and a quarter million clerks